



BELOW: To personalize each dish, I placed photos of family members whose recipes were used in inexpensive frames and set them in their section of the table. Here, a photo of my great-grandmother Lizzie sits atop bright, picnic-inspired red checkered fabric surrounded by family favorites: sweet potato pie, cornbread muffins and black-eyed peas.



POTLUCK CHIC

KELLEY MOORE TRANSFORMS THE HO-HUM BUFFET INTO A STYLISH COMMUNAL DINNER

LEFT: Even when a random assortment of serving plates is brought to a potluck, it's easy to create a beautiful tabletop with just a few simple additions. To help achieve a cohesive tabletop for our multicultural feast, I used bamboo table risers to create height and a patchwork tablecloth made of different fabrics where food from each culture is placed. Arranging family photos and, of course, the delicious dishes within their specific section completes the simple yet stylish buffet.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
RACHEL OLSSON

REPORTING BY KATE CALAMUSA

I ADMIT: I HAVE NEVER BEEN A FAN of the potluck concept. When I invite friends into my home, I want to serve them and make them feel pampered—not ask them to do work by bringing a dish. But in this economy, the need to support each other has increased as entertaining budgets have decreased, so I decided to rethink the potluck, giving it an inexpensive yet stylish makeover by inviting my friends over for a community dinner inspired by their family heritage. Hoping to deepen friendships while also tapping into the emotional connection that my guests have with family recipes, I asked each guest to bring a treasured family dish as well as photos and stories about their relatives to share. The result inspires great conversation and makes for a creative, fun, affordable evening.



Kelley Lee Moore:
A lady with a surprising heritage



Due to racially driven laws, Kelley's grandmother Hattie (an African and Native American) and grandfather Mr. Culbertson, (owner of the cotton plantation where they lived in Athens, GA) were not allowed to marry, with out endangering their very lives.

After migrating to Washington, D.C grandmother Hattie was employed to clean the capital steps. the very place were President Obama was sworn into office 48 years later.

LEFT: A simple craft project makes a big impact at the serving station; using iron-on T-shirt transfers, I printed stories from my guests about their heritage onto white cotton fabric and then pinned facts and photos onto a large piece of foam core to create a history board. ABOVE: My family dishes were inspired by my Southern roots, and I paid tribute to my grandmother Hattie, who was African and Native American, a fact none of my other guests knew!



ABOVE: In the spirit of our theme, I put out an array of beverages to complement each dish. Guinness beer is the perfect match for Patrick O'Rourke's Irish mashed-potato dish with scallions and lots of butter. As for me, I had to have some good old-fashioned Coca-Cola as a tribute to my Southern roots.



LEFT: Guests Patrick O'Rourke, Kim Flannery-Rye and Sammie Golan chat and share photos with me as they dish up specialties from the Dominican Republic, South Korea, Ireland, Norway, Eastern Europe and the American South.



ABOVE: After dinner, Kim Flannery-Rye, Mario Franck and Gabe Johnson play a rousing game of Take Off! an interactive race around the world and a perfect way to cap off a globally inspired fête. BELOW: To remember the evening, guests take home a handmade cookbook featuring the recipes served at the potluck. To assemble the "Cultured Palate" booklet, I printed out my guests' recipes on thin cardstock, added a chic map paper cover and tied off the packet with fuzzy red yarn.



» For more ideas for a stylish potluck, watch "Moore to Life" with Kelley Moore on *King-5 Morning News* on KONG-TV on March 25 at 8:45 a.m.

FIND IT:

PAGE 76 and 77: Bamboo table risers, \$16-\$40 at City Home Store; colored frames, \$5-\$10 at Annie's Art and Frame; tablecloth fabric, \$5-\$11/yard at Nancy's Sewing Basket.

PAGE 78: For serving station: hanging cutlery set with stand, \$16 at City Home Store; lemon peel soup/salad bowls (\$11), salad plates (\$9) and coupe dinner plates (\$11) at Whimsy; red croc candle stand, small (\$60), medium (\$69) at Whimsy; Fenomen pillar candles, \$4.49 at Ikea; black pulse wine rack, \$48 at Whimsy; buffet napkins, \$9.99 for pack of six at World Market; orange bamboo place mats, \$2.48 for set of four at World Market. For serving station history board: large foam core board, \$8.50 at Artist & Craftsman Supply; white cotton fabric, \$10/yard at Nancy's Sewing Basket; T-shirt transfers, \$25 for pack of 18 at Staples. For beverage serving station: Monte wood tray, \$380 at Revival Home and Garden; water glasses, \$5.99 at World Market.

THIS PAGE: Take Off! game, \$32.95 at Blue Highway Games. For guest favors: Mini basic book board, \$3 at Paper Source; Snow and Graham paper, \$2.75 at papermojo.com; red yarn, \$9.95 at Hilltop Yarn.

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