

on the table.

Recipes for connection

On the menu — for On The Table

Start to cultivate an encouraging atmosphere by offering a selection of drinks for your guests. From iced tea to sparkling wine, matching your drinks to the vibe of the event (or even the weather) is one way to help make your guests feel at ease. Often people feel more comfortable with something to hold on to and sip on while mingling with new people. Speaking of sips, this week we have Patrick Connelly from Sunday Cider sharing some tips on how to cultivate the right vibe through your drink choices! For cider expert Patrick Connelly, hosting an event is all about cultivating the perfect atmosphere through food, drink, and fun.



Patrick Connelly &
Clinton McDougall

“There are a few key ingredients to create the context for a good event: a sterling playlist, good food, and cold drinks.

Does the venue matter? Yes, but once people are eating and drinking, they could be standing in a hot parking lot and be very happy indeed. One sure-fire way to break the ice is to hand someone a cold sparkling drink. We are rather biased in this matter – cider is our top choice. Why choose cider? Well-crafted fermented apple juice is approachable, versatile, and delicious, just like your very best party guests should be. Cider builds a bridge that connects wine and beer drinkers. It can be dressed up to present like a fine sparkling wine, but it is usually lower alcohol (and a tad less pretentious perhaps). No fancy oenology education is required to quaff a glass of good cold cider. Gluten-free and vegan, cider can also roll up to the party in tattoos, cut-offs and sneakers, pairing well with a variety of foods from fatty street food to fine cheese plates.”

—Patrick Connelly Co-owner of Sunday Cider

Sunday Cider Rosé Cocktail

What you’ll need

6 ounces of Sunday Sesh
(a good BC dry cider will do the trick)
4 ounces of cold Hibiscus tea

*Garnish: Watermelon Slice

(A great substitute for cider if you’re looking for a non-alcoholic option is a flavoured or unflavoured sparkling water. This would be both refreshing and hydrating for your guests.)

How to make it

1. Brew a strong cup of Hibiscus tea and let cool (add a little honey or agave syrup if you want it a bit sweeter)
2. Put a few cubes of ice into your favourite glass
3. Pour in Sunday Cider (or sparkling water)
4. Top with Hibiscus tea
5. Garnish with watermelon and serve

Cider pairing tip

It’s no secret than cider pairs well with cheese. The crisp malic acid of cider and the creamy textures of cheese make a perfect match. Try pairing cider with high quality vegan cheese. If you live in Vancouver check out [Blue Heron Creamery](#).

Choosing a cider

Look for a quality dry cider made in BC. For packaged cider, go to a private liquor store as they have the best selection. The best cider is usually sold in 750 ml sparkling-style bottles, but good stuff is increasingly finding its way into cans. For quality cider, expect to pay more than craft beer. Like anything: ask questions, shop around, buy and try.



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We know that the thought of cooking for others can be quite intimidating for some, and preparing an entire meal for a large group can get expensive. No sweat! The food aspect of your On the Table doesn't have to be pricey or complicated - you can always provide simple provisions such as soda and chips. An easy way to add a personal touch here is to focus on making one dish, and buy the rest to complement it. For inspiration, **Haitham El-Khatib, Owner and Chef of Aleph Eatery in Vancouver, BC** has shared an easy to prepare dip that can be paired with bread, chips, or any sort of dipping vessel. Impress your guests with a homemade flare, without overextending yourself!

Baba Ganouj

a dip made of eggplants
(we make our own version of it)

What you'll need

4 eggplants
2 ¼ tps aleppo pepper or mild chilli pepper
4 ¼ tps ground cumin
1 ¼ tps salt
1 ½ tps lemon juice
2 ½ minced garlic
1 tsp nigella seed (Ground)
1/8 cup pomegranate molasses

How to make it

1. Poke the eggplants with a fork so they don't explode in the oven.
2. Roast full eggplants in oven @ 400F for 20 minutes. Cook until cooked and soft
3. Once cooled, peel all eggplants.
4. Drain extra liquid from eggplants
5. Add all ingredients to food processor and blend for 5 seconds. You want it a little chunky.
6. Keep cold
7. Garnish with parsley, Olive oil and pomegranates and serve with warm bread



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For the curious host who wants to try something new and exciting:

What inspires you? What would you like to learn more about? Being curious in the world is the first step toward finding others who share similar interests. Declare your topic as a magnet to attract like-minded individuals in your community.

Hear what Head Chef at Nada Grocery, Chantal Poirier, has to say about sharing her passions and values with others through food.

Chantal Poirier

Head Chef at Nada Grocery

“I personally like to encourage people to change one specific habit at a time.”

“Just having a conversation about plastic is a good start in the right direction. I personally like to encourage people to change one specific habit at the time, since I believe that small and slow steps are most likely going to bloom into larger and permanent new habits rather than getting you discouraged, lost, and overwhelmed with a completely new lifestyle. When you take action on environmental issues such as reducing your plastic consumption, it’s empowering. It feels good to do good! I know as well that our actions are sometimes louder than our words; they can lead and inspire many people around us to follow our path. Together we can alter for the better!”

— Chantal Poirier, Head Chef at Nada Grocery



Teriyaki Tofu Bites

What you’ll need

600g tofu cut into small bites (I like triangle shapes)

TERIYAKI SAUCE

250g tamari

150g water

150g coconut sugar or brown sugar

65g rice vinegar

15g garlic

10g fresh ginger

15g cornstarch

Garnish Options

Green onion

Cilantro

Hot pepper

Toasted sesame seeds

How to make it

1. Preheat the oven at 350° F.
2. Put all the ingredients for the teriyaki sauce in a blender and mix until well combined.
3. Pour the mixture in a saucepan, bring to a boil and simmer for 10 minutes. Make sure to stay close and stir often so the sauce doesn’t stick to the pan or overflow.
4. Set aside 1/2 cup of the sauce in a bowl for later. In a bowl put the tofu pieces and the remaining teriyaki sauce. Mix well.
5. On a baking sheet, place the tofu pieces with the sauce in one layer. Bake for 10 to 15 minutes. Flip the tofu pieces and put back in the oven and broil for 2–3 minutes on the top grill.
6. Plate on a serving board with the sauce on the side and add garnishes. Enjoy with friends!