

DESSERT BUFFET GUIDE

PLANNING A PARTY?

One of the great things about dessert buffets is they can be made up of anything you like! It just comes down to personal taste. Common dessert buffets might include a mixture of cupcakes, push pops, cake pops, pies, cakes, chocolates, puddings, jellies, lollies, bite size tarts and anything in between!

1. Pick a Theme and Colour

As with all other elements of your birthday, wedding day, or event, you're going to want to follow some kind of cohesive theme when it comes to your dessert table. Having a Gatsby-themed art-deco wedding or a Minion birthday party? Make sure to incorporate any colors and motifs from your theme to the dessert table. Picking cake plates, decor and tablecloths or a backdrop within this theme is a good starting point. For extra added impression, add some themed touches to your desserts — you can do this with a fun cake topper, edible glitter, colorful floral touches... you get the idea. No need to get too fancy with the food — plain white frosted desserts provide the perfect palette to make these themes or colors pop. Dessert tables are all the rage in Baby Showers, Weddings, Birthdays, etc. They are taking the place of giving out traditional party favors. They are interactive, fun and a definite wow factor to the decor of any party. The first thing to do when deciding on a theme is pick your printables first. That way I can design everything else around those colors. For example: If you are doing a vintage style birthday you may pick a colour palette similar to the one pictured above for the desserts and the table's decor elements. For that designer element use printables.

2. Dessert Selection

There are so many types of cakes, tarts, chocolates, puddings and lollies to choose from. To make it easier, separate desserts into 2 categories - Full Cake, Bite Size. Once at this stage, further break down your selections into 10 categories: Chocolate, Citrus & Fruit Flavoured, Cheesecake, Cupcakes, Candy, Fudge, Cookies, Tarts, Puddings & Mooses, Fruits

Display them in a variety of different platters, cake stands, mason and apothecary jars. Remember to ensure there is one of each of some of the candy and chocolates for each guest and then bulk loose candy that guests help themselves to a scoop or two and maybe some tongs. These tend to be more child friendly at events such as weddings as they are naturally much smaller than a slice of cake.

You can pick your lollies and chocolates up locally at designer boutiques, chocolate stores or department stores and supermarkets or order online. Catering companies often sell individually sliced cakes to small cafes at a cheaper rate (and if you're ordering a few, this is worth while and budget friendly). Easy recipes for your dessert table can be found on our recipes page. Also, remember, dessert tables do not have to be completely covered in sweets. It is ok and very acceptable to have natural fruits. In fact we encourage the use of fruit on your dessert tables.

3. Create Height

The difference between a blah and beautiful wedding dessert table is HEIGHT — this is the one key element that will turn an ordinary table full of desserts into a Pin-worthy masterpiece. It creates depth and visual interest, and allows you to emphasize the most important elements of your dessert table, like the cake.

So how does one achieve height on their dessert table? Cake stands are an obvious choice, and allows for you to create a cute display for each dessert. Make sure to find a varied assortment of sizes and heights — having a table full of cake stands that are the same height wouldn't have quite the same visual effect you're looking for.

If you don't have a bunch of cake stands to use for your dessert table, you can find some fairly affordable options if you search around! Our recommendations:

Home goods! Get thee to a Home Goods and find incredibly affordable cake plates. Just do it.

Pier 1 has a few basic glass and ceramic cake plates for under \$20

Ikea is one of the best places to get affordable decor for cheap. Cake stands are no exception!

If you don't have the budget, time or energy to find cake stands for your dessert table, you have a few options to add height to your dessert table:

DIY it: You can create your own cake stands!

Use vintage crates, boxes, or whatever else you can find that will create height: Who says you need to use cake stands? If your birthday or wedding has a rustic theme, old wooden crates or boxes could work just as well to create height. Or, cover your stands with fabric or the tablecloth to disguise the stand. Easy!

4. Decor Elements

Okay, you have a theme for your dessert table and you know you've got to add some height. Great! Just a few more steps... bear with me now!

Your dessert table is going to look pretty darn sparse if you don't have something else on the surface to fill it out, visually speaking. The easiest way to fill out your dessert table with decor is to add flowers, candles and/or whatever else you're using for decor for a wedding. For a birthday use small balloon table centres or toys in the theme of the party to decorate with.

There's no fast and quick rule to how many fillers (toys, balloons, vases, candles or extra decor you'll need) — a lot of this will depend on how much space you'll have on the table once the desserts are placed. Make sure that your table doesn't end up looking too crowded and cluttered, though! Give each dessert stand and piece of decor some space. Remember you might also have serving utensils, silverware or dishes on the the tables as well — this may affect how many pieces of decor you'll need to add.

5. The Backdrop

Okay, technically you can do without a backdrop, but it really helps to call out your dessert table and give it that extra-special touch, and doesn't have to cost a fortune. Some amazing backdrop ideas we've seen include:

Balloons

Ribbon garlands

Photo garlands

Marquis lights

A simple fabric backdrop

6. Signage

Your guests are going to want to know what tasty desserts they can choose from! Make sure to clearly mark the desserts with place cards or other simple DIY signage. Nuff said.

7. The Desserts - Quantity

Okay last step — make sure you have your desserts planned out and ready to go on the day! If you're partially doing a DIY and purchasing the main cake, ask a trusted family member or friend to help pick up the cake if you can not do it all by yourself. Celebrations can be stressful enough. For those people catering their dessert buffet but putting it together have the highest stress levels involved, trying to ensure everything is ready and still chilled.

In terms of quantity, think of it this way — it's always better to have more food than not enough, and that goes doubly for desserts! A good rule of thumb is:

For a table full of mini-desserts (no cake), allocate about 3-4 mini-desserts per person. (take this down to 1-2 mini-desserts per person if you're also having cake.)

You don't want to overwhelm guests with options, so choose 2-3 more options than what you're allotting per guests. For example, if you are assuming 3 mini-desserts per person, you should have about 5-6 dessert options.

For instance, at your baby shower, bridal party or wedding, that means if you're having a dessert table and a main/ wedding cake for 100 people, you should have about:

2-3 servings (including cake slices) per person, or about 250 dessert servings total.

4-5 different types of desserts to choose from

