

A lush garden scene featuring a black metal gate with a decorative top, a stone obelisk on the right, and various flowers including white and yellow blooms. The background is filled with dense green foliage and a large tree trunk on the left.

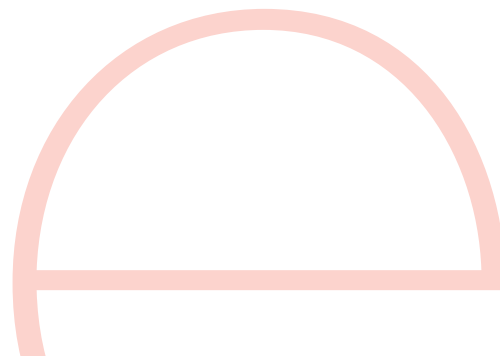
# Southern Hospitality on the North Shore

Interior designer and Mississippi native **MEG BRAFF**  
serves up a charming and colorful dinner  
for friends and family at her Long Island home

By **MARGOT SHAW** Photography by **BROOKE SLEZAK**



The hostess, dressed in a joyous poppy-colored maxi dress, carries arrangements to the dinner table. OPPOSITE: A soft perennial border yields many a bloom for party arrangements.



**EARLY-SUMMER EVENINGS** beg for alfresco dinners. And when the soiree is set on the North Shore of Long Island and hosted by interior designer Meg Braff, then prepare for party perfection. Meg grew up in Tupelo, Mississippi, where entertaining was and is considered a high art form. “My mother would prepare food for days, and on the night of the party, I would help set the table and then get dressed up and ‘pass the rolls.’ It was my official job,” says Meg.

With the rhythms of life so different today, Meg wisely plans with collaboration in mind, but not just any collaboration. The story begins with, of all things, Instagram. Having followed Meg for a while, I was smitten by the crisp, chic style of her outdoor entertaining, often under a cheerful black-and-white striped awning with a vintage Woodard wrought iron table and chairs finished with robin’s-egg blue cushions. I kept noticing a familiar last name associated with the catering duties when she entertained at home: Mar Slocum. Having had a stepfather with the same last name, from the same hamlet,

**ABOVE LEFT:** Meg and Mar Slocum, her longtime friend and caterer, swap stories and pick out china and glassware. **LEFT:** Mar, who always insists on fresh, local, and organic food, slices fruit for the dessert plates. **OPPOSITE:** A view of the terrace from below in Meg’s garden. This chic, timeless scenario perfectly reflects the designer’s aesthetic.

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I couldn't help but imagine there might be a family connection. And of course, there was. When I pitched the idea of a dinner party and photo shoot to Meg, we instantly agreed, not surprisingly, that Mar would do the cooking honors.

The afternoon of the party, the two spent a good while chatting and giggling in front of the china cabinets, perusing stacks and stacks of plates. "My mother and grandmother instilled in me a love of fine china, linens, and the art of setting the table. They are certainly the root of my china-hoarding tendencies," Meg confesses.

Meg's inspiration was a classic Tassinari & Chatel floral fabric-cum-tablecloth in summer-bright colors. She picked up the vibrant green in the tablecloth in vintage lily pad plates by Jean Roger and oversize lettuce leaf-form water glasses.

**LEFT:** For the centerpiece of peonies, lady's mantle, delphinium, chamomile, and lilac, Meg selected her Vladimir Kanevsky porcelain cabbage tureen. **BELOW:** The chinoiserie monogrammed napkins are from Julian Mejia Design.





Party guests mingle before dinner.  
**OPPOSITE:** Guests served themselves from this smartly dressed bar cart.





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“When I’m decorating, I like to thread color throughout a home, so there is continuity from room to room. The same holds true for the scheme of a dinner party,” she says.

Her abundant gardens yielded the lion’s share of the flowers for table decoration and throughout the house. Meg’s trusted friend and team member Jason Schwartz artfully mixed them with selections from the flower market in New York City. On arrival, guests were offered a refreshing seasonal cocktail—a passion fruit margarita garnished with edible flowers and sprigs of mint—with replenishment available from a festive bar cart out on the patio. Dinner consisted of a simple, elegant

menu conceived by Mar. “We know each other so well,” Meg says. “She knows how I entertain, and she makes it easy. I like to keep things light in the summer, so a green salad, chicken breast with fresh vegetables, and Pavlova and peaches for dessert was perfect. Mar always knows what’s fresh and in season.”

After meeting and getting to know my long-lost kin, as well as a complement of colorful and talented guests, and experiencing the shimmer of a party beautifully planned and executed, I glanced over at one of the guests, who happened to be Meg’s mother. She was wearing a glowy, loving look of approval and pride, as well she should. ✨

**ABOVE LEFT:** Retro laticework lowball glasses add another outdoor design element to the décor. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Elegantly simple dinner fare contrasts beautifully with the more ornate monogrammed plate **OPPOSITE:** A goblet doubles as a vase for an informal bouquet of lady’s mantle, spray roses, and chamomile.

