



Planning a Princess Tea Party

*(A Guide for Especially Fun Grandmothers
and other Lovers of Little Girls)*



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Introduction

My 5 year-old granddaughter, Macey loves the Sheila Walsh series of books and videos "GiGi, God's Little Princess."

One of the videos is called "The Royal Tea Party" where GiGi plans a tea party. This gave Macey the idea to have one of her own.

One night while I was talking on the phone to my daughter, Macey asked to speak to me and she said in her sweet little voice "Grammy would you like to come to my Royal Tea Party?"

I said "sure I would love to come" and knowing how she likes to take off into fantasy land, we talked about what we would wear ... who we would invite ... the fancy cookies we would eat. Then she handed the phone back to her mom and I thought that was the end of it.

The next day, my daughter called and said "Mom, Macey is *serious* about a Royal Tea Party. She is making invitations and she thinks this tea party is at YOUR house ... THIS weekend!"

I had already invited Macey to spend Saturday night, because one of my sister-in-laws and my 12 year-old niece were coming to town for a weekend visit. I said "Well ... I better get busy!"

I work full-time and only had evenings to prepare. We didn't have time to mail invitations or do a lot of shopping. I found everything I needed in my own home, the Goodwill Store and one stop at the dollar store. I had everything I needed for a Royal Tea Party!

The first thing I did was **make a guest list**. I determined I only had room for 6 guests. Since we didn't have time to **send invitations**, I had Macey call and invite her guests and I followed up with emailed instructions ... with photo teasers.

It would have been fun to make the invitations with my granddaughter, if we had more time, but people didn't seem to mind the phone call and email invite.

We set the **time** for Saturday afternoon and I asked that they wear their best princess clothing, bring a fancy tea party hat and tea cup and saucer if they had one. Teddy bears were welcomed.

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Then I had to decide **where** to hold the tea party. I share my computer/sewing room with Macey when she spends the night and we were in the process of changing her from a youth bed to a daybed.

So, my sewing room was semi-empty and a good place to set things up and out of the way. I could work on it a little each night after work ... and then just close the door.

I found I kind of liked this "special" location ... away from the phone, the T.V., the husband ... the cat. A place I could forget about my day ... put on some soft music ... let my imagination wander ... become a little girl again.

Think like a princess. I really enjoyed that part! I found a princess poster from the dollar store and hung it on the outside of the door. I wrote "Welcome to the Royal Tea Party Room" across the top of it.

Next, I had to **plan seating**. I had 6 guests ... Great Grandma, 2 cousins, 2 baby sisters and Macey. I decided to be the Royal Tea Server... borrowing a white chef's hat and apron from the toy box.

I covered 2 card tables, pushed together, with some floral fabric I found in my sewing closet.

I made a centerpiece out of items found around my house. A glass plate, crystal bowls, a fake diamond paperweight, a string of pearls, a glass candy dish and battery operated colored candles sitting around them.



It was just beautiful ... with the lights bouncing off all that cut glass!

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Each guest had their own place setting with a name card, a fancy feather fan, and a play cardboard mirror ... all dollar store finds. I hot-glued fake jewels (from the craft closet) onto the mirrors and they looked so pretty!



I decorated the chairs with a large purple vinyl tablecloth (\$ store) I cut it into 4 pieces, draped it over the chairs and tied it to the backs with lavender wired ribbon.



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The baby sisters were provided booster chairs that I decorated by taping (\$ store) paper tiarachs to the back. The **decor** and atmosphere had to be just right. It was a Royal Tea Party after all!

The next night, I covered my sewing machine cabinet with an old white tablecloth, lace curtain and tiny lamp ... all purchased at the Goodwill store.

I played soft, piano **music** on a small CD player and moved my small water fountain into the room.

I took a large picture off the main wall and borrowed hanging purple flowers from my sun porch. I found removable vinyl wall stickers (\$ store) that said "Once upon a time there was a beautiful princess."



I used purple and green mirrored Christmas ornaments to hang from the light fixture and on the main wall. I later decided this was a good backdrop for **photos** of each "princess" which I framed in teapot shaped photo frames ... also purchased at the dollar store.

What to Serve

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The **refreshments** for the Royal Tea Party were herbal fruit-flavored tea for Great Grandma and the 12 year-old cousin and apple-cranberry juice for the little girls. (This requires 2 teapots ... purchased from Goodwill)

The cookies were easy! I bought the entertainment pack of fancy cookies by Pepperidge Farms and the rolled wafer cookies from the \$ store. I served them on a (\$ store) golden tray. These small cookies were just perfect for little hands!

The day of the Royal Tea Party, we tied balloons to our mailbox ... which is our family's way of announcing a party.

I practiced with Macey ... how to welcome her guests to her Royal Tea Party ... but she lost her nerve ... and didn't find it until half-way through the party. Then she went around and curtsied and said "Welcome to my Royal Tea Party."

I picked up my two baby granddaughters ... dressed in their Easter outfits. One of my sister-in-laws called and said she was running late, had purchased a simple hat, feather boa and flowers to make a tea party hat, but did not have a glue gun or time to put it together.

I saw the opportunity for fun and told her to bring the stuff anyway. I found another simple hat in the toy chest and we let the two 5 year-olds design their own tea party hats ... while I operated the glue gun and my husband picked up pizzas.

This was great fun for the girls and I wish I had thought of it as a **planned activity**.



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The Tea Party

After our pizza lunch, I lined them up at the Royal Tea Party Room door, which had remained closed up until then.

I opened the door. The wood blinds were closed, the lights were off ... except the small lamp and the colored tea lights around the cut glass centerpiece ... fading from red, to green, to purple, to blue.

The soft piano music was playing, the water fountain could be heard in the background, the Christmas ornaments were sparkling. For a moment ... they were speechless!

Then Macey said "Woooooow it's so pretty Grammy!" Then she abruptly said "Where's my bed!?" and we all laughed and I assured her that she was getting a big girl bed and could still spend the night with Grammy.

Then, we closed the door ... and it was just us girls. Or should I say Princesses? I seated each guest at their assigned place at the table ... starting with the baby girls. I announced: "seating: Princess Willow ... seating Princess Great Grandma" ... and so on.

I served them "tea" and the fancy cookies on the golden platter. They loved the fancy cookies! They smiled and acted like the royal princesses they were.



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Great Grandma became a little girl again ... giggling and sharing her cookies, 12 year-old Jennie became all grown-up ... carefully helping the baby girls with their drinks.

The 5 year-olds became graceful ... carefully picking up their teacups, taking small sips and bites.



Me? I just stood back and watched this transformation of the women I loved ... feeling grateful.

Grateful for a phone call from a 5 year-old granddaughter, yearning for a Royal Tea Party and quite certain her Grammy could pull it off.

Thankful for relatives ... with their own busy lives, eager to come join in on the fun ... especially on such short notice. I was grateful for the shared memories with the people I loved most.

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After we ate our cookies and visited for a while, I asked them to pick up their princess mirrors and look into them.

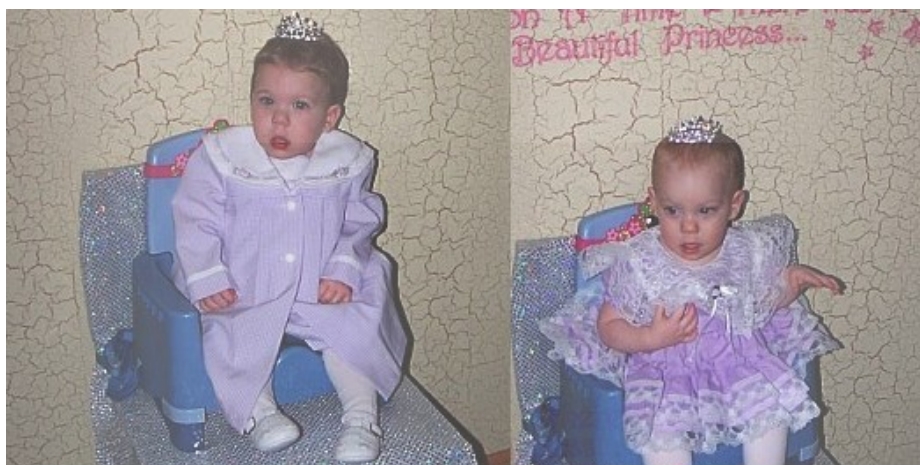
I read them a little poem I wrote for the occasion:

***God says I'm beautiful ... even when I think I'm not
He looks at what's inside my heart ... He loves me a lot***

***He says I'm His daughter ... the Lord, our God, our King
That makes me a princess imagine such a thing!***

***So when I look in the mirror ... what do I now see?
One of God's little Princesses looking back at me.***

Then I took pictures of each "Princess" sitting under the "Once upon a time" princess wall.



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While the girls watched a GiGi God's Little Princess video and showed Great Grandpa their treasures, I downloaded all the pictures from the party onto my computer.

I burned a CD for each one to take home and printed one small photo of each girl and put them in the teapot frames. They took home their feather fans and little princess mirrors.

Everyone went home ... feeling a little more special ... and little more loved. Especially me.

Grammy

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Princess Party Shopping List:

Dollar Store:

- Princess Poster
- Name Card
- Fancy Feather Fan
- Play Cardboard Mirror
- Large Purple Vinyl Tablecloth
- Paper Tiara's
- Removable vinyl wall stickers that said "Once upon a time there was a beautiful princess."
- Teapot Shaped Photo Frames
- Golden Tray

Goodwill:

- White Tablecloth
- Lace Curtain
- Tiny Lamp
- 2 teapots

Grocery Store:

- Herbal Fruit-Flavored Tea
- Apple-Cranberry Juice
- Entertainment Pack of Fancy Cookies by Pepperidge Farms
- Rolled Wafer Cookies

Other Items Used:

- White Chef's Hat & Apron
- Glass Plate & Crystal Bowls
- Fake Diamond Paperweight
- String of Pearls
- Glass Candy Dish
- Battery Operated Colored Candles
- Fake Jewels
- Lavender Wired Ribbon
- Hanging Purple Flowers
- Purple & Green Mirrored Christmas Ornaments

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