

No Labor Today Party



Kick your shoes off, relax and enjoy your National Day Off!

Labor Day is a "tribute to the contributions workers have made to the strength, prosperity, and well-being of our country," according to the U.S. Department of Labor website. We all have jobs that define a part of us and today we will celebrate what each of our family and friends brings to the world. No matter what your line of work, we all need to forget our jobs and remember what it is like to just have Fun!

You can use all or parts of the party box, or even mix and match from other party boxes, to create a joyful Labor Day party in your own backyard!



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Invitations

Who's at the Party?

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 – Casual and Comfortable
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 barbecue is late afternoon. This gives you enough time to relax with drinks and games and then a shared dinner.

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Menu

This Labor Day Party will allow you to relax and celebrate your day off along with your guests because everything can be done in advance of the party. The menu items are 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

Margaritas & Micheladas

Sodas

Appetizers

Green Chili Corn Bread Poppers

Veggie Platter with Chips and Salsa

Entree

Cuban Citrus Grilled Chicken

Side Dishes

Black Beans

Pineapple Cole Slaw

Grilled Corn on the Cob with Garlic Butter,

Lime and Cotija Cheese

Dessert

Amaretto Cheesecake Flan



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Recipes

Take the Labor out of Labor Day!

Cocktails

Margaritas



Original Margarita:

3 parts white tequila

2 parts Triple Sec

1 part fresh lime juice

Simple syrup:

1 part water

1 part sugar

Lime salt:

1/4 cup kosher salt

2 limes, zested



Method:

Ratio for any volume of margarita: 3:2:1 = 3 parts tequila: 2 parts Lime Juice, 1 part Triple Sec. Place whichever amount you choose, depending upon your guests, into a large pitcher.

For the simple syrup:

Simmer water and sugar over high heat until the sugar has completely dissolved then chill.

For the lime salt:

Combine the salt and lime zest with a mortar and pestle. Set in a plate to dip your glass in.

Micheladas



2 tablespoons of course salt
1 tablespoon of chili powder
12 oz. Ice Cold Mexican Beer (Corona, Dos XX) or light American beer
6 oz Motts Clamato Juice
2 dashes Lea & Perrins Worcestershire sauce
2 dashes Tapatio brand hot sauce
2 key limes, juiced
1 pinch coarse ground black pepper

Mix together the salt and chili powder on a small plate. Rim a beer glass with a little lime juice and then dip in the salt and chili mixture to cover the top of the glass.

Mix all the ingredients except the beer into a martini shaker and shake briefly. Pour Clamato mix at the same time as the beer into a 22 oz glass filled with ice. Pour slowly because if you pour too fast it will foam up and mess up your salted rim! Rimming the glass with celery salt is an option.



Green Chili Cheese Cornbread Poppers



1 cups all-purpose flour
1 cup yellow cornmeal
2 tbs sugar
1 tbs baking powder
1 teaspoons kosher salt
1 cup milk
2 extra-large eggs, lightly beaten
1 stick unsalted butter, melted
6 ounces aged extra-sharp Cheddar, grated
1/3 cup chopped chives
1 – 4 oz can chopped green chilies

Combine the flour, cornmeal, sugar, baking powder, and salt in a large bowl. In a separate bowl, combine the milk, eggs, and butter. Stir the wet ingredients into the dry until most of the lumps are dissolved. Don't over mix! Mix in the grated Cheddar, the chilies and chives, and allow the mixture to sit at room temperature for 20 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Line mini muffin tins with mini paper cupcake liners. Pour the batter into the prepared cups about half way full. Bake for 17 to 22 minutes, or until a toothpick comes out clean. Serve warm or at room temperature in a basket lined with a festive towel. Just pop them into your mouth!



Grilled Corn on the Cob with Garlic Butter, Lime and Cotija Cheese

Recipe courtesy of Bobby Flay



8 ears corn

Garlic butter, recipe follows

1/2 cup grated cotija cheese

4 fresh limes, quartered

2 tablespoons chopped chives, for garnish

Preheat grill to medium. Peel back the husks of the corn without removing them. Remove the silks and recover the corn with the husk. Soak in large bowl of cold water for 30 minutes.

Remove corn from water and shake off excess. Place the corn on the grill, close the cover and grill for 15 to 20 minutes.

Unwrap corn and brush with the garlic butter. Sprinkle with the cotija cheese and squeeze with lime. Sprinkle with chopped chives, to garnish.

Garlic Butter:

2 sticks unsalted butter, slightly softened

8 cloves garlic, peeled and coarsely chopped

1/4 habanero or jalapeno pepper, seeded and diced

1/4 bunch fresh chives, chopped

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Combine butter, garlic, habanero, and chives in a food processor and process until smooth. Season with salt and pepper. Place the mixture down the length of a piece of saran wrap and roll into a log. Put in the refrigerator to firm up. When ready to serve, slice off rounds like in the picture.



Cuban Citrus Chicken



8 chicken breasts, bone in, skin on
1 – 4 oz can chopped green chilies
1 tsp ground cumin
1/4 tsp ground red pepper
1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
1 tbs minced garlic
1/4 cup olive oil
1 cup fresh orange juice
1 tbs oregano

Combine orange juice, lemon juice, oil, green chilies, garlic, oregano, cumin, red pepper, and salt to taste in a resealable plastic bag. Add chicken; seal bag and refrigerate 2 to 8 hours, turning occasionally.

Coat grill rack with nonstick cooking spray. Preheat grill to medium direct heat (300 to 350F). Remove chicken from bag and discard marinade. Place chicken, bone side up, on grill. Grill 25 to 35 minutes or until chicken is no longer pink and juices run clear. Turn chicken only once.



Black Beans



2 – 15 oz can black beans, drained and rinsed
2 plum tomatoes, seeded and chopped
2 cloves garlic, chopped
½ cup chopped red bell pepper
½ cup chopped onion
2 tbs chopped fresh cilantro (more to taste)
2 package Goya Sazon - no salt
1 cup chicken broth (add more depending on thickness desired)
cilantro

Sauté onions, garlic, bell pepper in olive oil in a large deep skillet until vegetables are tender. Add black beans, tomatoes, cilantro, chicken broth and Goya Sazon packet². Simmer until flavors meld together, at least 30 minutes. Serve topped with fresh cilantro and cotija cheese.

Pineapple Cole Slaw

Recipe by Allene Hughes



One 2 pound head green cabbage, shredded, and chopped
1 medium carrot, grated
1 large Granny Smith apple, large dice
1 cup prepared mayonnaise
1 – 8 oz can unsweetened crushed pineapple, reserve juice
3 tbs pineapple juice



1/2 tbs granulated sugar
2 tbs red wine vinegar
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

In a large bowl, toss together the cabbage, apple and carrot. In a small bowl, whisk together the mayonnaise, crushed pineapple and juice, sugar, and vinegar. Toss the vegetables with the dressing and season with salt and pepper. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours before serving. This slaw is best if served within a day.

Amaretto Cheesecake Flan



3/4 Cup Sugar
3 Tablespoons Water
8 Ounces Cream Cheese -- softened
3 Eggs
2 Tsp Amaretto Liqueur
1 Can Sweetened Condensed Milk
1 Can Evaporated Milk -- (13 Oz.)

Combine 3/4 cup of the sugar and 3 tablespoons of water in a heavy-bottomed pot or pan. Place over medium-high heat and cook until the sugar begins to melt. Swirl the pan over the heat until the syrup darkens to a medium amber color, about 10 minutes; don't stir with a spoon. Pour into individual ramekins (5-6 oz each) making sure to coat bottom and a little way up the sides. Let cool.

Put cream cheese, eggs, and vanilla in blender. Blend until smooth. Add condensed milk and blend again. Add evaporated milk and blend again. Important to blend ingredients in steps so that they blend together smoothly. Pour over caramelized sugar in each ramekin and set ramekins in another larger pan. Pour cold water about half way up the ramekins. Gently place in oven.

Bake for 40-45 minutes in a 350F oven or until the custard is "set". Chill for 4 hours or overnight. When ready to serve, dip bottom of ramekin in hot water for 3 seconds, run a thin sharp knife around the inner edge and place a plate upside down over the flan pan and flip it over carefully. You can garnish with a dollop of whip cream, a raspberry and mint leave or serve as is.



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Decorations

Creating the Mood

Set up “no labor” signs. Hang a sign on the front door that let’s guests know they are in for some relaxation this Labor Day. “Come on in and relax!” “Celebrate Labor Day one cocktail at a time!” Place them around the party area as a reminder that Labor Day is truly meant to serve as time off for working so hard all year long.



Red, white and blue are the colors for the day. Plant small pots of colorful flowers with the American flag and silver stars on bamboo skewers shooting out of the top. Hang cut outs of silver stars from branches of trees, patio covers and wires strung across the yard. To make the star cutouts, use a stencil of stars in varying sizes and trace them onto card board or heavy construction paper. Cut out each star and punch a small hole in the tip of each star. You will run fishing string thru the hole and use this to suspend the stars. Cover each star with aluminum foil. The sun will catch the stars and reflect light around your yard.



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Music

Target has a wonderful selection of Upbeat Festive music CDs to pick from. They are very reasonably priced and we have never been disappointed by their quality. Some other favorites are listed below or you can always check iTunes. Start a playlist on Pandora you can revisit whenever you are not in the mood to work!

1. I Don't Wanna Work – Todd Rundgren
2. Take this Job and Shove It – Johnny Paycheck
3. Working 9 to 5 – Dolly Parton
4. Taking Care of Business – Bachman Turner Overdrive
5. Car Wash – Rose Royce
6. Hard Days Night – The Beatles
7. Proud Mary – Ike and Tina Turner

For fun you can ask each guest to bring a song about their job. It is funny to see how other people view their jobs through music.

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Activities

Name the artist – Play a few lines of the song and have everyone guess who the artist is. Kind of like Name That Tune but instead you have to guess the artist. Most people remember the name of a song or some of the words but the artist can be a bit tricky and funny!

What's the Job? – Make a list of jobs and write them on small pieces of paper. When the guests arrive, pin a Job name on the backs of each guest. Each guest ask with the name on their back goes around asking yes or no questions to help them guess what the job is on their own back. This is a great for mingling and meeting new friends.

Traditional Games - Lawn games such as volleyball, badminton, croquet and bocce ball.



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Favors

Send your guests home with a memento of their relaxing day off. Every time they wear their **Honor Labor button** or stick it up at work, it will take them back to their Day of No Labor and think of you.



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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, 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

4. Decide where you will hang the stars and place the potted plants. Make a list of all accessories, serving pieces and tableware you will need. Special glassware or plastic glasses if your party is around the pool, for Margaritas and Micheladas.
5. Make sure your music sound system is in good working order and make your playlist/burn CDs and load iPod.
6. Shop for any non-food type items.
7. Write job title on small pieces of paper and have pins ready for attaching to the backs of your guests shirts.

1-2 Days Before

8. 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.
9. Prepare all recipes the day before so that you only have to grill the chicken and make the drinks on Labor Day.
10. If possible, place the decorations the day before.

Day of the Party

11. Pick a time you must begin getting yourself ready and stick to it.
12. Set up the food area with the plates, utensils, napkins and glasses.
13. Make Margaritas and Michelada mix. Leave the ice out until ready to serve so that it does not water down the drinks. Chill the beer and sodas in the morning.



14. Prepare the toppings: Chop cilantro, cut limes, grate cotija cheese and place in individual serving bowls.
14. Place job title tags and pins by the front doors so you can attach when they arrive.
14. Place Labor Day party favors by the dessert so that you remember to give them to the guests.
15. Review lists to make sure everything is ready.
16. Get dressed in your comfortable day off outfit.
17. Begin the festive music and have music playing the entire time.

Once Guests Arrive

18. Greet them with a welcoming cocktail.
19. Pin the job name on the back of each guest as they arrive and explain how to play the game.
20. Don't forget to take pictures!
21. Play lawn games and mingle with your guests letting them know how much you appreciate them as friends.
22. Turn on grill for the chicken, your only working item!
23. Serve dessert and party favors.
24. Guest leave relaxed and happy remembering that you helped them celebrate with appreciation their contribution to the prosperity and wellbeing of our country.

