

black tie, the invitation specifies "RED SEA RIG", which means bow tie and cummerbund without the jacket.

## **B) PLANNING THE RECEPTION**

Great care must be taken in the planning and organization of a reception or any other type of gathering held at home. Servants are a luxury of the past, except in some hardship posts. Even if it is possible to engage servants and one has the means to do so, it is extremely difficult today to find reliable people. As host or hostess, you are anxious for your party to be a success. You should therefore plan to enjoy it yourself. When your guests arrive, you should be as fresh and ready to enjoy the occasion as they are.

We have prepared the attached guidelines on the assumption that you will have to do everything, or nearly everything, yourself. If you have help, so much the better, but the guide can help you to think of everything you will need, and in particular, to help you decide how much time you will have to spend on the various preparations, from the time you decide to give a dinner until your guests arrive.

### **1. Types of reception**

Except for official representational activities, the number of receptions you will give during your posting will depend on your financial means, the customs in diplomatic and other circles in the host country, and the possibilities offered by your own house. Since every invitation accepted must be reciprocated, one way or another, some of you will feel more comfortable organizing occasional small dinners or luncheons, and giving only one or two larger receptions a year.

Before deciding on the type of reception you are going to give, you must consider:

- the number of people you intend to invite;
- your budget;
- the possibilities of the house, for example, the dimensions of the dining room table and other arrangements that might be made for larger groups;
- the time and effort you are prepared and able to give (for example, do you have servants or will you have to do everything yourself?);
- your guests' expectations (what will please them?).

Then plan the activities around the foregoing.