**Taking the Stress out of Finding Your Santa**

Christmas is a magical time that many look forward to each year. It is a time of joy, celebration, and togetherness. So what better way to celebrate than to bring in the very symbol of the Christmas holiday! So, you set out planning your event. You start to think about who to invite, activities for your guests, and what to set as your budget. The only thing left is to find your Santa Claus ,but you don’t know where to start. Where do I find a Santa? How soon should I book him? How much does it cost to hire a Santa? Well, good news! Follow these tips and you will find your Santa!

**Elfish Event Planning**

Before choosing your Santa you may want to consider what type of Holiday event you are hosting. Are you looking for a small gathering with a few kids who will be surprised that Santa is visiting them after dinner? Are you hosting a neighborhood event with people coming and going as they please? Your first task in planning for your Santa visit is determining how long he will be at your event. With home visits and family gatherings 30 to 45 minutes seems to be the sweet spot for the length of a visit. This gives adequate time for Santa to make a grand entrance, tell some stories , ask what children want for Christmas, hand out a small gift, and make his exit. Children lose interest quickly once Santa has been there close to an hour or so. For larger events such as a neighborhood party or a large family gathering with 20 or more children, you could have Santa there for a few hours. This ensures every child has time with Santa and the magic of his presence lasts longer.

**What do I offer Santa besides Milk and Cookies?...**

Setting a budget for your Santa is an important step in planning your event. Many clients are often surprised by the cost of a professional Santa. Even before contacting a Santa for hire you may want to research the rates of Santas in your area. This will give you a rough idea for what to set your budget at. This information can even set the length of your visit depending on your budget. You wouldn’t want to pay a Santa for 2 hours if your event would’ve been better suited for 30 minutes.

**How exactly do I contact the North Pole?...**

Finding a Santa for your event will be the next hurdle you have to clear in planning your Christmas event. Thankfully there are many ways to find a Santa Claus. Thanks to modern technology we have information at our fingertips at all times. One of the first ways many find a Santa is by using an online search engine such as Google or Bing. Simple search terms such as “Santa Claus for hire in my area” or “Santa in (insert area)” can point you in many directions. You may find websites of local Santa’s with all of their contact information, rates, and even reviews of past events. You may also find booking sites such as “Hire Santa” or “Gigsalad” that are used for connecting performers to potential clients. These sites are user friendly and can allow you to set a budget for your event, choose a location radius to search within, and set a lengthy for your event. After you pick a Santa and you agree on specifics of your event, the booking sites will handle the transaction for both parties. A third option is to search social media, especially local groups in your community. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and X (formerly Twitter) can all point you in the direction of a Santa. Finally you can reach out to friends and family who have worked with a Santa in the past that they enjoyed. When choosing your Santa you want to have an idea of how he looks and acts. Santas can come in all shapes and sizes. Some are Real Bearded and others wear a Designer Beard. Some are great musicians or storytellers while others perform small magic tricks. You have to decide what type of Santa you want for your event and no guide will decide that for you. One simple way to decide on a Santa if you are stuck is to choose the Santa you would’ve wanted to see as a child. You can never go wrong trusting your inner child!

**Making your list, and checking it twice**

Congratulations! You chose the length of your event, set a budget, and chose your Santa. Now is a great time to communicate with your Santa and update them on any changes in guest list or event details. Help your Santa out by designating a parking spot close to the venue so he isn’t stopped on the way to your event (everyone loves seeing Santa!). Have another adult or yourself keep in close contact with Santa when he arrives so he knows just when to enter and make his big grand entrance! If you want pictures with Santa in a chair, make sure it is in a location with adequate lighting, a decorative background, and away from the fireplace(that suit is hot enough already!).

Remember that this is your event and that your Santa wants to make it memorable for you and your guests. A little bit of work upfront and following some of these tips will help you be able to enjoy your event that day. Your Santa will handle the rest. Together you and your Santa will make your event a truly magical experience!