

# Flavorful, on-trend Asian-inspired summer entertaining

Summer is the perfect time to bring out the grill and enjoy creating a flavorful meal when entertaining your family and friends. While some choose to whip up classic recipes, you can heat things up by taking advantage of all the seasonal ingredients and popular culinary trends, such as opting for authentic, Asian-inspired recipes.

With many Americans opting to eat more ethnic foods, it's evident that global flavors continue to be on the rise. While Asian flavors are not new, they continue to pique consumers' curiosity. Incorporating on-trend, plant-based products and ingredients that bring out Asian flavors aid in creating bright and balanced dishes for all your eating occasions both indoors and in the backyard this summer.

Consider these tips to ensure your summer gatherings are ones to remember.

## Take advantage of seasonal ingredients

Summer provides a variety of fresh flavors to incorporate into meals, whether you're stirring up a classic family recipe or something new. Seasonal tastes like tomatoes, peaches, corn, blueberries, avocados and other sun-ripened fruits and vegetables can help showcase the variety of the summer harvest.

## Opt for simple, flavorful swaps

From sides to salads

and sandwiches, many summer dishes are served with creamy condiments. However, simple, accessible swaps can provide the same robust flavors using fewer, cleaner ingredients. One time-tested example is rice vinegar, which can be an alternative to mayonnaise and creamy dressings. To help elevate the flavors of your summertime dishes with minimal calories, consider an option like the NAKANO lineup of eight delicious rice vinegars, which are made with real rice and the finest ingredients, creating a clean flavor that is smoother and mellow compared to other vinegars. Featuring easy-to-read labels with no more than seven ingredients, it has no added preservatives, no artificial flavors and no high-fructose corn syrup or MSG. These rice vinegars are available in eight delicious varieties, including the new Toasted Sesame Rice Vinegar.

## Serve up on-trend Asian dishes

Asian flavors and ingredients continue to be increasingly popular due to delicious flavor profiles combined with vibrant colors and presentation on the plate. When warmer weather calls for lighter meals, go for an option that blends popular culinary trends and adventurous tastes like those typically found in Asian cooking to wow your crowd. Even the most inexperienced of cooks can whip up this



Asian Buddha Bowl with Lemon-Tahini Dressing. PROVIDED

Asian Buddha Bowl with Lemon-Tahini Dressing, featuring tofu, nourishing veggies and a sweet-yet-tangy dressing — a combination to leave your guests eager for your next get-together.

For more recipe inspiration and tips for creating fresh summer flavors, visit [NAKANOFavors.com](http://NAKANOFavors.com).

## Asian Buddha Bowl with Lemon-Tahini Dressing

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

Servings: 6

### Ingredients

2 tablespoons NAKANO

Seasoned Rice Vinegar or NAKANO Roasted Garlic Rice Vinegar

1/4 cup tamari (Japanese soy sauce)

1 tablespoon sesame oil

2 teaspoons chili paste

2 garlic cloves, diced

2 blocks extra-firm tofu, pressed and cut into 1-inch cubes

Nonstick cooking spray

Wooden skewers, soaked in water

2 cups fresh, shredded carrot

2 cups broccoli, cooked and cut into small florets

3 cups brown rice, cooked

2 teaspoons sesame seeds, toasted

1 tablespoon NAKANO

Natural Rice Vinegar or

NAKANO Organic Natural Rice Vinegar

2 tablespoons tahini (sesame seed paste)

3 tablespoons sesame oil

1 tablespoon tamari (Japanese soy sauce)

1 tablespoon maple syrup

1 garlic clove, grated

1 teaspoon grated ginger

2 tablespoons lemon juice

Directions

In small bowl, whisk rice

vinegar, tamari, sesame oil, chili paste and diced

garlic. Add tofu to bowl and

place in refrigerator 10-20

minutes to allow tofu to

marinate. Before lighting grill,

spray with nonstick cooking spray then heat grill to medium-high heat. Remove tofu from marinade and thread on skewers. Grill each skewer 10 minutes, turning midway, or to desired doneness.

In six bowls, evenly combine carrots, broccoli, baked tofu, brown rice and sesame seeds.

In medium bowl, whisk

rice vinegar, tahini, sesame

oil, tamari, maple syrup,

garlic, ginger and lemon

juice until combined. Top

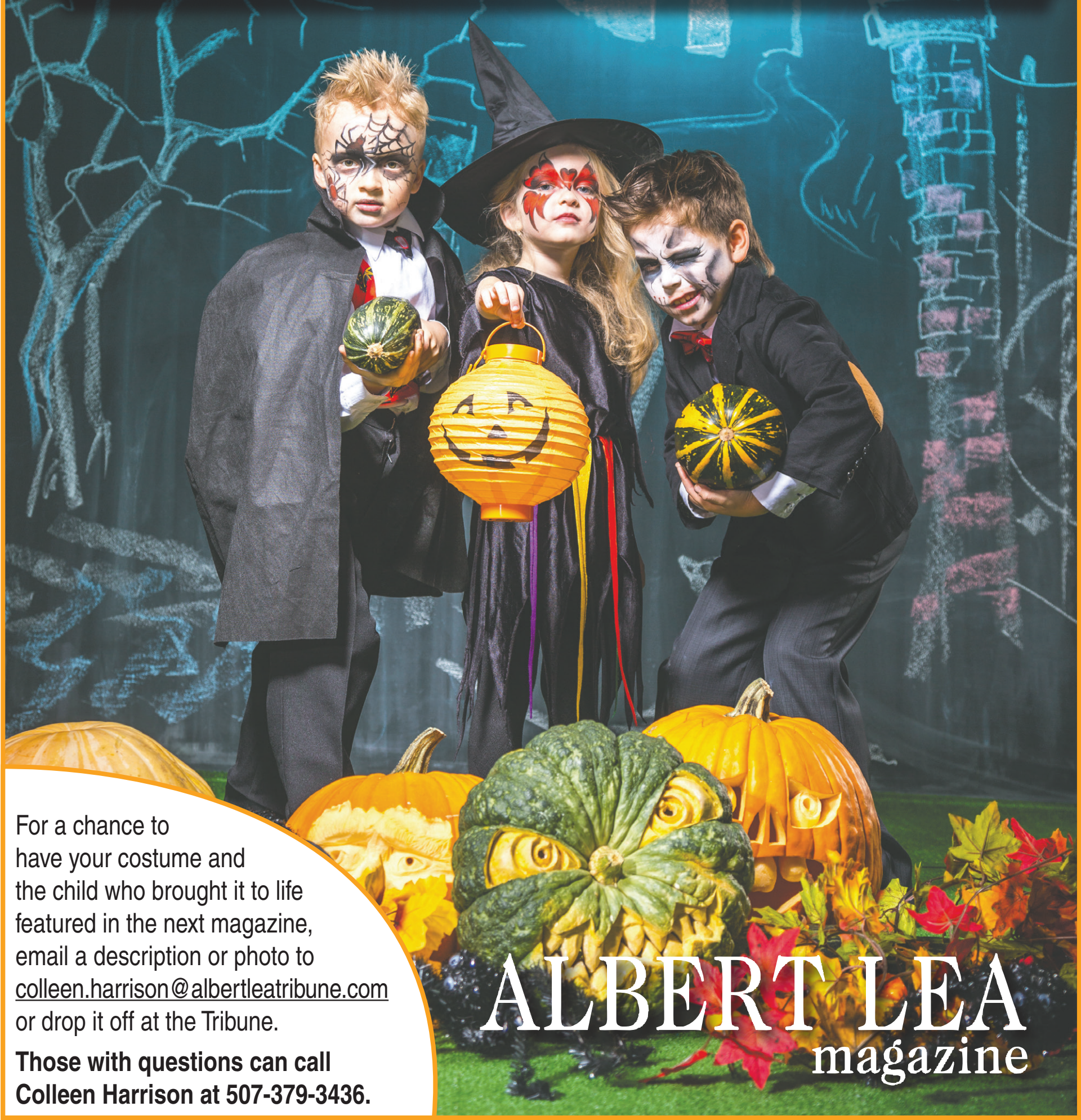
each bowl with dressing,

as desired. Tofu can be substituted

with 1 1/2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken or top sirloin steak.

# HOMEMADE HALLOWEEN FUN

**Do you help create costumes for your children or grandchildren?  
We're looking to feature some creative homemade children's costumes  
in the September/October Albert Lea Magazine.**



For a chance to have your costume and the child who brought it to life featured in the next magazine, email a description or photo to [colleen.harrison@albertleatribune.com](mailto:colleen.harrison@albertleatribune.com) or drop it off at the Tribune.

Those with questions can call Colleen Harrison at 507-379-3436.

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