

A LOCAL GUIDE TO  
PLANNING YOUR  
PERFECT DAY

# To Have & To Hold

- ideas
- photos
- advice
- fashion
- receptions

*...and more*

A publication of  
Southern Lakes  
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## Popular wedding photography packages

Capturing the memorable moments of a wedding is a necessity. Hiring a talented photographer is an important component of wedding preparations.

The best way to preserve a wedding day for years to come is through photographs and videography.

The Knot 2022 Real Weddings Study indicates 88 percent of survey respondents hired photographers for their weddings, and the average cost for a professional photographer is around \$2,600.

When couples begin to vet local photographers, they quickly will learn that many photographers bundle their services into packages. Each package will contain some standard offerings, which typically expand as the price goes up.

Although each photographer will

do things a little differently, here is a generalized idea of what wedding photography packages may entail.

### *Base photo package*

The base package likely will include the services of one photographer and potentially a helper. The photographer will be available for a predetermined period of time to capture both the ceremony and the reception.

This package will include an agreed upon number of edited proofs, of which the couple can choose a specific number that will be processed for viewing, sharing or printing.

The photographer may sign over print rights, or you may need to use them exclusively for prints depending on the

package and price.

Proofs and processed photos typically are shared through an online link.

### *Intermediate photo package*

An intermediate photo package will build on the base and will include additional services. The photographer may take photos at a set number of alternative locations. This can be advantageous if you'd like to take photos at a nearby park or seaside location.

This package also may extend how long the photographer will be with you, with some arriving early to take "getting dressed" photographs.

Intermediate packages may include

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**TO HAVE**  
*and to hold*

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**above:** Wedding photography packages vary based on the photographer or company chosen but generally offer a trio of options.

STOCK PHOTO *Winter Bridal*



a full printed and bound wedding album for the couple and print rights to even more processed photos in an online gallery for sharing.

This package also may allow couples to share the gallery with others so they can view and print their own photos.

*Advanced photo package*

A soup-to-nuts photography package is often the most expensive and extensive package a photographer offers. It may include an all-day commitment from the photographer and an assistant, unlimited locations for photo shoots, exclusive print rights to the couple for any photos that have been captured and processed, and other perks like extensive retouching and photo editing of photographs.

More inclusive packages also may include engagement photo sessions and even after-wedding bookings for post-honeymoon or first anniversary shoots.

In addition to online galleries and a printed wedding album, an advanced package may feature albums for parents and matted and framed portraits.

If the photographer contracts with a videographer, packages also may combine photo and video services and share the digital files accordingly.

Photographers often have various packages that can accommodate couples working on budgets of various sizes.

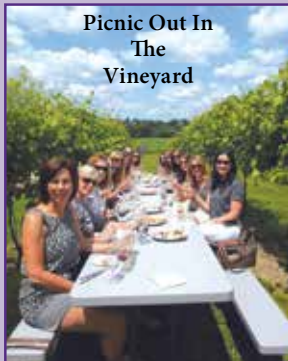
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# Reasons to hire a *wedding planner*

The average cost of a wedding in 2022 in the United States came out to roughly \$30,000, according to a survey of 12,000 couples compiled by wedding planning site The Knot.

When committing to as significant a financial investment as a wedding, couples may want to do all they can to ensure their big day is a hit. There are many advantages to hiring a professional wedding planner, who can take the stress out of a process that should be fun.

Here are several reasons to consider hiring a wedding planner:

## *Serves as a sounding board*

Wedding planners can take couples' ideas and turn them into reality. Seasoned planners know how to help a couple's vision come alive.

## *Lightens the responsibility load*

A wedding planner takes time-consuming responsibilities off couples' plates. These can include scheduling

appointments, dealing with vendors, conducting walk-throughs of locations, and more. This can be a big asset to couples who work full-time.

## *Offers a wealth of knowledge*

A good wedding planner has years of experience handling weddings and will know which aspects will work and which may not.

Also, a wedding planner can likely handle tasks expeditiously, while couples with no experience planning a wedding may not work so quickly.

## *Helps couples save money*

Knowledge and experience also comes with contacts in the industry that can help couples save money.

The planner likely knows where to get the best deals and may be privy to insider pricing and other discounts.

## *Serves as a buffer*

While everyone wants weddings to be incident-free, conflicts can and do arise. A

wedding planner can serve as a mediator or run interference between challenging family members or even vendors.

## *Reduces overall stress levels*

There's a measurable difference between the stress experienced by couples who don't hire wedding planners and those who do.

The main goal of a wedding is for it to be memorable and for couples and their guests to enjoy themselves. By leaving the planning to someone else, couples can arrive at the big day feeling more relaxed and ready to have fun.

## *There is an extra person around*

Wedding planners can field questions or handle tipping and other tasks on the wedding day, freeing up time for couples to have fun.

Wedding planners can provide support, expertise, company, and industry contacts to make weddings go smoothly.

(METRO CREATIVE)

There are many advantages to hiring a professional wedding planner, who can take the stress out of a process that should be fun.

STOCK PHOTO *Winter Bridal*



# Tips to plan a perfect *honeymoon*



Couples have much to look forward to when planning their weddings. In addition to the momentous occasion when they say, “I do,” couples can look ahead with excitement as they anticipate spending time with family and friends in a fun setting.

Though the wedding day is the focal point of couples’ planning efforts, the post-wedding honeymoon also merits ample consideration.

A honeymoon is the first trip many couples take together after tying the knot, and many will never forget this special excursion.

As couples pore over the details of wedding planning, they may want to consider these tips to ensure their honeymoon is a trip to remember for a lifetime.

## *Identify your dream trip*

There are no rules regarding honeymoons. Though couples’ budgets and professional obligations may factor into where they can go and how long their honeymoon can be, couples can discuss their dream trips and then determine if they can make those dreams come true on their honeymoon.

Couples who have always aspired to backpack through Europe should consider that a possible honeymoon trip. If a food tour of Italy is on couples’ bucket list, then investigate how feasible that might be for your honeymoon.

## *Stay up on current events*

It can be easy for couples to get lost in the weeds while planning their weddings and miss what’s going on across the globe.

However, knowledge of current events can be vital when planning a honeymoon.

Faraway and exotic locales may seem tailor-made for a honeymoon, but that’s only the case if such destinations are not plagued by civil unrest, conflict, natural disasters, or other events that can affect how safe it is to visit such places.

The U.S. Department of State maintains a free, easily accessible list of travel advisories at [travel.state.gov](https://travel.state.gov).

Couples are urged to visit the site before booking their honeymoon, particularly if they hope to travel internationally.

## *Consider amenities and all-inclusive packages*

All-inclusive packages can be a great deal, particularly for couples who want their honeymoon to be all about relaxing at a single resort destination.

Packages that are all-inclusive cover the cost of food and most beverages, making these options both convenient and budget friendly. When going this route, couples also should decide which amenities they want to access on their trip.

As couples pore over the details of wedding planning, they may want to consider these tips to ensure their honeymoon is a trip to remember for a lifetime.

STOCK PHOTO *Winter Bridal*

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

# Dig into these *wedding cake* options

Something sweet comes near the end of a wedding reception and that is the joy the couple experiences knowing they have their entire lives ahead of them to enjoy together. However, there is another sweet treat that is shared during the celebration and it is typically served with tea and coffee: the wedding cake.

Wedding cake traditions can be traced back to the ancient Greeks and Romans. Cakes represented good luck and fertility for the couples tying the knot.

The first wedding cakes were rather bland and breadlike, representing purity and virginity. Some were quite like the fruitcake now enjoyed during the holiday season.

Eventually wedding cakes transformed into the sweet confections that are known today.

The modern wedding cake as most know it debuted at the 1882 wedding of Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany. His wedding cake was actually the first to be completely edible.

Previously, some cakes featured wooden broomstick pillars covered in icing, but the Duke's cake used a hardened type of icing, according to Edible Art Bakery and Dessert Café.

Couples today have many options when picking their wedding cakes. The following are some wedding cake tidbits to chew on.

## *Couples can choose among various cake styles*

Many opt for a classic style, which is typically a white or ivory tiered cake with simple, elegant decorations.

Rustic cakes may be much less ornate, while modern cakes may be rectangular or square and feature clean lines and minimalist decoration.

The cake should fit the overall theme and scope of the wedding as it is another complementary component of the larger celebration.

## *Wedding cakes can be quite costly*

Wedding Wire estimates the average wedding cake costs around \$500. One way for couples to save on their cake is to have a faux cake on display, with one tier that is made from cake and can be cut.

Guests will then be served slices of a



Couples today have many options when picking their wedding cakes. From various cake styles to cake and frosting flavors as well as cost, there are plenty of choices to take into consideration.

STOCK PHOTO *Winter Bridal*

sheet cake that is much less expensive.

## *Couples have many flavors to choose from*

Vanilla is classic and quite popular because it appeals to a vast number of people.

Lemon, chocolate, and carrot are some other popular cake flavors.

## *Frosting*

When it comes to frosting a cake, there are various outer coatings that will encapsulate the cake to make it both beautiful and durable.

Buttercream, Swiss meringue, fondant, cream cheese, and ganache all can be used in various applications. Some bakers attest that Swiss meringue, due to the addition of egg whites, makes it a more stable option over traditional

buttercreams, particularly during warm weather.

Of course, couples can opt for a “naked cake,” which usually has a scant amount of frosting so that the cake underneath peeks through.

## *Groom's cake*

A groom's cake used to be tradition, but largely fell out of favor, although it is still alive and well in the American South.

The groom's cake typically is less ornate than the wedding cake, and favors the groom's choices in style, interests and flavors.

Couples and their guests look forward to indulging in wedding cake during the reception. The looks and flavors of a wedding cake can be as unique as the couple saying, “I do.”

(METRO CREATIVE)



# Local bridal fairs offer ideas and solutions

For those planning a wedding – whether it is this year, next year or even two years from now – it’s not too soon to begin the process of choosing a venue, dress, tuxedo, and all the other details needed to make the wedding of your dreams become a reality.

For many couples, finding businesses in the area that provide the many small details for a successful wedding requires research, time, and travel to a variety of venues.

The traditional bridal fair or expo, which provides an easy one-stop shop for a variety of venues and vendors, remains an attractive option for couples getting started in the planning process. Bridal fairs put attendees in touch with latest trends and styles.

Here are a couple area events planned:

## Lake Geneva Winter Bridal Expo

On Saturday, Jan. 20, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., the Lake Geneva Winter Bridal Expo will be held at the Riviera Ballroom, 812 Wrigley Dr., Lake Geneva.

Whether you’re a bride-to-be, a groom-in-waiting, or part of the wedding party, this in-person event is worth a stop,

according to organizers.

Discover the latest trends in wedding fashion, decor, and more. Meet talented local vendors who can turn your dream wedding into a reality.

From stunning venues to delectable cakes, you’ll find everything you need to plan your special day. Get inspired by breathtaking displays, sample delicious treats, and take advantage of exclusive deals.

Don’t miss out on this exciting opportunity to kick-start your wedding planning journey. Mark your calendars and get ready to say “I do” to the Lake Geneva Winter Bridal Expo 2024.

For more information, including tickets, visit [lgwinterbridalexpo.com](http://lgwinterbridalexpo.com).

## Veteran’s Terrace Bridal Show

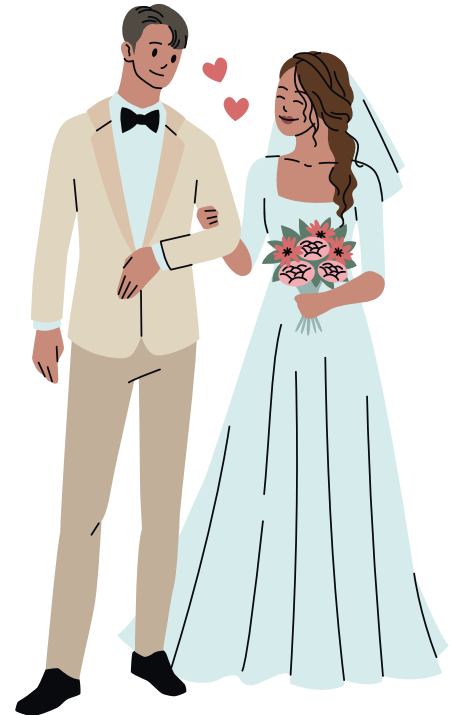
On Saturday, Feb. 20, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., the Veteran’s Terrace Bridal Show will be held at 589 Milwaukee Ave., Burlington.

Come to the beautiful Veteran’s Terrace Bridal Show. It’s sure to make your wedding planning easier, organizers said.

Visit local wedding vendors, tour the beautiful venue and meet the area’s finest

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# Clever ways to invite people to be in your wedding party

Plenty of love and effort goes into coordinating a dream wedding. Although the happy couple garners most of the spotlight on such momentous occasions, they're not the only ones who will feature prominently in the wedding.

The wedding party is made up of bridesmaids, groomsmen, a ring bearer, a flower girl, ushers, and other guests of honor, such as a couple's parents.

The wedding resource *The Knot* reports that old school etiquette once indicated there should be one groomsman and one corresponding bridesmaid for every 50 guests, although four bridesmaids and four groomsmen tend to be the average nowadays.

Choosing who will be included in the wedding party requires forethought and should not be rushed. The rule of thumb is to ask roughly a year to eight months before the wedding so those asked have time to prepare.

When that time comes, these fun ideas

can help couples invite loved ones to be in the wedding party with style.

## SAY IT WITH A TREAT

Remember those heart-shaped candies that come out at Valentine's Day that are printed with various sentiments, like "Be mine"?

Replicate the idea by giving prospective wedding party members cookies iced to look like tuxedos and bridesmaid gowns with a phrase like "Will you?"

## GIVE PERSONALIZED DRINKWARE

Whether it's wine glasses or flasks, have drinkware engraved with the names of who is being asked so that everyone can toast when they say yes.

In the event that someone declines, that person will still have a thoughtful memento.

## MAKE CUSTOM SCRATCH-OFF CARDS

This is one gamble that is likely to pay off when you present loved ones and friends with scratch-off tickets that reveal the question, "Will you be my bridesmaid/groomsman?"

## PUT TOGETHER SWAG BAGS

Take a page out of fashion shows or celebrity parties and package some luxury

items into gift bags for those special people you want to stand by your side on your wedding day.

High-end grooming products, jewelry, electronics accessories, and more can be great gifts for those who are likely to be in your wedding party.

## GIFT ROBES OR T-SHIRTS

Plan ahead for staged and coordinated photos by purchasing matching robes or T-shirts for all the besties in the wedding party.

Those who are up for having a good time will have no problem wearing the matching outfits when out for wedding-related events.

## FILL BALLOONS WITH CONFETTI AND MESSAGES

Ask friends and loved ones to pop balloons to reveal your request that they be in the wedding party.

Engaged couples may have many close friends and loved ones they want to stand by their side during the wedding. There are plenty of fun ways to ask them to be part of the celebration.

(METRO CREATIVE)

There are a wide variety of fun ideas that can help couples invite loved ones to be in the wedding party with style.

STOCK PHOTO *Winter Bridal*

# Can anyone be a wedding officiant?

Though it's been a while since the poll was conducted, in 2017 the data-tracking firm Wedding Report surveyed couples who had recently tied the knot, and one of the questions participants answered concerned who officiated their weddings.

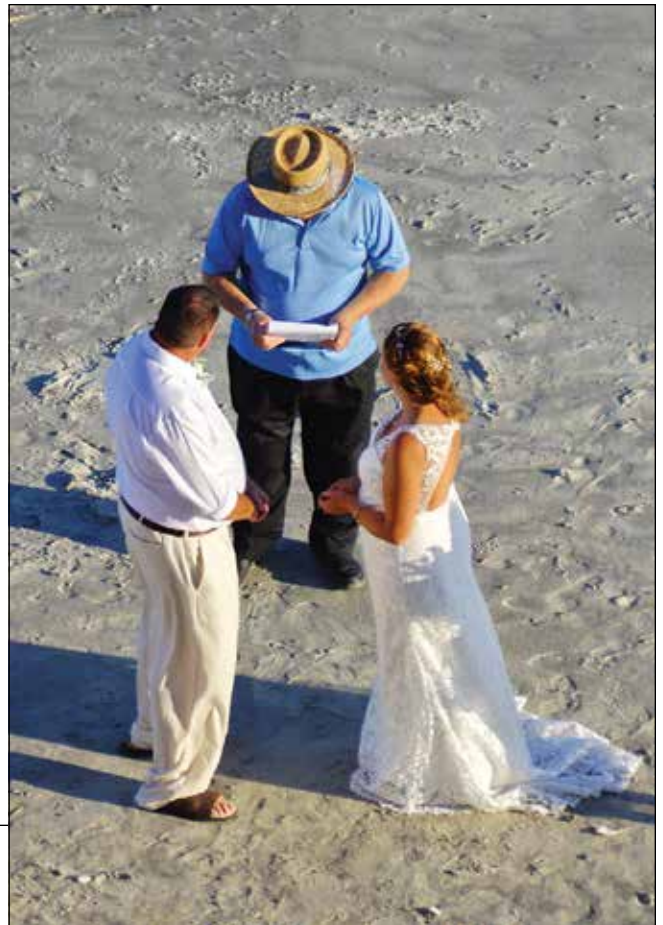
Roughly 25 percent of couples indicated a friend or family member had served as their wedding officiant, and that figure pales in comparison to older studies, one of which determined the number was around 40 percent.

But anyone who has attended more than one wedding in recent years has likely noticed that it's no longer unique to see laypersons officiate a wedding instead of more traditional officiants, which historically has meant clergy or other individuals with some formal affiliation with a house of worship.

Though local or provincial governments may have their own unique rules and restrictions, in many places it's easy and open to anyone to become a licensed officiant.

Couples who want a friend or family member to officiate their wedding are urged to make that request well in advance of their wedding, which can assure the person has ample time to complete the licensing process.

(METRO CREATIVE)



Roughly 25 percent of couples indicated a friend or family member had served as their wedding officiant.

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## *Simple tips to plan a fun and relaxing cocktail hour*

With so much on their docket in relation to wedding planning, engaged couples can be forgiven if certain components garner less attention than others.

The ceremony and reception are bound to stay on couples' radar, but what about the time in between saying, "I do" and cutting a rug on the reception room dance floor?

Cocktail hours are a great way to keep guests entertained between the ceremony and the reception. Many couples use this period to take their bridal party wedding photos, so offering guests a little food and some drinks during a cocktail hour can benefit everyone.

Planning a cocktail hour is not a significant undertaking, but couples can keep a few pointers in mind as they plan

this interim period between the ceremony and reception.

### **OPT FOR AN OUTDOOR COCKTAIL HOUR WHEN POSSIBLE**

Couples tying the knot in spring, summer or fall at a venue with ample outdoor entertaining space can choose to host the cocktail hour outside.

This reduces the likelihood that guests will feel cramped and it also sets a positive tone for the remainder of the evening. A balcony, patio or rooftop entertaining area can be great spaces for guests to mingle prior to the reception.

### **OFFER SEATING**

Cocktail hours tend to be stand-up affairs where guests mingle with long-lost friends or relatives while enjoying some light hors d'oeuvres. However, older guests or guests with small children will appreciate some seating.

Couples need not ensure there's a seat for each guest, but some strategically located high-tops and more traditional tables for guests with mobility issues can ensure anyone who needs to sit down can do so.

### **GIVE GUESTS SOMETHING TO DO**

If the cocktail hour will be a full hour or more, couples can consider ways to help guests pass the time. Some may be

content to relax and chat with friends and family over a drink, but others may grow a little bored as the hour drags on.

A photobooth or selfie station so couples can have a ready-made wedding album before the reception begins can be fun for guests. For less formal affairs, consider providing some popular outdoor games, like cornhole and bocce.

### **SET A TONE WITH MUSIC**

Music can help set the tone for a cocktail hour, which is not meant to get the ball rolling on the dancing-heavy revelry to come during the reception.

Some simple instrumental music, whether it's provided by a live string quartet or pre-recorded, can establish the cocktail hour as a peaceful period to relax, chat, eat a little, and enjoy a drink before the reception begins.

Reserve the dance music for when the reception hits full swing.

It's easy to overlook the cocktail hour when planning a wedding. However, some simple tips can ensure guests enjoy the time between the ceremony and reception.

(METRO CREATIVE)

Planning a cocktail hour is not a significant undertaking, but couples can keep a few pointers in mind as they plan this interim period between the ceremony and reception.

STOCK PHOTO *Winter Bridal*

## Did you know?

A number of variables affect how much engaged couples will spend on their weddings. Personal preferences, location and the season in which couples get married are just some of the factors that can affect the final cost of a wedding.

However, one aspect couples can count on regarding wedding spending is the reception will likely require the most significant financial investment.

The Knot 2022 Real Weddings Study found that the average cost of a wedding that year was \$30,000. The study also found that the biggest investment couples make is the venue.

Couples indicated they spent about 37 percent of their overall budget on a wedding venue. Obviously, it varies as some couples may spend more than that while others may spend less.

However, engaged couples currently planning their weddings should know that the cost of the venue where they will tie the knot will likely end up requiring the most significant investment of any component related to their wedding.

(METRO CREATIVE)



A study by The Knot Real Weddings found that the average cost of a wedding in 2022 was \$30,000. It also revealed that the biggest investment couples make is the venue.

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## What to know when picking a wedding reception menu

Lots of details require a decision when planning a wedding. Engaged couples may or may not enjoy tending to much of the minutiae involved in wedding planning, but the reception menu is typically one popular point of interest.

When picking a wedding reception menu, couples typically get to sit down with their venue operator or caterer and take a taste test so they can decide what to include and exclude come the big night. That typically results in some happy hearts and full bellies.

But there's more to picking a reception menu than taste, and the following are some pointers couples can consider as they aim to provide a tasty meal for their wedding guests.

- Resist the urge to make the menu reflect your personal preference. Couples, particularly those footing the bill for their own weddings, may be tempted to pick exclusively foods they like for the reception.

Though it's important that couples get to enjoy their first meal together after tying the knot, it's good to ensure

that guests get to have an enjoyable meal as well. Resist any urge to let personal preferences dictate the menu, particularly if you have a restrictive diet.

For example, vegans need not insist everyone eat a vegan meal at the reception nor should meat lovers insist that every plate end up with some red meat on it.

Diversify the menu so people with various preferences can fill up and enjoy their dinner.

- Inquire about food allergies. When inviting guests, ask them to cite any food allergies they may have when they RSVP.

Many banquet halls and caterers are now accustomed to accommodating diners with food allergies, but the earlier that information is communicated, the more time couples have to pick delicious foods that won't compromise the health of guests who must avoid certain dishes or ingredients.

- Align food with degree of formality. It's important that couples consider the ambiance of the wedding when picking a reception menu.

A pig roast might be ideal for a backyard wedding, but something more formal is called for when dining in a lavishly decorated banquet hall. Couples can keep this in mind when choosing the menu.

It's also notable that caterers tend to have a creative side, so they might be able to present certain foods in ways that match the vibe of the wedding even if those dishes would not ordinarily align with the ambiance of the reception.

- Leave the experimentation to the



cocktail hour. If couples have certain exotic foods in mind, they can still serve those items but do so during the cocktail hour.

Guests can simply turn down the chance to try exotic foods during the cocktail hour without going hungry. But a sit-down dinner should ensure every guest has something to fill their belly.

Picking a reception menu is a fun and filling component of wedding planning. Keeping some simple pointers in mind can help couples pick a menu everyone can enjoy.

(METRO CREATIVE)

There are numerous pointers couples can consider as they aim to provide a tasty meal for their wedding guests.

STOCK PHOTOS *Winter Bridal*

## HONEYMOON

• CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

Access to a gym and/or spa, activities like parasailing, and other perks are just some of the potential amenities couples can look for as they choose a honeymoon destination.

### *Collaborate*

A honeymoon may be the first trip couples take after tying the knot, and it can lay the foundation for future collaborative efforts.

Planning travel is not always so easy, so couples can work together and make any necessary concessions, so each person gets what they want out of the trip.

Some simple strategies can help couples plan and enjoy a honeymoon they are likely to remember for a lifetime.

(METRO CREATIVE)



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