

ICE CREAM BAR

Timeline & Checklist Planner

Event Date: _____

Guest RSVPs: _____

2 WEEKS BEFORE

Planning Tasks

- ☐ Confirm the date, guest count, and location.
- ☐ Choose your theme and buffet location.
- ☐ Set your dessert budget.
- ☐ Ask about relevant dietary restrictions and allergies.
- ☐ Choose ice cream flavors and topping options.
- ☐ Check your serving dishes, decorations, and storage space.
- ☐ Ice cream in your selected flavors
- ☐ Suitable alternative ice cream, if needed

Gather Serving Materials

- ☐ Ice cream scoops
- ☐ Bowls, cups, or cones
- ☐ Spoons
- ☐ Napkins
- ☐ Serving trays and bowls
- ☐ Small spoons or tongs for toppings
- ☐ Sauce bottles or small pitchers
- ☐ Trash can and spare trash bags

1 WEEK BEFORE: Finalize the Menu

Planning Tasks

- ☐ Finalize your shopping list.
- ☐ Purchase shelf-stable toppings and decorations.
- ☐ Gather bowls, cups, cones, scoops, spoons, and serving utensils.
- ☐ Create or print topping labels and buffet signs.
- ☐ Wash reusable containers and serving pieces.

Decorations & Setup

- ☐ Tablecloth or table runner
- ☐ Create or print the Sundae bar sign, any printable flavors, topping labels, and decorations.
- ☐ Decorative bowls, trays, or baskets
- ☐ Sturdy risers or display stands
- ☐ Themed decorations
- ☐ Paper towels and cleaning cloths
- ☐ Extra serving utensils

Toppings & Food Storage

- ☐ Crunchy & candy toppings
- ☐ Fresh or canned fruit
- ☐ Chocolate, caramel, and fruit sauces
- ☐ Whipped cream
- ☐ Cherries and other finishing touches
- ☐ Lidded containers for backup toppings
- ☐ Cooler or insulated storage, if needed
- ☐ Adequate ice packs or another appropriate cooling method
- ☐ Separate utensils for allergy-sensitive items

Extras

- ☐ Waffle bowls, Mini cones, Brownie or cookie pieces
- ☐ Coordinating sprinkle colors
- ☐ Milkshake blender and cups
- ☐ Take-home containers, if appropriate
- ☐ Camera or phone for photos

2-3 DAYS BEFORE

- ☐ Purchase remaining nonperishable supplies. (fruit)
- ☐ Check that you have adequate freezer space.
- ☐ Test the buffet layout with your serving dishes.
- ☐ Wash and dry reusable topping containers.
- ☐ Prepare homemade sauces or baked add-ins that can be

made ahead and stored safely.

- ☐ Check your cooler, ice packs, and cold-storage plan.

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DAY BEFORE THE PARTY

- ☐ Purchase ice cream if freezer space is limited.
- ☐ Buy fresh fruit and other perishable toppings.
- ☐ Wash and prepare fruit that can be safely stored ahead.
- ☐ Portion dry toppings into covered containers.
- ☐ Set out decorations and non-food supplies.
- ☐ Arrange the buffet table and confirm the serving order.
- ☐ Prepare freezer space or chill your cooler as appropriate.

- ☐ Review your shopping and materials checklist.

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2-3 HOURS BEFORE GUESTS ARRIVE

- ☐ Set up the tablecloth, signs, and decorations.
- ☐ Fill labeled containers with dry toppings.
- ☐ Set out serving utensils and napkins.
- ☐ Prepare the ice cream station near appropriate cold storage.
- ☐ Keep fruit, whipped cream, and other perishable toppings refrigerated.
- ☐ Make sure the buffet line is easy to navigate.

- ☐ Put cleaning cloths and trash bags within reach.

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JUST BEFORE SERVING

- ☐ Bring out ice cream in manageable batches.
- ☐ Add chilled sauces and perishable toppings as appropriate.
- ☐ Put out bowls, cones, and spoons.
- ☐ Check that all flavors and toppings are labeled.
- ☐ Make sure serving utensils are in the correct containers.
- ☐ Take a photo of your finished buffet.
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DURING & AFTER THE EVENT

- ☐ Monitor ice cream and chilled toppings.
- ☐ Replenish the buffet from safely stored backup supplies.
- ☐ Replace dropped or contaminated serving utensils.
- ☐ Clean spills and remove empty containers as needed.
- ☐ Return safely handled leftovers to appropriate storage promptly.
- ☐ Discard food that has exceeded safe time or temperature limits.

- ☐ Wash serving dishes and store reusable decorations.
- ☐ Enjoy the party!

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