

You're Having A Party!

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By Arleen M. Kaptur

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Fall – a fantastic season with the Holiday Party Season just nipping at its heels!

What makes a good party and how do hosts/hostesses get through the anxiety, worry, and how do they take care of all those details and bring it all to a successful conclusion?

A few tips for some really great parties. As a caterer, there are many tips, tricks, and so-called survival techniques.

Here are a few:

The first thing you do when you would like to have a party is decide on the occasion or theme—is it an anniversary, a birthday, a Halloween costume party, or an After Raking the Leaves get-together for family and neighbors? Then decide on how many guests to invite. This will greatly affect your table arrangements, menu, etc. More importantly, you must take into account the space you have available to comfortably entertain (even small spaces can be used effectively), and your budget.

With regard to theme, once that is chosen your menu becomes easier. The food should directly relate to the event. A Trimming the Tree party could have fantastic cocoa beverages, while your Hawaiian Luau would make this very inappropriate. A buffet is easier than a sit-down dinner, but space becomes critical. If guests are asked to serve themselves, then they must have somewhere to place their plates, sit, converse, and enjoy themselves.

Invitations follow your initial planning. A printed invitation is a more thoughtful way, then a mere telephone call. The written version contains all the essential information, so there are no mis-dates, time, or destination, especially if the party will not be at your home.

A simple schedule for you is next. Write down all the details – the decorations, menu, and amenities. This insures that the "non" immediates are handled in advance and the "immediates" such as fresh flowers, fresh produce, etc. are all last-minute items. Do as much as you comfortably can ahead of time. Make-ahead foods are great and give you a lot more time on the last minute food items. Use foods you are comfortable with, but with a twist. In other words, an event is not a good time to try a new, never-used recipe. It will only add to the anxiety and stress. Also consider food garnishments and touches. Use food to decorate food! If artificial items are used, they will need to be removed by your guests.

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Also, have and utilize a party log. In other words, write down your exact party plans, the guest list, menu, etc. in a notebook. Write down what went very well and what didn't. Which guest did not interact very well with others, etc. This will give you valuable insight into future parties. Also this allows you to invite guests that are compatible so that no one is uncomfortable. Also you avoid duplicating menu plans, decorations, etc. When the day of the party arrives, stay calm. Use your schedule and cross out all items as they get done. Have everything ready (except for hot-from-the-oven items) in place and do a once-over about an hour before the guests begin to arrive. Then dress-up, relax and make sure you enjoy the party as much as you would like your guests to. Nothing is more tense at an event, then a host/hostess that is jittery, upset, and obviously stressed out. Visit and personally greet each and every arrival and look after the extra details that mean so much to your guests. Extra towels, napkins, temperature adjustments for too warm or too cold, name cards on the table (double-faced for comfortable conversations), and easily handled food. If accidents occur, such as spilled beverages or

dropped food, discreetly do immediate clean-up, but save the real clean-up for after the guests leave. This will save embarrassment and frustration on the perpetrator.

Your reputation will soar as a successful host/hostess with just a few of these tips.

ENJOY!

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Party Planning For Dummies

By Patty Illomia

Planning for a party is no small stuff. It can be really hard to plan for any kind of party and the more important your party is the more stress you are bound to be under. It is a good thing for you that I am here to write this spectacular party planning article to help you to plan the perfect party for any occasion.

Party planning needs to start with a budget. You cannot just go out and start purchasing things willy-nilly without a budget and a plan. SO begin your party planning with making up a good budget. How much money do you have to spend on your party? Decide on a reasonable amount and then break this party planning budget down into sections.

Your party planning sections should look something like this, food, decorations, party favors, and plates, cups and napkins. Once you have this stage of your party planning finished you can then start filling in the columns. How many dishes will you need? Is this the kind of party that requires party favors? This is one of the most important aspects of party planning and it is what will make your shopping for your party much, much easier. Once you have a defined list you can go out and start your shopping. Party planning can be stressful, sure, but it should also be fun. After all you are planning for a party, so enjoy it!

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The food that you choose for your party is important to the entire event. You will have to take into consideration what kind of party it is that you are having in the party planning stage. For example, is your party planning being done for a birthday, or an anniversary? Is your party planning being done for a theme party? These types of things matter when you are trying to choose the foods that will suit your party to perfection. IF you are having a themed party then have foods that suit it. If you are having a luau themed party have Hawaiian foods and drinks or if you are having a Christmas party then have Christmas themed foods. This is just smart party planning and it will make your party all the more fun for everyone.

Patty Illomia owns and operates Instan Party Planning Ideas at

. You'll find many options and Ideas for Party Planning that

are right for you.



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