Mix a House Cocktail

“In our warmer months, the menu and beverages should be light and refreshing,” says Guérard. In other words, keep the ingredients simple, and serve them with a splash of fresh, fruity juice. Guérard’s signature drink is vodka, soda water, and fruit-infused water. “It’s a perfect cocktail to serve at a party,” she adds. “But be sure to have a few nonalcoholic beverages on hand for guests who don’t want to drink.”

Embrace Outdoor Entertaining

Guérard shares her secrets to being a happy hostess despite a little chaos. “A well-stocked beverage station is key,” says Guérard. “I like to mix and match inexpensive glassware and set them on trays with garnishes. I also connect with surrounding gardens. The hydrangea adds a cozy touch while also connecting with the music.”

Prep the Bar Cart

Whether you’re hosting outside or inside, a properly stocked beverage station is key. “I like to mix and match inexpensive glassware and set them on trays with garnishes,” says Guérard. “I also serve large bunches of drinks from pretty pitchers, carafes, or dispensers.”

Keep It Cool

Avoid the pre-bash dash to the kitchen by selecting a menu filled with items that don’t require heating—and relishing. Guérard pools foods that are seasonal and prepared right for late-summer feasts, such as Lowcountry shrimp, chilled and served with sides and sauces. And the former: “The day before hosting, I cheat and order cold cucumber soup from a local eatery, then pour it into juice glasses before guests arrive.”

Set a Table for Socializing

While formal settings aren’t required, a pretty table is a must. “For a fun and stunning idea, fill a vase with lots of one type of your season bloom,” says Guérard. The hydrangea for summer. Small bunches are ideal for grilling, but larger foods can get messy. Guérard recommends the finger foods by soaking foundation trends in lemons and water, rolling and inserting them into corral lemons, and freezing to keep their chill.

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