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Party games for 8 to 100 guests

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presents...

“The Balmy Bahamas Cruise”

Host Guide

For standard versions

by Stephanie Chambers

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Host's guide

It is easy to prepare and run a mystery party. We recommend that as host you should also take a role and participate along with everyone else. With our mysteries, not even the murderer knows who did it. But with a little intelligence and a careful ear for important clues, it is possible to solve the mystery.

Preparing for the party

- 1 Open the version of the kit to suit the number of guests you **think** you will be having. The name of each version shows the number of female and the number of male roles.
- 2 Decide when you will be having the party, where and who will play each role. You should read the description of each character and try to select a role for each guest. Or you may like to give your guests a choice of the roles not yet taken and let them decide for themselves.
- 3 We recommend that you tell your guests to: "Please dress up as your character. Over dressing and going to extremes is highly recommended." We generally find that the more people put into the event, the more fun it is.
- 4 Decide how you want to do the invitations. You can print out the Word or Adobe Acrobat versions and handwrite the details, or you can type in your party details before you print it out. There are four invitations per page. You can print them in color or black and white or you may like to print them on colored paper.
For versions with optional roles: For the guests playing optional roles, cut out and attach their character description or copy and paste it into their invitation.
- 5 Or you could paste the jpg version into an email and add your party details and send this to each guest.

- 6 Move to the page(s) which show the character descriptions for the main characters (suspects). You need to send each guest a copy of these pages along with their invitation. Print as many copies of these pages as you need using Print Current page and specify the number of copies required.
- 7 If you are emailing the invitations, copy and paste the text from the suspect pages into your email message. You can select the text (page by page) from the Adobe Acrobat file.
- 8 When you know **exactly** how many guests will be attending, print the version of the kit for that number of guests.
- 9 Cut each page in two using a guillotine/paper trimmer or scissors. Don't read the clues beforehand as it will spoil your enjoyment of the party, and you may spoil everyone else's enjoyment by letting on that you know everything!
- 10 Staple the pages for each person together into a booklet so that there is a page with their character's name at the front followed by clues for each act.
- 11 The "Who Did It" pages are at the end with a warning beforehand not to read the next section. Fold these unread, put them in an envelope and open it at the end of your party to find out who did it.
- 12 Print a name tag for each guest. You can print them in color or black and white or you may like to print them on thicker or colored paper. Cut these up and have some small safety pins handy.
- 13 **For versions with optional roles:** Create a clue booklet for each person playing an optional role. Divide up the extra clues for each act and staple them to their clue booklet for the appropriate act. You may like to print them an extra name tag each that you staple on to the front of their clue booklet. If you don't have many people playing optional roles, divide the extra clues up amongst the suspects also. All the clues should be given out. If there are far too many clues for the number of guests you are having, then you can ignore some of the sillier clues.
- 14 Print additional copies of the map to hand out or enlarge it and put it on the wall.
- 15 Decorate the room just before the party (see *Décor suggestions*).

- 16 Prepare or arrange for food for the event (see *Menu suggestions*).
- 17 Decide whether you are going to have prizes for the party (see *Preparing prizes*). This is optional, but recommended.

Décor suggestions

These are suggestions you might like to follow to make your place look like a luxury cruiser:

- position a banner (eg made from paper) in a boat shape so that everyone at the table is “inside” the boat shape
- tablecloth with pictures stuck on from magazines of the characters
- decorate table with Bahamas souvenirs (ask friends as they may have some)
- modern folding boat-type furniture
- modern music (eg modern music, Latin music or Caribbean music).

Menu suggestions

Eat food you would find in the Bahamas.

As a first course, you could serve pea soup with dumplings and salt beef or split pea and ham soup. One soup unique to the Caribbean and Bahamas is the souse (pronounced “sowse”). You can make it using water, onions, lime juice, celery, peppers, and meat; no thickeners are added. The meat added to a souse is often ox-tail or pigs' feet.

Seafood is popular in the Bahamas. For example, the Bahamian conch (pronounced “konk”) which is a large type of ocean mollusk. You can eat it fresh and uncooked just scored with a knife and with lime juice and spices sprinkled on top. Or you can serve it deep-fried, steamed, in a soup, salad, stew or as conch chowder or conch fritters.

Rock lobsters are also popular in the Bahamas. You can serve these broiled, minced or in salads. Alternatively, you could serve boiled or baked crab or any type of fresh fish.

You can serve boiled fish with grits or stew the fish with celery, onions, tomatoes and various spices. Many dishes in the Bahamas are accompanied by pigeon peas and rice with spices, tomatoes, onions, and bacon added.

Serve rum punch, pina colada or chilled Kalik (the beer of The Bahamas). The Bahamian refresher of choice is coconut water (not heavier, fattier coconut milk) blended with sweet milk and gin. There is also a drink called Switcher, made with native limes.

Maybe serve mango or banana bread with ice cream for dessert.

Search for recipes on the Internet (eg search for “Bahamas recipes” on www.google.com).

Preparing props

There are a few props you may like to provide:

- Karl Virgil’s sailor’s hat (if you are using a version for 9 to 12 guests, give this to Angelica as she will present it to the group in Act Two. In the version for 13 to 16 guests, someone will have a clue relating to it. In the version for 8 guests it is not necessary.)
- a bottle with a piece of blank paper in it (have this amongst the other decorations when people arrive – you may like to point it out to everyone as a clue)
- a toy monkey (made to appear dead) (have this amongst the other decorations when people arrive – you may like to point it out to everyone as a clue)
- a used flare (have this amongst the other decorations when people arrive – you may like to point it out to everyone as a clue). To create this you may like to use a flashlight and add a sign to it saying "Used Flare".

Preparing prizes (optional)

This is optional, but you may like to have some prizes available to give to the people:

- who guess who did it
- with the best costume.

You can reduce the number of people you have to give a prize to by asking for details as to who, how and why the person did it.

If you do have prizes, you should let people know they exist just after you read out “*The Rules*”.

Tip: Don’t assume that only one person will guess who did it. It is best to have a prize you can divide up (eg a box of chocolates or a bag or box of Turkish Delights). If no one guesses correctly, divide the prize up amongst everyone.

If you have a color printer and some T-shirt transfers, you may like to download and print out some of our special T-shirt logos (ie “I Gussed Who Did It” and “I Had The Best Costume”). See <http://www.merrimysteries.com/tmm/prizes.htm> for details. These are free to download.

Running the party

We suggest that you run the party as follows:

- 1 Give each guest their name tag and a small safety pin to attach it with.
- 2 When everyone has arrived, read *The Rules* to everyone.
- 3 Have everyone introduce themselves to the group by saying their character’s name and a few words about themselves from their description.
- 4 Check that everyone has read the “*The Suspects*” pages. If they haven’t, give them a few minutes to read them quickly. There may be important clues in “*The Suspects*” pages.
- 5 Serve the First Course of your meal or have dips available. Generally we don’t recommend you continue with the clues while people are eating unless you are pressed for time.
- 6 Hand out the clue booklets. You should give each person their clues for all acts. As you give it to each person, tell them not to open it until you say so. When you are ready, tell everyone to turn to Act One. Do Act One. Make sure everyone reads out all their clues and that everyone participates. You may like to encourage people who are shy by asking them a question or two.
- 7 Serve the Second Course of your meal (if applicable).

- 8 Do Act Two. Serve Dessert (if applicable).
- 9 Do Act Three.
- 10 Serve hot drinks and after dinner mints (if applicable).
- 11 Ask each person to think about who did it and why and how they did it. Ask them to write down their final choice. When they are ready, go around the group and ask everyone who they think did it and why and how they did it.
- 12 After everyone has had a guess, take the *Who Did It* pages out of their sealed envelope and read as specified.
- 13 Present the prizes (if you are providing these). If more than one person guesses correctly, give the prize to the person who has the most correct answers as to how and why the person did it. You may like to also give a prize for the person who has the best (or most creative) costume.

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Acture agrees to grant a license to you to download (or receive the kit files via email) and print out and use or perform our kits, according to the terms and conditions described on <http://www.merrimysteries.com/tmm/terms.htm>. You can only make one printout of the clue pages and lamination of the clue pages is not permitted.

If you wish to use our kits on a commercial basis (eg as a venue for mystery party events or as an event organizer or an actor or theater group), you may only use the purchased kit once. If you wish to use it for further events, you must purchase it again. This also means you will always be using an up-to-date version of the kit. We are constantly changing and improving our kits.

The Rules

These are to be read out by the host to the whole group at the beginning of the party:

Welcome to “The Balmy Bahamas Cruise”!

Tilly Song (a megastar singer) has hired a luxury-plus cruiser to see the Bahamas and have a holiday. She has invited a variety of other famous people along to share the lobster. But just as the party was about to start, Karl Virgil, musician and mad-man troublemaker, has been found overboard as full of water as he was of his own self-importance.

Was it one of the singers or actors or was it the tennis or the basketball star or one of the others? Although we have more comedians on-board than we do detectives, this is no laughing matter. We have to find out who did it.

Shortly I will introduce you to the people on-board. These are our suspects.

I will ask you to turn the page just before each act begins. There is a page of clues you have to reveal for each act. Only read the page for each act as required and please don't read the pages ahead of time. During each act you must reveal all of your clues for that particular act.

Go around the table and let everyone say a clue or two. Repeat this until everyone has said their clues. Try to blend any remaining clues into the conversation. If you can't do this, just say your clues when the conversation subsides. If you are asked a question, say the response from your clue sheet.

There is no need to hurry through this and you can adlib a little if you want. You do not have to read each clue exactly as it is written – embellish it if you want. You might like to speak in slang or with an accent. For example, if you are playing a snob, you might speak as if you have a plum in your mouth. If your character is distressed, you could reveal your clues in between sobs. Act it out to the fullest. This is your chance to be dramatic! (*See next page*)

At the end of the party you will be asked to guess who performed the crime and how and why they did it. If you work out who did it before the party ends please keep it to yourself. *Optional:* There is a prize for the people who guess who did it. There is also a prize for the person with the best costume.

The Map

"The Goombay"

