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## CELEBRATIONS SCENE DEBI LILY

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It's that ghoulish time of year again and I've got some easy tips for creating the ultimate haunted Halloween party. Transform your Chicago home into Transylvania in a snap...

### SCARY AND CHIC

Looking to scare your guests, in style? Haunted house ambience is easy to achieve. Project your favorite scary movies on a bare wall for instant movie-theater style. You can play them with or without sound. Dim the lights, let the movies set the tone and – boo! You've set the room aglow with the images of Halloween.

Gory wall decals, like witches, spiders and handprints add that haunted house touch. If you're entertaining little ones and don't want to frighten them, try the old classic, *It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown*. In fact, that could make a great theme...

### HALLOWEEN THEME

Make it easy and pick a theme for your party. My favorites are characters from a cherished TV show, past or present; Disney characters; and floating heads. It's not as gory as it sounds! Simply ask your guests to wear all black and costume above the shoulders only, on the head and face. Giant wigs, masquerade masks, dramatic make-up and other inventive (or gory) ideas complete the look and provide endless opportunities. If you want to help your guests, hire a face painter to create ghoulish characters. Or, hire a temporary tattoo artist to adorn your pals in authentic style.

Capture the event by renting an old-fashioned photo booth for guests to create memories throughout the party. How scary or silly can you be? For a less costly option, provide Polaroid cameras on tables around the event – with lots of extra film – for friends to use and return home with mementos.

### PICK YOUR POISON

Of course, nothing sends a chill up spines like the ultimate specialty cocktail. Serve bright-red pomegranate juice and Effen Black Cherry Vodka punch in a large, clear punchbowl. It's delicious and festive! For the ultimate touch, add a frozen hand floating inside the bowl. Simply fill a plastic latex glove with water and red food coloring until the glove is full, and then tie the end into a knot. Freeze for 24 hours until frozen. Place the entire glove into the punch and watch the "bloody" hand float along!

### HAUNTED (BUT YUMMY!) FOOD

Halloween is all about the candy, but these Witches Fingers are sure to impress—and satisfy. Roll thawed bread dough into long, thick "fingers." Score the middle a few times with a knife to replicate the knuckle. Press sliced almonds into one end, creating "fingernails." Brush with olive oil and sprinkle with garlic powder. Bake for 20 minutes at 350°F.

Then, the candy! Offer a haunted candy bar of black or red candies...black licorice, red jellybeans and Halloween chocolates. Make the ultimate, easy centerpiece with red Hot Tamales in a glass bowl, topped by giant gummy rats. Stuff skull bowls with eyeball candies or serve eyeball lollipops. Place plastic critters around the table or inside the bowls for the complete effect.

Now you've got the most impressive haunted Halloween party this side of Elm St... **scene**

*Debi Lilly is president of A Perfect Event, a Chicago-based national event-planning firm. Debi serves as an industry expert for InStyle Magazine, Martha Stewart Weddings, InStyle Weddings, Chicago Social and Chicago Magazine, among others. She has a faithful and well-known following, including Oprah Winfrey, among many other high profile clientele. For more information, visit [Aperfectevent.com](http://Aperfectevent.com).*