

Živa riječ

Ann Schumacher

A KANSAN BIRTHDAY BAR-BE-QUE

- Peggy: »Oh, mother, may I have a birthday bar-be-que party? It's hot in July but perfect for a picnic!
- Mother: Well, I don't see why not! That might be fun! How many do you want to invite?
- Peggy: I thought perhaps 25—30. My whole school class. Most of them are here this summer and it would be fun to see each other again! What do you think? You could even invite some of your friends if you want. We have enough room in the back yard.
- Mother: Well, this time we'll keep the age 18 and under, but I'll certainly help. Now, let's see ... we need to plan the menu, decorations, and of course, music and games...
- Peggy: Daddy can be the chef! He always looks so funny in his white apron and cook's hat! Besides he makes great hamburgers!
- Mother: And I'll be his assistant and your waitress! Right! (*laughs*) O. K., now what shall we have? Hamburgers...
- Peggy: Can't we have bar-be-que chicken too! Besides it's my 18th birthday and I want to make it something special.
- Mother: O. K. chicken too! Our grill is large enough to do both if we start the chicken earlier.
- Peggy: What about invitations? Should I send them?
- Mother: I think it would be nice. We could invite everyone for 6 PM since we have daylight until 8.30 PM. By then everyone will be ready for a bit of dancing... don't you think?
- Peggy: Oh, I'm so excited... We can hang those Japanese lanterns around for atmosphere, put on our red-and-white checkered table cloths with the blue-and-white checkered napkins... candles on the tables... and I'll go to the fields for those little white daisies... how romantic...
- Mother: Oh, what about the music...
- Mother: I don't think it will be too much trouble for your father to bring the stereo out to the back porch. We have a plug there for electricity and the porch is large enough for dancing.
- Peggy: I'll ask Julie to bring some of her records since she has the best collection.

A week before the party. Mother and Peggy are working on final party details.

Mother: Did you send out all of the invitations?

Peggy: Yes, and I've heard from everyone except five. They are all coming... Ann is bringing her two cousins from New York, and Jerry is bringing his friend from California. Wow, I hope he's cute. We should probably count on at least 30—35. I can't wait!!

Mother: Well, now let's sit down and plan all of the food you want to serve. I have already ordered 6 chickens which the meat man will cut up for me. The hamburger also has been ordered and will arrive fresh the day of the party. You want to have potato salad and what else?

Peggy: Well, I thought we could have potato salad, deviled eggs¹, potato chips², and Granddad can make his home-made vanilla ice cream. I'll bake those yummy chocolate brownies with nuts on top. Everyone loves them.

Mother: What about the baked beans? We can't forget them.

Peggy: Oh, yes, I almost forgot and those are my favorite! And then we need a fresh vegetable plate... you know with radishes, carrots, tomatoes, pickles, onions, celery... the young white onions are in season now! I guess we won't be able to dance too close, will we?

Day before the party. Mother and Peggy are preparing some of the food.

Peggy: Ouch, I burned myself! These brownies look... um... Don't they! Watch out! Let me set them down on the table there!

Mother: They look delicious... Which recipe did you use?

Peggy: Oh, you know, the one with bitter-sweet chocolate, marshmallow cream and egg yolks.

Mother: Here, I've ground the nuts for you... sprinkle them on while the brownies are still warm.

Peggy: We should make the potato salad today too. The deviled eggs can wait until tomorrow.

Mother: I've already started the salad. The potatoes are boiling now and the hard boiled eggs are finished. Will you chop the onions and pickles?

Peggy: Sure!

Mother: And get the mayonnaise out of the refrigerator. That goes into the salad too.

Peggy: When will Granddad make the ice-cream?

Mother: Tomorrow afternoon... just a couple of hours before the party... that way, it will really be fresh.

Peggy: Oh, couldn't he just make a bit today? I want to give it a pre-party taste!

¹ Deviled eggs are stuffed eggs.

² Potato chips in America are round and thin unlike the finger-shaped fried potatoes called chips in England.

Morning. Day of party.

- Peggy: There I've cut up all of the vegetables for the vegetable platter... Now, I need to get out the ketchup and mustard for the hamburgers.
- Mother: Maybe you should slice the onions and clean the lettuce for the hamburgers too. We should get as much done ahead of time as we can.
I expect the majority will drink ice tea and lemonade. Don't you?
- Peggy: Yeah, I think so... I've made the tea, sliced the lemons, and there's plenty of ice.
- Mother: Let's start on the baked beans. Now we need beans, a bit of onion, ketchup...
We'll leave them covered and put them into bake about 5 PM. They need about 1 to 1 1/2 hours.
- Peggy: Ooo, the potato salad is fantastic. It is always better the second day. You put in a new spice, didn't you?
- Mother: Yes, I added curry.
- Peggy: Now, let me see, what else do we need to do...
Can I leave you here in the kitchen while I work on the decorations?
- Mother: Sure, but call me if you need help. I am almost finished here.
- Peggy: I'm just going to hang up the lanterns... I hope the wind will die down a bit, otherwise, they might tear.
- Mother: It's not too bad on the back porch, Peggy. Why don't you take out the table cloths and napkins while you're going? We have the two large picnic tables and several card tables. They should seat 33 easily.
- Peggy: I can't carry all of that at once. Let me put up the lanterns first.
Well, that's done. They look nice, don't you think Mom? The table cloths look great too. Do we have enough paper plates and cups?
- Mother: Yes, yes, yes, you are talking a mile a minute!! (*laughing*)
- Peggy: I'm glad I don't have to wash all of those dishes. Besides, it makes it a real picnic with paper plates.
Well, I'll go now for the flowers... Julie should be coming soon with the records... I asked her to bring them over earlier. You'll be home, won't you?
- Mother: Sure, you go ahead now, so you can get back in time to clean up and relax. I'll wait for Julie.

A little later.

- Mother: How did you get so dirty?
- Peggy: Well, I told you the daisies were out in the fields!
- Mother: Julie brought the records and your father has set up the stereo. Here is a vase for the flowers. I'll arrange them while you clean up.

Peggy: Did you finish the deviled eggs?
Mother: Yes, do you want to try one? I put a bit of paprika on top to give them some color.
Peggy: Hm, they're good! We could even put some parsley on the plate for a little design.

The party.

Dad: Come and get em!!
Hamburgers and chicken done!
Finger smackin' good!
Peggy: Oh, Dad, you're so funny...
Here Tom, you can have both. Mom, will you pass the mustard to Bob? Watch out for the onions everyone! We still want to dance tonight!!!

Vera Simonin

UN REPAS À LA FRANÇAISE
OU LA BRU REÇOIT SA BELLE-MÈRE POUR LA PREMIÈRE FOIS

— Bonjour, Marguerite! Comment ça va?
— Bonjour, Jeannine...
— Que vous êtes soucieuse ce matin! Et venue si tôt au marché! Que se passe-t-il donc?
— Il ne se passe rien de bien grave ... Mais, c'est la première fois depuis notre mariage que nous recevons ma belle-mère...
— Oh, là là... J'imagine que l'on va mettre les petits plats dans les grands ... N'est-ce pas? et cela vous fera beaucoup de travail ... Si je puis vous être utile...
— Merci beaucoup, Jeannine ... C'est justement-là le problème. Ma belle-mère se pique d'être une fine cuisinière, et elle l'est! Alors, point de potage, puisque telle est la coutume de la ville. Point de ce menu-type, bifsteck-frites! J'aimerais que le repas soit bon, qu'il ne coûte pas trop cher, et que cela plaise à tout le monde...
— Regardez autour de vous! Que de fruits et de légumes! Que de bons fromages! De l'excellent poisson également!
— Justement! Je ne veux pas prendre de poisson. On aime, dans la famille, le vin rouge: je commence par composer mon menu à partir d'un bon bourgogne. Donc, pas de poisson.
— Mais alors faites un bon plat au vin, un bœuf bourguignon!
— Merveilleux! Quelle bonne idée! Voilà, je vous dirai ce que je souhaite faire, et vous me donnerez ensuite votre recette. Nous verrons si elle coïncide avec la mienne.
— Très bien, Marguerite. Je vous écoute.
— Pour commencer, et comme il se doit, j'offre un hors d'oeuvre ultrasimple: des radis au beurre. Ensuite, puisque tout le monde appré-