

ALICIA STOCKMAN HOUSE CONCERT GUIDE

HELLO POTENTIAL HOUSE CONCERT HOST! THANK YOU FOR CONSIDERING HOSTING A HOUSE CONCERT. BELOW I HAVE LAID OUT THE BASIC CRITERIA FOR HOSTING A SUCCESSFUL HOUSE CONCERT EXPERIENCE! PLEASE READ CAREFULLY.

1. **The House:** The only parameter I have for the actual space is that you have access to some space (legally) where folks can gather, sit and enjoy a seated, quiet, listening concert. This could be a living room, finished basement, backyard patio, art/photography studio, local theater, etc...basically anywhere your friends can congregate together for a couple hours away from distractions and noise. Floor seating consisting of pillows, blankets, or carpets is perfectly acceptable.
2. **Timing:** We can choose a date that works for both of us, usually at least 2 months in advance. I can perform pretty much any day of the week, depending on my existing gig schedule. House concerts are typically about 2 hours (give or take) so weeknights are great, getting your guests home as early as 9:00 pm. Weekends are no problem, as long as I don't have anything booked already. You know, subject to availability.
3. **Guests:** It's helpful for me if you can guarantee at least 15 guests for a house concert. I've found that 20+ people makes the event exciting and makes these donation-based events financially viable for me. Please no children less than 10 years of age. It's generally the rough dividing line between a fidgety cause for distraction and an ability to display good concert etiquette. If you think you'll have some sitting-quietly-and-listening kids in attendance, make sure to count the kids as 'extras' outside of the 20+ adults you've invited.

GENERAL RULE OF THUMB: Invite double number of people you'd like to have at the concert. i.e. If you're aiming for 20, invite 40 and so forth. If you're unsure you'll be able to get 20 folks, team up with a friend who also has a list of friends to invite and co-host the concert. That way you increase the potential invitees and overall attendance.

4. **Invitation:** Invite folks you know who appreciate and love live music! I will provide you with some precise language to include in your invitations, but besides that, it's up to **you** to lure your guests there! Be creative! Entice your guests with free food/booze or a pre-show potluck gathering. And remember, most of your friends have NO idea who I am, so it's up to you reassure them that it will be worth their time and I won't just be playing bad Nickelback covers for the evening.

When inviting your guests, be clear that the language states the concert will be held on a donation basis. DO NOT specify a suggested donation in your invitation. In my experience, I do better financially when people can "pay-what-they-want". Plus, I don't want to dissuade any music lovers from attending just because of money reasons. While it is true that this is how I make my living, **sharing my music with people is the most important thing.**

Occasionally, hosts prefer not to ask their guests for donations and instead pay an up-front guarantee for the show. Either way is fine. I've done shows both ways! If this approach suits you better, please let me know and we'll discuss the fee structure for scheduling a non-donation-based show is \$300.

OTHER INVITATION ITEMS:

FEED THE PEOPLE

People really like coming to events where there is free food and drinks. A novel concept, I know. You can even ask each person to bring a little something to share, potluck style. This is entirely up to you and not a requirement of hosting. Let them know in the invitation what to expect.

RSVP RSVP RSVP

For your house concert, **require** guests to RSVP. When guests are asked to RSVP, there is a much better turnout rate as opposed to a “come by if you can” approach. Also, this way you’ll know how much food and drink you’ll need.

MAKE IT PERSONAL

You should **begin the invitation process 2 months or 8-10 weeks in advance** so guests can plan ahead.

You can use whatever method suits you best to invite people, but in my experience, mass invites to a Facebook event are less successful than personal engagement. However, this does not mean you shouldn’t have a Facebook event. Once you have spoken to your invites and they have expressed interest and received an official invitation, add them to the event. That way, everyone is in one place to get notifications/updates on the event. (i.e. pre-show video updates and notes from me!)

You can copy and paste the template below into the blank message, type your friend’s name into the greeting, and send it off! Most people respond really well to being addressed individually. If you make them feel wanted, they will feel like their presence makes a difference, and they will be more likely to come. The official invitation should not be sent on Facebook. I strongly believe invitations should be sent via paper invitations or email. The more hype you put into the invitation, the more likely your friends are to RSVP.

Hey (*name of friend*)!

I’m hosting a house concert on (*insert date*) for (*the talented, glamorous, musically magical <- get creative and hype me up!*) Alicia Stockman who is on tour promoting her newly released music! Learn more about Alicia Stockman and her music at her website:

www.aliciastockman.com

This will be a donation-based concert—so please come prepared to make a donation to the artist. Alicia and I hope you’ll join us! She’ll gratefully accept donations at the end of the show. She will also have her music available for sale.

Please join us at (*time of event*) the concert will begin promptly at (*1 hour later than the event time*).

[Let your guests know here if you’d like them to bring anything-- a snack or drink to share?]

Please RSVP if you would like to attend. Thank you so much!

5. The Concert: I will arrive one hour before guests are scheduled to arrive, in order to set up equipment and do a soundcheck. Guests will arrive at the time you and I have decided to begin the event. As guests arrive, we’ll all hang out and mingle for about an hour. Then, after an hour of pre-concert hanging out, everyone gathers in the performance space, finds their seat, and the host (that’s you!) gives a brief introduction and welcome, perhaps something like this:

“Welcome everyone! Thank you so much for coming! I’m excited to be hosting Alicia Stockman from Heber city, Utah. (*insert bio and other goodies/info I send you*) we’re thrilled to have her with us this evening, please join me in welcoming Alicia Stockman!”

And then you sit back, relax, and I play for an hour (or so)! As soon as I've played the last note, the host (you!) gets up to thank folks for coming and to make a call-to-action announcement asking their guests for donations. That can go something like this:

"Thank you all for coming tonight. I hope you enjoyed this as much as I did. I want to remind you that this is a donation-based concert. Your donations tonight will benefit our artist and show her our appreciation for this experience she has brought to us tonight. I am going to leave this vase/bowl/hat (whatever) right here and encourage you to give generously. Thank you again!"

After that, we all hang out some more until the guests start heading home.

6. The Goal: All these details—from the invitations, to the setup, to the flow of the event—serve the singular goal we have for this event: to create a truly unique and special night-- an intimate concert experience where memories and meaningful connections with your community will be made through music.

To make things flow smoothly, it helps to keep the pre-show mingling time is about an hour. If it's shorter than an hour, people don't have enough time to get comfortable; and if it's longer than an hour, the focus of the event begins to get fuzzy. It's really important to remember, it isn't a party: it's a concert.

It's really important to me that I am able to make it so that these concerts are possible for anyone to host, and the way I do that is by doing shows on a donation basis. But since the donations are how I earn my living and pay my expenses as a working musician, it's obviously super important that I have my host's full enthusiasm behind this aspect of the event. The success of the donations has a direct relationship to the enthusiasm of the speech the host gives at the conclusion of the concert. I've also discovered that guests are always really receptive and super happy to be a part of supporting the unique and memorable event they've just experienced.

I am more than happy to answer additional questions and guide you through the whole process. This is something we get to do together to create a unique and intimate musical experience! I can't wait to do a house concert with you!
Thank you!

Much love,

Alicia