

Fun Family Themed Dinner Nights





As we continue to be on “Shelter in Place,” families across the country are getting very creative on how to make memories with their children and have fun together, even when stuck at home.

All over social media, people have been posting their family theme dinner nights. If you have TikTok, go check out [@caitcanoe](#). The mastermind behind these fabulous dining experiences is 14-year-old Derek Cannuscio from Massachusetts. He prepares dinners for his family around certain themes, like in-flight dining, a hibachi-style meal, a recreation of a favorite restaurant, Mexican Food night, and a romantic, Cinderella-themed meal for his parents, to name a few.

During these hard times, make your dining experiences something fun and different. It will create a memory your children will remember forever and one day tell their own children about.



Kid's Family Dinner Theme Night Planning Sheet

Dinner Theme: _____

Dinner Menu: _____

**Atmosphere/
Decorations:** _____

Activities: _____

Music: _____

Movies: _____



Theme Ideas

Here are some theme ideas to help jumpstart your creativity. Use your imaginations and whatever you have on hand around the house. You would be surprised at what can be created with items you already have. Let the kids brainstorm and research different ideas connected to your theme. You can have them plan the entire theme night. You will be amazed at what your kids will come up with and create (repurpose) out of items they can find within the walls of your home. Plus, the results will be pure entertainment, with lots of laughs.

1) Day at the Beach

Plan a fun indoor or outdoor beach day themed dinner/ or lunch. The attire on this one is easy – just pick something out of your closet that you would typically wear to the beach. Bring out the beach towels, blankets and lawn chairs. Serve food items you might pack and take on a beach trip. Plan fun games you might play at the beach. Put on your favorite music and find a family movie that connects to your beach theme (i.e. *Finding Nemo*, *Moana*, *Lilo and Stitch*, *Dolphins Tale*, *Big Miracle*, *Surfs Up*, etc.)

2) Pirates

Have fun creating your own pirate attire. It might sound challenging, but you could easily use just a couple of things to transform yourself into a pirate. You can simply tie back your hair in a bandana, make an eye patch, draw on a tattoo or facial hair with make-up, etc. Have the kids research “pirate talk” and you must talk like a pirate the entire dinner. Play fun pirate games (this is a common summer camp theme) like, a treasure hunt with a map. Watch a fun family pirate movie (i.e. *Peter Pan*, *Hook*, *TinTin*, *Treasure Planet*, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Treasure Island*, etc.).



3) Backwards Dinner

This one you can go totally crazy and silly with. Be creative! Wear your clothing backwards. Eat under the table. Start with dessert and work your way to your salad or appetizer. Play a boardgame and start at the finish line and work your way to the start. Try and talk backwards...so many possibilities!



4) Time Travel

Have the kids pick any era of time travel they wish to go back to for dinner. It could be from an era not too far back – where they plan a totally 70s, 80s or 90s night, with the popular dress, food, music, movies and games of that era. Or they could choose to travel further back and create a dinner around the roaring 20's, sock-hop 50's or even way back to the medieval times with sword fights and eating dinner with your hands. This is a theme the kids will have fun researching the era and creating fun ideas. They can come to the table with fun facts about the era to share. Plus, the family could make their own family time capsule.



5) Movie Mashup

Have your kids pick one of their favorite movies and plan a themed dinner around this movie. Dress up as their favorite character, come up with games (i.e. movie trivia, work in their favorite lines from the movie during dinner conversation) and create a fun food menu that connects to the film. At the end, watch the movie together, as a family.

6) Around the World

Pick a country and plan your menu according to what is popular or traditionally eaten in that country. This one you might need to plan backwards. First, see what food items you have in the house and plan an ethnic meal around what is available. Have the kids learn

something about the country and share at the dinner table. Listen to popular music from this country. Learn a couple words or phrases, if this country speaks a different language. Talk, during dinner, with an accent (i.e. if your country is Australia, England or Ireland). Have the kids research a traditional game that is played in the country they have chosen.

7) Comedy Club Night

The menu for this one could be whatever the kids want to plan and make (i.e. their favorite easy meal). The real star of this night is what takes place after dinner...Open Mic Night!

Everyone can prepare their jokes before dinner. The kids can even create a stage and seating area in the family room. Even the night of laughs with a fun family movie



comedy. You can also change it up and plan a **Karaoke Nightclub Dinner** (with Karaoke singing instead of comedy).

8) Kids Favorite Book

This one is similar to the “Movie Mashup” theme. The kids pick a favorite book and plan their themed night around it. For example, *Harry Potter*, *Green Eggs and Ham*, *Dragons Love Tacos*, *Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs*, *Very Hungry Caterpillar*, etc.

9) Mystery Dinner

The kids can write a mystery to go along with dinner. They could even make dinner a mystery. For older kids, they can plan and make dinner, without the parents knowing what they are having for dinner. Then, they can cover the meal and the parents must figure out what they are having based on clues given or create a fun game of 20 questions. For younger kids, the parents can create the mystery dinner. Also, kids can create a fun “who done it,” story and each family member can be a character within the mystery. Clues are given throughout the dinner, in order, for the guests to solve the mystery.

10) Slumber Party

Create one big slumber party for the entire family. Everyone dressed in their pajamas. Eat breakfast for dinner. Play slumber party games. Stay up late telling ghost stories and watching movies.



11) Fancy Dinner

Everyone gets dressed up for dinner. Eat by candlelight, make your favorite “special occasion” meal, use the fancy dishes.



12) Camping

Create a family campout either in your backyard or in your family room. Create a campout menu like, hot dogs and hamburgers with smores for dessert. If you have one, make everything on your BBQ. Setup a tent in your backyard, in your family room or make a home indoor fort. Create a campfire out of flashlights or candles in jars (be safe) and tell stories, sing songs, create fun skits, etc.



Additional Ideas....

- **Halloween Bash**
- **Superhero Theme**
- **Disneyland Park**
- **Recreate your favorite family restaurant**
- **Musical Theater Night**
- **Old Wild West**