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## Throw a recession party

Just having fun with friends needn't cost a lot.

BY SUSAN THURSTON  
Times Staff Writer

Event planner Marley Majcher says the pitiful economy shouldn't put the brakes on parties and good times. Some tastefulness and attention to costs can result in a memorable event guests will enjoy and even appreciate.

"The whole thing doesn't have to be roses and gilded with gold," said Majcher, owner of the Party Goddess, a Los Angeles-based catering and event planning company. "People just want to feel comfortable and see their friends."

Majcher (pronounced Major) has been throwing parties for 17 years, working with celebrities such as Britney Spears, Pierce



Marley  
Majcher

Brosnan and Katherine Heigl. These days, instead of dropping big bucks for parties, more people want advice on how to entertain on a budget.

"This is the first time we've seen this since 9/11," she said. "People felt it was inappropriate to have a party after that. In this case, we can't entertain because no one has any money."

But for those with money to spend, they can still host an event without appearing

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## Have fun with friends without breaking bank

frivolous or insensitive to those going through tough times, Majcher said. In fact, a fun diversion may actually help people who have lost their jobs or homes.

"People are depressed, and what do you need when you're depressed?" she said. "You need your friends."

Majcher, 39, heads to Florida next week to offer advice about hosting parties on the cheap for WFLA-TV's *Daytime Tampa* and *The Daily Buzz* in Orlando. In an interview from California, she shared a few tips.

- Pare down the guest list. Instead of inviting all 80 people you know, invite 20 friends, those you really want to see.
- Make sure items do double duty. Choose a centerpiece that also serves as a dessert or drink.

Decorate the table with candied apples or buckets of microbrewed beer. It's less expensive, and your ecoconscious friends will appreciate you not throwing out a bunch of flowers after the party.

- Swap a dinner party for a dessert party or a brunch with specific start and stop times. Guests won't drink as much (who drinks five mimosas?), and the food costs less.
- Throw a wine-tasting party. The host provides the food; guests supply the wine. Mix it up by having guests bring a cheap bottle and an expensive one. Cover the labels and quickly discover that your palate doesn't always pick the priciest.
- Finally, slow down and be practical, she said. "That never hurt anybody."