


THE PARTY'S COOKING

GET BOOKISH, AND MAKE COOKBOOKS THE CENTER OF THE PARTY
BY KELLEY L. MOORE

PHOTOGRAPHS ALEX HAYDEN
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WHETHER YOUR TASTES RUN TO CLASSIC French cuisine or down-home American comfort foods, breaking bread—and sometimes even baking bread—with friends is a terrific way to bond and, perhaps, learn new culinary skills in the process. So why not make it a regular date? Gather hungry friends together for a monthly cookbook club to concoct favorite and new recipes, and sit down together to enjoy the fruits of your labors. 📖 Different club members can host a party each month, featuring at least one recipe that is truly one of their favorites. Discovering your friends' absolute favorite recipes is a fun and delicious way to get to know them better. Set up cooking stations along a kitchen island, table or countertop, complete with the recipe printed out on a 3-by-5 index card or copied from the cookbook it was culled

from—just make sure that the instructions are secured down and easy to follow—and keep the wine or cocktails flowing! If, like me, you're not exactly Julia Child in the kitchen, invite an experienced chef to lead your club's class. For my party, I called upon the famed Chef in the Hat, Thierry Rautureau of Madison Valley's Rover's Restaurant, to show my guests and me how to make a dish or two from his cookbook written with Cynthia Nims, *Rover's: Recipes from the Chef in the Hat* (Ten Speed Press, 2005). After dinner, we shared our favorite cookbooks with each other, discussed memorable meals and recipes and eagerly made plans for our next club "meeting." 

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Setting the table >>

Set up a cooking station so that it serves double duty as a place to learn and to dine. Defining each station on a large kitchen island or table is easy with a colorful placemat as the anchor. Remember to include note cards to keep track of tips throughout the evening. The glimmer of candlelight adds a touch of romance to the room especially with these modern glass candelabras with taper candles to reflect the color palette in the room. A tiny cup of fresh herbs with a place card peeking out on a wooden skewer is a sweet way to acknowledge each guest.



CLOCKWISE FROM MIDDLE: Rautureau's Dungeness Crab Salad with Garlic, Roasted Shallots and Pomegranate Vinaigrette is a great option for a cocktail party and can be served as shown here on small slices of rustic bread. ✨ Encourage guests to express their personal style by offering a variety of aprons. ✨ Travel spice packs are portable and packed with spices from around the world. ✨ A temptingly close-up look at the Martini of Spot Prawns with Cucumber, Caviar and Vodka



FIND IT

Page 51: Red Vic Firth salt-and-pepper mills (shown by stovetop), \$59.95 each, at City Kitchens (1527 Fourth Ave.; 206.382.1138). Quiche apron (worn by Kelley and female “cookbook club” members on this page), \$28, at Anthropologie (University Village, 2520 NE University Village St., 206.985.2101; 1509 Fifth Ave., 206.381.5900; anthropologie.com). Reisenethel Collapsible European Market Tote, available in red, black and green (as shown), \$29.95, at Sur La Table (84 Pine St.; 206.448.2244; surlatable.com). Page 52: Copperfield Candelabra, \$288 each at Anthropologie. Cinnebar Creative Taper Candles, \$8 for two, and golden piggy bank, \$160, at Stuhlbergs (1801 Queen Anne Ave. N; 206.352.2351; stuhlbergs.com); Iron fork-and-knife cookbook stand, \$15.95, at City Kitchens. *Rover’s: Recipes from Seattle’s Chef in the Hat* cookbook, \$40, at Rover’s Restaurant (2808 E Madison St.; 206.325.7442; rovers-seattle.com). Chilewich green placemat, \$16 each, and metallic runner, \$52, at Stuhlbergs. Hand-blown confetti glass wine glasses, \$48 each, and green cut-glass champagne flutes, \$100 for six, at Veritables Décor (2806 E Madison St.; 206.322.7782; veritablesdecor.com). Water glasses with red swirl, \$10, at Anthropologie. Revol Crinkle Cup (shown with placecard and herbs), \$15, at City Kitchens. Orange Grove apron, \$38; Ava reversible apron, \$38; Magic Mushroom apron, \$38; and Mod Swirl apron \$38 (all shown in a stack); all at Anthropologie. Travel spice kit, \$25.95, at Mrs. Cook’s (University Village, 2685 NE Village Lane; 206.525.5008; mrscooks.com). Page 53: silverware chest, \$198; Summer Palace flatware, \$30 for a five-piece place setting; linen napkins with hand-stitching, \$6; all at Anthropologie. Martini glass from the owner’s collection. Votives in hidden moss, \$40 each, at Glassybaby (435 NE 72nd St.; 206.568.7368; glassybaby.com). Now Designs white cotton aprons (worn by male “cookbook club” members), \$18, at Mrs. Cook’s.



Setting the scene

✱ THIS PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: The Chef in the Hat has the full attention of Sherri Swingle Johnson. ✱ All guests were greeted with Rover’s chef Thierry Rautureau’s signature martini made of Broker’s gin and fresh-squeezed pomegranate juice with pomegranate seeds for garnish. Also served, Champagne Taittinger Brut La Francaise and a Seven Hills Pinot Gris 2005. ✱ Don’t forget the recipe! For our soirée, Rautureau brought a copy of his cookbook for each person. For the cooks’ comfort, be sure to prop cookbooks on cookbook stands, such as fun fork-and-knife models (see above for detail). Animating the island’s center is a metallic runner bearing a golden pig and plump votive candles. The homeowners’ Murano glass chandelier hanging above the island inspired the selection of these hand-blown confetti Glass wine glasses, cut-glass champagne flutes and drinking glasses. Cookbook clubbers raise a glass to a tasteful and tasty evening (clockwise from left): Amy Wick, Dan Kully, Kelley, Rautureau, Swingle Johnson, Brent Martin and Marylee Skelly. ✱ Kelley places a silverware chest on the counter so guests can help set the table.