

# DETOUR: BLOCK PARTY IN PROGRESS

There was a time a family reunion meant a large group of neighbors getting together for a celebration. Not so anymore, when families rarely live in the same town, let alone in the same block. Maybe this is why so many neighborhoods across the country are turning themselves into a sort of community family complete with an annual bash that brings everyone together for one big outdoor party.

Whether they're called block parties, development get-togethers, road association picnics, neighborhood fairs or building cookouts, this event helps to bridge the gap. Strangers often become friends and any warm day is turned into a special day to talk about all year—until it's time to plan the next party.

Organizing a neighborhood party can be as simple as making a few phone calls to assign responsibility for the salads, main course and dessert. Some groups, however, organize months in advance and begin with a meeting to determine where the party should be held, how to finance the venture and who should take charge of food, games and decorations.

If plans call for a large meeting, contact the local fire or police department and check on regulations that cover closing a street to traffic.

When every detail is finally checked off the list, be sure that food, one of the most important ingredients for any party's success, is not forgotten. If outdoor grills are available, roast or boil corn and let everyone bring barbecue fare.

Plan a few surprises like vegetable platter pie, a new twist on the Italian favorite featuring vegetables and pepperoni on top of an unusual cheese layer.

If your group enjoys sharing recipes, a pot luck buffet might be the answer for the big day. Have everyone bring a main course, salad or vegetable dish. Include some new recipes like layered summer salad, chicken rice salad, Mexican muffins and pineapple ham loaf. Then collect all of the recipes several weeks before the big event and put together a block party cookbook and hand out copies at the picnic.



## LAYERED SUMMER SALAD

- 4 cups torn lettuce
- 1 medium red onion, sliced
- 2 cups sliced green pepper
- 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved
- 4 cups sliced summer squash
- 3/4 cup real mayonnaise
- 3 tablespoons horseradish
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1/16 teaspoon hot pepper sauce
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic salt

In a large, deep bowl, layer lettuce, onion, green pepper and cheese. Add a ring of tomatoes; top with a ring of squash. In medium bowl, stir together mayonnaise, horseradish, lemon juice, Worcestershire, hot pepper sauce and garlic salt until smooth. Spoon dressing into center; surround with remaining tomatoes. Cover and refrigerate four to six hours or overnight. Makes 16 to 12 servings.

## CHICKEN RICE SALAD

- 1/3 cup thawed orange juice concentrate
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1/3 cup corn oil
- 2 tablespoons white vinegar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon dry mustard
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 2 cups cooked, diced chicken
- 4 cups cooked rice
- 1 can (13 oz.) mandarin orange sections, drained

In large bowl, stir together orange juice concentrate, sugar, corn oil, vinegar, salt and mustard until blended. Stir in mayonnaise until smooth. Add chicken, rice and oranges; toss until well mixed. Cover and chill. Makes six to eight servings.

## MEXICAN MUFFINS

- 1/2 cup finely shredded Cheddar cheese
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped onion
- 1 tablespoon chopped canned green chilies
- 1 package (12 oz.) corn muffin mix
- 1/3 cup real mayonnaise
- 1 egg
- 1/3 cup milk

Grease nine (2 1/4 by 1 1/4 inch) muffin cups. Gently toss together cheese, onion and chilies. In medium bowl, stir together muffin mix, mayonnaise, egg and milk until just moistened. Put one heaping tablespoon batter into the bottom of each muffin cup. Sprinkle each with one tablespoon cheese mixture; top each with two tablespoons remaining muffin mixture. Bake in 350 degree oven 15 to 17 minutes, or until lightly browned. Cool 10 minutes before removing from pans. Makes nine muffins.

## VEGETABLE PLATTER PIE

- 2 cups buttermilk baking mix
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 tablespoon corn oil
- 1 1/2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1/2 cup real mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 1/2 teaspoons dried basil leaves
- 1/2 pint cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1/4 pound sliced pepperoni
- 1 medium green pepper, sliced, blanched
- 1/2 cup sliced mushrooms
- 1/2 cup stuffed green olives, sliced

In medium bowl, stir together baking mix, water and corn oil until just moistened. Roll out and fit in 12-inch pizza pan, with one-half inch overhang. Flute edge. Bake in 450 degree oven 10 minutes, or until lightly browned. Stir together mozzarella, mayonnaise, Parmesan, garlic powder and basil. Spread on baked crust. Arrange tomatoes, pepperoni, green pepper, mushrooms and olives alternately on top of cheese. Bake in 350 degree oven 20 minutes or until cheese is melted. If necessary cover edges of crust with aluminum foil to prevent browning. Makes six servings.

## PINEAPPLE HAM LOAF

- 3 3/4 cups cooked ground ham (about 1 lb.)
- 1/3 cup minced onion
- 1/2 cup finely chopped celery
- 1 cup real mayonnaise
- 1 cup fine dry bread crumbs
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley
- 1 egg, slightly beaten
- 2 teaspoons dry mustard
- 1 can (8 oz.) crushed pineapple, drained
- 2 tablespoons light brown sugar

In large bowl, stir together ham, onion, celery mayonnaise, bread crumbs, parsley, egg and mustard until well mixed. In nine-by-five-by-three inch loaf pan, stir together pineapple and brown sugar. Pat gently to cover bottom. Turn in ham mixture. Spread to level top. Bake in 350 degree oven one hour or until firm. Cool 15 minutes before removing from pan. If desired, garnish with halved pineapple slices. Serve warm or cold. Makes six servings.