

# KEEP YOUR PARTY YOUNG AND FRESH

By Jason Davis

Palm Beach loves its parties. There's no real secret to throwing the perfect party—every event is memorable in its own way, but the challenge is making sure yours is memorable for the right reasons. Contemporary parties no longer are stuffy, formal affairs by default. Instead, elaborate events with younger crowds in mind—bar/bat mitzvahs, wedding receptions for couples in their 20s, birthday parties for up-and-comers, or any other kind of get-together—are on the rise. Because party trends evolve over time,

*PalmBeachIllustrated.com* asked event expert Heather Lowenthal of [Posh Paper & Parties](#) in Jupiter, who specializes in mitzvahs and weddings, for ideas about throwing great parties for young adults—and those young at heart.



- **Keep it casual.** Think club settings and cocktail parties, rather than formal sit-down dinners. The best events emphasize what's "hip" and that often means creating a lounge-like atmosphere centered around dancing and mingling. "You have to remember, these are *celebrations*," Lowenthal says. "They're your chance to let loose and have fun, and guests should feel that way, too."
- **Establish a theme.** Whatever your interests are, share them with your guests. Love music? Try a rock 'n' roll-themed event. Enjoy the beach? Have a luau. Or focus on something simple, like a color or a letter. "This is where the host's true personality can come out," Lowenthal says.
- **Send creative invitations.** Fancy invitations are still in, but mainly from a "marketing" standpoint. There are many events on the Palm Beach social calendar, and yours must grab attention. "An invitation is the first impression of your party, your first opportunity to introduce someone to it," Lowenthal says. "You want people to come? Make the invitation eye-catching." For a luau-themed bat mitzvah, for example, Lowenthal sent out brightly colored invitations in a box that included a lei; for a French-themed party, the invitations were adorned with feathers.
- **Serve fun foods.** Sure, the era of "comfort food" has already come and gone through culinary circles, but bite-sized nibbles are still part of the local party scene, whether it's macaroni and cheese by the spoonful or mini-corn dogs delivered in popcorn tubs, or desserts such as cheesecake lollypops or miniature ice cream cones served on the dance floor. "Presentation is everything," Lowenthal says. "Make it appealing; no one wants to open up a chafing dish and scoop something out."
- **Do your guests a favor.** Don't waste money on take-home *tchotchkes* your guests will stow in a drawer or, worse, throw away later. Lowenthal suggests commemorative items based on the event's activities (airbrush artists creating T-shirts) or the party's theme (a beach pail filled with candy). Hot items for bat mitzvahs, she says, include zip-up hoodie sweatshirts or pajama pants, personalized with a logo or a color scheme from the occasion. Failing that, something edible (theme-shaped cookies) is always appreciated. "Make sure they're something people can use," she advises.