

SOFITEL MINNEAPOLIS

For Immediate Release

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Planning Office Holiday Parties at Sofitel Minneapolis is as Easy as Eggnog *The Hotel's Experts Share Stress-Free Planning Tips*

Minneapolis, MN (August 22, 2007) – Office holiday parties can range from boring to fun to disastrous and everywhere in between—the difference almost always comes down to proper planning. To make sure this year's holiday party is a huge success, Sofitel Minneapolis offers 10 tips that are certain to help create an enjoyable celebration without the headaches.

“The office holiday party should be a time when company employees come together to celebrate the season, which ultimately should boost the office morale and culture,” said Antoine Winckler, Food and Beverage Director for Sofitel Minneapolis. “If planned poorly, the party can quickly turn from a nice idea to a nightmare. Throughout the years, we have hosted countless parties so we know how to prepare and ensure everything goes off without a hitch.”

Sofitel Minneapolis has tested these tips, having helped plan and execute holiday parties for companies such as McDonald's, Interbank, Prostaff and NextNet Wireless. These guidelines are sure to make organizing the perfect office holiday bash as easy as eggnog:

1. **Start planning early.** Let your co-workers know of the date, time and location one to two months in advance to avoid any conflicts. Sometimes sending out a party survey can help determine when most employees are available, as well as what location, food and activities are preferred.
2. **Party outside of the office.** People tend to be more relaxed when out of the office environment (and it eliminates the need to worry about spilling on any computers). Sofitel Minneapolis has a number of great event rooms that can work for any size company.
3. **Research for the best deals.** If hosting the party at a hotel or restaurant, avoid booking during the peak dates. December weekends are typically the busiest and most expensive times to book a holiday party. Instead, look for nontraditional days or times, such as hosting a holiday luncheon or a party on a weeknight. Sofitel Minneapolis is home to two amazing restaurants—Chez Colette and La Fougasse—which are great for less conventional holiday lunches or dinners.
4. **Send invitations.** Plan how to distribute the invitation. With Internet services like Evite, it is easy to invite the whole company without leaving your desk. Hand-delivery is another popular option, or you can simply drop the invitations in the mail. No matter how they go out, make sure to send all invitations at the same time, so no one feels like an afterthought. Also, use the invitation as a preview for the decorations, so this is a great time to start thinking about possible themes.

5. **Check out the space.** Site visits are important in planning an office holiday party at a different location. This way, any kinks can be sorted out ahead of time, and having a visual of the space is essential to planning. Sofitel Minneapolis recommends setting up a site visit at least one week in advance.
6. **Set the mood with decorations.** A holiday party should be festive! Use decorations that fit the personality of your office, including twinkling lights, tinsel, confetti and anything else to make it feel like a party. Always remember to be sensitive to religious beliefs by either avoiding religious decorations all together or decorating for all religions represented at the company.
7. **Keep them entertained.** Plan activities, hire a DJ and organize a gift exchange to break the ice and keep the party fun. Sofitel Minneapolis suggests booking DJs from Instant Request (www.instantrequest.com) to get things going. Holiday music is a must!
8. **Make food easy to eat.** If it is a mixer event, be sure to choose finger foods that can be easily and cleanly eaten while standing up. If a sit-down dinner is planned, make sure to provide options to accommodate various diets and preferences. The chefs at Sofitel Minneapolis can work with you to recommend which items will work best for your party.
9. **Offer different drink options.** Most corporate holiday parties serve all types of alcohol, including beer, wine and mixed drinks. However, it is important to provide non-alcoholic beverages as well. If serving specialty mixed drinks, try to include an interesting non-alcoholic alternative, like Sofitel Minneapolis' Angel's Delight or Santa Special cocktails. This helps those who are not drinking to feel more included.
10. **Be responsible.** Arrange to make taxis or other alternative transportation methods available to any party-goers who get too "festive" to drive. Another great option is to encourage your coworkers to make a night of it. Sofitel Minneapolis offers great group guest room rates that can be booked before the party so no one has to worry about driving home.

From catering to event rooms to restaurants and more, Sofitel Minneapolis can help make corporate parties not only memorable, but enjoyable as well. To find out more about Sofitel Minneapolis' event services, please call 952-835-1900

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