

THE "ART" OF BOOKING AT MUSEUMS:
WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW TO HELP PLAN YOUR NEXT FUNCTION AT A MUSEUM

ITEMS TO CONSIDER WHEN BOOKING A GROUP AT A MUSEUM VENUE:

- ✦ Security guard staff will always be required
- ✦ Confirm the museum's alcohol policy in advance
- ✦ Find out parking availability, costs and hours of operation in advance
- ✦ See if you can negotiate group rates for admission into special exhibits featured at a museum
- ✦ Check the museum's calendar special public events that might conflict with your function
- ✦ You can use museums for spouse programs. Participants can take self-guided tours, or sometimes the museum can help you arrange for a docent to guide the group for a nominal fee
- ✦ Museums will oftentimes provide collateral material to assist you with promoting your event (quantity based on discretion)
- ✦ Museums generally book their exhibits/displays at least a year out so you will know what is scheduled
- ✦ Space parameters of various function rooms in a museum are not constant. Walls are moved and rooms are added or eliminated, based on the particular exhibition going on at the time. Just because there was a room large enough to accommodate a reception for 400 people this year, does not mean that same room will even exist next year.
- ✦ Meeting planners can theme their event menus, invitations, decorations, etc., around the particular exhibit being displayed at the museum during their timeframe
- ✦ Museums typically have food restrictions (i.e., no red punch, no brownies, etc.)
- ✦ Advance communication of itinerary to the museum is essential to avoid overlap of group activities
- ✦ Museums are not like hotels, so almost everything you will need to facilitate a function will have to be rented
- ✦ Ask each museum for its list of approved catering vendors if applicable
- ✦ Check with the museum for liability considerations (i.e., exhibit damage, property damage from leaking coolers, etc.)
- ✦ If you are renting equipment to facilitate your weekend event, be sure to verify the rental company is open for a Sunday pickup following a Saturday night event so dirty dishes are not left at the museum over the weekend
- ✦ Last but not least, always ask a museum for its Catering Policies in writing.

HERE ARE JUST A FEW EXAMPLES OF MUSEUM POLICIES YOU WILL TYPICALLY ENCOUNTER:

- ✦ Food and drink is usually prohibited in the actual exhibit area of a museum;
- ✦ No confetti, rice or seeds can be used for special events like weddings;
- ✦ Check with museum staff in advance if you plan to have banners.
- ✦ Banners typically have to be pre-approved, and, there are usually restrictions as to the hanging options;
- ✦ Transport carts and service equipment need to have rubberized wheels to prevent marking up floors;
- ✦ Usually live floral decorations have to be provided by a retail florist to assure plants have been treated with pesticides to prevent exhibits from being exposed to insects;
- ✦ Large entertainment bands with full-scale sound systems are typically prohibited - entertainment should be kept to a modest level;