



Bachelor & Bachelorette Parties

TAKE ON A NEW LOOK!

During the last several years, there has been a trend away from the “party till dawn at a gentlemen’s club” affair or a “girls go wild” night. Bachelor and bachelorette parties are about friends getting together, sharing old stories and, perhaps, creating some new memories. A weekend immersed in an outdoor adventure with plenty of time before and after for fine dining and visits to the local pubs is a great way to do just that.

The adventure bachelor parties give the best man a chance to sign the group up and then relax. From the time the groomsmen arrive at the destination city until they depart, everything is planned out and orchestrated. Choosing a destination close to home, within driving distance, or at a mid point that is convenient to all members, is a plus; too often out of town guys must make two costly trips to the wedding city. ►

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Five things to consider when planning the perfect party:

1. Who should be invited?

The make up and size of the group will have an effect on the rest of the planning. If relatives such as dad, a favorite aunt or teenage siblings are to be included, it will influence the type of event, where it happens and how long it lasts. Two and three-day excursions or adventure weekends can accommodate participants of all ages. The focus of the celebration should be on adventure and making memories, so that older relatives and younger siblings don't feel out of place. The same type of event can also apply for best friends scattered across the country.

2. When should the event take place?

There are some factors to be considered - should the party be a weekend adventure or be well separated from the wedding itself to give the wedding party from out of town time to return home, get back to work and regroup before leaving for the wedding. Local parties with local participants can be held the weekend prior to the wedding or more traditionally, the night before the wedding. Some ideas encompass adventures e.g., lake fishing, white water rafting, that are best done at certain times of the year. For a "destination" adventure weekend plans and reservations should be made early, using only a reputable tour company with bachelor(ette) party experience.

3. How long should the Bachelor(ette) Party last?

Weekend events are becoming much more common, they last from Friday night to Sunday afternoon, some even

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start on Thursday giving those from out of town time to travel and allow everyone to relax, socialize and relive memories. Everyone pays their own transportation costs and the weekend ground costs are usually split between all the participants so that the bride or groom is free.

4. How can the party be made "special"?

This is where the Best Man and the Maid of Honor needs to put on their thinking cap. What would make this a memorable occasion? Isn't it more than consuming excess beverages and waking up the next day with a strange tattoo? Great memories are made of sharing an adventure, a special dinner, or sitting around a campfire telling tales from the past. Special t-shirts, with the date and guest of honor's name, videos of the adventure or even an engraved memento to be presented at the wedding reception are now becoming more common bachelor(ette) party ideas.

5. Who can make the arrangements?

Planning a memorable and exciting party can be complicated and overwhelming for the best man or maid of honor, even with ideas from the bride or groom. The important thing is keep the idea, not lose the enthusiasm and let someone else do all the planning. Destination weddings, wedding planners and bridal consultants all take the pressure off the bride - now the same logic can be applied to the bachelor(ette) party. New tour companies can set up weekend adventures with just the right touch, just the right location, just the right ingredients, to meet everyone's expectations.

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Now that we understand what's at stake and how to plan it, here are some ideas to get the ball rolling:

WHITEWATER RAFTING

As long as there is a flowing river, someone will put a boat in it! The trick is finding the rivers that will take you to the edge, without throwing you over it. Under the guidance of an adventure expert, you can paddle, dodge, and hold on through class IV and V rapids, all while taking in spectacular views of the scenic beauty and wildlife.

CATTLE WRANGLING

Saddle-up the crew, ride the open range like old-time cowboys, and drive longhorn cattle through rugged mountain terrain. Work alongside real cowboys to move the thundering herd to greener pastures as you enjoy the sights and sounds of rolling rivers, towering mountain ranges, and native wildlife. After the drive, see if anyone lasts eight seconds on the mechanical bull before taking aim at the skeet shooting range. Recount the day's highlights during a Texas-style barbeque dinner including steaks, potatoes, and plenty of beer.

WINE TOURS

Wine tasting can be an occasional pleasant diversion or a time-and-resource-consuming passion. Wine tasting is actually a complex proposition involving much more than simply sipping some fermented grape juice, but even if you are not a true wine aficionado, it is pretty easy to fake it. Just swirl, sniff the glass using words like bouquet and tannin, and taste. Be sure to rent a shuttle or assign a designated driver.

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CHARTER FISHING

Compete in your own private fishing tournament aboard charter boats. While everybody breathes in the fresh air and takes in picturesque views, the expert captains and crew guide the team to the hot spots and teach the boys how to reel in the big one. After a full day of fishing, camaraderie, and competition, a chef "cooks the catch" at a restaurant overlooking the water.

SKYDIVING

What's better than jumping out of a plane, free-falling for over a minute at 120 mph, and seeing for miles in every direction? Doing it all with some of your closest friends. After some basic training, everyone flies to 13,000+ feet and prepares for the jump. Hearts pound, men begin to fade to the back of the line, and adrenaline pumps as everybody peels out of the plane into the open sky.

PAINTBALL

What better way to spend your day than pummeling your friends with paint? Break up into teams, learn how to handle your firearm, don your fatigues, and head off into the woods. Add a new spin on your favorite childhood game, "Capture the Flag", except this time speed is not the only weapon.

The most important part of the experience is making sure the groom or bride has a great time. If all goes as planned, you will have successfully orchestrated a weekend filled with memories to last a lifetime. Contact a coordinator who specializes in adventure-based trips for groups who can plan everything from the lodging to the adventure such as www.hitzadventures.com. &