



## august inspiration... lazy, hazy, crazy

Whoever coined the phrase, "the lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer", got it only partly right. Crazy and hazy - that's for sure, but lazy, not so much. I rather think that the lazy part refers to our country's agricultural days when the crops were planted and we sat on rockers sipping lemonade, cranking homemade ice cream, and shelling peas while watching the corn grow.

Maybe it stems back to my school days when my summers spread in front of me with so much possibility- endless days to sleep in, visit my grandparents and cousins at the New Jersey Shore, and luxuriate in summer reading. For some reason, my internal clock still ticks like a 15 year olds, because at the beginning of every June, I write out my summer ***To Do List*** - Holiday cards, catch up on photo albums as well as projects such as dying antique linens that live stacked in my china closet, and writing some extra Inspirations. In my heart of hearts, I really believe that I will have the extra time to take on these projects, but then life happens, the house fills with family and friends, and the TO DO LIST flies out the window (Needless to say, in late December I am scurrying around trying to get our family holiday cards in the mail before December 23<sup>rd</sup>).



'The Street' Gathering

*Linden Hill Farm*, our home in Connecticut becomes our family's home base for the summer. From June through Labor Day, I work from my office there whenever possible. It is also where my husband and I do most of our entertaining. Our house loves people and the more people we accommodate, the happier it is. We host friends, have dinner parties under the stars, and have an annual family reunion for the *Clan Blair*. This year, for the first time, our boys (both recent college grads) invited their own friends for special weekends- the *Tulane Club Baseball Reunion* as well as a weekend for my older son's young friends who work at *The Street*.

For the past 10 years, we have hosted a large group of friends that we have known so long, they have become more of an extended family. Our children have grown up together and they think of each other more as cousins than friends. Even though they are now all adults and have graduated college, they are still affectionately known as "the Kids". This year, I challenged "the Kids" to a table setting competition scheduled for Saturday night's dinner. I divided them into 3 teams of 2 and gave them their challenge - to set a table for 6 - including linens, tabletop, centerpieces, and place cards. Anything (with the exception of my good china and crystal) was game, as long as it was found on the property.

What resulted was nothing short of inspired! Never in my wildest imagination did I expect such creative and completely unique tables. It started out as a ploy to get the Kids to help out. The guests were **wowed**, and the best part? I never had to ask the "Kids" to set the tables, not even once! There obviously is nothing like a little healthy competition to liven up a dinner party.



Team Tiny Carrot



Team Dizzy Pond



Team Angry Birds

Saturday night of the *Tulane Club Baseball* weekend, I woke up in the middle of the night and noticed all the outdoor lights were still on. Not hearing a sound, I stepped out onto the terrace to see if the boys had forgotten to turn out the lights. It was then that I heard a low voice and recognized shapes of bodies floating in the pool. I stood musing - how peaceful those boys were - no horseplay, no loud shouting. There they were, *just a bunch of baseball guys bobbing around, talking*. Then within the next moment or two, I heard my son's voice shout out "just trust me" and the pack of them ran across the field into the dark of the night. I knew then it was time for me to go back to bed...whatever the trust was about, it was not for me to know.

With summer coming to an end, I say what I say every summer. "I can't believe the summer is over. It seems like it just began!" This summer, although I once again never got to tackle the things on my *To Do List*, I realized how much my cup runneth over with love for my family, old friends and new. I am thankful that we have spent such quality time together, sharing our histories and traditions and starting new ones as well. Entertaining is not just about food, drink and the decorations. It is about sharing our lives with the people we care about.

So Kids, get ready for the *Second Annual Table Setting Competition Summer 2016*...the stakes will be higher next year as I hear the purse has doubled!

**Ready, Set, GO!**

***May all your remaining summer days be lazy!***



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