



Live long and prosper in the Force: Sci-fi entertaining at its best

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Lunar eclipses, water discovered on Mars and Chewie is coming home! Okay, maybe the last occurrence is fictional (though no less awe-inspiring) ... but the point is, with life so closely resembling art, there's no better time to embrace otherworldly entertaining. In addition to the much-anticipated "Star Wars: The Force Awakens," other blockbuster reboots, such as a follow-up to "Independence Day" and an all-female "Ghostbusters," are making their way to the big screen. It's the perfect time to tap into your inner geek and throw a science-fiction film party like it's 2099!

'HELP ME, (PLAN THIS PARTY) OBI-WAN KENOBI. YOU'RE MY ONLY HOPE'

Not everyone is familiar with the ways of the Force. Not to worry. Even if a host isn't fully tapped into the realm of science-fiction film or its pop culture derivatives, it shouldn't deter him or her from hosting a perfectly out-of-this-world party. Like any good movie, begin with a bang and make party invitations a preview of what fun is to come.

Sweet Tea and Cactus on Etsy has a line of custom cards with a sci-fi spin including "Dr. Who," "Star Wars" and "Star Trek" themes in clever combinations (e.g. Leia and Han coming out of Dr. Who's police box). If pursuing the ghostbusting route, check out Sweet Digital Creation's

personalized-ready "Ghostbusters" invitation, featuring a likeness of the original cast with the infamous Ghostbusters logo.

If the upcoming blockbusters don't trip your lightsaber trigger, consider a past fantasy favorite like "Lord of the Rings" or "The Hobbit." Craft an invitation on parchment with Elvish-inspired handwriting and include a single gold ring inside. Instruct guests that to gain party admittance, the ring must be presented-and remind them to knock three times on the door bearing the sign "No admittance except on party business."

'I LIKE THIS SHIP (SCENE)! YOU KNOW, IT'S EXCITING!'

Mission: to make a party atmosphere sci-fi fans will swoon over. There is no shortage of "Star Wars" merchandise, counting down to the December debut of "The Force Awakens." You could surely populate a room with Millennium Falcons, Death Stars and mylar R2D2s, but why not go the extra light-year by going beyond simply decorating ... to creating an iconic scene?

"Star Wars" fans can turn a kitchen or dining area into Mos Eisley Cantina. Provide a drink list consisting of bizarre-looking beverages. GeekGirlBrunch.com has an entire ready-made menu consisting of rum-based Jedi and the Sith cocktails, The Han Solo (made with coffee liqueur) and the ominous, but no doubt delicious Dark Side Martini (black rum, creme de cacao, black food coloring and brown sugar).

To mimic the lighting of Mos Eisley's ethereal glow, centralize the lighting in the bar area with space-like fixtures such as Pottery Barn Kids' hanging metal pendant or hand-crafted industrial lighting. Drown out all other ambient light to accentuate the spacey, dive bar feel.

Of course, no true Jedi environment would be complete without a lightsaber. Fun.com has mountable lightsaber lights with hues accommodating both Jedi and Sith personalities (green and red).

Top off the Mos Eisley scene with spacey-cantina music.

Alternately, if tastes veer closer to supernatural rather than extraterrestrial, recreate a 1980s-inspired "Ghostbusters" apartment. Re-create the scene of Sigourney Weaver's kitchen, complete with boombox, marshmallows, cooked eggs on the counter and a "Zuul" inside the fridge.

Encourage guests to dress the part-extra kudos to whoever comes as the Stay Puft MarshMallow Man!

'THAT'S GREAT, RAY. SAVE SOME (FOOD) FOR ME'

If only a hostess had a replicator. For example, if you were Captain Picard, you'd order an "Earl Gray, hot" and it would show up instantly inside the handy-dandy duplicating-food machine.

Replicator aside, it's still possible to satisfy unusual appetites with equally unusual kitchenware.

For a Trekkie-inspired party, serve guests a rainbow roll with a Star Trek U.S.S. Enterprise Sushi Set (ThinkGeek.com).

Before the "Force Awakens," wake up taste buds with Wookie Cookies, recipe courtesy "The Star Wars Cookbook: Wookie Cookies and Other Galactic Recipes," Obi-Wan Kabobies (fruit kabobs) and Darth Vader Sausage Rolls (MamaWithIdeas.com).

If going "Ghostbusters," marshmallows should be incorporated in some way-Green-Slimed Popcorn is an easily makeable (albeit gooey) treat. Be sure to provide de-Slimer wipes (wet wipes) for sticky fingers.

Perhaps one of the easiest appetites to accommodate is that of Middle Earth enthusiasts. Dwarves, known for their voracious appetites, are meat lovers, Elves are more of the vegetarian persuasion and Hobbits eat a little of everything. Place food on a tablecloth featuring a map of Middle Earth and place each dish on a corresponding land, such as Lembas Bread on the Elven land of Rivendell.

For added fun, treat guests to a personalized science-fiction ice cream flavor of your own making. eCreamery (ecreamery.com) enables customers to not only create their own flavor combinations, but to name them as well-and they'll deliver to your door. In preparation of the next "Independence Day," maybe a Goldblum Grapefruit Sorbet is in order. Or, pick from an existing made-to-order "Star Wars"-inspired line such as Ewok Road, C3P Dough and Java the Hut.

'I HAVE GOT TO GET ME ONE OF THESE (PARTY FAVORS)!'

"Spare no expense," said John Hammond, fictional founder of Jurassic Park. Of course we all know how things turned out for him. Still, it's those finishing touches that really make a party. Instead of raptors, think about safer party favors for guests to enjoy.

Award the best-dressed "Star Wars" character (past or present) with a custom-made quoted wrap bracelet from Elizabeth Lyons Designs' "Traveling Beyond Bracelet" collection: "I love Han Solo," "Boba Fett, Boba Fett!" or "Delusions of Grandeur!"

Have a pinning ceremony for Trekkies by awarding Federation Insignia pins.

Don't let "Ghostbusters" partygoers escape with out a jar of green "ectoplasm." YouTube has several instructive videos on how to make DIY slime.