

How to organise the perfect company Christmas Party

Organising the company Christmas party should be fun, but whether you are an event planner or you have been given the job of sorting out this year's Christmas party for the first time, we know that far too often this item on your "to do" list can just add to your stress. We have years of experience of planning and hosting successful events of all kinds (and we love Christmas!) so we have put together this handy guide to make planning your perfect Christmas party as painless as possible.

It takes two (or more!) It can be daunting to shoulder the entire responsibility of organising the biggest social event of the year so if you have a budget available, consider hiring an events company to help you, or why not recruit a right-hand man or woman to assist with all the details? Some wise party planners establish a party committee – it sounds exhausting, we know, but not half as exhausting as doing it all by yourself!

Timing is everything. A vital tip is to start early to secure your preferred venue, as everyone's diaries fill up fast.

How much? Try and establish a clear idea of your party budget at the very start. Another key question is who is paying? This might be stating the obvious, but it's wise to let people know if they are expected to contribute towards their own place or if the company is footing the bill, to avoid any awkwardness!

It's good to share. Do you need a venue all to yourself or can you bear to share? Obviously with exclusive hire you have the flexibility to customise the party somewhat, but joining a party night with other like-minded companies can be a much simpler party to plan and it's a more affordable option too.

Theme or no theme? Okay, so Christmas itself is quite a theme! But maybe you have other ideas? What about celebrating music of a certain era or working with your chosen venue to plan an extra special menu. Alternatively, of course, you can trust your venue to provide a tried and tested formula to offer you peace of mind that everything is in place for a fantastic night.

Love in the Christmas air. Is your party going to be for just staff, or are partners invited too? You may think that the latter option is straightforward (and here's hoping it is!), but it can also be a minefield. Don't make single guests feel that they have to miss out on the fun, let them know they are welcome to bring a friend too.

Getting there. Help avoid guests worrying about whether they can have a drink or two and book taxis or maybe hire a minibus for them. If you go that extra mile to make the journeys to and from the venue as smooth as possible, your guests will thank you for it. If they would rather make their own way, pass on details of local taxi firms with the party invites and encourage them to make that call, sooner rather than later.

Saying thank you. A Christmas party can be the perfect setting to reward and recognise staff who have worked hard and gone the extra mile. Do you want speeches, or a full-blown awards night? Think about what really works for you and make it happen – the more unique your event, the more people will love it.

Attention to detail. Are there little touches you can add to your party to make it extra special? How about branded Christmas gifts for people attending, a fun Secret Santa during the meal or canapés and a glass of mulled wine or Buck's Fizz on arrival? We will be happy to help with the finishing touches. As long as you get your fellow guests to fill in the booking sheet correctly, we will create name cards with their menu choices on, so everyone knows where they are sitting, and no-one has to remember what they pre-ordered!