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- Cool off with cold beverages!
- Learn how to have your (wedding) cake and eat it, too.
- Get your creativity flowing.

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The Other Half Party Planning & Catering

More Than the 4 Ws

People are busy. Between work, shuffling kids back and forth from school and sporting events, finding time to socialize with family or friends seems to fall somewhere below showering on the priority list. Often, people are so busy and want for time that being invited to a party can seem more like a chore. After considering the questions, what do I wear, do I need a sitter, what should I bring, party invitees are exhausted. Not wanting to bother, they may throw your invitation into the trash.

To ensure good

attendance at your gatherings it is becoming more important to provide more than just the who, what, when and where when sending your invitations. Including more detail in your invitations will make your invitees grateful and more likely to at least scribble the event on their calendars.

Good information to include is the type of party: Dinner & drinks, dinner, snacks, formal or informal? Anything they can bring: "Dinner provided but bring your favorite beer." If you need an RSVP, make it as easy

as possible—ask them to send you a text or an e-mail. For kids' parties, always include both pick up and drop off times and ask them to bring anything that would be easy to grab & might curb your costs such as hairbrushes and ties for a salon party.

As you may have guessed this strategy will require extensive advanced planning but going through the exercise before you send your invitations will make for a much more organized and relaxing party in the long run.

Affordable Summer Party Ideas

Aside from Christmas, summer seems to be the time to party. School is out, the weather is warm and we want to get out to share it with our family and friends. There are plenty of opportunities from Memorial Day to Independence Day to Labor Day and from pool parties to backyard barbecues to old fashioned picnics.

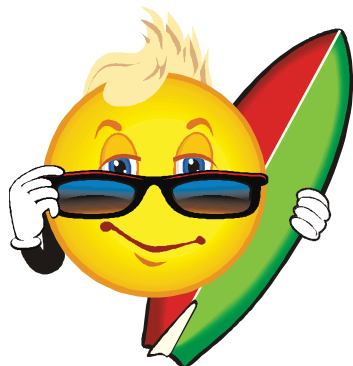
Unfortunately these parties can get expensive. So what if money is tight but you still want to entertain? Here are a few easy and affordable ideas to get you started.

Hold the "patriotic party" you would normally have on the 4th of July on Labor Day instead. Hit the clearance shelves on July 5th and the following few

days to stock up on red, white and blue themed tableware and decorations.

If the men on your invite lists seem to get territorial with the grill or get in heated discussions about their barbecuing skills, have a barbecue showdown. Each chef can bring his or her favorite grilled (or other)

Affordable Summer Party Ideas – cont'd.



dish to cook and the rest of the guests get to taste test and decide which is the best recipe. You could have each bring their favorite anything or restrict it to just burgers or baked beans. If you only have one grill to work with, have your grillers in the front yard and the rest of your guests in the back and have a non-participating runner deliver all of the samples from the

chefs to the tasters. Assign each chef and their dish a number; guests can simply write the number on a sheet of paper and their thoughts next to the number. Then after all dishes have been tasted, the guests can choose their favorites to determine the winner.

Ask each of your guests to bring their favorite yard game they already own in their garage or basement

for everyone to play while waiting for their next sample. This can be a party all by itself; lay all of the games out in your yard in a space sufficient enough to play safely. Guests will have a blast testing their skills at each station.

Get creative. Have a squirt gun battle or an ice cream sundae social. Just be safe and have fun!

“Ask each of your guests to bring their favorite yard game they already own...”

Summer Food Recipe

Pizza Pasta Salad

Ingredients:

2 cups
1 14.5 oz. can
1 8 oz. can
2 T.
1 T.
2 T.
1 T.
1 8 oz. pkg.
1 8 oz. pkg.
¼ c.

Whole Wheat Rotini or Other Macaroni
Italian Diced Tomatoes
Tomato Sauce
Extra Virgin Olive Oil
Minced Garlic
Dried Oregano
Red Wine Vinegar
Turkey Pepperoni
Reduced Fat or Fat Free Shredded Mozzarella Cheese
Grated Parmesan Cheese



Instructions:

Cook pasta according to package directions.

While the pasta is cooking, roughly cut pepperoni into quarters. When pasta is tender, drain and run under cold water until cool. In large serving dish, mix tomatoes, tomato sauce, olive oil, garlic, oregano and vinegar. Stir in pepperoni and mozzarella cheese; carefully stir in cooked and cooled pasta until pasta is evenly coated with sauce. Sprinkle with parmesan cheese. Serve with additional grated parmesan and hot pepper flakes if desired.

Makes approximately 8 one cup servings.

Leftovers also taste great heated in the microwave!

Summer Adult Beverage Recipe

“It’s Too Hot For Clothes” Cocktail

Ingredients:

- 1 pkg. Sugar Free Lemonade Drink Mix (Crystal Light) to make 2 qts
- 2 c. Cold Water
- 1 12 oz Light Beer
- 2 12 oz Cans Diet Lemon-Lime Soda
- 1 c. Citrus-, Lemon-, Lemon-Lime- or Un-flavored Vodka

Instructions:

Mix all ingredients in a 2 quart pitcher. Serve in tall glass over ice. Makes approximately 2 quarts.



Caution: This drink can diminish your inhibitions!!!!!!!

Summer Kid-Friendly Beverage Recipe

Christmas In July Kid Cocktail

Ingredients

- 1 single serve packet Sugar Free cherry or fruit punch flavored drink mix for water bottles
- 2 12 oz. Cans Diet Lemon-Lime Soda, Divided
- 3 c. Ice

Instructions:

Pour a small amount of soda into the bottom of each of four 10-12 ounce clear tumblers. Sprinkle a small amount of the drink mix in each glass trying to divide it completely between the four glasses as much as possible. Add $\frac{3}{4}$ cup ice to each tumbler; pour remaining soda over ice being careful to divide it evenly. Serve with a drink straw and encourage the kids to stir well before drinking to avoid the pucker affect from the drink mix in the bottom.

“...stir well before drinking to avoid the pucker affect from the drink mix in the bottom.”

Summer Craft

Patriotic Paper Quilts

Supplies:

2 pieces of 12" x 12" scrapbooking paper, each a different patriotic print
 1 piece 12" x 12" scrapbooking paper in red or blue, matching the shade to one of the reds or blues on one of the patterned papers
 1 or more sheets of white heavyweight paper in your choice of size(s)
 Picture frame(s) closest in size to your white sheet(s) of heavyweight paper(s)
 Repositionable/Removal double sided tape
 Ruler, Scissors and Pencil

Instructions:

Use inserts from picture frame(s) as a template to cut white paper to fit in frames. Using ruler, lightly draw a 4 x 4 grid of 3" squares on the back sides of the patterned and colored papers. Use ruler to divide each square in half by drawing lines through corners of the squares in one direction (See Figure 1.). Carefully cut paper along the lines and sort triangles by print/color. Arrange triangles in a pattern or randomly on the white paper; use as many as desired. When the triangles are arranged to your satisfaction, adhere them to the white paper using double-sided tape on back sides of triangle. Tape one triangle at a time, working from the middle out. If you make a mistake, carefully lift triangle and re-stick. Place project(s) in frame(s) and display!

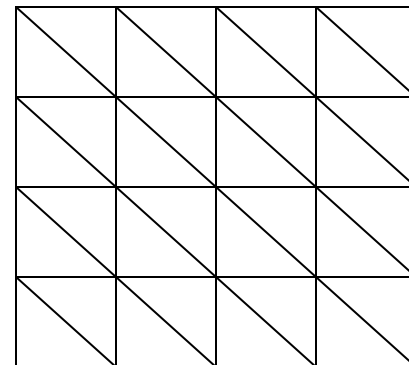


Figure 1.

Have Your (Wedding) Cake and Eat It, Too!!

Weddings can get so expensive—from the dress to the flowers to the organist to the reception—that by the time you're done paying everyone, your bank account will be drained and your credit limit maxed out. With people waiting to get married until they've established a career, parents are less obligated and less able to pay for their children's nuptials. If you are in this situation, you may be considering eliminating your honeymoon or delaying it which in effect is eliminating it because chances are good life will take over and the honeymoon will seem a forgotten memory.

There is a solution to this

dilemma, however, and there are several ways to ensure enjoying a beautiful ceremony, fun reception and relaxing honeymoon.

First, think of your ceremony, reception and honeymoon as a total package with each being a necessary requirement.

Second, look into your future spouse's and your own savings, talk to family members to see if they can and would like to help, and using your future spouse's and your own paychecks, if any, and the date of your wedding or proposed date of your wedding as a guide, determine how much you can take from each paycheck to put toward paying for your wedding. Adding all of these figures

will provide your total budget.

Now that you have your total budget, it is time to allocate. Start by prioritizing. Rank the ceremony, reception and honeymoon in order of importance. Assign 50% of your budget to the most important portion, 30% to the next most important and 20% to the least important. If all are equally important, allocate 33 1/3% of your budget to each; or if one is clearly the most important but the other two are about equally important, allocate 40% to the most important and 30% each to the remaining categories.

Next, write each category with your budget (Cont'd)

"...think of your ceremony, reception and honeymoon as a total package..."

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dollar amount for that category at the top of three separate sheets of paper. Underneath each heading, brainstorm all of the items and expenses that will be associated with that category. For instance, the ceremony is likely to include your dress, programs and the location while the reception would likely include the location, food, and decorations and the honeymoon with lodging and travel.

Now that you have all of your needs, brainstorm details of what you would like to fill each need. In our example, options for the dress maybe be full-length off the shoulder and gold leafed embossed

About Our Organization..

Other Half Party Planning & Catering is a family-friendly family business focusing on helping families to enjoy life and their loves ones with minimal hassle and

programs.

Research all of your items and options and estimate the cost of each. Choose one detail for each item in your list for each category. Such as, if you have beach in Hawaii and the city park as potential locations for your ceremony, choose one based on your wishes and cost in relation to your budget. Add up the estimated costs for each item choice and compare that to your budget amount for each category. Unless you are frugal by nature, your estimate will mostly likely greatly exceed your budget. This is where the trade-off will come into play. Tweak your items, look for and

expense.

We provide custom services at reasonable prices for all of our clients' occasions, from small dinner parties to elaborate

research less costly alternatives. In the end, you may need to reallocate your budget. Just keep researching, brainstorming and reallocating until your estimates equal your budget.

Once your budget is set, put your plan into action. Keep your budget fluid and rework it if your priorities change or your estimates turn out off. On the big day, relax, have fun and pat yourself on the back. Problem solving with your new spouse with regard to your wedding will have been a valuable lesson for negotiating marriage...

wedding receptions. We also offer do-it-yourself instruction kits as well as free party advice via our web-site and newsletter.

Party On!!!!



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