

## How to plan a fabulous last-minute New Year's Eve party

*Simone Joseph*

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With all the hype leading up to the lip-locking, time-countdown extravaganza that is New Year's Eve, the real thing can sometimes be a letdown.

Here are tips from York Region party planners and culinary types designed for people who decide at the last-minute that they want to host a New Year's Eve party.

### Child's Play

For those who plan to have children at their party, here is a fun idea from party planner Deborah Goldberg, a Thornhill native.

In the week leading up to New Year's Eve, the children attending Goldberg's get-together make a papier-mâché piñata. Each family that attends is responsible for making part of the piñata and eventually, the parts are attached. On New Year's Eve, before midnight, the kids gather to hit the pinata and share the candy.

"The kids talk about it all year," Goldberg said. "It is definitely the highlight of the night for them, on a night that can often be boring for children".

### A Bellini Bar

For a recent party, Julie Miguel created a bellini bar. Miguel is a food expert and blogger who placed seventh on the inaugural season of CTV's MasterChef Canada. A bellini is basically a juice or nectar combined with Prosecco (Italian sparkling white wine), Miguel said. "Let me tell you, it was a hit," she said. "The great thing about my bellini bar is that I included seasonal fruit like pomegranate, persimmon and apple cider". This recipe can be found at: [dailytiramisu.com/diy-seasonal-bellini-bar/](http://dailytiramisu.com/diy-seasonal-bellini-bar/)

### Dressing up a Drink

Alison Kadlovski likes to give drinks an extra pizzazz by dressing up ice cubes.

Kadlovski suggests adding cranberries and lime wedges to your ice cube tray before you add your water. Try some rosemary and lemon slices or pomegranate and orange peel, says Kadlovski, director of events at Double Chocolate Fountain & Fun Foods.

"It's so simple but adds a big punch your drinks", Kadlovski said.

### Party on Board

As a simple solution for entertaining, Julie Miguel suggests putting out a charcuterie board.

"I keep cured meats, olives, crackers and cheese on hand and I always have jams and mustard in my fridge so when guests arrive I can easily throw together a nice board," Miguel said.

### Or, When in Doubt, Skewer

Choose dishes you can make or prepare ahead of time (eg., dips you can make the night before or cold plates like fruit skewers or caprese (bocconcini/tomato) skewers, suggests Fina Scropo author of The Healthy Italian cookbook. Scropo has been featured on numerous TV shows, radio programs, and in print media across the country.

Rely on recipes you've made before and know well, she suggests. Don't plan to make more than one recipe you've never made before, she says.

Scropo recommends Pistachio fig dark chocolate bark which you can find on [thehealthyitalian.ca](http://thehealthyitalian.ca) site.

### S'mores Station



*Julie Miguel and Fina Scropo display some culinary creations they recommend making for a quick New Year's Eve treat. Dec. 16, 2016*



*Alison Kadlovski, a Richmond Hill resident, puts raspberry curd on macarons, which are an almond meringue cookie. She has a kitchen in Vaughan where she makes creations for her business Double Chocolate Fountain and Fun Foods.*

Your guests will have a great time creating custom treats, says Alison Kadlovski. You only have to put out a few pre-made ingredients. Jazz up your station by using glittery gold and silver bowls or platters. All you need are some store-bought graham crackers, wooden skewers, marshmallows, and chocolate bars. Set each ingredient in its own bowl. The roasting part is easy, Kadlovski says. Get some dollar store tea lights. Put them in votives so they look pretty and also create a safety barrier. Or, put candles in a deep dish tray.

#### The 3-ingredient dessert

Alison Kadlovski has enjoyed hosting dessert-only parties for the holidays for close friends. Everyone has to bring a dessert to share ... the catch however, is that she provides a list of three ingredients everyone has to include in their dessert. She has faith in her friends but just in case, she provides backups, and pizza. "My guests love the idea, and we have been keeping up with the tradition for the last 5 years," she said.

One more note: Don't forget about your responsibility as a host, especially when it comes to alcohol, says Alison Toscano of Alison Toscano Consultants Ltd., which includes event management.

"Be very aware of your responsibility — moral and legal," said Toscano, whose company is an association and charity management company based out of Markham. Make sure you know what you will serve, when you will stop and make sure there's a safe option to get home, she said.

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