

Entertaining Ideas

Outdoor Entertaining Never Looked So Good

(NAPSA)—Sweet, warm nights when you come home from work and the sun is still shining should be treasured. These nights call for a celebration.

Why not have an impromptu dinner with the neighbors or a few drinks with friends on, gasp, say a weeknight?

There's no doubt doing something fun during the week helps it go by faster. By tapping into the savings at off-price retailers, having just what you need on hand for a weeknight party can save you both time and money.

"It's not the meal that matters, but how it's served," explains Jennifer DeBarge-Goonan, Home Style Expert at Marshalls, one of the nation's leading off-price stores.

Most people don't like to eat heavy meals when it's hot outside, so serve a simple pasta salad on bright, festive dishes instead. Don't fret over mismatched tableware either; experts agree it's better to have a mix.

"If your favorite color is yellow, for example, make it into a year-long scavenger hunt, and buy one or two of every plate with a yellow design that you like," says DeBarge-Goonan. "Add some summer-themed acrylic glasses to the mix and before you know it, you'll have an eclectic, fun set of outdoor place settings."

Decorating the table and patio area can be easy too. Reach for some colorful ceramic flower pots



Let your favorite color be your guide when selecting festive dishes for outdoor entertaining.

to display your favorite plants and liven up the patio furniture with cushions or pillows in cool patterns. If lighting is what you need, string some festive hanging lights for a dramatic look or choose citronella candles to adorn the table.

"Pick items that welcome the season and make you feel good," says DeBarge-Goonan. "Those are the items that will likely catch the eye of your discerning friends."

Finding amazing home decor items at a great price can be easier when you know where to go. Shopping at off-price retailers uncovers a broad offering of outdoor entertaining items that are up to 60 percent off retail every day. With a little know-how and a few eye-catching accessories, weeknight entertaining never looked so good.