



It's hard to believe that Christmas is less than four weeks away. So many parties, so little time! When I was at Michael's Salon on Wednesday, I was trying to decide on a topic for this Holiday Gift Guide column. When in doubt, ask your hairdresser. "Michael, should I write about hostess gifts or Christmas appetizers?" "Appetizers!" he said almost immediately.

"My clients ask me all the time if I know a good recipe that they can take to parties. Besides, hostess gifts are usually bottles of wine that someone took them last year and they didn't drink." See? The man knows what he's talking about. Taking Michael Petorock's most excellent advice, these are some of the appetizer recipes that I came up with. All three can be made ahead and baked just before serving. Happy Christmas partying!

Festive Pigs in a Blanket with Spicy Honey-Lime Ketchup

These are great to make ahead and reheat just before serving. I actually like them better the second time around.

½ cup ketchup

1 teaspoon buffalo wing sauce

1 tablespoon honey

Squeeze of fresh lime juice

1 (13.8-ounce) roll refrigerated pizza crust

1 (14-ounce) package cocktail smokies, drained

1 egg, beaten

1 tablespoon poppy seeds

Fresh rosemary, optional

Combine first 4 ingredients in a small bowl. Cover and let sit for at least one hour to allow flavors to meld. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Cover a baking sheet with aluminum foil and spray lightly with cooking spray. Unroll pizza crust on a cutting board. Slice pizza crust into 36 strips. Wrap each cocktail smokie in a slice of pizza crust and place, seam side down, on prepared baking sheet. Brush each appetizer with beaten egg and sprinkle with poppy seeds. Bake in preheated oven for 17 to 20 minutes, or until appetizers are puffed and golden. Serve warm with Spicy Honey-Lime Ketchup. Garnish with fresh rosemary. Makes 36.

Tuna Melt Poppers

