

Dating Advice: 5 Lessons Learned from a Bachelorette Junkie



By Caroline Liller

Bachelorette parties equal the ultimate girls' weekend getaway. Fortunately for me, or some might say unfortunately, I've attended my fair share of bachelorette extravaganzas. From Napa Valley, to New York City to Nashville and everywhere in between – I've planned or attended a combined 12 destination bachelorette parties in seven years. You could say I have a thing for them. I've learned a lot from these three, sometimes four-day weekend parties.

Here are a few confessions and lessons worth passing the torch on:

1. Let the Bride Pick the Destination

There's nothing worse as a Maid of Honor than planning a trip around what you 'think' the bride will enjoy or forcing her to do things she doesn't want to. It not only makes it miserable for her, but everyone attending. Remember the main goal for the weekend is for the bride and her best group of girl friends or future family members to get together. If she wants a relaxing weekend in the mountains, don't force everyone to go out on the town and go clubbing. She'll probably leave the club early anyway and everyone will be disappointed. In my experience, forcing the bride to do things 'because she has to – it's her bachelorette party' never ends well. It's best to involve the bride in the planning process so that expectations for the weekend are already set, and everyone is on the same page.

2. Understand Not Everyone Meshes

Bachelorette parties can consist of a very interesting group of people. Essentially you are inviting siblings, future in-laws, old friends from elementary school and newer friends from your college years – to all go on vacation together. Mix in everyone's opinions on where to eat, what to do and who pays for what (and alcohol) and there's potential for a lot of drama. It's best to stay neutral and lie low if you can. Focus on having fun and the bride's wishes.

3. Know Your Limits

As a bachelorette attendee, you should know your limits and own up to them to make for a better experience for all. For example, if you can't fly hungover, you shouldn't book your return flight for 6 AM on Sunday. The same goes for a drivable destination. If you've offered to drive the group, make sure you are available to get everyone home safely. Sometimes it's

easy to forget about details such as these until you're in the moment and they can have a big impact on the group. Bachelorette parties are not a time to be selfish (unless you are the bride).

4. It's OK to Not Attend

In all seriousness, if you know you can't hang – or don't want to – it's ok to politely decline an invitation to a weekend of partying. Also, if you know you can't contribute or afford what is being planned by the majority of the group, simply say you can't attend. Remember to speak up way in advance though, since your attendance likely influences costs for everyone else. These extravaganzas really add up so know what you're getting yourself into.

5. Make the Bride Feel Special

What's a bachelorette party without fun gifts and [bachelorette accessories](#) for the bride? Delegate members in the group to bring different items to make sure all of your bases are covered. One person shouldn't have to buy everything – you should all pitch in to make sure the bride feels special. Hopefully the favor will be returned someday when she's attending your bachelorette party.

There are many things you will learn from bachelorette-ing with a group of people you rarely hang with all together. But with any luck, it will be one of the most memorable weekends (in at least one way or another!) for all of you.

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