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Spruce up the front entry for summer entertaining

By Amanda Eck



I don't know about you, but I am ready for longer days and warmer temps. Every evening around 6 p.m. you will find me in the backyard, feet up with a glass of wine, enjoying the evening breeze. We love to entertain in the summer and have friends over for casual dinners or simple drinks and hors d'oeuvres. But before those guests filter out to the backyard they first must come through the front door. And as you know the first impression of any space starts at the front of the home. So here are some simple ways to spruce up your front porch.

1) Give it a good clean. Sweep away the dust and dirt and remove any cobwebs. Some front entrances may need a good power washing to remove any tough stains from the winter and spring rains.

Front porch décor Photo provided

2) Add a pop of color. One of the quickest ways to add some curb appeal is to paint your front door a bold bright color. Make sure you use a paint that is for exterior surfaces and is easy to clean. My favorite front door paint colors are Benjamin Moore Vine Green, Sherwin Williams Tri-corn Black, Benjamin Moore Palladian Blue, Benjamin Moore Rumba Orange, Sherwin Williams Red Tomato, and Benjamin Moore Sunburst.

3) Update your address. Does your house number need a little face-lift? I love adding some modern metal or brass numbers to give the home a fresh look. You can find these at your local hardware store or one of my favorite online shops, Rejuvenation.com.

4) Go Green. If your porch gets sunlight, add some potted flowers. Or if you have a porch like mine that gets zero sunlight, go faux. I have two large urns with faux boxwoods on either side of my door. No watering required, but you do have to dust them from time to time.

5) Light the way. Update your outdoor lighting and it will give your space a fresh look instantly. Some great affordable outdoor lighting sources are Rejuvenation.com and CircaLighting.com.

6) Watch your step. And last, but not least, add a fun mat to welcome your guests. Now I am originally from the south, so I am all about a great monogrammed doormat. But there are lots of other fun options out there. Pottery Barn and West Elm carry some nice ones, and for online sources try Ballarddesigns.com or Frontgate.com.

Now that you've freshened up the entrance it's time to welcome your guests for some relaxing summer fun. Try this easy hors d'oeuvre recipe, which has been a hit at my place. Happy Entertaining!

Amanda's Easy Cheese Hors d'oeuvres

Manchego Cheese

Peach Preserves or Fig Preserves

Whole Almonds

Cut the manchego cheese into bite-size triangles; add a dollop of preserves and then top with an almond. Seriously the easiest and it pairs well with a summer sparkling Rose or Prosecco.



Vine Green BM 2034-20



Tricorn Black SW 6258



Palladian Blue BM HC-144



Rumba Orange BM 2014-20



Red Tomato SW 6607



Sunburst BM 2023-40



As the Owner and Principal Designer of Lamorinda-based Amanda Carol Interiors, Amanda Eck believes your home's interior should be both approachable and well- appointed. She often asserts, "Beauty is a necessity." With a distinct sense of style that mixes contemporary and classic design she fashions spaces that are both elegant and inviting. Her design aesthetic is inspired by anything visual but especially fashion, architecture and art. Visit <http://amandacarolinteriors.com> for more design ideas.

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