

Holiday Party Planning Tips by Missy Green

The holiday season, be it with family, friends, co-workers or business associates, is a time for celebration. Traditions are important when planning a holiday party. Whether you are celebrating Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, or any other holiday, it would be nice to share some special traditions for your guests to learn about and enjoy.



Dates and times are crucial when planning a holiday or company party. In general, Friday and Saturday nights are the first to be booked. If you are considering having your party, outside your home, at a country club, hotel or a private room in a restaurant, book early.

Open Houses during the week are always nice, especially at holiday time. More of my customers over the last few years have had cocktail and wine tasting parties during the holiday season. If you are serving appetizers, I would recommend 4 – 6 pieces per guest.

As many of us begin our holiday party plans, the following tips are suggestions that I have shared with customers, to help them ensure a smooth and successful event.

1. Have a realistic budget and stick with it.
2. Make sure that your financial obligations, including deposits and deadlines for payment, are understood in advance by all parties involved.
3. Your budget will be impacted by the number of guests. The higher the number of guests attending, the lower the amount will be to spend on food, beverage, décor, entertainment, etc. to maintain your budget.
4. Mailed invitations convey the warmth and thought that the host or hostess has put into the event. This sets the tone of the holiday party, and makes a great impression. The invitations do not need to be expensive. By keeping the cost down, they can be simple,

yet elegant. An E-vite or E-mail invitation has also become more socially acceptable.

5. RSVP's are extremely important when planning your holiday party. It does not matter whether you are entertaining in your home or having your event at another venue. The final number of guests will impact the costs for the food, beverages, centerpieces, favors, rentals, etc. If you do not want to spend the extra money for an RSVP card, have your phone number and E-mail address printed at the bottom left-hand corner of the invitation. Truthfully, any type of communication with the host or hostess would be greatly appreciated. Until you host an event on your own, you do not realize how imperative an RSVP can be.
6. When hosting your holiday party at a venue other than your home, it is important to determine if the bar will be hosted for the entire time of the event or just for a specific period. This information should be printed on the invitation so the guests know what to expect. If you are entertaining in your own home, wine, beer, soft drinks and bottled water seem to be most popular, and I always recommend a designated driver for those who need assistance getting home.
7. Depending on which holiday you celebrate, table décor can be as simple as pinecones and branches from your yard or fresh fruits and vegetables from your kitchen. Several of these items can be spray painted and glittered for a lovely holiday centerpiece. Whether you decorate with a Christmas Tree, Hanukkah Menorah or Kinara for Kwanzaa, everyone has their own special décor to display at holiday time.
8. Gift exchanges are fun at holiday events. Keep in mind not everyone celebrates the same holiday; therefore your gift should be appropriate for any of your guests.

9. The key to a successful holiday dinner party is planning. Prepare foods in advance that can be stored in your refrigerator or freezer. Are any of your guests Vegan or Vegetarian? If so, prepare something they will feel comfortable eating. Don't be afraid to ask for assistance the day of your event. Take time for yourself before your guests arrive. They will see a relaxed host or hostess, and enjoy themselves so much more.

For the past 25 years, I have helped plan my customer's parties, weddings and special events around their budgets, even passing on some of my discounts, to find the most cost effective way to provide everything that my customer wants. If you have any questions or need assistance in planning your holiday party, please contact my office at your convenience.

Happy Holidays to you all. I wish you peace in your life; joy in your heart, and good health throughout the coming year.

Missy Green

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