

HERE'S HOW TO SOURCE A SUMMER SUPPER FROM PRESTON ROYAL

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IF "SUMMER" ISN'T A VERB FOR YOU, and you're in Dallas this season, no worries. Just chill out, and create some fun in the sun in your own backyard.

Dining al fresco with a super simple menu and a few summer tips creates a laid-back vibe for easy entertaining. Everything you need for the quintessential relaxed summer shindig can be sourced here in the neighborhood at Preston Royal Shopping Center.

"If you can't stand the heat, stay out of the kitchen," and grill some chicken and veggie kabobs on the deck instead. Serve room temp or cold with a refreshing Greek salad, hummus and fresh pita bread. Easier yet, pick up a family pack at Zoës Kitchen.

Or keep it simple, and choose from the "ready to go" appetizers from Eatzi's. How about their charcuterie board with salami, soppressata, provolone, Greek olives and marinated mozzarella balls? Moving forward, self-serve is the ticket, so plate everything on easy-care Melamine service ware from Ballard Designs.

Tubs of iced craft beer and Topo Chicos from Tom Thumb keep guests cool, along with a cold pitcher of refreshing white sangria. My favorite pick-up dessert this season is Central Market's lemon tart. Add fresh berries on top — and I dare you to eat only one sliver. It has just the right combination of sweet and tart and cold. I am obsessed.

This is what summer tastes like. Keep decor simple with summer blooms and greenery from the yard and a pretty pop of color with Sur La Table napkins. Now for the fun part. Pop into Toy Maven and pick up some Super Soakers and a set of lawn darts.

You're never too old for the classic Slip and Slide. Well, maybe you are, but the concept is really cool, and they actually carry the game. Pesky mosquitoes aren't on the guest list, so don't forget citronella candles and bug spray.

A lively summer playlist and sunglasses are all you need now.