

The GABLES Hotel

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. At The Gables we have a wealth 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, but if you've left it too late and your chosen venue is already booked this year, consider holding your party in November or January which will avoid clashes with existing arrangements for your colleagues and may be a little cheaper too.

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, 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? Race nights and casino nights can also prove popular, not to mention a 'winter wonderland' feel. 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 – The Gables' Party Nights and Retro Party Nights are proving to be very popular!



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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. Or why not book rooms for your guests to stay over and relax? Most venues offer preferential rates for party goers, especially if you are booking a number of rooms.

In the frame

Hire a professional photographer to capture special moments at the party, especially if it's going to be a very glamorous affair. You can commission special frames for sharing photos (with permission!) on social media and have a whole host of props – from feather boas and oversized glasses to something maybe a bit more classy, to help the evening go with a swing. Alternatively, hire a photo booth who can do it all for you!

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? At The Gables, we will be happy to help with the finishing touches. A couple more things – if you're joining a shared party, don't forget name cards so everyone knows where they are sitting, and remember to take a copy of the guests' menu choices with you, as often people may have forgotten what they pre-ordered!

Charity begins at Christmas

Can you put something back and nominate a good cause to also benefit from your celebration? From a silent auction to asking people to donate direct to a charity, now is the perfect time to do something lovely and help give your guests the warm glow of knowing they are sharing the Christmas spirit!

Join the Festive Celebrations at The Gables

With glistening baubles on the trees, twinkling Christmas lights and the warmest of welcomes from friendly staff, there is no better place to celebrate the festive season with family, friends and colleagues than The Gables.

To find out more visit www.thegablesbristol.co.uk



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