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Girlfriends
AT THE SEASIDE

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creative ideas for

unique gatherings

A Whimsical
Wedding
IN WONDERLAND
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Bonding with
Girlfriends
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NETS, COCKTAILS
Afternoon with Anna Corba
V-WORTHY
Details



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Cocktails, Crafting and Corba

by Becky Rourk

OK, girls. This is the trifecta of crafting goodness – I mean it! First, let's talk about Corba – Anna Corba – *bonnes vivantes*, collage goddess, creative muse. I met her a few years ago at French General's Chateau Getaway in southern France. Much like my little event here in the states, the Chateau Getaway brings like-minded girls together for French food, fun, flea-marketing, and crafting. French General's Kaari Meng, sister Molly, and mom Kick are the coolest, craftiest women I've ever met, and I thank them for pretty much the trip of a lifetime and for introducing me to Anna, who was one of the workshop instructors. Anna has a super cool artistic vibe, and trust me – I was all over her like Mod Podge.

We remained in touch, bonded by our adoration of all things French, all things crafty, and pretty much anything in the form of a cocktail. When I found out she had friends and family in the Central Florida area and might be visiting, I offered to host a Saturday Crafternoon last June, centered around her fabulous book "Doodling in French." Lucky for me she agreed!

Anyone who knows me knows I'm a detail girl. It's the little things that can have a huge impact when entertaining. You can bet every detail was "Frenchified" – from the pink-and-black color palette to custom M&Ms imprinted with doodles from the book, to the amuse-bouches. What's great is that you don't have to spend a French fortune to pull this off. ►



Paying homage to Anna's collage artistry, inexpensive manila mailing tags (for the invites) and plain kraft bags (for the goodie bags) were collaged with French book pages, tissue papers, scrapbook papers, you name it. For the swag, I turned to my fabulous blog and Etsy girls for handmade French Flair: fleur de Sel caramels, hand-dyed seam binding, custom mini French notebooks, mini French flashcards, gorgeous clay tags ... in fact, many of my cyber girlfriends threw in freebies and extras, making me a very blessed Becky indeed.

Remember those details I talked about? Pink monogrammed wine glass charms, custom M&Ms, Mason jars filled with flowers ... you can doll up things so easily! I bought plain white cardboard drink coasters and drew images from Anna's book on them and used them for table décor; I also placed tissue paper flowers in varying sizes and colors down the middle of the table for a pretty focal point. I could go on all day about the tissue paper flowers, just stack a large, a medium, and a small flower in an urn for a very cool and pretty topiary. ▶



I gifted Anna's book to all the girls in attendance (and also to some of my special Etsy/Blog girlfriends), and Anna was kind enough to sign them all! I wrapped the books in pretty papers, added a little bling, personalized them with their initials, and placed them on beautiful scrapbook paper, which I use for placemats year-round. I also use vintage sheet music and large French magazine pages. If there's spillage, who cares? Toss them, and put fresh ones out.

The food was, of course, mostly French. Don't kill yourself making everything from scratch. The trick is to do a couple things you can brag that you made yourself, then buy frozen mini quiches, tarts, etc. to fill in. I made mini pies in Mason jars a week ahead and



froze them. All you have to do the day of is pop them in the oven for about an hour. The trick to displaying the food is to use inventive items to add height to your food table and to hold your food: I like to use a vintage lampshade and place a plate right on the top. Smaller cement urns can hold crackers and paper cones made from heavy-stock cheese paper can hold caramels, spiced nuts, or popcorn.

If you have the room, set up "stations." The food was set up on the kitchen bar and counter, a beverage station was nearby with wine and cocktails, and the craft area was in the dining room. Make sure you have enough room between areas for girls to chat, eat, craft, and enjoy.



For the crafting, I offered a couple of collage options and provided everything the girls would need. Banners, cones, it was collage-a-palooza up in here! To make it easy for the girls to get to everything, I used an old rolling laundry cart and locker baskets to hold the craft supplies. I used peat pots to store seam binding and mini inkpads, vintage berry cartons to store mini-glue sticks, Mason jars for foam brushes, and vintage muffin tins for buttons and jewelry bits.

Cocktails. Check. Crafting. Check. Corba. Check. The coolest chicks that I'm honored to call friends. Check. Grab your girls, pour some drinks, pull out the Mod Podge and set the date for your own Saturday Crafternoon ... and then invite me!

I'd like to give a special "merci" to Michelle from Petite Michelle Louise; Rhonda from A little bit French; Jami from Freckled Laundry, Nicole from Caramel Jar, Salpi from Vintage Paris Market; Tammy from Cloth & Patina. *

All planning was done by Becky Rourk. All photography was done by Cassandra VanCuren, Artful Adventures Photography and Vicki Moletteire, rustyroostervintage.blogspot.com.

