



Masters OF FETE

By Carita Rizzo

From tree houses to tiki torches, event planners do whatever it takes to create Emmy night's memorable parties

Russ Patrick was speechless.

Standing alongside a stunned colleague, he stared out at the vast West Hall of the L.A. Convention Center and wondered how on earth he was going to transform the dreary space into one of Emmy's hottest parties.

It was 2007, just after the awards show relocated to L.A. Live following years at the more party-friendly Shrine. As the committee co-chair for the Governors Ball — the first stop for post-awards partiers — Patrick and production designer Dwight Jackson knew they had their work cut out.

"What we then said is unprintable," Patrick recalls.

What they did was act fast. They had 50,000 square feet of drapery custom made in an effort to black out the room and start from a blank, dark canvas. "We tried to make it feel more intimate," Jackson says. "One of my cardinal rules is darkness is your friend."

Darkness may have been a friend, but light and bright is the theme this year.

Drink UP

Natural food chef and mixologist Bethenny Frankel — star of Bravo's "Bethenny Getting Married?" — shares with THR what cocktail she'll be sipping come Emmy night.

*Skinnygirl Margarita
With Red Carpet Rim*

Ingredients:

- 2 oz. of premium Blue Agave clear tequila
- Tiny splash of orange liqueur
- Juice of four fresh lime wedges
- Red rimming sugar

Preparation:

With a lime or lemon wedge, coat the rim of the margarita glass. Dip the coated rim in the red sugar. Serve on the rocks. Combine all ingredients in glass. When pouring tequila, count 1, 2. No need for measuring. Mix and serve.

If you're in a hurry, pick up ready-made Skinnygirl Margaritas in the bottle.



To keep people partying at Sunday's Governors Ball, the duo has upped the spectacle by creating a starry sky out of a staggering 5,082 disco balls. It's an ambitious project that requires the help of 10 people just as "detanglers" for the three-inch mirrored balls that hang at different lengths from the ceiling.

"It's like a spider web," says Andrea Drake of Sequoia Prods., the project manager. "One of our vendors actually bumped into a portion of it and they all tangled. So now there's literally going to be a person every two feet (during the set up) to manage the balls in their area. We hire people to just detangle."

Whether it's gathering detanglers for the world's biggest collection of disco balls or building indoor tree houses, there are few lengths to which these masters of fete will not go.

Drake spends most of her year planning just two events: Emmy's Governors Ball and the movie Academy's equivalent. "This year, as I was on site for the Oscars, I was already getting Emmy e-mails," she says.

Like the rest of the teams that put together the key bashes of the night — those thrown by "Entertainment Tonight," HBO and Fox — Drake is in familiar territory, as virtu-



ET's post-E Emmy bash will once again take over downtown's Vibiana.

ally the same people have been in charge of Emmy night for years.

Drake's boss, Cheryl Cechetto, the president of Sequoia Prods., has been the event producer of the Governors Ball for more than a decade, as has Billy Butchkavitz, the event designer for HBO. "ET's" vp communications, Lisa Summers Haas, and Tomiko Iwata, vp special events at Fox, each has half a decade under their belts.

"It's fun," Butchkavitz says of the elaborate bash he's planning at the Fountain Plaza at the Pacific Design Center. "This is where I get to really have input in what you're going to smell, see, touch and taste. It's like one big design bubble."

Butchkavitz's biggest headache in previous years has been contending with the seemingly end-

less construction around the Design Center. "A crane popped up one day that wasn't there before," he sighs. "And they started construction on the West Hollywood Library last year, which was a complete surprise."

He jokes about coping through "mini-meltdowns," but in the end Butchkavitz tackles the noise with barriers — literally. "We put up a 24-foot wall last year. And I had to put up a 220-foot wall on San Vicente Boulevard to block out a construction site. (Each year) I just build higher walls."

This year, the wall will allow guests to be undistracted as they admire his newest creation, a summer-safari-themed party, consisting of oversized torches, lanterns and towering palms that serve as performance stages.

"We're doing cantilevered

stages that are going to look like 14-foot-diameter palm trees floating off the side of the Pacific Design Center," he says.

Even more crucial than the design is the food. At Cicada, in downtown's Oviatt building, where Fox is hosting its Emmy celebration for the second year running, Fox's Iwata warns: "There are a lot of food allergies these days. We actually have someone who is a vegan and allergic to soy."

The quantities of food consumed on Emmy night are staggering. At "ET's" Emmy bash, guests will enjoy 3,000 handmade tortillas and guacamole made out of 150 pounds of California-grown avocados.

At the Fox party 150 pounds of filet mignon will be served, while HBO estimates that the setup crew alone will gobble up more than 120 large pizzas.

The Governors Ball, the largest annual sit-down dinner in the U.S., will serve 984 pounds of rack of lamb, 900 pounds of heirloom tomatoes and 800 pounds of dark chocolate. It takes their caterers five days, with a kitchen staff of 50, just to prepare the ingredients.

Sometimes unwanted guests aim for the food — or rather, for the people trying to eat it, and Iwata recently had to prepare for a stealth party crasher.

"We had pictures of the person, and everyone was aware of it,

even kitchen staff, floor staff and working staff, because this particular person was crafty," she recalls. "They go to extremes and will try to sneak in, just like a movie, in the back or as a caterer."

The final touch of every party is a top-notch goody bag, and gifts in the past have included hotel stays in Hawaii, luxurious makeup and delectable sweets. Party planners are in charge of these, too, and start approaching vendors six months before the soirees.

"Each year, we see what products are new, fun and will get a 'wow' when the guests get home," Summers Haas says.

One suggestion might have got too much of a wow: "(A company) suggested a mini flashlight you wear on your head," she recalls. "It was just odd."

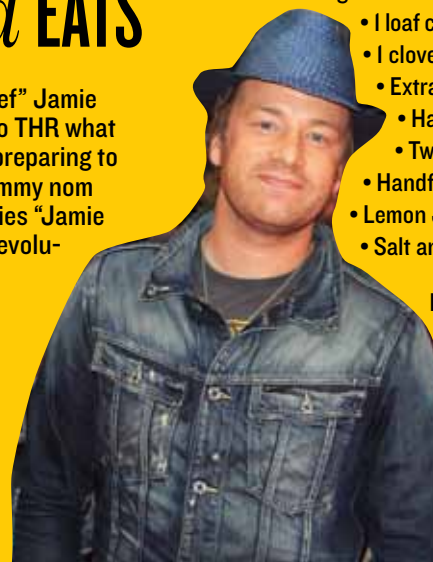
No goody bag compares to the wedding gift "ET" gave a young couple last year at Vibiana, which hosts its Emmy party for a second year in a row. "A couple was getting married on Saturday and the Emmys are on Sunday," Summers Haas recalls. "We, of course, have to load in and design, and we couldn't because (of the) wedding. So we told the couple, 'You can have our lighting and sound system, if you let us put it in early.'"

She adds, "There's nothing like TV lighting when you're getting married. We never heard a peep out of them." **THR**

Good EATS

"The Naked Chef" Jamie Oliver reveals to THR what appetizer he's preparing to celebrate his Emmy nom for the ABC series "Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution."

*Green Room
Crostoni*



Ingredients:

- 1 loaf ciabatta bread, cut into half-inch slices
- 1 clove of garlic, peeled and cut in half
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Handful of mint leaves
- Two handfuls of shelled peas and fava beans
- Handful of freshly grated pecorino
- Lemon Juice
- Salt and Pepper

Preparation: Grill your slices of ciabatta. While hot, gently rub with the cut side of the garlic and drizzle with extra virgin olive oil. In a mortar and pestle (or a food processor), smash up a handful of mint leaves with two handfuls of shelled peas and fava beans until mashed. Add the grated pecorino, a couple of glugs of olive oil, a little lemon juice, salt and pepper. Smear mixture over each crostoni and finish with pecorino and mint. Enjoy!