Dinner's on me: entertaining and eating out

VOCABULARY PRACTICE
UPPER-INTERMEDIATE | B2

Name: _____ Date: _____

1 Match each precise term with its definition.

1 hospitality ____	**a** warm, generous treatment of guests
2 lavish ____	**b** done on a grand, generous scale
3 reciprocate ____	**c** to return a favour, such as an invitation, in kind
4 impromptu ____	**d** spontaneous, not planned in advance
5 discerning ____	**e** having refined, selective taste
6 gracious ____	**f** polite, warm and considerate, especially as a host
7 obligatory ____	**g** required by social convention
8 extravagant ____	**h** spending or displaying wealth excessively
9 understated elegance ____	**i** tasteful and refined without being showy
10 faux pas ____	**j** a social mistake or embarrassing error

2 Choose the word with the most suitable connotation.

1 For warm, generous treatment of guests: hospitality / neglect.

2 For an extremely generous, grand meal: lavish / meagre.

3 For returning an invitation in kind: reciprocate / ignore.

4 For a spontaneous, unplanned gathering: impromptu / scheduled.

5 For someone with refined, selective taste: discerning / indifferent.

6 For a socially embarrassing mistake: a faux pas / a triumph.

7 For a tasteful, refined style without excess: understated elegance / gaudiness.

8 For excessive spending or displaying wealth: extravagant / frugal.

3 Complete the entertaining collocations with one word.

1 _____ hospitality (= extended warmly, without reservation)

2 a _____ affair (= a grand, generous occasion)

3 _____ the invitation (= return the favour later)

4 an _____ gathering (= spontaneous, unplanned)

5 a _____ palate (= refined, selective taste)

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6 commit a social _____ (= make an embarrassing mistake)

7 _____ elegance (= refined without being showy)

8 an _____ display of wealth (= excessive spending)

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4 Complete the case notes with words and phrases from the box.

discerning | extravagant | faux pas | gracious | hospitality | impromptu | lavish | obligatory | reciprocate | understated elegance

Case A: The host was known for genuine 1 _____, making every guest feel welcome without any hint of 2 _____ display.
Case B: The wedding banquet was 3 _____, with dishes flown in from several countries, though some guests found it overly 4 _____ rather than tasteful.
Case C: After being invited to dinner twice, Mia felt it was 5 _____ to 6 _____ with an invitation of her own.
Case D: An 7 _____ gathering turned into a memorable evening, proving that the best occasions aren't always carefully planned.
Case E: A 8 _____ guest immediately noticed the quality of the wine, while another accidentally committed a 9 _____ by arriving without a gift.
Case F: Despite modest means, the dinner achieved a real sense of 10 _____, favouring quality over quantity.

5 Read the text and answer the questions briefly.

The pressure to impress

Social scientists studying entertaining note a persistent tension between genuine hospitality and the pressure to impress guests through lavish or extravagant displays. While generous entertaining is often motivated by real warmth, some hosts report feeling obligated to reciprocate at an equal or greater scale after being invited elsewhere, turning what should be an enjoyable social ritual into a source of financial or social anxiety. Etiquette experts increasingly argue that understated elegance, favouring quality and genuine attention over extravagance, tends to leave a more lasting impression on discerning guests than an overly showy display, which can occasionally come across as insecure rather than generous.

1 What persistent tension do social scientists note? _____
2 What often motivates generous entertaining? _____
3 What do some hosts report feeling obligated to do? _____
4 What can this turn an enjoyable social ritual into? _____
5 What do etiquette experts increasingly argue tends to leave a lasting impression? _____
6 How can an overly showy display occasionally come across? _____

6 Rewrite each sentence using the word in capitals. Do not change the meaning.

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1 The host was warm and generous to every guest. HOSPITALITY _____

2 The party was unplanned but wonderful. IMPROMPTU _____

3 She felt she needed to return the favour. RECIPROCATE _____

4 He accidentally made an embarrassing social mistake. FAUX PAS _____

OVER TO YOU

Write a 120-150 word account analysing the tension between genuine hospitality and the pressure to impress when entertaining guests, distinguishing observation from interpretation.

[ ] Use at least twelve target expressions. [ ] Control connotation carefully. [ ] Avoid unsupported assumptions.

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ANSWER KEY

1 Precise terms

1 a 2 b 3 c 4 d 5 e 6 f 7 g 8 h 9 i 10 j

2 Connotation

1 hospitality 2 lavish 3 reciprocate 4 impromptu 5 discerning 6 a faux pas 7 understated elegance 8 extravagant

3 Collocations

1 warm/genuine 2 lavish 3 reciprocate 4 impromptu 5 discerning 6 faux pas 7 understated 8 extravagant

4 Case notes

1 hospitality 2 extravagant 3 lavish 4 extravagant 5 obligatory 6 reciprocate
7 impromptu 8 discerning 9 faux pas 10 understated elegance

5 Reading - suggested answers

1 A tension between genuine hospitality and the pressure to impress guests through lavish or extravagant displays.
2 Real warmth.
3 Reciprocate at an equal or greater scale.
4 A source of financial or social anxiety.
5 Understated elegance, favouring quality and genuine attention over extravagance.
6 It can come across as insecure rather than generous.

6 Rewriting - possible answers

1 The host showed real hospitality. 2 The party was impromptu.
3 She felt she needed to reciprocate. 4 He committed a faux pas.

Over to you

Answers will vary. Check lexical precision, appropriate connotation and separation of fact from inference.