Organising your social life

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\(^2\) on Saturday with a couple of other friends. We went out for a meal\(^3\) to a local restaurant. So much for me sticking to my diet!\(^4\)

Emma was here for a surprise party\(^5\) for her parents on Sunday. She and her brother wanted to spring a surprise on\(^6\) them for their 30th wedding anniversary – they thought 30 years together called for a celebration\(^7\) – so they decided to throw a party\(^8\) 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\(^9\)! 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\(^10\) with Emma, but she promised the next time she comes it won’t be such a whirlwind visit\(^11\). Anyway, what about you? Is life its usual busy social whirl?\(^12\) Do you still go clubbing every weekend?\(^13\)

Claire

\(\text{\(1\) a visit that doesn’t last long} \quad \text{\(5\) time where people can give their complete attention to each other} \quad \text{\(9\) definitely} \quad \text{\(13\) whirlwind visit} \quad \text{\(12\) social whirl} \quad \text{\(2\) to surprise} \quad \text{\(6\) brief and very busy visit} \quad \text{\(10\) put in an appearance} \quad \text{\(14\) formal function} \quad \text{\(11\) family gathering} \quad \text{\(15\) a convivial atmosphere} \quad \text{\(13\) new business contacts in} \quad \text{\(16\) the perfect venue} \quad \text{\(14\) wine and dine} \quad \text{\(15\) welcoming atmosphere} \quad \text{\(16\) Castle Hotel is the perfect venue} \quad \text{\(17\) organising a barbecue or have a barbecue, NOT make a barbecue.} \)
### 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 wined 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 (give/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. Grapley 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?