

in good company

How to throw a Super Bowl Party

Nicole Harding

I'll confess that no matter how hard my husband has tried, he just can't seem to mold me into a football-loving fan. On the other hand, Super Bowl parties are by far one of my favorite types of parties. The food is simple and wonderfully bad for you, and the atmosphere is always filled with excitement. You can also spend as little money as you want, and everyone will still have a great time! This month's column puts the spotlight on everything you'll need to make your Super Bowl party a success.

As with any party, you should first start by figuring out your budget and the amount of people you can accommodate. After you've got that settled, you can start on something fun – sending out invitations. Depending on your budget, you can choose to make your own invitations, send them free of charge over the Internet or have them custom made through a local invitation

store or online service. If you make the invites yourself, make sure to stick to the football theme. Try cutting them in the shape of footballs, pompoms or goal posts. If you're looking for the free route, I recommend designing them through Evite.com. The website has great personalization features and is known to be very reliable. The latest craze seems to be sending out invitations that look like Super Bowl tickets. You can order these online and most companies will mail them directly to your guests for an extra fee. Make sure you include details like your party's start and end time, address, RSVP, whether kids are allowed, what your guests should bring and how they should dress.

The next "to do" item on your list should be getting your decorations. You should do this as far in advance as possible to avoid last minute shopping stress. One of my favorite things to do

is to decorate each half of the TV room with each team's colors. If that's a little too much for you, regular football decorations will also make your guests happy. You can buy Super Bowl packages from party stores or even your local supermarket, and they often include football-themed plates, napkins, cups and serving platters. You can also find "touchdown party packs" that include football-shaped beads, hats, maracas, clackers (noise makers), penalty flags and even an air horn. If you're having a lot of kids over, it's a good idea to get some football-shaped or colorful balloons and maybe a piñata. Buying some face paint wouldn't hurt either!

And now my favorite part – the food! Generally, Super Bowl food should be easy to prepare and mostly edible without the aid of utensils. People will expect a steady supply of chips, salsa, pretzels and dip. Chicken

wings are also a must. I like a good variety of selections such as buffalo, tequila lime, teriyaki and plain. A lot of people opt for putting out several kinds of extra long and large subs like Italian, chicken parmesan and meatball. You can also plan to have the stadium food favorites – popcorn, hot dogs (with all the condiments), nachos and pizza. Hamburgers are always a hit, and if you've got vegetarian guests in the mix, it's easy to slip in a veggie or Portobello burger. Make sure to have at least one veggie platter or a salad to balance out the fried foods. Other classics that require a little more cooking on your part are chili, baked BBQ beans and potato salad. I like to serve my chili on top of rice with shredded cheese, sour cream, scallions and seeded olives. Delicious!

Dessert is always popular, and the great thing about it is that most people are just as happy eating store-bought goodies as they are eating homemade ones. My favorite Super Bowl dessert is actually cupcakes decorated for the football theme. They're easy for guests to grab and you don't have to worry about cutting and serving dishes like you would for a cake. Use green icing and piping tools to make grass for your cupcakes, then draw on footballs, yard lines, pompoms, players' jersey numbers, anything you want! You can do the same decorating with brownies and cookie bars.

The last thing you might want to consider adding to your party is "football" games. My favorite game is the "Super Bowl questionnaire." The questionnaire should be handed out to guests and completed before the game starts, so you might want to tell your guests to come a little early for this. You should include questions like who they think will win, predictions for the final score, how many touchdowns will each team or a certain player score, who will be ahead at half-time, guesses for interceptions and so on. Some silly questions are also normally asked, like how many times will cameras show a coach screaming or how many close-ups of cheerleaders will we see. The person with the most correct answers gets a prize. For the prize, you can have people contribute to a pot that the winner takes home, or you can go for actual items like a case of beer, Super Bowl mugs, team jerseys or a real football. ■

Nicole Harding is a freelance writer living in Malden, Massachusetts. Readers with entertainment questions should send emails to nicolewharding@gmail.com.

Food & Dining Guide

AMERICAN

1790 Restaurant & Tavern

208 TURNPIKE RD
WESTBORO • 508-366-1707
1790RESTAURANT.COM

Tues - Thurs 4-9
Friday & Sat 4-10
Sun 1-8

Parking

Atmosphere

Attire

F





Price per plate

Recommended Dish

\$\$

Try Our Ribeye Steak!

AMERICAN

Burgerdrome

257 MAIN ST., ACTON
978-263-7638 • www.actonbowladrome.com

Parking

Atmosphere

Attire

F





Price per plate

Recommended Dish

\$

Try Our Angus Burgers!

AMERICAN

Cast Iron Kitchen

177 MAIN ST., MAYNARD
978-897-2897, www.castironkitchen.com

Mon.- Thurs. - 4:30pm-10pm
Fri. - 11am-11pm, Sat. - 4:30pm-11pm
Sun. - 4:30pm-9pm

Parking

Atmosphere

Attire

F





Price per plate

Recommended Dish

\$

Try Our Pistachio Crusted Daily Catch!

BAKERY

Sweet Bites Bakery & Cafe

5A SPRUCE ST.
978-263-2233
www.sweet-bites.com

Monday-Friday 6:30am - 6pm
Sat 7am - 5pm
Sun 8am -3pm

Parking

Atmosphere

Attire

F





Price per plate

Recommended Dish

\$\$

Try our Donut Muffins

BARBQUE

Slowpokes Barbecue

978-902-2633
Barbecue and Clambake

Call For Hours
www.slowpokebbq.com

Parking

Atmosphere

Attire

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Price per plate

Recommended Dish

\$

Pulled Pork

ITALIAN

Bella Famiglia

59 GREAT RD., RT. 2A, ACTON
978-263-2222, www.bella.familiainc.com

Lunch & Dinner
Mon. - Thurs. 4pm-10pm
Fri. & Sat. 4pm-11pm
Closed Sundays

Parking

Atmosphere

Attire

F





Price per plate

Recommended Dish

\$\$

Try our Chicken & Eggplant Parmegiana!

ITALIAN

Il Forno

508 NAGOG PARK. ACTON, MA
978-263-5311

Lunch & Dinner
Lunch - Tue.-Fri. 11:00am - 2:00pm
Dinner - Tue.. - Thurs. 4:00pm - 9:00pm
Fri. - Sat. 4:00pm - 10:00pm

Parking

Atmosphere

Attire

L





Price per plate

Recommended Dish

\$\$

Try our Lobster Ravioli!

PIZZA

Maynard Village Pizza

86 POWDERMILL RD., RT. 62
MAYNARD • 978-897-2233
www.maynardvillagepizza.net

Mon-Thur: 11am-10pm
Fri & Sat: 11am-11pm
Sun: Noon-9pm

Parking

Atmosphere

Attire

L





Price per plate

Recommended Dish

\$

Try Roadies Fried Chicken!

MEDITERRANEAN

Cafe La Mattina

1 NASON ST., MAYNARD
978-897-1516, FAX 978-897-1517

Mediterranean, Middle Eastern, American Food
Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
Open 7 days a week,
8:00am to 8:00pm

Parking

Atmosphere

Attire

F





Price per plate

Recommended Dish

\$\$

Panini Sandwiches