

Bachelorette Party-Planning Guide

While some bachelorettes still enjoy the presence of a semi-naked “police officer,” today the average celebration usually involves donning a veil and stumbling through a haze of bars. If that sounds like fun, you’ve got a million options. But if that sounds so “not you,” we’ve got some other ideas you can suggest to your bridal party. **EDITOR: LAUREN MATTHEWS**



OUTDOORSY IDEAS

- 1 If you like the idea of doing something active and not so stereotypically girly, **go kayaking down the Farmington River** (above). The “flat-water” excursions are tame enough for beginners, and you can book a “quick start” lesson for the group. *Main Stream Canoes and Kayaks, from \$50 per person, New Hartford, mainstreamcanoe.com*
- 2 For a group of self-proclaimed jocks, **head to an outdoor adventure center**, where you can opt for a two-hour zip line canopy tour. Still feeling energetic? You can also incorporate a scavenger hunt into the day, or do a two-hour climb to the top of a nearly 50-foot-tall oak tree. (Don’t worry, there are safety lines involved.) *Empower Leadership Sports & Adventure Center, \$47 per person (zip line canopy tour only), Middletown, leadershipsports.com*
- 3 If **relaxing on the open seas** is about as active as you want to get, then board a grand schooner for a five-hour daytime cruise around Fishers Island Sound that includes lunch (feel free to BYOB). If you or any of the other ladies are avid sailors, you can even book all-inclusive two-, three-, or five-day overnight stays on the ship. *Mystic Whaler Cruises, \$85 per person (day sail cruises), New London, mysticwhalercruises.com*



BAR CRAWL ALTERNATIVES

- 1 The Connecticut Wine Trail has a whopping 19 wineries to choose from. Hit a few to **sample some of the region’s vino** with your girls—everything from Cabernet to Riesling. If you head to the southern part of the state, try Chamard Vineyards (above), which isn’t just picturesque; it also has a friendly staff that will take you on a private tour of the premises to learn how the wine is made, followed by a tasting. Or, on Friday and Saturday evenings, consider packing a picnic to enjoy while listening to live music. (The \$10-per-person cover charge includes a glass of wine.) *Chamard Vineyards, \$200 for 10 (private tour and tasting), Clinton, chamard.com*
- 2 Room 960, a nightclub in downtown Hartford, is a popular bachelorette party destination, but instead of hitting the dance floor right away, **start your night with a show at a nearby comedy club** to get everyone feeling merry and silly. *Brew HA HA at City Steam Brewery Cafe, tickets from \$15, Hartford, citysteambrewerycafe.com*
- 3 **A design-your-own-jewelry fête may seem a bit grade-school at first, but the materials at Femme Gems are definitely grown-up. And, of course, there’s still a little revelry involved—the private event packages include wine and hors d’oeuvres. Femme Gems, from \$25 per person, Greenwich, femmegems.com**



ROAD TRIPS

- 1 To get the feel of a European escape without having to convince all your bridesmaids to hop on a plane, **road-trip it to Montreal**. In just one weekend, you can enjoy some scrumptious cuisine (Au Pied de Cochon), bob to a few jazz clubs (House of Jazz), or even do a little gambling (Casino Montréal, above). Call it a night (or stay up late gossiping) in a suite at the swanky *W Montréal, from \$279 per night, wmontrealhotel.com*
- 2 Looking for a weekend outing to a city that’s not New York or Boston? Then **head to Philadelphia**. It’s full of fun options, whether you and your friends are foodies (a trip to Reading Terminal Market and dinner at Barbuzzo are in order), history buffs (Independence Hall, natch), or shopaholics (the original Anthropologie). Stay at the Sofitel Philadelphia, a hotel that’s near all the action. *Sofitel Philadelphia, from \$199 per night, sofitel.com*
- 3 For a group that can’t sit still, **drive up to the Equinox Resort & Spa in Vermont** for pretty much any activity you can imagine. We’re talking hiking, biking, fishing, horseback riding, archery, and even falconry (!). And if you’re visiting in the winter, there’s skiing and snowboarding. If all that activity has you craving some R&R, the resort also has a top-rated spa. *Equinox Resort & Spa, from \$199 per night, Manchester Village, VT, equinoxresort.com*
—Reporting by Elena Donovan Maurer