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Create A Fun And Entertaining St. Patrick's Day Celebration.

By Jolanda Garcia

On March 17, everyone likes to feel a little Irish. St. Patrick's Day is a great holiday for kids and adults alike. It is a lot of fun to learn about the history of St. Patrick's Day, to hunt for leprechauns, four-leaf clovers, and that lucky pot 'o gold.

St. Patrick's Day Tradition - There are many traditions and activities that help celebrate the life of St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, the emerald island. With your children, locate Ireland on a map and research about the history of St. Patrick's Day, the shamrock, the Blarney Stone and where leprechauns come from. St. Patrick's Day is celebrated worldwide with people dancing and singing, watching St. Patrick's Day parades, eating green food, wearing green clothes (and pinching those who aren't wearing green!).

Clover everywhere - Shamrocks are three-leafed clovers, and if you find a four-leafed clover, you are thought to be lucky! Decorate your house for the holiday. Create a centerpiece from pots of shamrocks (clover) that can often be found at this time of year in local supermarket. Add some gold ribbons and shamrock garlands to the pot to make them even more festive.

For a great art project, cut shamrock shapes from coffee filters and have children add green and yellow colored water to the shamrock.

For the St. Patrick's Day parade, make a green shamrock bracelet by cutting a one inch strip off a paper roll and paint green. Cut four heart shapes out of green craft paper and glue together to make a shamrock.

Green, green and more green - Green is the theme of the day! Just about every child knows and loves the book Green Eggs and Ham. Simply tint some eggs green with a little food coloring and serve for breakfast. Read the story to your child as they eat their green treat. Prepare a green-themed dinner of pesto pasta and green veggies for dinner and don't forget the green cupcakes for dessert!

A leprechaun visit - Leprechauns are little Irish fairies, and they are thought to be shoemakers. The Irish say that if a leprechaun is caught by a human, he will reveal where he hides his pot of gold. The night before St. Patrick's Day, do some harmless pranks and mess up the family-room after your

children are in bed. Think of as many silly things as you can that your children will notice in the morning. Leave little gold coins or gold nuggets (beans sprayed golden) lying around. Hide a scroll (letter from the leprechaun – find print version at KidsSoup.com) for your children to find. Read the letter together and tell your children about the mischievous leprechauns and their pot of gold. Together write a letter to the leprechaun asking him about his life and to please clean up next time he plays in your house. Discuss how you could catch a leprechaun and make a leprechaun trap together. If you are lucky enough to capture a Leprechaun don't take your eyes off the Leprechaun for even a second or he will disappear. Happy leprechaun hunting....

With a bit of the luck of the Irish, St. Patrick's Day celebrations can be fun and entertaining for adults and kids, and you might just create new traditions for your family.

Jolanda Garcia is a former teacher and educational content designer and runs several websites. Visit her websites at: <http://www.kidssoup.com>

St. Patrick's Day Party Food Ideas For Kids

By Dee Power

Keep in mind that kids will eat more than just pizza. A lot of children I know love Cesar salad but if you tell them it has anchovies, "fish," in it, forget about it. So always try to embellish or create a new name for a dish. For example broccoli with cheese sauce, try using the name "Lucky the Leprechaun's clover trees with melted gold sauce" or if you are using minced herbs over food for a green color effect, tell your kids it's "Lucky the Leprechaun's magical clover/shamrock flakes. St. Patrick's day party food for kids can be fun to make and to eat.

If you're a little unsure about picky kids always serve one dish you know is a hit. Or serve sauces & dips on the side. Be creative. Think Shamrock green and pot of gold yellow.

Here are a few ideas for St. Patrick's day party food for kids to get you going. Most adults will love these tidbits too.

Cucumber Bites * Use a vegetable peeler to cut lengthwise strips of peel down four sides of large cucumber leaving some visible peel, making a square shape. Cut cucumber into 1 inch chunks. With a melon baller scoop out a hole in the middle of the cucumber to create a bite size bowl. Be sure not to go too deep you want the bottom to stay in tact. Fill with garlic and herb cream cheese, or dill dip.

St. Patty's Vegetable table tray * Cut up broccoli, cucumber, celery, green bell peppers, snap peas, and zucchini use ranch or dill dip. For extra color sprinkle minced parsley or dill in and on top of dip.

St. Patrick's fruit tray * Use green grapes, sliced green apple, sliced kiwi, balled honeydew melon. Use tooth picks to pick up fruit and dip into vanilla yogurt or key lime pie yogurt.

Clover Dip * Use your favorite spinach dip. I like Knorr's vegetable recipe mix. Serve with vegetables, crackers, or French baguette bread slices

Irish Deviled Eggs * Hard Boil eggs. Gently crack shells of the eggs, by rolling on a hard surface, but don't remove the shells. Place half of the eggs in 2 cup of hot water, two tablespoons of vinegar and 20 to 40 drops green food coloring. The dye bath should cover the eggs. Let the eggs sit in the dye bath for about 10 minutes. Take out one egg and remove the shell. The white of the egg should now be green and veined with darker green where the dye got through. If not let the eggs stay in the dye bath a little longer. Use your favorite deviled egg recipe. For the other half of the eggs, add chopped green herbs to the egg yolk to turn it green. Or add a few drops of food color to the yolks. I like a simple recipe for deviled eggs just adding mayonnaise and mustard to the yolks.

Use your imagination and your food at your St. Patrick's day party for kids will be a huge success.

Would you like a free booklet that has lots more ideas for <http://www.partyideaskids.com/stpatricksday.html>, St. Patrick's Day Party Ideas for Kids? Dee Power and her daughter have come with <http://www.partyideaskids.com> Party Ideas: Kids crammed with lots of tips and tricks for kids parties

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