

INTRODUCTION TO

Dinner **PARTIES**





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INTRODUCTION

Hosting a successful dinner party doesn't have to be stressful or painful. In fact, it should be fun and something that both you and your guests can enjoy. Planning and hosting a dinner party can be fun and easy to pull off if you know how to go about it.

One of the best things about planning a dinner party is that the style you choose can be entirely up to you. You can plan a menu as elaborate or as simple as you would like. In this guide we will walk you through the basic steps of planning a successful dinner party, including everything that should be taken care of in advance, handling the guest list, centerpieces for the table, how to set the table and much more.

Remember, you do not have to a professional chef or party planner in order to entertain like one. We will walk you through the steps of planning the entire event as well as provide tips on hiring others to help you execute a wonderful dinner party. Whether you are planning a luncheon for an intimate group of friends or a holiday open house, you will find everything you need to know about planning a successful dinner party in this guide.

Ready to begin planning your first dinner party?

Let's get started!





CHAPTER 1

Getting Started

Dinner Party Planning Basics

Planning a dinner party can be stressful, especially considering the many things that must be considered. From the invitations to the food to the music to the ambience and the entertainment, every element of the event must be skillfully managed in order to plan the ideal dinner party. Understanding how to approach the process of planning a dinner party and when to handle the planning of each item can help you to pull off the perfect dinner party.

The most important thing you can know about planning the perfect party is to always plan in advance. This will help to eliminate many of the snags and problems that you might otherwise encounter. Planning in advance will also ensure that you have more time during the party to actually enjoy yourself and your guests without worrying about last minute details.

An important element to consider when you are planning any type of dinner party is why you are planning the event. Is it for a holiday, office party, birthday or simply an excuse for friends and family to get together? Whatever the reason, it is a good idea to have a clear vision of why you are hosting the event so that you can convey this intent to the people invited to the party.

You should also consider what the objective of the party will be. What type of party will you host? This can be extremely important and relevant to many other details related to the party. For instance, if you plan to host a themed party, then the decorations and perhaps even the food will need to be tied in with that overall theme. A themed party need not be expensive with a little thought and creativity. For instance, you could plan a party around a single recipe or invite everyone over to celebrate the big game. Do you and your friends enjoy a good bottle of wine? What about hosting a wine tasting party? As you can see there are many different options.

Of course, you must also consider who you will invite to your party. This is crucial in planning the event. Will everyone invited to the party know one another? Are you inviting only close friends? Family Co-workers? Business associates? Whatever the case may be, it is important to consider whether everyone there will be acquainted with one another.

You will also need to consider the total number of people you are planning to invite, their particular likes and dislikes and what they have in common. Understanding the different variables of your guests will help you to plan a party that will be enjoyed by everyone.

The choice of venue is also important. Location cannot be stressed enough. There are many different factors that should be considered when selecting a location for any dinner party. In many cases you may choose to host the event in your own home but you might also choose to host it elsewhere if your place is too small or you are inviting a large number of people. Ideally, you should make sure there is plenty of space for everyone to be comfortable, adequate lavatory facilities, access to food and beverages and space for everyone sit/stand comfortably.





You should also consider whether you have enough space for parking and whether there is space for guests to leave their vehicles if they should need to take a taxi home.

If you do choose to rent a venue for your dinner party, consider the following questions:

- Does it have food and beverage facilities?
- If so, will they provide the room free if you use their services?
- Are there adequate lavatory facilities? Are they wheelchair accessible?
- Is there an outdoor area available for smoking?
- At what time will you be able to gain access to the facility? At what time must you leave?
- Will you be responsible for cleaning after the event?
- Are there adequate electrical outlets?
- What is the capacity of the venue?
- Is security available?

You should also consider the date and time for your dinner party. When you choose to host your party can impact not only where you have your party but may also impact who you invite as well. Consider the following timelines:

Will the party fall on a holiday?

Will the start time for the party accommodate your guests' schedules?

Invitations and Guest Lists

One of the most important parts of the planning process is the guest list. You need to make sure that you send out invitations early enough to ensure you have a confirmed guest list well in advance of the event. Be sure to include any pertinent details in the invitations such as the time, place, etc.

When planning your party, be sure to include the interests of the people you plan to invite to the party as you plan elements such as the food, music, entertainment, etc. For instance, if you plan to invite any vegetarians to the event, be sure to include some appropriate dishes on the menu. Ideally, you should plan to invite between six and twelve guests for a dinner party, with six being the ideal number. Try to balance out the guest list between both new and old friends as well as people from a variety of different aspects of your life in order to keep the conversation varied.

Once you have determined who you would like to invite to your dinner party, you will need to give the guests ample advance notice; ideally two weeks before the party date. Keep in mind that the formality of the invitation you use will dictate the overall tone for the event. For example, a phone call or email would suggest a casual get together while a custom or handwritten invitation signals a more special event.

