

## SPOTLIGHT

Traditionally, a bridal shower is an intimate, women only, lunch, often hosted by the bride's close and dearest ones before the series of wedding events kick off. While some like to keep it down-low by hosting a little in-house event, some like to go big outdoors. The point here though, is not the sheer size and venue, but the organisation and planning of the whole day that brings an unforgettable smile to the bride's face.

# An Unforgettable Bridal Shower

## MAKE YOUR BUDGET

This is the part no one really wants to talk about, so best to address it fast. Before you set out with your plans, sit and make a budget, and only then, start allocating work, vendors and decorators. It is easy to get carried away, so better plan ahead.

## THEMES TO EXPLORE

It all starts with the theme, and that helps you decide on everything else. Although the pinks and glitter have been a great theme, it has become a bit overused and mundane. It is now time to pick out something fresh and more grown up that will help your girl transition into a bride.

## NEO NAUTICAL

Think colour pallets of navy blues and whites, finished off with some nice sailor hats. Toss out the shiny ribbons and go for a raw rope to tie presents, or to add that last nautical touch. White and navy stripes with hints of red are also a good outfit choice to coordinate with your girls.

## EXOTIC EXTRAVAGANZA

Lots of fruits, coconut drinks with an umbrella straw, and decorations with raw leaves and flowers are some of the elements of an exotic bridal shower. Flowy summer dresses, paired with handmade flower crowns are not only easy, but go great with the theme as well.

## BEACHY WAVES

We all have one friend who loves the beach, so why not bring it to her bridal shower. If you can do it right beside a real beach, you score top points, but while that is not always possible, there are other options. Candles set in sand, tables decorated with dried starfish and seashells... and a menu full of seafood are some of the ideas one could start with.

## TEA PARTY AND BRUNCH

Loud parties are not everyone's cup of tea, but a tea party might be. This is best done outdoors; preferably a private garden or an outdoor restaurant would serve nicely.

Make sure to have options of different flavours of tea, and some coffee too, just in case. Macaroons, cookies, cupcakes and finger-food like sandwiches are the perfect menu, followed by a simple cake. Tea, lights, and flowers provide the perfect décor and ambience, and a table to showcase gifts.

## PICNIC THEMED PARTY

Instead of throwing a surprise party which always becomes too obvious, why not treat her to a picnic to some refreshing outdoors. Set a nice big table with all the food she loves, add on flowers and balloons to the chairs, and maybe hang on some decorations from the surrounding trees. If you want to go the extra mile, you can always add in or rent a swing for the day. It will double as a great photo booth as well.

## BRIDE'S FAVOURITE

While there are hundreds of themes to explore from, the bride will always have something close to her heart that she would love to experience at her bridal shower. This could be her favourite book, music band, artist, movie or TV show, and bringing that to life for a day would undoubtedly bring happy tears to her eyes.

## CATERERS ARE A CHOICE

Vendors are available by the dozen, and are ready to recreate any fancy idea of yours, but it will not hold the value or sentiment of a

girlfriends when you have plain cookies and lots of toppings and designs to paint on.

## THE GUEST LIST

Since this is usually an all-girl affair, invites are sent out to both the bride and groom's mothers, sisters, aunts and closest friends. But the number depends on the size of the party and the bride's preferences. So talking with the bride's mother is best while making the list, or the bride herself so you do not miss out on anyone important.

## INVITATION LETTERS-- ONCE AGAIN A CHOICE

not create a party, the activities do.

Planning games for the day is one option, like Best Recipes, Ring Toss, A Flower Crown Making Contest, Designing your Own Wedding Dress, Best Date Night Ideas, and so on. If games do not appeal much, go for other activities you would all enjoy together, like a spa day, a manicure and pedicure session, a movie night or taking a baking class at home.

## THE DRESS CODE

No one likes a strict dress code that pushes too hard. Instead, offer a colour palette so the guests have a range of shades to choose from, making it easy for everyone involved which. Plus, it looks better in pictures too.

## THE PERFECT PLAYLIST

A collection of the bride's favourite songs playing in the background while everyone is enjoying themselves will act as a thoughtful gesture that the bride will love. Besides, it is always nice to have good music to complement the ambience.

## THE QUEEN'S CHAIR

Having one chair decorated differently for the bride makes her feel extra special and important. It serves as a photo booth for the bride as well for when she is opening all the presents or cutting the cake.

## PARTY FAVOURS

This is not mandatory, but guests appreciate favours on their way back. Do not go for something over the top that might not fit the budget. A small box of chocolates, a piece of small jewellery, a monogrammed key ring, or a small pouch are just some of the options you can look into. If the budget allows, an all in one gift bag will be splendid.

## FEASIBILITY MATTERS

Pinterest and all other pretty blogs out there will give you a ton of ideas you will want to execute, but not everything will be feasible, and most will be unachievable. Try to not get too carried away with the planning, and start with the executing as soon as possible to make this the most memorable bridal shower ever. Mishaps happen, but overlooking the minor ones and enjoying the day is what it is all about.

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Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed

Model: Indrani

Wardrobe: LS Design

Blouse: Jahin Khan

Jewellery: Araaz

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Make-up and hair: Noyon Ahamed and Niloy

Styling: Sonia Yeasmin Isha

Location: Mermaid Beach Resort, Cox's Bazar



handmade cake, or the homemade cookies that you decorate so carefully with the frosting. For a big party, you will need a vendor, but for small ones, you can skip on it altogether. Try to keep the food being served in line with your theme by matching colours or prints so it all comes together nicely.

## MAKE YOUR OWN MENU

The common list of bridal shower menus is known to all, but a twist is always fun and appreciated. Have a little make-your-own ice-cream or yoghurt bar with a few flavours to choose from, and an array of add-ons like berries, cookies, chocolates and candies. Or empty waffle cones that guests can fill up as they like with an assortment of savouries and sweets. A design-your-own-cookie station is also a ton of fun with your

Invitations can be made for the event if it is being done on a large scale. If you do decide on invitations, get them ordered or made professionally. Pinterest has printable templates that you can look into as well. It does not have to be anything too fancy, but making it by hand will not be too visually pleasing and will be very time-consuming.

## A UNIQUE BACKDROP THAT STEALS THE SHOW

Pictures from that day will be cherished for years to come, so better make a pretty good looking backdrop to go with it. Match it with your theme, or opt for something simple like mesh curtains and flowers that would complement everything.

## PLAN AN ACTIVITY

Dressing up and good food on their own do