



HAPPY VINTAGE BIRTHDAY



If you are thinking of arranging a birthday party for your family member or your friend, why not opt for something different? Have fun in the style of the vibrant 1960s! For someone who was born in that decade this is going to be an exciting and heartwarming trip down the memory lane.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION:

BEFORE THE PARTY

To prepare for the party, first of all take some time to think about that decade, i.e. 1960s. What were these years like in your area or country? What music did everyone listen to? What about the hottest dances? What were the trendiest clothes, accessories and hairdos? What were the most popular foods and drinks? How did people use to decorate their homes? More often than not, such memories are amusing and heartwarming. Include some details in the style of 1960s into your party, and they will become the focal point of conversations and encourage your guests to share funny or nostalgic childhood stories. There are many different ways to create vintage atmosphere: you could play hit songs that date back to 1960s, cook dishes and mix cocktails that used to be party favorites back then, decorate your room and table with the 1960s color palette and décor elements or give your guests some vintage accessories to wear during the party. Whatever your choice, this is going to be an experience to remember.

Music

In music, many artists were known and loved in many countries all over the world, and their songs definitely bring back the flavor of the 1960s. Here are some ideas:

- Elvis Presley, especially the songs he recorded after returning from the U.S. Army in 1960, such as "It's Now or Never" and "Are You Lonesome Tonight".
- The enormously popular and successful band – "The Beatles".
- The U.S. all-female band, "The Supremes".
- For rock music fans, such bands as "Grateful Dead", "The Doors", "The Who" and "The Rolling Stones".
- The American singer-songwriter Bob Dylan.
- For jazz lovers, John Coltrane and especially his widely acclaimed album, "A Love Supreme".
- The well-known American duo, Simon & Garfunkel.
- The American singer-songwriter Johnny Cash.



Interior Décor

If you are interested in interior decorating, it might be fun to introduce some décor elements in the style of 1960s. No need to do much: adding cushions, vases, flowers or pieces of art in vibrant, bold colors will do the trick. Pick dark greens, yellows and orange hues, use pink together with red or add some neons. Other popular trends were pop art, floral prints, tie die fabrics, ethnic and paisley motifs.



Drink Ideas

Here are a few cocktails that were enjoying a wave of popularity back in 1960s: Bloody Mary, Blue Hawaiian, Brandy Alexander, Old Fashioned, Martini, Greyhound, Manhattan, Mint Julep, Pink Squirrel, Screwdriver, Stinger, Tom Collins, Vodka Gilmet, White Russian, Side Car and Mai Tai. Of course, many of them are not a purely 1960s sensation any more, they have become timeless classics. In addition, you might consider serving some punch, for example, Canadian Clubhouse Punch or non-alcoholic fruit punch, as these were quite a fad back in the 1960s.

AT THE PARTY

Welcoming of the Guests (6.00 pm – 6.30 pm)

When the guests start arriving, serve welcoming drinks and offer them to pick an accessory in the style of the 60s they would like to wear at the party. Bold color palette, tie die, floral and paisley fabrics were the fashionable stuff back then, so you could stock with scarves and ties that look right. As a tribute to the Hippie movement, you might also want to add some Hippie sunglasses, peace medallions or headbands. To add to the atmosphere, you could play the songs of the 60s.

Dinner (6.30 pm – 7.30 pm)

Once all the guests have arrived, invite them to a dinner that includes some or completely consists of the popular 1960s foods. They will differ from country to country and from region to region, but here are a few ideas you might like: Stuffed Eggs (mushroom, tuna or olive), Chicken Liver Pate, Iceberg Wedge Salad, Quiche, Fondue (cheese or beef), Steak Diane, Beef Wellington, Swedish Meatballs, Buffalo Wings or Potato Cheese Charlotte. You might also have some grilled food as backyard barbecues were becoming increasingly popular during that decade.

We suggest putting the dessert off until later and having some fun right after the main dish.

Games (7.30 pm – 9.30 pm)

Flower Power

It's a nice idea to introduce the flower motif as a tribute to the 1960s Hippie movement because flowers always look beautiful and festive. Here are three ideas, all of them requiring different amount of effort and preparation; hopefully you can find the one that works for you.

- To prepare for this game, take some sheets of colored paper (in bold, bright, even neon palette) and draw a simple flower motif (about the size of your palm) on each of them. Cut the motifs out. Make sure that you have one motif for each person attending the party and several extra ones – in case of small emergencies. Also, make sure that you have a pen or a pencil for everyone, a pin board and some pins.

At the party, give each guest a flower and something to write with. Ask them to wish the birthday person something nice, either serious or humorous. If possible, i.e. if the guests are lifelong friends or family members, ask them to write something they remember from that person's childhood or teenage years. This generally works really well and is much fun. After the guests have finished, ask them to read the wishes and/or share the memories. As a finishing touch, pin the flowers to the pin board to produce a festive-looking décor element.

- Another option is producing a painting. Prepare a canvas, paintbrushes, oils and other things used for painting. Explain to the guests that you would like everyone to work on a joint project – painted flowers for the hero/heroine of the evening. All night long, the guests can approach the canvas whenever they feel like it and add a brushstroke or two to the painting. There is only one thing they should have in mind: the painting should look as one complete piece of art, so they should pay attention to what other guests have been painting and try to develop or add to their idea. You might end up with something that looks like 1960s pop art. The painting will be a great keepsake to remember from this party.



- For this activity, you are going to need a supply of fresh flowers and greens and a place where the guests could work with them. The idea is based on the Victorian-era language of flowers, sometimes called floriography, where flowers were used as means to send coded messages and express feelings. In this language, each flower implies a certain meaning, for example, orchids have the symbolic meaning of 'refined beauty', pink carnations say 'always on my mind' and dahlias express 'elegance and dignity'. (The symbolic meanings are easy to find on the Internet by entering the search term 'language of flowers'.) If you are prepared to make the effort, research the meaning of some of the most common flowers and greens and stock with enough fresh blooms and greens to make several small bouquets. Invite your guests to master the art of floriography and make bouquets that express their birthday wishes to the birthday person. (You will have to prepare a 'mini-dictionary' of floriography and give it to each guest.) After everyone has finished, let them explain what they wanted to say and photograph of the bouquets because everyone will most probably want to have some photos to remember.



This activity is going to be more time consuming than the two previous ones, so if you decide to do it, you will probably want to cut down on other games.

How is Yours?

Unlike the flower power ideas, this game requires no special preparation. One person leaves the room, so that others could decide on one very common object that everyone has, for example, a car. Then that person is called back and tries to find out what that object is by asking questions. He is only allowed to ask one type of question, "How is yours?", and the rest have to give one word answers that describe the cars they have, for example, "expensive", "clean", "fast" etc. After the guessing person has asked everyone in the room, he has to guess what object is meant. If he still can't do this, he can ask everyone once again, but this time everyone has to choose a different word to describe that. When the guessing person comes up with the correct answer, somebody else is chosen to leave the room and the game goes on.

Yes, No, Black, White

This is another game that requires no special preparation. For starters, decide on one person who is going to ask questions. These can be any kinds of questions, but the asking person should do his best to elicit the answers 'Yes', 'No', 'Black' or 'White'. The rest take turns to answer the questions and can say whatever they want, but they are not allowed to say 'Yes', 'No', 'Black' or 'White'. The faster the pace of the game, the more difficult it is to avoid the taboo words, so the asking person should do his best to keep the pace up. The person who says one of the four taboo words drops out of the game, and the last person to remain in it is the winner.

If you decided to have a joint project and produce a painting, now it's about the right time to have a look at the result and enjoy it. You will have a beautiful gift from your friends and family members to remember this party.

The Sweet Treat (9.30 pm – 10.00 pm)

Now everyone is most probably ready for some birthday cake. If you want to stick to the style of 1960s, research some vintage cook books and bake (or order) a cake that would remind everyone of the celebrations they used to have as children. Again, the traditional 1960s cakes will differ from country to country, but maybe some of these will sound familiar: Tunnel of Fudge Cake, Vanilla Butter Birthday Cake, Chiffon Cake (or Lemon Chiffon Cake), Bundt Cake, Chocolate-Cherry Delight Cake or Upside Down Pineapple Cake.

Sky Lanterns (10.00 pm – 10.15 pm)

Birthdays are about wishing, and the more the better. Invite everyone to go outside and give them Chinese sky lanterns. Allow some time to think of a wish. When everyone is ready, light the lanterns and launch them, all at the same time. This will make for a beautiful highlight of the good evening with friends and family members. If there is a river or a lake nearby, the sky lanterns can be replaced with water lanterns.



A Disco (10.15 pm – ...)

If you wish to continue the party, a 1960s disco could be a good option. If you and your guests are keen on singing, you might want to sing karaoke; or maybe you just want to enjoy each other's company and another drink or two.

When the party is over and the guests are leaving, you might want to give them some small gifts to take home. These might be the 1960s accessories they have been wearing all night long, some photos of the small bouquets they made or photos picturing any nice moments of the party (sent later).



We wish you a stunning party!