

## PARTIES TO REMEMBER: Top 10 Tips for Planning Your Memorable Event by Missy Green

**1. Budget:** Have a realistic budget and stick with it.

**2. Decide on the date, time and place** (time of year, indoors or outside, afternoon or evening): All will affect many other choices and therefore should be decided as early as possible.

**3. Determine the number of guests:** Your budget will be impacted by this number; the higher the number of guests, the lower the amount that you can spend on food, beverage and entertainment.

**4. Secret site visits:** Arrive early (at least an hour or even a day if possible) for any planned site visits and do some mystery shopping by asking questions of the staff. Are they trained to provide information, directions and courteous help? What impression does the entrance to the facility give to arriving guests?

**5. Who's paying for the event?:** Make sure financial obligations, including deposits and deadlines for payment, are understood in advance by all parties involved.

**6. Invitations:** Mailed invitations make a great impression, but most guests do not save them. Therefore, make them simple, keeping printing costs down and putting the extra money back into the event. Online and emailed invitations are becoming more accepted and also can be used as reminders after a mailed invitation.

**7. Hosted or non-hosted bar:** Will your bar be hosted for the entire event or for a specific period of time? This information should be printed on the invitation so guests know what to expect.



**8. Flowers, decor, rentals, favors, photography, video:** After the food, beverage and entertainment have been determined, the remainder should be budgeted for these extras.

**9. Event planners' rescue kit:** Every event planner should have an emergency kit at the event, including scissors, box cutter, twine, adhesive tape, duct tape, blank paper, pens, markers, paper clips, stapler, sewing kit and compact first aid kit. Your clients and attendees will never forget what you did to help repair a broken display or prevent a fashion disaster.

**10. Ask for an all-inclusive price, with no hidden costs:** Make sure that you thoroughly read the contract, and do not sign anything until every question is completely answered and understood.

*Missy Green is founder and owner of Parties to Remember, a Reno-based event planning service celebrating this year its 25th anniversary of creating memorable events, meetings and celebrations.*

