

## FULL INSTRUCTIONS

Murder on the Menu can be played by up to 10 players but these rules will explain the game for 8 Players.

### AIM OF THE GAME

To discover, by observation and deduction, which of the guests at the Localtown Food Star of the Year Dinner is guilty of the murder of V. Ictim.

### WHAT YOU NEED

8 Character/ Story cards  
8 Clue cards  
1 Guilty card / 7 Innocent cards (or playing cards)  
4 Game leader instruction cards  
These rules

### SECTIONS

1. Card distribution
2. Discovery of murder
3. Discussion
4. Alliances
5. Discussion
6. Clue card re-distribution
7. Discussion
8. Accusation
9. Reveal

### TO START

1

A GAME LEADER should have distributed CHARACTER/ STORY CARDS in advance so players know which guest at the Localtown Food Star of the Year Dinner they are playing. Copies should also be available on the evening.

On the night, the players each select one of the GUILTY or INNOCENT CARDS, keeping this to themselves. (If using playing cards, the ace of spades can be used to represent guilty and a selection of low hearts and diamonds cards for innocent). Players keep this with them at the table.

Then each player is dealt an unseen CLUE CARD and scans the appropriate side (either GUILTY or INNOCENT) for prompts. They should not share this with other players at this point and only the guilty player needs to pay attention to the opposite side. Each player's CLUE CARD informs them how to behave from now on and which HOTWORD to drop into conversation.

2

After the discovery of V. Ictim's body, the game can begin in earnest.

## PLAYING

### 3

#### (READ OUT GAME LEADER INSTRUCTION CARD 1)

Each player must now behave in line with their CLUE CARD and their relevant innocence or guilt. So a player who is innocent may have on their card, “When someone says AMAZING, you must gargle” and this is what they must do during the discussions over the course of the meal. Other behaviours involve moving the conversation to certain topics, using strange comparisons or commenting on aspects of the room or the dinner. Players don’t have to do all these things at once or in the order printed on the card – there’s plenty of time.

While concentrating on implementing their own odd behaviour prompts, the players should also be observing other players’ quirks and questioning one another to establish motive and alibi at the time of the murder. This gives ample opportunity to deduce the card prompts of others.

And vitally, they must take a sip of their drink just after the point when they drop their special HOTWORD into the discussion. Players can drink at any time of course, but the HOTWORD SIP is crucial.

The guilty player is also permitted to use their card’s INNOCENT HOTWORD (and sipping) at one point to create confusion.

### 4

#### (READ OUT GAME LEADER INSTRUCTION CARD 2)

After a period of observing one another and behaving and conversing like the strangest possible dinner guests, there will come a time to form ALLIANCES.

By following the directions on the CHARACTER CARDS, players can offer, accept or turn down ALLIANCES. An ALLIANCE is useful if you are guilty as you may wish to ensure you have someone on your side when it comes to ACCUSATIONS.

When two players agree an ALLIANCE, members can share one or more prompts on their CLUE CARD by whispering. They might say, “I am comparing things to Shakespearean plays.” But they should not say whether or not they are guilty. After the card swap to come, an innocent guest who has found themselves allied with the guilty guest may choose to be a PARTNER IN CRIME, voting together, or alternatively, turn on their ally.

Players can only be in no more than one ALLIANCE.

### 5

Another brief discussion follows – all the HOTWORDS and the behaviour prompts should have been played by now.

6

(READ OUT GAME LEADER INSTRUCTION CARD 3)

Next, the GAME LEADER collects all the CLUE CARDS, shuffles and re-distributes them. If a player receives the same card again, they will just have to work harder to solve the case. Players should read both sides of this new card now and recall if anyone has shown themselves to be guilty by their behaviour or conversation topics.

7

At this point players cannot share the contents of this new card with their ALLIANCE and this is where deception and bluff may come in. A guilty party may see that an innocent player's HOTWORD was 'flabbergasted' which they used in the discussion, but if they insist that their card says it was the option for a guilty player, they may persuade others to vote with them. ALLIANCES may hold up or break down as the tension rises.

8

(READ OUT GAME LEADER INSTRUCTION CARD 4)

After a short discussion, it is time for ACCUSATIONS. Going round the table, each player should declare who they think is the guilty party and why – all reasons are valid and don't have to be confined to the CLUE CARDS – and why they themselves are innocent.

A vote is held – a simple majority is enough to convict. Ties are settled by a second speech to persuade others to change their votes with the GAME LEADER having a final casting vote.

9

The convicted player reveals their INNOCENT or GUILTY CARD and if the group has successfully solved the case, the game is over. But if the convicted party is revealed to have been innocent, they are out of the game and a second round of accusations, speeches and voting may follow.

## WINNING

Justice is served when the guilty player is identified by the majority of the players. But should the group fail to identify the guilty player after two rounds of voting, that person has won and got away with murder. They may identify themselves and revel in their wickedness, thanking any PARTNER IN CRIME who helped them with the victory.

## NOTES

To keep the game moving at a pace you may wish to use a kitchen timer; for example, a brisk three minutes for accusations can focus the mind. However there should be no rush for the first discussion round; players should be encouraged to use their prompts and HOTWORDS in as natural (or unnatural) a manner as possible.

We've also included some BLANK CLUE CARDS for you to make your own silly prompts.