

25 Tips and Tricks

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Wednesday, 07 July 2004
Last Updated Thursday, 20 October 2005

25 Tips and Tricks to Highlight Your Next Halloween!

Eerie Eats and Spirited Snacks

1. Freeze gummy worms and other wiggly creatures into ice cubes. Float them in your party drinks or make a big splash in a punch bowl.
2. Bake apples in "blood." Core apples and place them in a microwave-safe tray. Pour cherry-flavored soda over, into, and all around the apples. Cover them with plastic wrap, poking a few holes in it so air can escape while cooking. Microwave according to the oven manufacturer's directions for baked potatoes.
3. Serve fiendish punch or spiced apple cider from a large hollowed-out pumpkin.
4. Carve a pumpkin serving bowl by cutting the top off a medium-sized pumpkin in a jagged design. Remove seeds and fleshy innards. Cut assorted veggies into bite-size servings to fit in your smashing new pumpkin bowl.
5. Serve dips and other fiendish snacks from smaller, hollowed-out pumpkins and gourds. Dry snacks will get gobbled up when served in tin pumpkin buckets standing in a row.
6. Roast pumpkin seeds. Remove the seeds from a pumpkin or two and wash thoroughly. Let them dry for a day on paper towels. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Spray a cookie sheet with vegetable oil cooking spray. Spread seeds on the cookie sheet, and then spray them lightly with the vegetable oil cooking spray. Season with salt, dried salad dressing mix, or your favorite spices. Bake 10 to 12 minutes or until the seeds are lightly browned.
7. Treat guests to individual, edible jack-o'-lanterns. Cut the tops off large oranges and set them aside. Scoop out the centers, leaving a thick shell. Cut or draw a jack-o'-lantern face on each orange. Pack chocolate ice cream into the shells, and then gently set the orange tops back on. Put the oranges in the freezer for at least 3 hours before serving.
8. Make "grave" desserts. Use gray construction paper to cut out 4-6" headstones. Write the name of your guests on the headstones, along with a funny memorial to each person. Make instant chocolate pudding and once set, put in individual serving bowls. Then using a food processor, pulverize a package of chocolate sandwich cookies. Process until the mixture resembles rich dirt. Sprinkle liberally on top of each bowl of chocolate pudding. Decorate each with a headstone before serving.

Demonic Decorations

9. Make a guest book out of brown paper bag pages. Your Halloween guests can sign their names in vampire's blood-red ink as they arrive.
10. Cover your Halloween table with burlap fabric. Cut corrugated cardboard into scary jagged shapes to use as place mats.
11. Glue felt pieces onto your pumpkins to make eyes, noses, and mouths instead of carving.

12. Decorate your carved pumpkins with mini marshmallows or gumdrops secured with toothpicks for teeth. Add flashlight glasses , wigs, hats , or bandanas . Bananas and radishes make funny noses. Raisins or cranberries are freaky freckles. Carrot and celery tops make silly hair. And gummy worms or plastic insects hanging out of the pumpkin's nose or mouth is sure to gross everyone out! (Important tip: Don't light votive candles in these pumpkins. It's a fire hazard. Use battery-operated lights or glow disks instead.)
13. Light outdoor walkways and windowsills with luminaries. Take orange or black paper bags and cut out Halloween designs with a hole puncher or stencil. Line the bottoms with two inches of sand, push votive candles into the sand, and light.
14. For an eerie effect, hang glow-in-the-dark bats and skeletons from the ceiling and turn out the lights. Or suspend in trees outdoors.
15. Write scary warning messages on your front walk using colored chalk.
16. Create creepy centerpieces by filling vases with dead flowers, brown leaves, and empty branches. Tie a black ribbon bow around each centerpiece.
17. Hollow out small pumpkins and carve designs into them like flowers, leaves, spirals, or geometric patterns. Illuminate with votive candles for a more sophisticated look.
18. Make apple candle holders. Choose well-proportioned, round apples that will sit stable on a flat surface and remove the stems. Cut a small section out of the top of each apple - deep and wide enough to securely hold a taper candle. Place the apple candleholders down the center of your Halloween table.

Tricks and Treats

19. Play the trick and treats game. Individually number brown paper bags. Put a small toy prize or treat in each. Prepare pieces of paper, each with a number and a designated trick, like hopping on one foot or doing a somersault. Put all the numbers in a bowl. Have each child pick one and perform the trick written on it. Then they get the corresponding numbered treat bag!
20. Hold a musical costume parade. Trick or treaters march around the block playing assorted homemade or store-bought instruments. Use rhythm sticks , shakers , maracas, tambourines , horns , whistles , harmonicas , drums , pots, pans, etc.
21. Start a group ghost story. Sit in a circle and start a ghost story. Each guest adds on to the story until it reaches its unnatural scary ending! Or just read ghost stories geared to your guests' ages.
22. Remember tried-and-true Halloween apple traditions. Bob for apples. Make caramel apples. Play the bite-an-apple-swinging-from-a-string game.
23. Videotape short interviews with your costumed revelers as they arrive. Watch the tape later in the evening for rollicking entertainment.
24. Make scarecrows. Stuff old jeans, flannel shirts, socks, gloves and hats with scrunched up newspaper. Use an inflated balloon or a plastic jack-o'-lantern for a head. Hang the scarecrow from a tree limb or inside from a hanging pole to greet your Halloween guests.

25. Wrap candy and snacks in squares of aluminum foil and twist shut.