

FOOD DRINK PARTY!

PRODUCED BY TONY CONWAY
TEXT BY TRAVIS NEIGHBOR WARD
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Caviar and salmon hors d'oeuvres by Tony Conway

BEST IN SHOW

Treat guests—and yourself—to a dramatic night of theater-going and dining.

THE OPENING ACT

There's no better way to give your party dramatic flair than by tying it into a new performance around town, such as *Mrs. Warren's Profession* at the Alliance Theatre (September 27–October 22; www.alliancetheatre.org). To get the evening going, says Tony Conway of A Legendary Event, start *chez toi* with pre-show cocktails and hors d'oeuvres. Conway's faves include seared fois gras and fennel; bruschetta made with yellow tomato, and yellow and red peppers; caviar on buckwheat bellinis; and blanched asparagus wrapped in salmon. (His recommendation: Ducktrap River wild salmon or ECCH Falls Wild Alaskan smoked salmon, available at Whole Foods.) Another option: gruyere grilled cheese finger sandwiches with celery shaving on top, which Conway recently served at Cartier's grand opening party at Lenox Square. Next, mix up some Kir Royale martinis with Champagne and cassis, and unveil the grand finale: primo tickets to the show and limos to escort guests to the venue. "I did this in Dallas," says Conway. "We had someone acting as theater concierge, who whisked guests to their seats and served them cocktails during intermission. Then we had the valets drive everyone's cars to the post-show restaurant, so they would be ready to go home when the evening was over." Now, that's entertainment!

GET WITH IT!

In case you're embarrassed to insist that guests R.S.V.P. long before the date of your soiree, rest assured: You're doing the right thing. "When you're buying theater tickets, serving food and possibly renting limos, the R.V.S.P. is a must," says Tony Conway, who notes that not replying is on the rise. "The deadline you give should be at least eight to 10 days before the party." As for the wording, New York invitation guru Ellen Weldon of Ellen Weldon Design says "we prefer the card to say only 'kindly respond' so it leaves each guest the opportunity to write a short note. In the last year, we've done a few reply cards that include e-mail addresses, too."



R.S.V.P. cards by Ellen Weldon Design



Quinones Room

THE HOTTEST SEATS

Why cry that the party's over just because the curtain's gone down? Wow your guests by reserving one of these great private rooms around town for an after-show meal.

QUINONES ROOM AT BACCHANALIA

Quinones has wood-paneled walls, antique mirrors and Venetian glass chandeliers. Up to 42 guests can dine on the multi-course, pre-fixe menu or the Bacchanalia menu du jour. You'll pay a \$5,000 minimum for food; the last reservation is at 9:30 p.m., Tuesday–Saturday. 1198 Howell Mill Road, 404.365.0410 or www.starprovisions.com.

PRIVATE DINING ROOM AT STRIP

You can seat up to 50 people in this room at master chef Tom Catherall's newest restaurant. The minimum purchase is \$3,000 for food and beverage. Specify the pre-fixe menu when you make the reservation, or order off the regular dinner menu. Open until 11 p.m. Monday–Thursday; midnight on Friday and Saturday; 10 p.m. on Sunday. Atlantic Station, 404.385.2005 or www.heretoseverestaurants.com.

THE 50TH FLOOR OF THE FOUR SEASONS HOTEL

This series of connected private rooms with skyline views seats 20 to 50; the curfew is midnight. Choose from a menu with buffet and plated options (including cuisines from India, the Caribbean and Persia, to name a few), or chef Robert Gerstenecker will create a personalized menu for you. Pricing starts at \$4,000. 75 Fourteenth St., 404.881.9898 or www.fourseasons.com/atlanta.

THE RED ROOM AT BLUEPOINTE

Officially the party has to end at 11 p.m. in the Red Room, located in the glassed-in mezzanine overlooking the main dining room. You can choose from a selection of pre-set menus, and there's a full bar on site. Food and beverage prices vary depending on the day of the week and time of the year. 3455 Peachtree Road, 404.237.9070 or www.buckheadrestaurants.com.

QUINONES ROOM PHOTO COURTESY OF THE REYNOLDS GROUP