

How to Throw a Shower That Will Have Even the GUYS Talking

Contributed by Jane Stefanowicz
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a know, ladies, I've really gotta hand it to us. Not a day goes by that I am not amazed by our strength, gentleness & ability to multi-task like nobody's business!

I see grandmas, young women, moms & wives performing downright miracles on a regular basis. We are power-suit wearing, dinner-cooking, book club-hosting, carpool-driving, brownie-baking, boo-boo-kissing superheroes!

So, when someone asks us to host a shower, we wonder how we can shoe-horn all of that work into our already packed day planner. We wish we had that kind of free time on our hands! (...and that kind of unspoken-for money in our checking account)

Don't get me wrong...I adore showers! Actually, I love all occasions that involve friends & food! I love teas, luncheons, brunches, bachelorette parties, cocktail parties, dinner parties...shoot, I'll even "raise the roof"

at a church picnic if the mood strikes!

But, being a guest at one of these fine affairs & being responsible for hosting it are two very different things.

We don't always feel like being the Superwomen that the world expects us to be. Not that we're not very capable, competent women, but come on! There are only so many hours in the day & between my job, my family & my friends, they're all pretty much ear-marked.

If you can relate to having a packed schedule & you've been asked to throw a shower, never fear!

Before we begin, I would like to applaud you for deciding to throw a co-ed shower. Women & men alike will enjoy a laidback, yet festive atmosphere that celebrates both halves of the happy couple. This type of shower is one of the few times the poor, neglected groom-to-be (or dad-to-be) is even acknowledged. In this case, not only does he get presents, but if you orchestrate this thing correctly, he actually has a good time, too!

It's a way for the bride to have her man actively involved in something "weddingy" (because goodness knows he sleepwalked through picking out the china pattern). It's a way for the mom-to-be to join in acknowledging that the dad-to-be actually exists. (Pregnancy is one of those times where the squeaky wheel gets all of the grease.

Let's appreciate the chief "greaser" for a couple of hours!)

Get ready to save yourself plenty of blood, sweat & tears.

...not to mention your money, time & sanity! So, grab a glass of Chardonnay, print out this article & enjoy!

3. Decide on Your Budget

Money is the root of all shower drama. You will find yourself walking the fine line between throwing an impressive shower & not making yourself or your co-hostesses go broke in the process. There are several ways to keep your budget under control that range from food to flowers to favors. I discuss my favorite ways to save money without sacrificing the "ooh" & "ahh" factor in my free eBook. You can find it at www.howtothrowashower.com.

Please feel free to download it, print it & share it with whomever you'd like. The more money, time & sanity I can save out there, the better! There are several factors that play into the budget. Consider how many co-hostesses you will have (if any), menu offerings, number of invitees, etc.

Just decide on your budget & stick to it. Trust me, those little impulse buys along the way really add up!

2. Shower "Prime Time"

I have found that there is a very specific day & time that work best for showers. It is from 2:00-4:00PM on Sunday.

I attribute this to a few factors. First, no one has time to relax during the work week. Second, most households have something planned on Saturdays whether with their spouse, children or both. Third, & most importantly, Sunday afternoons are best because (at least here in the

South) people are already ready for an afternoon get-together. They are up & dressed cute & have already been to Starbucks, been to church & fed the family lunch.

Frankly, they're probably ready to drop any kids off with a sitter for a nice two-hour break from whatever their week has been full of.

An added bonus is a high-quality, low-cost menu. Your guests have usually eaten lunch by 2:00, so you don't have to offer heavy, main course-ish food. You can focus on quality instead of quantity & knock their socks off!

Let's pause here for a second: Co-ed showers are the one exception to this due to their lack of pretense (at least the ones I throw). Typically, the "girly" showers require more elegant, chi-chi food. In contrast, men have a hard time faking a smile while choking that stuff down.

What does this mean for you? You can feel free to throw Shower Prime Time out the window & have a full-blown dinner if you choose your menu wisely. My eBook shares a few of my favorite couple shower themes & their corresponding menus. I have always stayed within budget & no one has ever gone home hungry! It is up to you (or the honorees).

Just one more advantage to having picked a couple shower.

Good choice!

1. Theme, Theme, Theme!

Pick a theme & go BIG! Don't be scared, girls! Themes set a mood & even guys will get into the spirit (as long you feed them something more than tea sandwiches & petit fours).

I'm a fan of themes for a few reasons. Like I mentioned, they set the mood as soon as your guests walk in. It puts everyone in a festive state of mind.

Second, do you really want to be the bridesmaid who throws the shower with white stuff & all those doves & bells everywhere? I'll answer that for you..."No, I don't! I have at least an ounce of personality & originality somewhere inside me & I'd hate to be the proponent of such a tired cliché!"

Third, your centerpiece can easily double as a gift for the honoree because, in these cases, it will actually be cute & maybe even something that they won't be ashamed to put on their own kitchen table for awhile.

And finally, if you aren't already waving your white flag of surrender, themed showers show that you care. You clearly won't put forth the effort to throw a shower for someone unless you care about them very deeply. As my Mom always says: "The more effort you put forth for someone, the more they know you care.". Themed showers are no exception.

You can search for theme ideas on the internet, ask your friends what themes they have enjoyed or buy a "Bridal Shower Themes" book. Another option is on my website:

www.howtothrowashower.com. My free eBook includes my favorite themes as well as details on the corresponding decorations & menu planning.

There you have it. A few tidbits out of my twenty-five years of mistakes & triumphs all wrapped up into a nice, neat article.

Keep your eyes peeled for the latest additions to the website. In the meantime, visit www.helloworld.com/howtothrowashower for photos & videos of what we talked about in this article & my book & oh-so-much more!

And remember, the difference between ordinary & extraordinary is that "little extra"!

Stop by <http://www.howtothrowashower.com> to download my free 50-page book, see photos & videos & much more! I'll share how to take the overwhelming task of planning & hosting a shower & turn it into a fun, stress-free event you'll all look back on & smile about.