

****MEDIA RELEASE****

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Top 10 Tips for Hosting the Perfect Party

Whether you're having a casual backyard barbecue, or planning an elegant soiree, here are 10 tips for hosting the perfect party this festive season from the events teachers at TAFE Queensland South West ...

1 - Get Organised Ahead of Time

Where and when will you be hosting the party? Who do you want to invite? What will you serve?

Ask any event planner and they'll agree – the key to keeping everything (and everyone) on track, from planning to partying to cleaning up afterwards, is organisation.

Start planning a month before your party if you can, and use a checklist to stay organised every step of the way.

2- Pick a Theme

Themed parties aren't just for kids! Themes are a simple way to make sure your party is a hit, whether you're planning a small get-together or a sprawling celebration. Pick a theme, then work around it – choose décor, tableware, drinks, food, and music that matches your choice.

Some themes to consider for Summer (apart from your classic Christmas or New Year's themes) include:

- Tropical Paradise
- Outdoor Fiesta
- A Day at the Beach
- Barbecue Party
- The Great Gatsby
- Summer Luau

3 - Choose Your Décor Wisely

If you're sticking to a theme, make sure your décor reflects it – choose multicoloured streamers for a fiesta theme, seashells for a beach theme, and elegant candles and silverware for a sophisticated garden party.

For example, vibrant seasonal flowers, colourful tableware, candles, elegant tablecloths, and – of course – a piñata, are all staple summer party decorations.

4 - Pick Paper Invitations

Online invitations may be quick, easy and convenient, but there's nothing like receiving an old-fashioned paper invitation. Mailed invitations are the perfect way to build anticipation and help set the overall tone of your party. Choose ready-made invitations from an online stationary shop, or get creative (and save a good deal of money) by making your own – any craft store would have all the supplies necessary to make some charming paper invites for your guests.

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5 - Prepare Drinks Beforehand

A party wouldn't be complete without drinks, alcoholic or not! To make sure your guests have something to sip on right away, prepare cocktails beforehand, and serve them to guests as they arrive. A mixed punch bowl is great for outdoor parties, and margaritas and sangrias are classic favourites.

No matter the type of party, a good host or hostess is responsible with alcohol – make sure your guests don't go overboard with their drinks, and always ensure that guests have a safe way home after the party's wrapped up.

If you want to keep things casual, set up a self-serve bar where guests can mix their own drinks, and make sure to include plenty of non-alcoholic options to keep everyone happy and hydrated.

6 - It's All About the Food

Take advantage of flavours by choosing produce that's in season – seasonal fruit and vegetables (like peaches, watermelon, cherries, artichokes and field tomatoes in Summer) will keep your menu on theme.

Prepare most of your food in advance, and lighten the load for yourself by getting guests to bring a dish – most of the time, people are more than happy to contribute!

While grilled meat entrees and appetizers are always a hit, don't forget to prepare alternatives for your vegetarian friends.

7 - Make a Solid Playlist

Keep your guests head-bobbing, singing and dancing with a solid set of songs that will satisfy all tastes. Set up a playlist beforehand to avoid any silences, or get your guests to take turns being DJ.

If you've decided on throwing a themed party, choose music that works with your theme, like Hawaiian music for a Luau theme and Summer Top 40 for a Day at the Beach.

8 - Don't Forgo the Lighting

When you think of "party", you may not think of lighting. But the way your party is lit can actually make or break the mood of your entire get-together. Make sure that your lighting reflects the overall ambience of your party – choose dimmer lighting for a cozy get-together, or paper lanterns and string lights for an outdoor barbecue.

9 - Keep it Comfortable

While mixing and mingling is always fun, eventually your guests will want to rest, and that means you need to provide them with plenty of places to sit. Make sure you have comfortable seating on hand for at least 30% of your crowd, so that whoever wants to take a break from standing can have a (comfy) seat.

10 - Put Safety First

If you're throwing a barbecue party, make sure you stay safe by the grill. Avoid foodborne illnesses by properly preparing and handling your food, and remember: food shouldn't sit at room temperature for too long – after two hours, you'll want to refrigerate or throw away any leftovers.

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A responsible host or hostess puts safety first, no matter the type of party they're throwing.

Bonus tip: make sure your home insurance policy is up to date, and includes liability coverage, so that you're covered in case a guest is injured on your property.

For a limited time only you can study a Certificate III in Events (SIT30516) for just \$300 at TAFE Queensland South West (terms and conditions apply), for more information please visit www.tafesouthwest.edu.au or call 1300 914 754.

Disclaimer: The comments provided in this article are general in nature only and are not a substitute for professional advice. The author accepts no responsibility for any action taken by a reader in relation to this article.

****ENDS****

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