

# Last School Bus – College Graduation



Graduation from college marks an important transition from school days to the world of careers and responsibilities. All the hard work in classes preparing for the big day is finally over and it is time to celebrate in a big way! Gather all the friends and family and have them jump on the “Last School Bus” ever and make it a Party Bus!

Great food served in creative ways with music and laughter that fit the theme will have the graduate and the parents so glad this day finally arrived. You can use all or parts of the party box, or even mix and match from other party boxes, to create a party the graduate will remember long after caps are tossed!



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## Invitations



### Who's at the Party?

Themes parties open the door to catchy, inspired invitations.

*Accomplishments like this  
Deserve some joyous praise  
So here's to (graduates name)  
Our glasses we will raise!*

However you let people know about your party be sure your invitations include the following information:

1. Date
2. Time
3. Location
4. Dress Code –
5. RSVP by date (usually 1 week before the party)

Send your invites a month to three weeks before your event so people have plenty of time to respond. The ideal time for a Graduation Party like this is several hours prior to the graduate needing to be on campus. To start the celebration, a little pre-party at home, time on the bus to tour favorite spots in your city that evoke happy memories for the graduate and then food and drinks on the bus after the ceremony.



# **Last School Bus – College Graduation Menu**



School's out forever! Time to celebrate! We have created a menu that is easy to make yet interesting and flavorful, the decorations are simple but fun and you have a step by step plan on how to pull it all together with ease right here in the party plan.

## **Cocktails**

### **Frat House Party Punch**

**Beer, Sodas & Water**

## **Appetizers**

**Spinach Cheese Swirls**

**Insalata Caprese Skewers**

## **Entrees**

**Moo, Cluck, Oink, Veg**

**in Chinese Boxes**

## **Dessert**

**Diploma Graduation Cupcakes**



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## Recipes



While waiting for everyone to arrive, serve the cocktails and appetizers before the party bus arrives. This will get everyone in the mood and get a little food in the stomach as a soft landing for the cocktails!

## Cocktails

When I was in college, our fraternity (I was a “Little Sister” at the fraternity) would make punch drinks in trash cans. It was funny and served lots of people with ease and was very budget friendly.

### Frat House Party Punch (serves 50)



#### Ingredients:

New 15-gallon rubber trash can  
5 (750 ml) bottles light rum, chilled  
4 (750 ml) bottles dark rum, chilled



2 (1-liter) bottles coconut rum, chilled  
10 pounds oranges, pineapples, seedless grapes, lemon and limes  
4 gallons orange juice, chilled  
3 gallons pineapple juice, chilled  
6 cans frozen limeade concentrate, do not dilute  
1 liters grenadine (pomegranate syrup)  
Ice

**Make the punch on-site; not even a fraternity guy would try to transport a 15-gallon "punch bowl" full of punch.**

First, clean the trash can and rinse it very well. Pour in the rums. Add the fruit and let it soak up the alcohol for an hour or two in the refrigerator. Stir in the chilled juices, frozen limeade and grenadine. A small, clean, paddle makes a good stirrer. Do not add ice to punch because it will dilute the punch. Serve over ice with fruit. Makes about 200, 4-ounce drinks.

When the party is ready to move to the bus, pour the rest of the punch into gallon jugs and you are ready to roll! Store in ice chest with ice for glasses.

**Ultimate party punch secrets:**

How much punch is just right? Punch gets great mileage; plan on about 10 people to the gallon. That's a conservative estimate, assuming your guests will drink about three 4-ounce servings during the party. Allow for the length of the party, the strength of the punch, the day of the week, the rowdiness of the crowd, or lack thereof, and adjust your figure accordingly.

Is the quality of alcohol important? This is a punch and the fruit flavors with mask the quality of the alcohol. Remember that this punch is a favorite at fraternity parties and most of these guys don't have any money so use the inexpensive stuff!



# Appetizers

## Spinach Cheese Swirls



Makes: 36

These tempting appetizers look like they're difficult to make...but they're not. They feature a spinach, onion and cheese filling simply rolled up in flaky puff pastry and sliced into pinwheels.

### Ingredients:

17.3-ounce package Pepperidge Farm® Puff Pastry Sheets (2 sheets), thawed 40 min.  
2 egg  
2 tbsp. water  
1 cup shredded Muenster cheese or Monterey Jack cheese  
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese  
2 green onions, chopped (about 4 tablespoons)  
1/4 tsp. garlic powder  
2 pkgs. (about 10 ounces) frozen chopped spinach, thawed and **well drained**\*

### Directions:

Heat the oven to 400°F. Beat the egg and water in a small bowl with a fork or whisk.

Stir the Muenster cheese, Parmesan cheese, onion and garlic powder in a medium bowl.

Unfold the pastry sheet on a lightly floured surface. Brush the pastry sheet with the egg mixture. Top with the cheese mixture and spinach. Starting with a short side, roll up like a jelly roll. Cut into 18(1/2-inch) slices. Place the slices, cut-side down, onto baking sheets. Brush the slices with the egg mixture.



Bake for 15 minutes or until the pastries are golden brown. Remove the pastries from the baking sheets and let cool on wire racks for 10 minutes.

**\*Tip:** Make sure to remove as much liquid as you can from the spinach before adding it to the pastry. Put the spinach in a kitchen towel and twist until all of the liquid has been removed. If it's too wet, it may make the pastry soggy.

## **Insalata Caprese**



### **Ingredients:**

#### **For Basil Oil:**

1 container of Pesto Sauce  
Olive Oil

#### **Directions:**

In a bowl, combine pesto sauce and olive oil until the consistency is more like oil than sauce. Pour the basil oil into a squeeze bottle to drizzle on Caprese skewers after they are plated.

#### **For Caprese Skewers:**

1 pint grape or cherry tomatoes (about 50), cut in half  
50 small basil leaves or larger leaves torn in half  
1 1/2 pounds fresh buffalo mozzarella, cut into bite-size pieces or bocconcini balls  
salt and pepper



## Directions:

Slide a tomato half, a basil leaf, a piece of mozzarella, and then another tomato half onto each skewer. Place the skewers on a serving dish and drizzle the basil olive oil over the skewers. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Serve the remaining basil oil in a small dish alongside.

Makes about 50 skewers.

## Entrees

Since you will be on a Party Bus, the easiest way to transport and eat the food is to put them in Chinese “to go” Boxes that you can get from a Smart and Final or a party store. Label each of the Chinese boxes with “Moo”, “Oink”, “Cluck” and “Veg” and place a one serving size in each box. Store the Chinese boxes in an ice chest to keep cool and for easy transportation on the bus. Your guests will have so much fun with the presentation and calling for their next food container by “name”. Old McDonald had a farm..... with a moo, moo here and a cluck, cluck there....





## Asparagus Beef Roll Ups (Moo)



### Ingredients:

36 asparagus spears  
4 heads Bibb lettuce, leaves separated  
18 thin slices deli roast beef, halved  
2 red bell pepper, cut into 36 strips  
36 fresh chives

### Horseradish Mayonnaise:

1 tablespoon prepared grated horseradish  
1/3 cup mayonnaise  
1/2 cup cream cheese  
1 tablespoon red onion, minced  
Salt and pepper

### Directions:

Snap off and discard tough ends of asparagus. Cut asparagus tips into 3 1/2-inch pieces, reserving any remaining end portions for another use.

Cook asparagus in boiling water to cover 1 to 2 minutes or until crisp-tender; drain. Plunge into ice water to stop the cooking process; drain and pat dry with paper towels.

Make the Horseradish Mayonnaise and set aside.

Spoon the Horseradish Mayonnaise into a 1-qt. plastic freezer bag. (Do not seal.) Snip 1 corner of bag to make a small hole, and pipe Mayo mixture down center of each lettuce leaf. Arrange 1 roast beef slice, 1 asparagus spear, and 1 red bell pepper strip in each lettuce leaf. Wrap sides of lettuce around roast beef and vegetables, and tie bundles with chives. Place 2 bundles in each box.



## Spicy Chicken Wings (Cluck)

Recipe & Photo Courtesy of [lick-my-spoon.blogspot.com](http://lick-my-spoon.blogspot.com)



### Ingredients:

2-3 lbs chicken wings & drummetts (meaty part of the chicken wing) skin on  
2 tsp garlic paste  
1 tsp ginger paste  
2 tbs vinegar  
1 tbs chili sauce  
1 tbs ketchup  
1 tsp red chili powder  
salt to taste

### For the sauce:

1 tbs oil  
2 green chilies, chopped finely  
2 tbs tomato paste  
salt to taste  
1 tsp chili powder  
2 tsp paprika powder  
2 tsp cayenne powder  
2 tbs hot sauce  
Cilantro, chopped to garnish



### **Directions:**

Marinate the wings in the ingredients listed for at least half an hour or more. Broil in the oven on high heat until cooked and just beginning to char.

In the meantime, prepare the sauce by heating the oil. Add to it the chopped green chilies and stir fry for 30 seconds. Add all the rest of the ingredients and stir fry for 2-4 minutes until cooked through. You can add up to 1/4 cup of water at this stage if you want a thinner sauce. Add the grilled chicken wings and toss to coat. Garnish with coriander. Place 3 chicken pieces in each box.

### **Grilled Veggies & Spicy Pork Loin Pinwheel (Oink)**



### **Ingredients:**

2-3 lbs Pork Loin  
2 - 7 oz cans Herdez Salsa Verde  
1 - 7 oz can Herdez Salsa Ranchero  
8 large zucchini, sliced lengthwise  
3-4 eggplants, sliced lengthwise  
4 red peppers, cut in half and seeded  
2 large red onions, cut in thick rings (so they stay together during grilling)  
Olive oil  
Salt and Pepper  
Lavash (any Flat bread like tortillas, Tandoori Naan)  
2 - 16 oz containers whipped cream cheese



## Method:

Place the pork loin in the bottom of a crock pot and pour the Salsa Verde and Salsa Ranchero over the pork loin. Set the crock pot for 8 hours. Then shred the pork loin with 2 forks and stir into the sauce. Flavors will enhance overnight so be sure to **make 1 day in advance**.

Baste all veggie with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Grilled zucchini, eggplant, onions and red peppers until charred with grill marks and tender. Use a flat bread like Lavash, tortillas or Tandoori Naan from the middle eastern market and spread cream cheese on it. Layer grilled veggies and spicy shredded pork (remove as much moisture from the pork as you can or it will be soggy). Roll it up in a pinwheel and slice into rounds. Place 3 pinwheels in each box.

## Asian Noodle Salad (Veg)



## Ingredients:

2 package soba noodles or spaghetti noodles  
2 teaspoon sesame oil  
4 tablespoons rice wine vinegar  
6 tablespoons soy sauce  
2 teaspoon hot chili oil  
2 tablespoon hoisin sauce  
3/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil  
2 carrots, thinly sliced or julienned  
4 celery stalks, thinly sliced or julienned  
8 green onions, thinly slice whole onion  
1 cup thinly sliced napa cabbage  
1 cup thinly sliced red cabbage



1 red bell pepper, thinly sliced or julienned  
1 cup julienned bok choy  
6 tablespoons minced fresh cilantro leaves  
6 tablespoons sesame seeds, toasted, for garnish  
1/2 cup unsalted peanuts, for garnish

### **Directions**

In a medium stock pot, boil water, add salt and cook noodles. When finished, place noodles in an ice water bath to cool. Drain and set aside.

In a medium bowl combine, sesame oil, vinegar, soy sauce, hot chili oil, hoisin and extra-virgin olive oil. Mix thoroughly and then combine prepared vegetables and noodles.

Garnish with sesame seeds and peanuts. Place several large spoon fulls in each box.

## **Dessert**

### **Diploma Graduation Cupcakes**



**Ingredients:**

1 package of graduate's favorite cake flavor

Cupcake wrappers in gold or school color

**Simple Buttercream Frosting:**

2 cups confectioners sugar (AKA - icing or powdered sugar), **sifted**

1/2 cup unsalted butter, room temperature

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

2 tablespoons milk or light cream

Food color gel paste in school color

**For Diplomas:**

Paper

Thin ribbon in school color

**Directions:**

Bake cupcakes per the cake mix instructions. While the cupcakes are cooling, make the frosting in one of the school colors. Frost cupcakes once they are cool.

**Frosting:**

In the bowl of an electric mixer, or with a hand mixer, cream the butter until smooth and well blended. With the mixer on low speed, gradually mix in the sifted sugar. Scrape down the sides of the bowl. Add the milk and vanilla beat on high speed until frosting is light and fluffy (about 3-5 minutes). Add a little more milk or sugar, if needed. Tint the frosting with desired food color paste that is available at cake decorating stores and party stores.

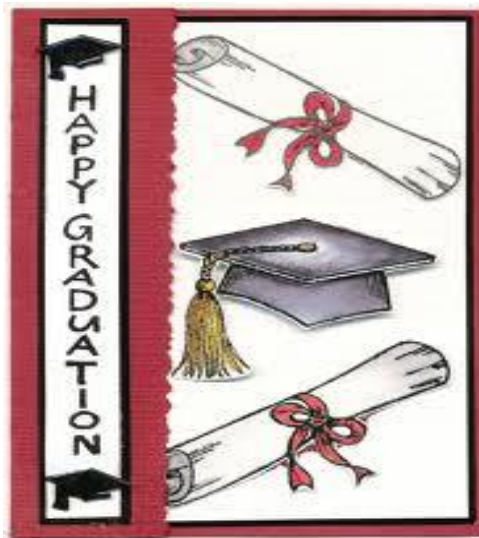
Place frosting in disposable pastry bag and pipe a swirl of frosting onto the cupcake. Place a "diploma" on each frosted cupcake.



## Diplomas:

In a word document, print 1 -2 line inspirational, humorous or challenging quotes. Create a whole page of different quotes and then cut them into individual pieces of paper to form the “diploma”. Think of the size needed so as not to overwhelm the cupcake top. Roll the “diplomas” up and tie with a ribbon in the other school color. Place on top of each cupcake.

For an extra element of fun, make your paper "diplomas" into a graduation party game. Put a special message in one, and the person who gets that cupcake wins a prize. Have fun with it and be creative!



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## Decorations



### Creating the Mood

#### **Be True to Your School - Colorful Tablescapes**

Vinyl tablecloths are better than paper since moisture from glasses will ruin the tablecloth. You can pick up inexpensive ones at Party City. Set each table with the school colors. Get napkins, plates and cups that either tie in with the school colors or say Graduation Party on them.

The Diploma cupcakes will be part of the decorations too so put them in a cupcake stand so they stand up tall and are noticed. Or stack books under the tablecloth in several areas and place plates of cupcakes on the books for height.





## Signs

Make a big paper sign “Frat House Punch” and wrap it around the trash can. This will leave no doubt about the punch or the theme!

Makes signs from poster board attached to a stake that can be place in the yard for the party and then pulled up to take to the ceremony. Attach a picture of the graduate on the sign with “Congratulations! You did it!” “Way to Go” “You Made It” “The Tassel is Worth the Hassel” and clever things that the graduate says or will embarrass them a bit are always fun!



## Lanterns, Streamers and Balloons

Lighting always makes a party more fun. Use **graduation theme lanterns** to shine a little light onto the party. Streamers in the school colors and hanging decorations with “**mortar boards**” and “**diplomas**” dangling from them are lots of fun.

Balloons are a must and an inexpensive way to add color and pizzazz to the party. The balloons and streamers will be used to decorate the inside of the party bus also.



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## Music



**Rockin' Party Bus Music!** Graduation is a time of sharing the party times, looking to the future and sentimental times of remembering. The music will inspire stories, laughter and fun. Target has a selection of music CDs to pick from. They are very reasonably priced and we have never been disappointed by their quality. Some favorites are listed below or you can always check iTunes. Start a playlist on Pandora you can revisit whenever you are in the mood to feel uplifted!

### Singles

1. Graduation Song (Friends Forever) - Vitamin C
2. Learning to Fly – Tom Petty
3. Schools Out for Summer - Alice Cooper
4. Freebird - Lynyrd Skynyrd
5. First Day of My Life - Melanie C
6. You Raise Me Up - Josh Groban
7. We Are the Champions - Queen
8. I Believe I Can Fly - R. Kelly
9. A Moment Like This - Kelly Clarkson
10. Change the World - Eric Clapton
11. Forever Young – Rod Stewart
12. Good Riddance (Time of Your Life)- Green Day
13. Born to Run - Bruce Springsteen
14. I'll Remember You – No Secrets
15. Let the Good Times Roll – The Cars
16. What A Feeling from Flashdance



17. It's My Life - Jon Bon Jovi
18. I Did It My Way - Elvis Presley
19. Top of the World - Van Halen
20. Everybody Have Fun Tonight – Wang Chung
21. I Hope You Dance – Lee Ann Womack
22. Somewhere Over the Rainbow - Israel Kamakawiwo'ole
23. See You Later Alligator – Dr Feelgood
24. Wanna Be Startin' Somethin' – Michael Jackson
25. Get Ready for This – 2 Unlimited
26. All Star (Shrek 2)
27. Wide Open Spaces – Dixie Chicks
28. Get the Party Started – P!nk
29. Do You Remember – Jay Sean
30. I'll Remember - Madonna

## Last School Bus – College Graduation Activities



The party and the Commencement Ceremony are all part of the activities. If you choose to write a special note in one of the Cupcake diplomas” then this would be the time to give the prize to the lucky winner!



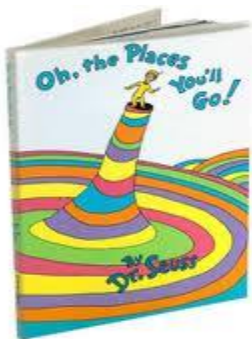
# Last School Bus – College Graduation

## Gifts



Graduation Cap Gift Card Box is a great way to store all the gifts cards the graduate gets and becomes part of the decorations at the same time. This is a clever idea for collecting the gifts at the graduation party.

### Oh the Places You'll Go!



This picture book by Dr. Seuss has become a favorite graduation gift for high school and college students. It's an inspirational book in rhyme that speaks directly to the reader and provides an uplifting sendoff for people entering a new phase in their lives. It's all about going out and finding your way in life, weathering its storms, and being in charge of and taking responsibility for your life and how it turns out. It begins...



*Congratulations!  
Today is your day.  
You're off to Great Places!  
You're off and away!*

Instead of a scrapbook or signed poster board, you can have all the guests write in the book well wishes for the graduate. This will be a lasting memory of graduation and they can enjoy it over the years. A Graduation Party Yearbook!

## **Last School Bus – College Graduation**

**Ready, Set, Go**



The best way to have a stress free party and feel like a guest at your own party is to plan ahead. Here is a step by step party plan that will have you confident and excited about your own party. Remember, you are the Life of the Party and your guests will follow your lead.

### **One Month Before**

- 1.** Choose the date for your party. Make your guest list and send out invitations. Our **Party Planner** will help you get all your ideas for the party together.
- 2.** Decide what items you have on hand and what items you will need to purchase. Use our **Party Plan Menu** to help you plan. If they are custom items, like Graduate Gift Card



Box, lanterns, Dr Seuss book, order them now.

**3.** Consider the areas for the party and any touch ups that may be needed. Plants for outdoors, a little tidying up indoors.

### **One Week Before**

**1.** Decide where you will hang the lanterns, string the lights and Lanterns. Make a list of all accessories, serving pieces and tableware you will need. Get Graduation napkins, plates and decorations. Purchase a clean, new trash can for Frat House Punch.

**2.** Make sure your music sound system is in good working order and make your playlist/burn CDs and load iPod.

**3.** Shop for any non-food type items, like Chinese To Go Boxes and prize for winning cupcake.

**4.** Make “Diplomas”.

**5.** Make poster board Graduation and Party signs.

**6.** Write Moo, Cluck, Oink and Veg on all the Chinese To Go Boxes.

### **1-2 Days Before**

**1.** Shop for all food items (2 days before). Create a shopping list that will make it so much easier to plan and shop for your party. Our customized **Shopping List** will help you get organized.

**2.** Make pork loin in crock pot and marinate chicken wings and drummetts.

**3.** Chill all punch items. Chill the beer, sodas and water.

**4.** Make Asian Noodle Salad. Refrigerate.

**5.** Make the cupcakes and frost them. Wait until day of party to place diplomas on top.

**6.** Grill Veggies for Pinwheels. Make Basil Oil and put in squeeze bottle. Refrigerate.

**7.** If possible, place the decorations the day before.

**8.** Bake or grill the chicken wings and drummetts and chill.

**9.** Have a bag with all the plastic forks, napkins, paper cups, trash bags and any other



supplies needed for the Party Bus. Wet wipes are great to have! The party continues on the bus!

### **Day of the Party**

1. Pick a time you must begin getting yourself ready and stick to it.
2. Set up the food area with the plates, utensils, napkins and glasses.
3. Make Insalata Caprese.
4. Make Beef Roll Ups.
5. Assemble Pinwheels.
6. Make the Spinach Swirls.
7. Fill all the Chinese Boxes with Moo, Cluck, Oink and Veg. Put in the ice chest.
8. Create the Frat House Punch in the trash can. Have gallon plastic jugs ready for bus.
9. Review lists to make sure everything is ready.
10. Get dressed in your party outfit.
11. Begin the festive music and have music playing the entire time.

### **Once Guests Arrive**

1. Greet them with a welcoming cocktail.
2. Bring out the Insalata Caprese Skewers and the Spinach Swirls.
3. Have everyone sign the “Oh the Places You’ll Go” book while enjoying appetizers and cocktails. Remember to mingle with your guests letting them know how much you appreciate them as friends. Don’t forget to take pictures!
4. Decorate the Party Bus with balloons and streamers from the party. Remove the yard signs to take to the Commencement Ceremony to wave for the graduate!
5. Pour the Frat House Punch into the plastic jugs and place in an ice chest with ice for drinks on the bus. Load the Party Bus with food ice chest and bag of paper cups, forks and napkins, etc.



6. Tour the favorite places in the city and head out to the college for the Commencement Ceremony.
7. Cheer for the graduate and all their friends, waving signs amid laughter and lots of pictures!
8. Back to the Party Bus for food in Chinese Boxes and more Frat House Punch!
9. Once back at the house, serve the cupcakes and open gifts (if you choose to do now).
10. Guests leave knowing that they have honored the graduate, their accomplishments and wish them well as they begin the next phase of their life!

