

THE BLOG



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CEO, The Creative Class Group & Author, Upgrade

Creative Entertaining: Mysterious Venetian Nights (VIDEO/PHOTOS)

Posted: 06/13/2013 10:15 am

Why go out for pizza when you can convert your BBQ grill into a wood burning pizza oven for an entertaining and delicious 'make your own pizza party' right at home?



The best pizza is from Napoli, with a delicate thin crispy crust, light sauce, and fresh buffalo mozzarella topped with fresh basil leaves, but I chose Napoli's neighbor to the North, Venice, for my inspiration. I wanted to give my backyard pizza party pizzazz by using the colors of Venetian gondolas -- deep red and smoldering black, with a dash of mystery.

Offer a wide selection of gourmet toppings so your guests can customize their own pies. Arrange a tray of Mediterranean olives, some bowls filled with chunks of Parmigiano-Reggiano and Marcona almonds, a few bottles of Barollo or Amarone, and your heavy lifting is done.



Photo gallery for more design tips:

Photo Credit: [Mark Luciani](#)

Dress the Part



These carnival masks were purchased on the streets of Venice years ago. They added an element of fun to the evening.

Design Objects



An assortment of odds and ends vases, candleholders, linens, masks, flowers and even an old scarf used as a runner complete the look.

Semi Homemade



You can buy the dough ready-made from any local pizzeria to skip the hard part and jump right to the fun.

Made to Order



Offer a wide arrange of gourmet toppings, from vegetables, meats, speciality cheeses and herbs and let your guests do the work.

Set Up



Get friends, family and even the kids to help with the setup; that's half the fun.

Made to Order



Kids and adults alike have a blast making their own pizza!

Get Grill'n!



Any BBQ grill can be used as a pizza oven. Just preheat the grill on high, close the lid for 30 minutes.

Get Grill'n!



Customize the toppings and the pie shape.

Format



Dinner doesn't have to be formal or served in courses. Choose the format that works for you.

Speciality Drinks



Set out the drinks and let guests help themselves.



Decorative straws in a Fornasetti holder.

Mocktails



Crack open a refreshing drink and drop in a fun straw.

Back Up Plan



Don't let rain dampen your spirits. Be sure to have an alternative plan for indoor seating in case of inclement weather.

Design Objects



Jonathon Adler Mr. & Mrs. salt and pepper shakers.

Mocktails



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Get Creative



Piero Fornasetti face plates add a touch of whimsical exoticism.

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Sweet & Sour



Chilled Lemoncello served at the end of the meal as a digestiv is the perfect drink on a hot summer night. Garnish with a lemon twist.

Sweet Endings



Dessert is as simple as lemon gelato served in a martini glass, garnished with a sprig of mint or lemon wedge for a chic and sweet ending.

Sweet Endings



Espresso cups to match the theme.

Sweet Endings



Ornamental candy jars, vases, or bowls filled with tasty treats serve a dual purpose of dessert and décor.