

## QUICK GUIDE TO PLANNING THE ALCOHOL FOR YOUR EVENT

Planning an event can be exciting and daunting at the same time. Questions that arise frequently are in regards to alcohol. As event caterers **we will** help you to **plan** and **organize** your special day to ensure **ultimate success**. Initially there are several decisions that need to be made regarding alcohol that will be helpful with the planning:

### 1. HOST OR CASH BAR?

The service of alcohol is an important consideration. Will it be a **host bar** where the drinks are provided free of charge or will it be a **cash bar**. In addition will the bar be limited to beer and wine or will it include a selection of spirits.

**A professional smart-serve bartender** is an invaluable investment for any party as far as responsible drinking goes.

A **Special Occasion Permit (SOP)** is required anytime alcohol is served or offered for sale anywhere **other** than a licensed establishment or private place such as a private office or residence.

The AGO (Alcohol and Gaming Organization) requires this certificate to be clearly displayed the day of the event. A SOP can be obtained from the Alcohol and Gaming web-site [www.agco.ca](http://www.agco.ca) for a fee. The cost for a **host bar** (guests do not pay for drinks) is **\$35.00** and a sale permit is **\$150.00** if guests are **purchasing** their drinks. The SOP needs to be obtained at least 2 weeks before your event.

Keep all receipts attached as any unopened bottles can be returned.

In addition we also **recommend the purchase of PAL (Alcohol Liability Insurance)** when planning your event. This program provides protection against lawsuits for individuals, organizations and companies who hold single/multi-day functions with or without alcohol service. This can be purchased on line or through your insurance broker.

### HOST VERUS CASH BAR:

Some people like to do a combination of Host and Cash Bar. The host bar is set for a limited amount of time such as a cocktail reception before the dinner service. Many people chose to close the bar for dinner service offering a selection of white and red wine. After dinner the bar is reopened and drinks can be purchased for a set fee. Not only does this help to off-set the cost of alcohol but it also encourages guests to drink with some responsibility. Free drinks are often taken advantage of not to mention waste.





## 2. HOW MUCH ALCOHOL WILL WE NEED TO PURCHASE

Estimating the amount of product to purchase can often be a bit tricky. The following guidelines will hopefully help.

### GUIDELINES FOR WINE

A standard serving of wine is five ounces at 12% alcohol by volume. This means that you get.

- Five glasses per 750ml bottle
- Seven glasses per liter
- 10.5 glasses per magnum

### LUNCH

If your event takes place over the lunch hour plan on 1/3 of a bottle per person which will give them two glasses each.

### DINNER

Dinner is usually a bigger meal than lunch and typically takes longer to consume. With this in mind you may require ½ a bottle per person, which will provide 3 glasses per each.

### PARTIES

Most guests can drink three glasses of wine in two hours which is ½ bottle; this amount can be increased depending on the total length of the party or event. **Always remember if you are the host you are responsible for your guests' safety. Always make sure there is a Designated Driver or an alternative method of transportation.**

### GUIDELINES FOR SPIRITS

A 750 ml (26 oz.) bottle gives approximately 17 standard drinks. You will need three similarly sized bottles of mix. Allow three drinks per person. Guest preferences or a party theme may affect the types of spirits purchased, so the following is only a basic guide for making spirit purchases:

- 30% Canadian Whisky
- 20% Vodka
- 20% Rum
- 10% Scotch
- 10% Gin (more popular in summer)
- 10% Float or something unusual (e.g. liqueurs or Schnapps)

### 3. HOW TO ESTIMATE FOR LARGE SOCIAL EVENTS?

Follow these three steps when estimating your needs:

1. Calculate how many people will be drinking at the event.
2. Multiply this number by four. This tells you the average number of drinks required.
3. Translate the number of standard drinks into cases of spirits and bottles of wine.

100 "standard drinks" = approximately:

**Beer:** 100 - 12oz bottles

**Spirits:** 6 - 750 ml bottles

**Wine:** 20 – 750ml bottles

Suppose you expect **200 people** to be drinking at your event. The recommended number of drinks you need is **800 (4 x 200)**. Let's further suppose that you expect about half of the people will drink beer and the rest will be divided between spirits and wine. The 800 "standard drinks" required would be divided as follows: 400 bottles of beer (4 x 100), plus 12 bottles of spirits (2 x 6), plus 40 bottles of wine (2 x 20).

### 4. CAN HOMEMADE WINE OR BEER BE SERVED AT OUR EVENT?

Homemade wine and beer can only be served but not sold at a **wedding, anniversary, or other family special occasion**. Examples of events that may be considered family special occasions are a family reunion or other family gatherings. The wine/beer must be made by a member of the family hosting the event and the permit holder must have acquired it free of charge. The permit holder may not sell the wine/beer.

### 5. WHAT ALTERNATIVE BEVERAGES CAN WE SERVE INSTEAD OF ALCOHOL?

A wonderful addition to any event! A non-alcoholic beverage station featuring fruit infused water, mango juice, lemonade or ice-tea. The beverages are served in disposable plastic cups for easy clean-up

