

**Turn an ordinary dinner into an extraordinary evening with the family!**  
**Designate one night a week or a month as 'Dinner Palooza'**

*Here are a few ideas (make them as healthy or unhealthy as you'd like)*

**1. Let your Asian flare shine!-** Keep it simple with stir fry for dinner. Sit around the coffee table on pillows OR stay at the table and eat straight out of chinese food boxes. You can pick up chop stix and fortune cookies at Panda for little or nothing. You can even make your own fortune cookies and stuff them with special notes to your kids.

**2. Have a Picnic!-** Forget about the traditional dinner at the table. Set out a blanket in the backyard. Make some sandwiches, juice boxes, fresh fruit, and chips. Don't forget to keep it simple with brownies or cookies for desert. Play a game of frisbee and call it an evening!

**3. Lose the Structure!-** Have a backwards dinner night. Start with dessert and work your way backwards. Make sure you separate your dinner into courses to get the full effect. Start with dessert, then have your main dish, move onto a salad, and then finish up with a yummy appetizer. Keep all of your portions small so everyone is still hungry by the end.

**4. Hodge Podge-** In the morning have all the kids write down one thing on paper that they want for dinner. Make sure they keep their item a secret. Have a hodge podge dinner of all the things written down. You might have licorice, corn dogs, and brownies, but hey they were fed weren't they!

**5. Is it night time?-** Forget about rules and have breakfast for dinner. There's nothing like some home made waffles with strawberries and whipped cream for dinner! Make sure you get into your jammies before dinner to create the perfect mood.

**6. Finger Lickin' Good!-** Have a finger feast. No utensils involved. You can start out with a relish tray (carrots, celery, ranch dip, pickles, etc. ) and move on to have hot dogs rolled up with crescent rolls, hot wings, breadsticks, etc. Don't forget to pick up some cream puffs for dessert!

**7. Everything's better on a stick!-** Forget plates. Turn a paper cup upside down and present your dinner on sticks sticking out of the cup. Have corndogs, shish kabobs, fruit kabobs, etc. Everything is better on a stick. For dessert serve popsicles or caramel apples. Don't forget to finish your night up with a game of 'stick pull' or 'stick ball' (baseball).

**8. Go Back in Time!- Remember the days of TV dinners?** Turn on your favorite re-runs of 'I Love Lucy', 'Leave it to Beaver', or 'The Andy Griffith Show'. Eat dinner around the TV and reminisce with your kids about your favorite old shows (You know when they were clean!). You can get little trays at Walmart for next to nothing. Only pull them out on this special night. This wouldn't be complete without eating fried chicken and mashed potatoes. Don't forget a little apple pie for dessert.

**9. Who wants a vacation?** Put on your hula skirt and pretend you're in Hawaii! Hawaiian haystacks are yummy and a must for this night. Fresh pineapple and a tropical smoothie is the only way to finish off the meal. Make sure you eat outside and play some soothing ocean sounds in the background. If you have a pool complete your night with a swim or else have a little limbo contest. All you need is a broom for this one!

**10. Color me hungry!** Put all the colors of the rainbow in a hat and let your kids pick which color dinner is going to be. If it's red night have cherries, strawberries, tomatoes, red jello, red meat (steak), red cabbage, red potatoes, etc. You'll have fun shopping at the store for this one. Make sure you play Red Rover at the end of this night