

USC GIRLS' SOCCER PASTA DINNERS

A cherished and long-running tradition continues throughout this upcoming soccer season! Senior players and their families will host a series of in-home, old Rec Center or C&RC pasta dinners throughout the regular season on various evenings prior to scheduled games. On occasion we will ask Junior players and their families to host as well. All Varsity players, Junior Varsity players and coaches are invited to attend each and every dinner.

The Lady Panther pasta dinner tradition includes the custom of asking Junior, Sophomore and Freshman players to provide the pasta, bread, salad and dessert items in exchange for the gracious hospitality offered by the senior families. Please reference the spreadsheet for the schedule of dinner dates and assignments. **Parents, you are responsible for providing the specified food items on the specified dates. If you are unable to fulfill your obligation, you (and not the host family) must find a substitute family. Please be considerate and alert the host family to any swapping of responsibilities.**

Guidelines for Host Families:

- Please contact your helpers several days in advance of your meal in order to coordinate the types of food that will be contributed.
- There will be approximately 50 players and coaches attending
- 3 helpers provide the pasta and bread. Each helper provides about 4 pounds/helper (total 12 pounds) of pasta.
- There are 2 helpers also assigned to each dinner to contribute salad and dessert, it is suggested to plan for a fruit salad as well as a green salad. "Dirt" (recipe below) and brownies are enduring dessert favorites.
- In the past the host families have provided other foods of their choosing (wings, meatballs, soup). Chicken Nuggets from Chick-Fil-A seems to be the favorite!
- Provide plenty of beverages such as soda, water, Gatorade, and iced tea.
- Paper products and ice.
- Tables and chairs
- The girls arrive en masse directly from practice. Be sure to know exactly when practice is expected to end, the dinner usually lasts about 45 minutes.

Guidelines for Helpers:

- Approximate attendance per dinner will be 45 people. There will be five helpers assigned per dinner.
- To ensure that the dinners are a success, helpers are asked to provide your assigned items on the assigned evening at the assigned time.
- If a helper is unable to fulfill the assigned obligation on the indicated date, then the helper is responsible for making arrangements to find an alternate provider. Please make sure to inform your host of any change.
- **PASTA HELPERS (3 per dinner) should provide the following:**
 - 1 **large** tray of pasta (homemade or purchased) that will serve 25 people. This equates to a full hotel pan or 4 pounds of pasta/helper.
 - Typically, your host will ask that you deliver it already fully cooked, hot and ready to serve.
 - 2 or 3 large loaves of **sliced** bread, garlic bread, bread sticks, rolls, etc.

- Alfredo and Vodka sauces seem to be the favorites in the past.
- **SALAD AND DESSERT HELPERS (2 per dinner) should provide the following:**
 - **1 Green Salad** that serves 20 to 24 people.
 - **1 Fruit Salad** that serves 20-24 people
 - **1 or 2 desserts** that serves 20 to 24 people. “Dirt” and brownies seem to be the favorites in the past
- Please coordinate your ideas with your host.
- Use disposable, non-breakable containers that do not need to be returned after use.
- Please make arrangements to get your food to your host at the time they specify.

A Few Additional Comments About Pasta Dinners:

- Freshman parents: These dinners are quite short. The girls will arrive directly from practice, eat and be ready to leave in about 45 minutes or less.
- While not mandatory, it is a wonderful opportunity for socializing, bonding and mentally prepping for game day.
- You should plan to carpool from practice sight to the host home – rides are not always available in the cars of upperclassmen.
- If a helper decides to provide purchased pastas, favorite places have included Franco’s, Armstrong’s, DeLallos, Olive Garden and Pasta Too.
- Time of the various pasta dinners will vary with the times at which practices end.

“Where can I find the recipe for “Dirt?”

There are countless variations and adaptations (check the internet), but here is one from Three Rivers Cookbook III (blue cover) “Heavenly Dirt” page 241 that has worked well:

“Heavenly Dirt”

2 8 oz. Pkgs. Cream cheese, softened
 2 cups powdered sugar
 2 3 ½ oz. Boxes vanilla instant pudding (can substitute chocolate pudding)
 3 cups cold milk
 16 oz. Cool Whip topping, softened in refrigerator
 2 tsp. Vanilla
 1 20 oz. Pkg. Oreo cookies (can substitute pure chocolate wafer cookies)

Beat cream cheese and powdered sugar until creamy and set aside. Mix pudding and milk until thick. Combine with cheese mixture, using a whisk. Add Cool Whip topping and vanilla to pudding-cheese mixture. Crush Oreo cookies, including the white filling. Layer as follows: cookie crumbs, cream mixture, cookie crumbs.... And end with a later of crumbs. Can decorate with gummy worms or other artistic flourishes.

Thank you, for your kind cooperation. Your participation and contributions will ensure that the Lady Panther Pasta Dinners will continue to be a cherished tradition for the girls.