

19

Social life

A

Organising your social life

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Hi Nadia,

How was your weekend? My old school friend Emma came on a **flying visit**¹, which was fun. We had a **girls' night out** on Saturday with a couple of other friends. We **went out for a meal** to a local restaurant. So much for me **sticking to my diet**!

Emma was here for a **surprise party** for her parents on Sunday. She and her brother wanted to **spring a surprise on**² them for their 30th wedding anniversary – they thought 30 years together definitely **called for a celebration**³ – so they decided to **throw a party** for them. They had it at a hotel near their house and invited all their parents' old friends. The vicar who'd married them even **put in an appearance**⁴! They asked me along too and it was lovely, a really **special occasion** with a fun atmosphere. I was just sorry I couldn't **spend much quality time**⁵ with Emma, but she promised the next time she comes it won't be such a **whirlwind visit**⁶. Anyway, what about you? Is life its usual busy **social whirl**⁷? Do you still **go clubbing** every weekend?

Claire

- ¹ a visit that doesn't last long

² to surprise

³ meant that a celebration was appropriate

⁴ came just for a short time

⁵ time where people can give their complete attention to each other

⁶ brief and very busy visit

⁷ non-stop set of social events

B

Formal entertaining

To: Councillor D. M. Patel
County Hall, Swithick

Penniston International Youth Festival

Dear Councillor Patel,

First let me thank the County Council, on behalf of the Festival Organising Committee, for **playing host to**¹ the welcome reception for our international colleagues and for **making us** so **welcome** at County Hall last week. We were also grateful that you were able to **find time to pay us a visit** at our weekly planning meeting, where we were delighted to hear that you intend to **join the festivities** at the opening ceremony of the festival.

We would further like to invite you and your spouse to **attend a formal function**, to be held at the Castle Hotel, Penniston on Friday 27 July, from 7.30pm to 10.30pm, to mark the closing of the festival.

Yours sincerely,
Mark Janowski (Committee Chair)

- ¹ providing the facilities for

² social event where a family comes together, usually to celebrate something

³ take out for dinner and drinks

⁴ (rather formal) a very friendly and welcoming atmosphere

⁵ place where a public event or meeting happens

ERROR WARNING

We say **organise a barbecue** or **have a barbecue**, NOT ~~make a barbecue~~.

Castle Hotel Penniston

Whether you are planning a formal party, a **family gathering**² or simply want to **wine and dine**³ new business contacts in a **convivial atmosphere**⁴, the 16th-century Castle Hotel is **the perfect venue**⁵. Our 24 bedrooms, three restaurants and Function Room can be reserved by calling us on 1327 5547655 or by booking online at [www.castlepenniston.com](#).

Exercises

19.1 Complete the conversation words from the opposite page.

- Suki: How was Bill's (1) retirement party?
 Dave: Great. You should have seen his face; he really had no idea about it and he was so moved. It was a really nice gesture for the company to (2) a party for him like that. They really wine and (3) us. And even the MD put in an (4) ! What happened to you? I was surprised not to see you there.
 Suki: Oh, well I was planning to come, but then my friends (5) a surprise on me too that same night.
 Dave: Was it a (6) occasion?
 Suki: Yes, it was my birthday and my friends had arranged a girls' (7) out and invited lots of friends that I hadn't seen for ages.
 Dave: Sounds great. Happy Birthday, by the way.

19.2 Choose the correct collocation.

- 1 My parents have always *gave / made / had* my friends feel very welcome.
- 2 My aunt came on a *quality / whirling / flying* visit last week.
- 3 It's quite difficult to *hold on / keep with / stick to* a diet when you're eating out with friends.
- 4 You've passed your exam! Well, that *takes / gives / calls* for a celebration!
- 5 We hope you will *give / find / spend* time to visit our exhibition of students' artwork.
- 6 It's important to try to spend plenty of *welcome / convivial / quality* time with your family.
- 7 My sister's life is a constant *special / active / social* whirl.
- 8 I recommend you *pay / spend / go* a visit to the folk museum while you're in Dekksu.
- 9 Athens *threw / gave / played* host to the first modern Olympic Games in 1896.

19.3 Rewrite each sentence using a collocation from the opposite page. Then say whether the sentence you have written is more or less formal.

- 1 We could go to a nightclub later.
- 2 The restaurant has a really friendly atmosphere.
- 3 London is holding the Olympics in 2012.
- 4 She has a mad social life.
- 5 I have to go to a formal function on Thursday.
- 6 We invite you to join in the fun at the opening of the Arts Festival.
- 7 Grapsley Park is a great place for an outdoor concert.

19.4 Which do you prefer:

- 1 when you're too tired to cook, ordering a takeaway or eating out?
- 2 plain food or rich food?
- 3 having a family gathering or having a barbecue with friends?
- 4 giving a dinner party or going out for a meal?
- 5 paying your friends a visit or playing host to friends at your own home?
- 6 a whirlwind visit from a friend, or a relative who stays for a week?

