

Holiday Cooking

Simple Ways To Celebrate The Holidays

(NAPSA)—Whether you call it a “soiree,” “bash” or “get-together,” holiday festivities usually require a level of organization and planning. From creating the guest list to preparing the menu, the steps to hosting a holiday party can seem daunting.

Keep in mind, though, that this planning effort doesn't have to be difficult or require weeks of work. In fact, a memorable evening can be organized in just a few days. The trick is to keep things simple and stress-free so that both you and your guests can enjoy the party.

Following are some tips for hosting a festive event with ease:

- **Select a theme.** Make gift-giving a fun adventure by providing guests with specific gift exchange criteria, such as “anything round” or “something green.”

- **Mix it up.** Using different shapes and colors of glassware and plates is an effortless (and trendy!) way to create an eclectic and charming atmosphere.

- **Get connected.** Take advantage of party-planning sites, such as Evite.com, where you can manage your guest list with a click of a button.

- **Open the bar.** Place cocktail mixers, glasses and alcoholic beverages on a kitchen island or open table so guests can mix their own special concoctions.

- **Take it easy.** Simple menus and uncomplicated recipes are essential for an enjoyable evening. The following recipe, *Bruschetta with Garlic Shrimp*, was found on Buitoni.com and takes less than 15 minutes to prepare, making it a simple yet elegant addition to your holiday menu.



BRUSCHETTA WITH GARLIC SHRIMP
(Makes 30 Pieces)

- 1 loaf (8 ounces) baguette-style Italian bread, cut into thirty 2-inch slices
- 3 tablespoons olive oil, *divided*
- 1 teaspoon chopped garlic
- 30 raw small shrimp or prawns, peeled and deveined
- 1 container (10.5 ounces) Buitoni® Refrigerated Classic or Tuscan Bruschetta, at room temperature
- 30 Italian parsley leaves (optional)

PREHEAT broiler.

BRUSH bread slices with 2 *tablespoons* oil. Place on baking sheet; broil for about 1 minute or until lightly toasted.

HEAT *remaining* oil and garlic in medium skillet over medium-high heat. Add shrimp; cook, stirring occasionally for 2 to 3 minutes, until pink and cooked.

TOP each bread slice with 1 heaping teaspoon bruschetta and 1 shrimp. Garnish with parsley leaves.

For more recipe ideas, entertaining tips or a helpful Dinner Party Tool Kit, visit Buitoni.com.