

# How to Throw a BACKYARD FESTIVAL

BY LAUREN CONRAD

Us' Guest Entertaining Editor shares tips for hosting an "eclectic" celebration

**B**ig music festivals aren't Lauren Conrad's jam. "I like the vibe, but I prefer a more relaxed version," she explains. To kick off summer, the designer — whose new LC Lauren Conrad for Kohl's collection launches May 1 — decided to host an alfresco party that culled "the best parts and made them more intimate." Rugs, blankets and oversize pillows (tie-dyed for an ombré effect) layered beneath a floral-accented wood canopy created "picnic-style" seating where the *Celebrate* author, 31, and friends could relax with chili-spiked cocktails and global small plates.

→ See her real-flower tattoo DIY at [USMAGAZINE.COM/LCFESTIVAL](http://USMAGAZINE.COM/LCFESTIVAL)





### Chicken Banh Mi

MAKES 8 MINI-SANDWICHES

- 1 rotisserie chicken, cooked
- 8 small French baguettes
- 2 carrots
- 2 small Armenian cucumbers
- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- Sriracha to taste
- 1 bunch cilantro, chopped
- 1 red jalapeño, deseeded and thinly sliced
- Salt and pepper

- 1 Shred the white and dark meat of the chicken with your hands. Set aside.
- 2 Cut each mini-baguette in half horizontally, but not all the way through; set aside. (Note: You can also use two large baguettes, sliced into segments of about 5 inches.)
- 3 Clean and julienne the carrots and the cucumbers; they should resemble small matchsticks.
- 4 In a small bowl, mix the mayonnaise with sriracha to taste.

- 5 Spread the spicy mayonnaise mixture on one or both sides of the bread. Layer in the shredded chicken, followed by the cucumbers, cilantro, carrots and jalapeño. The amounts of each ingredient can be adjusted to your preference.
- 6 Finish each sandwich with a pinch of salt and pepper. Serve on a large platter.

### Cauliflower Tabouleh

YIELDS 5 CUPS

- 1 head cauliflower, cut into 2- to 3-inch florets
- 2 tbsp coconut oil
- ¾ cup parsley, chopped
- ½ cup scallions, chopped
- 2 tbsp garlic, chopped
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, quartered
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 1 head iceberg or Boston lettuce
- ½ cup feta cheese
- Optional garnish: edible flowers

- 1 Place one handful of cauliflower florets at a time into a Vitamix or high-speed blender.
- 2 Run the blender on the lowest setting until the cauliflower resembles rice. Remove granules from blender and repeat with another handful of cauliflower until all of the cauliflower is riced.
- 3 In a large skillet, heat the coconut oil over a medium flame. Add the cauliflower and sauté for 5 to 10 minutes.
- 4 Add the parsley, scallions, garlic, cherry tomatoes and salt and pepper to taste. Gently sauté for about 2 to 3 minutes. Allow to cool.
- 5 Squeeze fresh lemon on top and gently toss to incorporate.
- 6 Cut the bottom off the head of lettuce. Portion out the cauliflower mixture onto the leaves. Finish each mini-salad with a sprinkle of feta and, if using, edible flowers. To serve, plate in small bamboo boats.



Conrad served this dish from her friend Claire Thomas at TheKitchyKitchen.com in lettuce cups so that no utensils were needed.



### Strawberry Habanero Margarita

YIELDS 1 QUART

- 1–2 habaneros, stem and seeds removed and thinly sliced
- 2 pints strawberries, hulled
- ½ cup fresh lime juice
- ½–1 cup blanco tequila
- ¼ cup triple sec

- 1 If using a juicer, juice the habaneros and berries. Stir in the lime juice, tequila and triple sec. If using a blender, combine all ingredients and blend at high speed; strain.
- 2 Refrigerate for at least an hour. Serve in a large pitcher or individual bottles.