

# TOP TIPS FOR A CRACKING CELEBRATION!

**Are you organising your own Christmas or New Year's Party? Do you want to make sure that it is a 'cracking' celebration?**



**Karen Lindsey,  
Corporate Event Consultant.**

Karen Lindsey, who is our corporate event consultant, has 24 years experience of organising functions for the likes of KFC, Orange and Universal Pictures. We asked Karen for her top tips on how to organise a great private party. Here's what she shared:

**1** Get those invitations out ASAP. With so many people wishing to celebrate either Christmas or New Year, competition will be rife, so get in first. The early bird gets the worm or, in this case, gets the full complement of guests - one of the essential ingredients for generating that all important party spirit.

**2** Give yourself time. Don't leave everything to the last minute. Make a list of everything that you need to do and taking into account the days between now and the party date, break up your 'things to do' into bite sized, manageable chunks. This way you won't become stressed and you can enjoy the process and, indeed, your party!

**3** Choose a theme. Themes such as 'Classic Christmas', 'Moulin Rouge at the Jones's' or 'Happy Hogmanay' - are all great for the festivities. A theme provides an opportunity to have some fun with the key party elements such as drink, food and entertainment and, of course, your guests.

**4** When considering your invite list... establish the male and female split and whether it will be just adults or any children/teenagers also attending. From each guest's perspective, think through the various party elements, making sure that there is something for everyone, whatever their age or gender.

**5** Consider decorating all the significant areas of your house. However, should budget be a little tight, just focus on the entrance and main party room. Spreading your decor thinly will reduce the effect but focusing on two main areas will create maximum impact.

**6** Once you have chosen your theme, to provide some inspiration, research any suitable websites or watch any films that are loosely based on your selected topic. Take note of any colour schemes used, music played, décor featured, food and drink consumed - absorb the overall flavour and think how you can apply it to your own party throughout.

**7** Invite guests to dress fitting to the occasion ie fancy dress but always provide the option of just wearing a 'hint'. For example if your theme is 'Happy Hogmanay', then a guest would arrive feeling comfortable wearing either a full blown William Wallace costume or a black frock adorned with a tartan ribbon

brooch. Some people love dressing up, some don't. So, to receive many positive RSVPs, remove any obstacles.

**8** When considering your food and drink, make sure that you also provide a vegetarian option and soft drinks. You can select a menu that suits, such as haggis, neeps and tatties, or just provide more traditional fayre accompanied by themed menu names.

**9** If plumping for 'bring a bottle'... budget allowing, provide a welcoming drink such as a cocktail (both alcoholic and non alcoholic versions.) With their drink in hand, direct guests out of the kitchen and into the main gathering area and remember to introduce those who don't know each other.

**10** Finally, for the early part of the evening, play your themed music at a lowish level to encourage conversation and then switch to mid tempo, generic music when guests are eating. After food, now would be the time to up the pace and the sound level to encourage dancing.

There you have it... my top tips for hosting a fabulous party. (You could always serve Salvatore's featured Christmas cocktail, it would certainly help your party go off with a bang!) Have fun.