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The Perfect Guide to Plan the Perfect Wedding!

04 The Best Bar for Your Budget

What to know about your reception bar and some different options on the various types of bars you can offer.

05 Brimstone with Bridesmaids

A good guide to defusing conflict between your bridesmaids or in your bridal party

16 Questions to Ask Your Caterer

These are the general things to ask your caterer before hiring them- warning! There's a lot to ask!

18 To Write or Not to Write

The pros and cons of writing your wedding vows from a reverend herself

22 More on the Bar

Didn't quite get enough info on your bridal bar earlier? Fear not. There's more.

24 How to Avoid a Destination Disaster

Tips and tricks to plan the perfect destination wedding.

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8 From Two Left Feet to Sweep Her Off Her Feet

The importance of a quality first dance together as a couple

10 A Love to Beat the Status Quo

The beautiful love story of Melissa and Mark: truly inspirational

14 4 Smart and Sexy Ways to Keep the Love Alive

A few fun ways to keep the love alive long after you two say I Do

28 Luxurious Scented Milk Bath

The perfect at home pampering treatment to get you glowing on your special day

30 Your Outdoor Wedding

What to know about an outdoor wedding to determine if it's the right choice for you

38 KC Bridal Group Vendors

The Best Bar for Your Budget

By Daniel D'Angelo- Distinctly D'Angelo Studios

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What are the options for the bar?

So much goes into planning an unforgettable wedding. You've ordered the flowers, booked the venue, and even found the perfect gown, but there's still one important part of planning the perfect party: the booze! Booking the right type of bar for your big night is essential if you're looking for a really good time for you and your guests. Here are some options for the bar for your big night!



Let's start with the most obvious option: the open bar. It's exactly as it sounds, the hosts pay a flat fee and then the bar is open freely to your guests to indulge to their hearts desire. This can be limited to a certain amount of time (such as cocktail hour) or for the entire reception. A consumption bar is similar to an open bar except the hosts pay per drink- like a rolling open tab for all the guests at the party.

What are the other options?

Whatever the reason may be, if an open access bar isn't right for you, there are other options.

If you aren't too keen on offering an unlimited bar a white bar is another option. A white bar

is exactly as it sounds, it is a bar that only offers white drinks, such as vodka, rum, white wine, etc.

Another, budget saving, option a soft bar. A soft bar only offers champagne, beer, red and white wine. There's also the super saver option of a cash bar- but beware! Some guests may not be too thrilled with this option.

If saving money while still offering the bar is a priority for your wedding- try offering only a signature cocktail and an option of champagne or wine- you're budget and your guests both will thank you!



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How to Avoid Brimstone with Bridesmaids

By Daniel D'Angelo- Distinctly D'Angelo Studios

Trying to plan a wedding is a daunting task, there are so many things to plan, book, and arrange before the big day..

Things such as the venue, catering, and aesthetics of your wedding can be all planned out easy enough with the help of a knowledgeable wedding planner. Your wedding party, on the other hand, can end up being more unpredictable.

Maybe your best friend from high school and your soon to be sister and law just can't seem to see eye to eye, or maybe your mother and Aunt Nikki never really smoothed things over as well as you thought they had. Whatever the case may be, the fact of the matter is that sometimes people just don't get along.

It's a worst case scenario, to think that the people you love so much don't seem to like

each other at all, especially the people who you want to share such a special role in this exciting moment. How do you keep the clashing cats to keep their claws at bay on your big day?

Remember when the vows and I Do's are all said and done, it's your wedding day. It is your day for you and your happiness, not your bridesmaids' banter.



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Most conflicts, not only between bridesmaids, but people in general, is a simple failure to communicate. Often people dislike people they don't know well or don't understand.

Plan out some small outings for you and all your bridesmaids to go out and do together. These meetings can be anything to nights out on the town, to concerts, to even meeting up at a local park and playing some fun team building games together. They can be anything you can think of that'd be fun to do together!

These outings can also act as a good test to make sure that all your bridesmaids can get along on your big day and the pre-wedding events.

With that all being said here are some tips and tricks to try to get your girls to get along.

You've already got your hands full with all the planning to do for the wedding, but the good news is that there are ways to prevent if not to reduce bridal party tension before anything gets out of hand.

Make sure to tell your girls about each other's quirks before they meet each other. Often very reserved or very outgoing personalities can be seen as rude when unexpected.

Once they've met each other- give them the opportunity to get to know each other!



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"The single most important ingredient in the formula of success is knowing how to get along with other people"

-Theodore Roosevelt

What else could I do?

If all else fails, it is okay to make tough choices.

So maybe the games don't go well, and two of your girls really don't get along with each other. Be direct with them, separately. Let them know that you are concerned with how their tension will impact your wedding day. More than likely they will put your wants before theirs and swallow their aggressions for each other to ensure that you have a great wedding day. Even if they don't get along- they still love you and want you to be happy.

Separate them in the planning by giving them different, yet equally important jobs in the planning. The conflict most likely isn't about you, and even if it is, it's just their jealousy over your affections. Sometimes personalities just clash.

Nobody is saying you have to mediate alone! Your other bridesmaids can help keep the conflicting girls at bay. Inform the neutral girls on the situation- but never talk poorly or complain about one bridesmaid to another. This can encourage or justify their behavior, or worse, pull you directly into their bickering. If you need to vent, reach out to your mother or your future spouse.

Planning an event as elaborate as a wedding can be stressful enough- there's no reason to let conflicts in the bridal party add to that stress. In the end, what matters is the happiness of you and your partner on that day. This is one time where it is certainly okay to put yourself and your happiness first!

From Two Left Feet

To Sweep Her Off Her Feet

By Daniel D'Angelo- Distinctly D'Angelo Studios

Your wedding night is one of the most memorable nights of your life. Your wedding night is a celebration of you and your partner's love for each other, as well as a celebration of the years of love to come.

There are many special ways to show your deep love for your partner on your big night- but none are as beautifully intimate as your first dance together as a married couple. The first dance is a beautiful display of you and your partners deep connection- but if they don't dance then what do you do? Fear not! There are ways to have that fairytale princess ball moment still.

Start by talking with your soon to be about what kind of dance you'd like to do. The options are virtually limitless. Whether it be a graceful waltz, an intimate tango, or a fun and upbeat cha cha or swing dance, your first dance should be something fun for you and your partner while also being engaging for your guests to watch.

Once you've decided the type of dance you'll be doing, it's time to learn how to do it! Start looking at your options as far in advance as possible, the more time you have to put into learning the



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dance, the more polished it will be when it's time to show it off. Three to four months before the wedding is a good minimum, but it all depends on how quick you and your partner can pick up on the footwork.

There is always the route of taking classes at a professional studio. These classes, lead by knowledgeable instructors are great for beginners and advanced dancers alike. Just once or twice a week for a few months will leave you gliding across the dance floor. However- depending on the quality and prestige of the studio- you could be spending an arm and that other left foot to pay for them!

Couples that dance together stay together

Dancing strengthens the connection between you and your partner.

To dance with someone you love is one of the most intimate ways to connect with someone- I mean- besides the things already reserved for the honeymoon.

If the price of a studio class is intimidating- there are other ways to learn out there- just be creative!

"Marriage is not a ritual or an end. It is a long, intricate, intimate dance together and nothing matters more than your own sense of balance."

- Amy Bloom

And now that we're dancing who cares if we ever stop?

Check for local dance groups in your area. These groups are normally ether free or charge a small fee to participate in. Some groups will offer short classes teaching the basic footwor of the dances to beginners before throwing them out into the waters to learn simply by doing it.

This method of learning is a fun way to interact socially with your partner as well as a great way to meet new people. Not only that- going out to the dance hall as a reoccurring romantic night out is a fun date night idea to keep the love and connection alive long after the wedding.



The first dance between you and your soon to be life long love is a beautiful moment to cherish. Investing in this moment prior in time, detication, and possibly finances is a investment well worth making.

Dancing and frequent close contact helps to maintain a strong connection of love and intimacy long after your wedding day. It is a fun way to bond and a great way to impress some people with you and your partner's stunning chorography.

Whether you learn from a class, at a hall, or simply picking up some how to videos off of YouTube or your local library the time you two spend learning this skill together will pay off in the moment of your first dance and for many years to come.

Now go out and dance your way into the next exciting part of your lives together!

To be married is to make a promise to fall in love with the same person every day over and over again for as long as you both shall live- and then some.



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A Love to Beat the Status Quo

By Daniel D'Angelo- Distinctly D'Angelo Studios

Swapping rings and wedding vows is an exciting a life changing moment for you and your partner- but it is only the first piece of a bigger puzzle. Read this couple's story of lifelong love and compassion.



The love shared between Melissa and Mark is a beautiful story showing how a strong love and commitment is stronger than any struggle.

After meeting at a coffee shop through friends of friends it was only a matter of time for the two to up together- a short ten years later!

From then on everything just seemed to fit into place for the two regarding each other.

The two built a strong foundation of acceptance and honesty over the next five years together before- and I quote- Mark decided

that it was "just time for us to get married". Listening to him recount the story of the proposal, leading up to the wedding was inspirational.

He recounts the moment he asked her with a humored fondness. "It was the weirdest way I could word the question- 'I'm not really happy with the status quo of our relationship. Will you marry me?'

Like any rational woman, she was stunned for a moment. He says that she told him she was unsure what to say. "Well... I was hoping for a yes." Her response back was "well why wouldn't I?"

The marriage itself he describes as "thrifty". Having spent \$50 for the marriage license, \$150 for the preacher, \$36 for their two wholesale rings, and in clothes from their closets that had not been bought specifically for the occasion, they were married inside Melissa's jewelry store.

"It wasn't fancy; we just got married."

Another piece of the commitment puzzle- no confrontation.

Sadly, their time together was cut short.

Within two weeks after the wedding, Melissa was diagnosed with cancer. Their plans for a lively reception were put on hold to make way for medical expenses. She fought it long and hard with Mark supporting her at every step along the way, but their fight together would be in vain. Over time, the chemo took a brutal toll on Melissa, and she tragically passed two years later.



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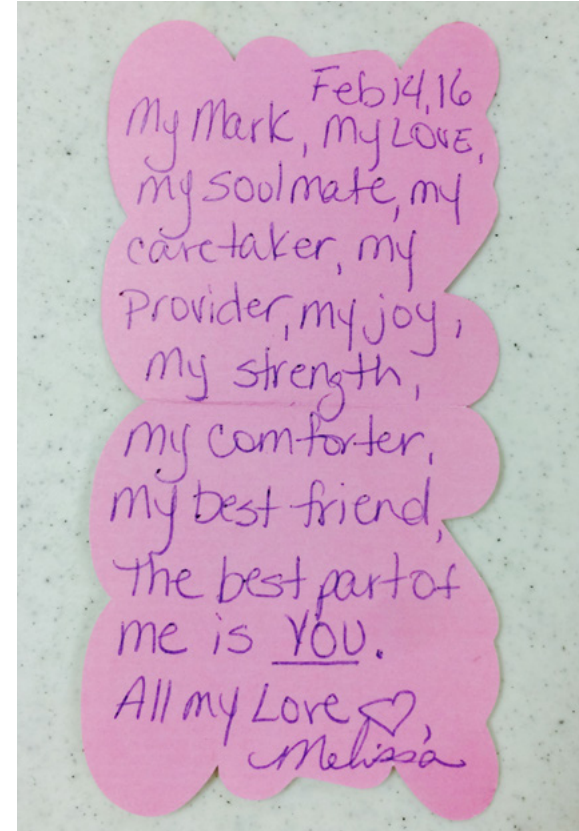
Allow them to play wholly to their strengths, and do your best to support them with their weaknesses.

The two joined together after having both been in messy divorces in the past, with three kids each. At first, the kids were angry with each other- particularly Melissa's sons towards Mark. However, after a little time and a few bonding games, they discovered that they were happy that their parents were so happy.

Mark's love for Melissa, even today, is truly a beautiful. their former relationship of honesty and love would bloom into an equally honest and loving marriage. They pinkie swore to each other to allow honesty and acceptance.

Everyday, the two would sit down and tell each other their LBs and NTs" The LBs. The LBs are the things that one likes best about the other, while the NTs are the things to improve on for next time. They'd write all the LBs down in a big book, and impliment the NTs right away.

Mark's advice for planning the perfect wedding is to understand the strengths and weaknesses of your partner. Allow them to play wholly to their strengths, and do your best to support them with their weaknesses. In the perfect relationship- this give and take method is not only wonderful wedding planning advice, but wonderful relationship advice!



"What greater thing is there for two human souls, than to feel that they are joined for life—to strength each other in all labor, to rest on each other in all sorrow, to minister to each other in silent unspeakable memories at the moment of the last parting?"

-George Eliot

When asked if there was anything he would have done differently, Mark's only reply was that he would have found her 30 years sooner. He recalls that they just must have crossed paths before, because they were destined to be together.

Melissa was an inspiration who brought joy and happiness to wherever or whoever she encountered. It's wonderful to see that love and passion for everything equally matched back at home in the way that Mark treated her.

Love is still impactful even after life.

I had the pleasure of knowing Melissa in life- she was truly an inspiration on her own, as well as alongside Mark. The strength of their love, though unfairly short, is truly remarkable. The connection they shared is beautiful in every way a deep love should be.

If I can wish you anything in your marriage- I hope you and your partner will grow to have an as impactful and loving connection as Melissa and Mark.

4 Smart and Sexy Ways to Keep the Love Alive



By Daniel D'Angelo- Distinctly D'Angelo Studios

Your wedding is just the first step forward towards you and your partner's lives together- here are some ways to keep the love alive long after the fun of the first night!

Once you're married, you're committed, and you are committing yourself to find happiness with your partner for as long as you both shall live. If all goes well, "as long as you both shall live" is a crazy long time! Here are some smart and sexy tips from the editor on maintaining the love and passion between you and your partner as long as you both shall live.

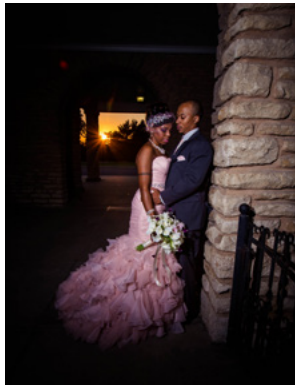


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"Chains do not hold a marriage together. It is threads, hundreds of tiny threads which sew people together through the years."

-Simone Signoret

1 Talk often. This isn't just simple, "how was your day?," small talk. That means sit down and really talk with your partner on a regular basis. This can mean anything from deep existential talks at 2am or serious talks about life and plans for the future.

Work to create a strong atmosphere of honest communication between you and your partner. Nothing is sexier than being properly attuned to your partner's needs!

2 Always be willing to try something new. Whether this in the bedroom or just something fun you two have never gone out and done before- go out and try new things!

Trying new things (particularly things that require teamwork, or that can be done together) helps to keep things interesting, as well as continues to build the bond between you and your person.

Some fun ideas for new things can be extremes, such as group skydiving classes or trying out as scuba diving, or something as simple as finally going out and trying that one restaurant you always pass on the way to work every morning out for a date night.

Mix it up and keep things interesting! Get tacos at two then go deep sea diving at 3! Live together to love together.



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Keep it weird... just trust us.

3 Don't be afraid to be lighthearted. In a healthy relationship, humor can be found in even the most intimate moments. Never be afraid to make a fool of yourself in front of your spouse-.Considering they share a bed with you every night, they've already signed up for your special brand of weird.

Humor helps to build the bond of the best lasting relationships. Being weird and spontaneous in the various parts of your lives helps to keep things interesting and helps keeping you both from getting bored. Laughter is good for boosting the positivity in your life and increases your happiness, the core foundations for a really successful lasting, loving relationship.

4 Be intimate often. Well, here's an easy one! Studies have shown that couples who are intimate often are more often happier and better connected than those who are not as intimate. Keep love by making love- how crazy is that?

Questions to Ask Your Caterer

By Daniel D'Angelo- Distinctly D'Angelo Studios

How to ensure you get what you want for your wedding day from your caterer and how to ask for it.

The cost of catering is likely to be the biggest expense for you for your wedding. Normally catering costs are presented as per person charges but be aware the per person charge often doesn't include everything: tax and service charges may be extra. So that per person charge may be a lot more than you were initially expecting it to be. Here are the things you want to make sure to ask your caterer well in advance when debating whether not to choose their services.

Of course, you'll want to ask right away if your date is open for them. Some other good basic questions to ask are how long have you been in business, and how many weddings do they normally do per year. Ask if they've ever done events at your location, if they're licensed by the state of the location, and of course, if they're licensed to serve alcohol. Ask if you will need any permits for the event, and if so will they handle obtaining them. check if they will provide a banquet manager to coordinate the meal service or an on-site coordinator who

help run the entire event. And for good measure ask if they can assist with other aspects of the wedding, such as finding other vendors, event design, specialty lighting, etc.

Once the basics are out-of-the-way, start asking questions about the food itself. Tell them your budget, guest count, and event style, then ask what food choices they would recommend and if they specialize in any certain cuisines. Ask if they work off of preset menu, or if they would be willing to create a custom menu for the event. Make sure if you are wanting a special dish served to ask if they will accommodate. Check if their event packages offer anything



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a la cart and what specifically the packages include. If any of your guests have dietary needs, make sure that the caterer can accommodate. Ask what sort of decor that they provide for appetizer stations or buffet tables. Check if they offer any package upgrades such as chocolate fountains, sculptures, cappuccino



There's so many questions!

Imagine trying to think of all this on the spot!

machines, or specialty displays. If your wedding has a theme where you would want a themed menu, ask if they can accommodate.

Ask your caterer for the most affordable options, and the differences between a buffet and a sitdown meal. If they are for children's meals, ask how much they would cost. Then ask how much it would cost for the vendor's meals.

If they do wedding cakes ask if that is included in the per person meal price or if it is extra. Make sure to ask for photos cakes they've done in the past. If you want planning on having cake at your wedding ask if they can provide a dessert display instead. If you're planning on using an outside cake designer, ask your caterer if they charge

a cake cutting fee. Finish it up by asking if they do taste testings and if it costs extra.

After asking all the questions on the food, comes the questions of business matters. Ask what the ratio of servers to guests is, how the servers will be dressed, and how their prices are broken down specifically. Check how much time is required for setting up and breaking down the event, and if there any extra fees for this. Ask them what their overtime fees are, in case your event runs longer than expected. Ask for the last date by which you are able to give the final guest count. Check what their payment policy is, how much of a deposit is required to hold your date, and when the deposit is due.

There are so many things to ask! These questions will help to ensure that you and your caterer are on the same page right from the start.



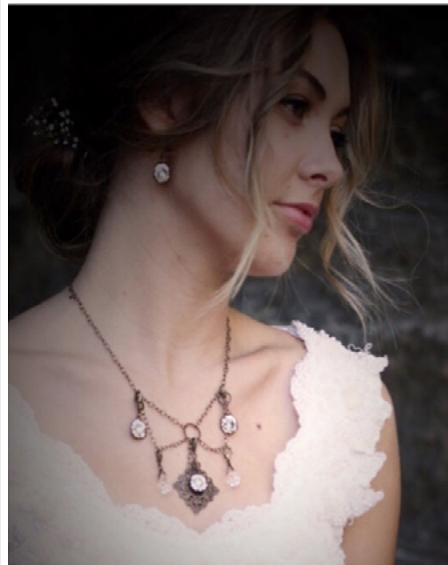
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To Write Or Not to Write

Many of “the engaged” couples I work with on their wedding ceremony, have one question that stands out among all others – “Do we write our own vows or select one from a host of vow samples?”

Generally, the vows are considered the most touching, meaningful part of the wedding ceremony. I often read wedding articles that mention guests will travel hundreds of miles, to share in that one special moment where the bride and groom are holding hands, looking so lovingly into each other’s eyes and sharing their heartfelt commitments to each other.

Hearing this, many couples feel that if they don’t write their own vows, their wedding will not express their uniqueness and have that added heartfelt touch. Yes, it is very special to write your own vows, but some brides and grooms find this task very stressful because they don’t have a lot of confidence, in their writing abilities.

Any couple that I work with who are hesitant about taking on this task, yet really are set on writing their own vows, I have lots of tips and tricks that I give with them to make this process easier. I start by giving them guidelines for having a conversation with each other on their expectations of what their vows should include such as how long, must use words, style: traditional or original and even just being clear, if it is ok to “just surprise me”. I also share with my couples a fill-in template that I found in an article on offbeatbride.com that was written by a bride who designed the fill-in vows to help her groom who was finding writing his a bit of a challenge. You will see this template is a bit long (see text box at end of article), but I like the content it covers -- a couple’s relationship from first meeting to growing old together. I advise my couples to complete the template, then make adjustments by picking out what they want to emphasize in their vows in addition to finding the length that is comfortable for them to speak during their ceremony.



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It's okay to borrow and edit vows you find on the Internet, or read in a book or see in a movie. The template and sample vows can really help to create a great foundation to build your own vows from!

Couples who choose vows together most often say the same vows at their wedding. This is a tradition that actually originates from western Christian ceremonies. Some of my couples who decide to look at sample wedding vows, come back to me

and tell me about the wonderful discussions that ensued by picking out their mutual wedding vows together – talks about what is most important to them about their upcoming marriage. I also see couples that use pre-selected vows, “tear up” and get a little emotional while reciting these chosen words during their ceremony.

In the end, I tell my couples, “It is best for you to decide what is important to each of you in choosing how to put your vows

together. As your wedding officiant, I am available to guide you through either the writing of your vows or in selecting vows for you to review that fit your beliefs about your love commitment to each other”. To me, and the couples I work with, it's the whole ceremony -- from the processional all the way to the pronouncement that sets the tone for the couple's special day, not just the wedding vows even though they are an endearing component of the ceremony.

For more info or to reach Rev. Annika Kleschinsky of Heart and Soul Weddings and Events, please visit her website: <http://heartandsoulevents.weebly.com> or call/text her at 617.416.0157.



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Sample of Traditional and Contemporary Vows

Traditional (found in many Christian church services): Groom/Bride: I, (name), take you, (name), to be my wife/husband. I promise to be true to you in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health. I will love you and honor you all the days of my life.

Contemporary: Bride/Groom: _____ choose you, _____, in the presence of our family and friends, to be my husband/wife/spouse/partner, from this day forward, to love you, to be a comfort and safe haven in your life, to hold you close, to listen deeply when you are sad or angry, to learn compassion with you, to nourish you with gentleness, to uphold you with my strength, to love your body as it ages, to weight the effects of the words, I speak and the things I do, to never take you for granted, but always give thanks for your presence.



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More on the Bar

How Much and of What Should You Have at Your Reception Bar?

So much goes into planning your wedding and reception. Many of them become difficult to know how much to prepare for when the amount you buy depends on how many people are coming to the wedding. This is true when you choose to have a bar at your reception - it is hard to know how much alcohol to have on hand and other things needed for drinks.

The obvious fact is that with the more people you have, the more you'll need for the bar, but knowing how much more can be a challenge in itself! To the right is a simple chart to help make your planning easier.

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The bar is one of the best ways to ensure that your guests have a phenomenal time at your wedding. Drinking together is fun and helps set a good social atmosphere at your reception.

Again, knowing how much of what to have at your wedding is key to making the night a success while keeping both your guests, and your budget happy.

Only you really know the crowd you'll be serving, so these numbers and liquors aren't set and stone. Such as, if your family loves beer and hate wine, investing in a few bottles of a nice chardonnay probably isn't the best idea. When all is said and done, you know what is best choice for you and your loved ones. This is a general guide to good practices and general wisdom, use it as you see fit.

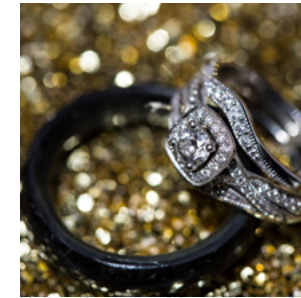


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When all is said and done, you know what is best choice for you and your loved ones.

Always work with a professional bartender and your venue

Unless of course your planning on blowing most of your budget on stocking up at your local liquor store, then by all means.

Whether you plan on offering an open bar of any kind, or a limited bar, wine and beer are essentials. Generally, there are three basic types of bars: beer and wine only, full bar, and some mix in between. The type of liquors after the beer and wine you choose to pick will really set the tone of your reception. Just make sure you remember all the garnishes for the drinks you want to offer- such as salt and limes. No matter what you choose, use the numbers at will and go with your instinct.

Oh and one more thing- don't forget to buy ice!

Number of People	10	25	50	100
Wine and Champagne	5 Bottles	13 Bottles	25 Bottles	50 Bottles
Beer	20 Bottles Per Hour	50 Bottles Per Hour	100 Bottles Per Hour	200 Bottles Per Hour
Liquor	1.5 Bottles Per Hour	3 Bottles Per Hour	6 Bottles Per Hour	12 Bottles Per Hour
Mixers	4 Liters per Hour	9 Liters per Hour	17 Liters per Hour	33 Liters per Hour
Limes	3	7	13	25
Olive & Maraschino Cherries	1 Jar Each	3 Jars Each	5 Jars Each	10 Jars Each
Ice	5 lbs	13 lbs	25 lbs	50 lbs
Cocktail Napkins	40 per Hour	100 per Hour	200 per Hour	400 per Hour
Water	20 Bottles	50 Bottles	100 Bottles	200 Bottles

By Daniel D'Angelo and Angela Lukenbill

How to Avoid

A Destination Disaster

By Daniel D'Angelo- Distinctly D'Angelo Studios



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Planning a stunning desination wedding can be daunting- here's how to avoid a destination disaster!

A destination wedding is great if you are looking for a little foreign excitement and romance to top off your big day, but there's a lot more to do than just buy plane tickets and book the hotel for the perfect destination wedding.

Start by picking a place that is easy to get to. Remember, the easier it is to get to the actual destination of the wedding, the less headache for you trying to find it. Talk with your travel agent about the number of stopovers to your destination as well as the travel time between the hotel and the actual wedding location. Think about it. Do you really want your guests to spend 20 hours on a plane then take another 2 hour bus ride to get to your wedding?

Next item on the list is to choose between a wedding package or a planner. A package is a more cookie cutter option but is a necessity if you aren't going to

have a planner. You won't be able to find the vendors you know you'll want for your wedding! When looking at planners, begin looking way in advance at their previous work. If possible, look for someone who has worked in the area of your destination wedding, or even better, at the same venue. Those planners will already have good connections with the local vendors.

"You don't need to be on the save wavelength to succeed in marriage. You just need to be able to ride each other's waves."

- Toni Sciarra Poynter

An advertisement for 'Defy Aging Beauty' is set against a green and white patterned background. It features four small images: a close-up of a bright smile, a woman's face with a dark facial mask, a hand holding a small jar of cream, and a smartphone displaying a brochure. The text reads: 'ASK ME FOR A BROCHURE', 'Defy Aging Beauty', 'We specialize in: Essential Oils - Beauty Treatments Skin Care - Supplements - Hair Care', and 'Join our VIP group www.facebook.com/groups/defyaging'. A signature 'D. D'Angelo' is visible at the bottom right.

An advertisement for 'Travel Benefits by Design' features a couple in white wedding attire sitting on a beach. A hotel employee in a vest is serving them coconuts on a tray. In the background, there is a large resort building and a swimming pool. A quote from Shannon Leadford is overlaid on the image: 'Our honeymoon was beyond our wildest dreams. Robert with Travel Benefits by Design tailored everything to our tastes and used his breadth of knowledge to uncover hidden gems we would have never known about otherwise! In fact, we just can't wait to go back!'. The company logo is in the bottom right. At the bottom, it says 'DESTINATION WEDDINGS & HONEYMOONS', 'Let us design and deliver a special memory that you thought was only a dream.', 'www.travelbenefitsbydesign.com', '816.595.6000', and 'robert@travelbenefitsbydesign.com'.

Ask the hotel or resort about other events that weekend

While most places won't be as tacky as to book multiple weddings at the same time, it's good to ask if there are any other events going on on the date you plan to have your wedding.

Make sure to factor in exchange rates when looking at the prices for goods and services for your wedding. Destination weddings are known for being slightly more cost friendly, but make sure you understand the actual value of the services you're paying for!

Invitations need to go out as early as possible. Your guests need plenty of notice to make their plans for the wedding.



Photo credits to Angie Weston- Metro Brides Photography

When you plan, plan for the whole weekend! Destination weddings are usually held over a long weekend, with guests arriving on Thursday and staying until Saturday. Once they're there, it's the newlyweds' job to make sure that their guest are entertained.

Check local laws before hiring vendors from the U.S., and make sure to budget for the hotel and airfare for non-local vendors. If you decide to fly in your own photographer, or any other service provider, you'll be responsible for their hotel, airfare and other travel costs.

The Destination Downfalls



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Here are just a few things to avoid when planning that perfect beachside wedding in Cancun

Don't invite everyone you know to your destination wedding. Keep your guest list short, this might mean a maximum 250 guests, but preferably somewhere between 40 to 50 is ideal. This helps keep the setting more intimate, while also being easier on your budget.

Don't pay the bill for your guests' airfare. You're not expected to pay for the guests' accommodations or travel. It is also not etiquette for the bride and groom to pay for the flight or hotel of the wedding party, though some still do. If you are needing to alleviate the cost for some of your guests, pay for a few extra rooms and have people here for the weekend, or if you're out at a luxury venue, subsidize the costs. Hotels are more than willing to let you put down a specific amount towards each room.

Don't leave guests to figure out their own transportation. If you have guests that are staying at nearby properties, it is your responsibility to provide some sort of transportation to the main menu. The idea is that because you were taking them out of their comfort zone to place they're not familiar with, they won't know how to move around. Have each hotel provide your guests with the schedule events along with the pick up and drop off times so that nobody misses a part of the celebration.

"I love being married. It's so great to find one special person you want to annoy for the rest of your life."

- Rita Rudner



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Milk Bath Recipe:

1 ½ cups whole fat powdered milk (or whole milk)

½ cup Epsom salt

½ cup baking soda

¼ cup ground oats (optional)

10 drops lavender essential oil

Luxurious Scented Milk Bath

Linda Childress & Michelle Kentch- Defy Aging



Photo credits to Angie Weston- Metro Brides Photography

A milk bath is one of my favorite indulgences... this is the perfect way to pamper yourself for your big day. This would make a fantastic bridesmaid gift, as well. Cleopatra enhanced her beauty with fresh milk. Her secret was that she soaked in baths of fresh milk scented with honey, lavender or rose petals.

Milk contains lactic acid and alpha hydroxy acid, which is a gentle, natural exfoliant. A 20-minute soak allows the dead cells to be easily washed away. The milk acts as a moisturizer, helping to create lustrous, silky soft skin. This is the one time you want full fat. Oatmeal and baking soda are naturally soothing for the skin, especially after too much sun.

Epsom salt is a great natural and inexpensive way to reduce stress.... Which is handy when planning a wedding.

Milk Bath Recipe:

1 ½ cups whole fat powdered milk (or whole milk)

½ cup Epsom salt

½ cup baking soda

¼ cup ground oats (optional)

10 drops lavender essential oil

Mix dried milk, Epsom salt, baking soda, and ground oats together. Lavender is known for its relaxing aromatherapy benefits. My favorite essential oil! Add the lavender essential oil and stir together to break up any clumps. containers of choice.

If you are giving as a gift divide into your Mason jars work great! To use, add about ½ cup of milk bath to warm water and stir to dissolve.

Don't forget to add some raw honey to the running bath water for extra beauty benefits. Then you really will feel like an Egyptian Goddess!

We want to help give you the tools to look and feel your best for your big day!! Join our VIP Bridal Beauty Box at www.facebook.com/groups/defyaging for more tips and DIY recipes, plus receive a promo code for 20% off your essential oils.



Photo credits to Angie Weston- Metro Brides Photography

By Daniel D'Angelo- Distinctly D'Angelo Studios

The Pros and Cons of an Outdoor Wedding

Nature is beautiful, that's undeniable, and nothing is more calming than fresh air- but is an outdoor venue a good choice for your wedding?

Summertime is the season of sun and summertime weddings! The warm temperatures and beautiful scenery outside have gotten you thinking- "hey, why not an outdoor wedding?"

Outdoor weddings certainly have their advantages. They require less decorations (cutting costs on decor), as the aesthetics of the world around you serve most of that purpose. Blooming flowers, rolling hills, swaying trees, and fields of green- a well-located outdoor wedding doesn't require much more than that.

Not only is it pretty to look at- but it's easy to entertain outdoors! Keeping the kids entertained is much easier at an outdoor venue opposed to an enclosed indoor space. Little ones can keep themselves busy running around, hula hooping, or whatever you decide to offer them! Adults can dance, enjoy the views, or even run around with the kids when Mother Nature hosts the venue.



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As perfect as it sounds, an outdoor wedding does have its disadvantages.

The obvious one is the weather. If it rains and your wedding is outside, you get rained on. Often brides who plan an outdoor wedding set up a back up indoor space at the ready just in case the sky takes a turn for the worst. If it's unusually cold that day, then you'll shiver in place through your ceremony, and if it's too hot you'll sweat through your dress!

The less obvious limitation (to you, not your photographer) is the lighting. A visually stunning spot doesn't exactly equal a picture-perfect wedding venue. When you are outside you will have less control over the lighting which can make it a challenge for your photographer or videographer to get the memorable shots of your big night.

All-in all, it's entirely your day and you can make the most of it with these helpful considerations for whichever venue you choose!

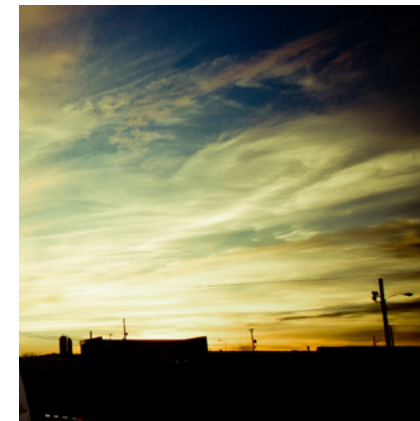


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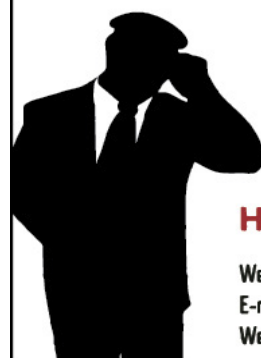
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