

THE GROOM'S GUIDE

BUCK UP

THE TRADITION OF MEN CELEBRATING THEIR FRIEND'S DEPARTURE FROM BACHELORHOOD GOES BACK TO ANCIENT ROME, IT'S SUCH A GOOD NIGHT, THE GUYS ARE HANGING ON TO THE TWO THOUSAND YEAR OLD TRADITION.

The contemporary buck's night is intended to be a night of good clean fun, although some have been known to go over the top. However, with luck and a bit of good management, the groom should have a great night with his dignity intact.

SETTING UP

The groom decides how he would like to spend the evening and the best man organises it, whether he follows instructions fully IS another story. A popular option is to book a private room at a restaurant or pub so the guests can enjoy an inexpensive meal and some drinks. It also allows some privacy so that other patrons won't hear the speeches which are quite often designed to cause the groom embarrassment. Often entertainment is involved which might be better kept behind closed doors.

INVITATIONS

Generally the groom will give the best man a list of people to invite and the best man will see to it. Traditionally on the list are the groomsmen, ushers, brothers of the bride and groom, and the groom's close friends. It is also considered a courtesy to invite the fathers of both the bride and groom.

MONEY MATTERS

Guests usually pay at least part of the cost. Sometimes the groom will pay for the meal, while the guests buy their own drinks. A generous idea is for the guests to combine resources and pay for the groom's night out. The best man should make this decision and let guests know what monetary arrangements have been decided. He should also take charge of the money, to ensure there is enough and that no one forgets their share.

SETTING A DATE

Traditionally, the buck's night was held on the eve of the wedding. However, this has proved to be too close to the big day and didn't allow enough time for a decent recovery. Be sensible, choose a night some days, even weeks, before the big day.

THE SPEECH

Traditionally, the best man delivers a buck's night speech. The topic is likely to revolve around his friendship with the groom and will possibly touch on some disreputable episodes from the groom's past.

SAFELY HOME

The best man is responsible for organising the after-party transport. Under no circumstances should any guest drive home. Pooling taxis works well and is quite economical. To avoid confusion, the best man can compile a list of partygoers with the address and phone number for each for the taxi drivers. The best man should ensure that the groom arrives home and is seen safely inside, tucked up in bed safe and sound.

IT'S A BOY THING

ALTERNATIVES TO A BUCK'S NIGHT INCLUDE:

High Adventure: Sky diving, white water rafting, go-kart racing, mountain biking, horseback trail riding, parasailing, water skiing, snow skiing, gun shooting, camping, deep sea fishing charter, kite surfing.

Sports Mad: Play golf, a game of football, cricket or frisbee at a local park, play backyard tennis. Russell Crowe hosted a cricket match between his family and friends versus Danielle Spencer's family and friends for his buck's show, and had shirts made up for the two teams.

The Rat Pack: Hire favourite dream cars, Porsche, Lamborghini or Ferrari for the day; go for a cruise to a favourite destination; hire a casino to come to you (www.funcasino.com.au or www.pokerama.com.au) and enjoy martinis and cigars. Hire a bus and go wine tasting to favourite wineries.

Good Plain Fun: Paint ball, ten pin bowling, lawn bowls, bouncing boxing on a bouncy castle, hire a mechanical bull or surf board, hire sumo suits for sumo wrestling.