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DAY

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Time management tips for your wedding day

As any married couple can attest, a wedding day has a tendency to fly by. Couples have much to do on the day they tie the knot, which can make the day feel like a whirlwind.

Certain skills can come in especially handy on a wedding day, and the ability to manage time is certainly one of them.

As their big day draws closer, couples can employ the following time management tips to slow the day down a little bit.

• **Create and distribute a schedule** – A schedule can ensure the happy couple and all members of the wedding party know when and where they need to be at certain times during the day.

Include all pertinent information on the schedule, including when and where hair and makeup appointments begin, when transportation to and from the ceremony and reception site will arrive and, of course, the start time for the ceremony.

A printed copy can help, but a digital copy sent via text or email can guarantee

the schedule is accessible via smartphone at all times during the day.

• **Collaborate with the photographer in advance** – Couples can streamline wedding day photography sessions by collaborating with their photographer in advance.

During these sessions, identify the photos you want taken and then create a schedule of them so all members of the party know where they need to be and when. Some couples choose to schedule wedding party photos before the ceremony, while others prefer to have theirs after the ceremony has made it official.

Regardless of which option couples prefer, schedule these photos so no time is wasted finding wedding party members.

• **Don't forget to set aside time to eat** – Anything can derail a wedding day schedule if forgotten when couples devise their initial plan for how the day will unfold. Couples might be less inclined to forget hair and makeup appointments and photo sessions because such components

are integral to wedding planning.

But couples should not forget to leave time for themselves and their wedding party to eat. Schedule a breakfast for all involved (separate ones if couples insist on avoiding each other that day until the ceremony) to ensure no one sleeps in and throws off the timeline.

Include time to eat lunch if the ceremony is in late afternoon or early evening. If you forget to schedule time to eat, the timeline will almost certainly be thrown off at some point as it's generally a long day and some sustenance will be needed.

• **Go over schedules with vendors** – In the weeks prior to your wedding, reach out to your vendors to check in and confirm the day's timeline.

Do this prior to handing out a schedule to the wedding party so everyone is clear even if last-minute changes are made.

Couples have much to manage on their wedding days. Perhaps no component is more important to manage effectively than time.

(METRO CREATIVE)

TO HAVE and to hold

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above: Maintaining and distributing a schedule of the day's events, including hair appointments, transportation times to and from the ceremony and reception site, among others, can help couples keep their wedding day timeline on track.

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Benefits to one venue for wedding and reception

Streamlining the wedding planning process can help couples feel relaxed and enable them to more fully enjoy their big day. Hosting a wedding ceremony and reception at the same location is one way to streamline and simplify the planning process.

According to the wedding resource Here Comes the Guide, all-in-one venues are preferred by the majority of modern engaged couples.

Couples contemplating such an approach can consider the following benefits to tying the knot and hosting the reception at the same venue.

Streamlined planning

Rather than having to coordinate with two places, all of couples' attention can be directed to one location and working with one party coordinator. This can reduce the propensity for mix-ups.

Ease of transport

Figuring out how to move between multiple locations and schedule hired vehicles and the like can be a chore. With one venue, guests simply arrive and are done with travel until the festivities end.

Seamless transition

Sometimes there can be an awkward period between the ceremony and the reception. In such situations, a ceremony may end but the cocktail hour is still an hour or two away. A ceremony and reception in one locale can eliminate the gap, as such venues typically begin the cocktail hour a short time after the ceremony has ended.

Better guest attendance

Guests who may find it challenging to get to two different locations, particularly those who don't drive or must rely on public transportation or a taxi, may find a single-location wedding more convenient.

Outdoor ceremony

Couples who want to exchange vows outdoors often can do so when they have one wedding location because the nuptials are taking place outside of a house of worship, which may not allow for an outdoor wedding due to the sanctity of the location.

Fewer travel worries

With a single location, it makes it much

easier if inclement weather dampens the occasion because there is far less traveling involved.

Couples can keep in mind that a single-location wedding may come with some challenges. Unless it's on the grounds of a house of worship, the wedding may lack the religious or spiritual component that some couples aspire to.

Weather can cause issues if couples had hoped to have the ceremony outdoors and must go with a Plan B, such as moving it into the same space as the reception, necessitating a turnover of the room. Couples also may be limited in photo backdrops, as there will not be two separate places where photos are taken, particularly if the wedding space is limited.

Hosting a ceremony and reception at a single location can benefit couples who want to streamline their wedding planning.



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OFFERS WEDDING OPTIONS GALORE

by **Sandra Landen Machaj**

CORRESPONDENT

While planning a wedding can be the most exciting event to plan, it can also be challenging to organize. For many, where to begin – and when to start the planning process – are the first questions to be addressed.

Once that engagement ring is on, it's time for the couple to start planning their wedding.

One of the first things to take care of is finding a venue. Other priorities include shopping for a wedding dress and tux, choosing outfits for the wedding party, deciding on flowers and decor, and food and cake, and ordering wedding invitations as well as thank you cards. Many couples also send out "save the date" cards once they have chosen a wedding date.

Then there is the photographer, photo booths if desired and possibly videographers along with music for the ceremony – whether a band or a DJ.

In other words, the to-do list is not for the faint-at-heart.

But let's go back to the first order of business, the venue – important because it needs to be booked well in advance.

Evergreen Golf Club in Elkhorn is the venue of choice for many couples.

"Most couples come in one to one and a half years before the wedding to reserve their date and make plans for the wedding," said Lexi Simmons, Wedding Coordinator for Evergreen Golf Club. "While we may have some dates available closer, if you have your heart set on a certain date, it is best to come in as early as possible to reserve that date."

While some couples have an idea of where they wish to hold their wedding and reception, for others finding the place that's perfect for them is a challenging task.

"Among the things the couple will want to share with the wedding coordinator when they make an appointment and come in for a visit are the size of the wedding, their approximate budget, and whether they plan to have the ceremony on site," Simmons explained.

A view. Inside and out

In the past, most weddings were held in churches however, the trend now is that the wedding is held at the same place as the reception. Many wedding venues offer an outdoor site but also have an indoor space



above: The outdoor site for a wedding ceremony at Evergreen features a hill and waterfall, providing an eye-catching background. **top:** This couple enjoys a stroll through the grounds at Evergreen, one of several areas where wedding photographs can be taken for the collection. **opposite bottom:** Tables decorated with napkins that compliment wedding colors, along with gold flatware and chairs provide an elegant look. **opposite top:** A couple kisses with the beauty of the room at Evergreen serving as a backdrop.

PHOTOS COURTESY EVERGREEN GOLF CLUB *Spring Bridal*

– which some couples prefer or that can be used as an alternate to outdoors if the weather doesn't cooperate.

"Here at Evergreen, we have a beautifully landscaped hillside complete with a waterfall and our beautiful 27-hole

golf course in the background," Simmons said. "If the weather is inclement or if you prefer an indoor ceremony, it will be held indoors in front of the floor-to-ceiling, Frank Lloyd Wright-style windows in the reception room with its 15-foot vaulted

ceiling. The view is incredible, looking out on the hillside where the ceremony would have been held.”

For those who are curious, no golfers will pass through the area while a ceremony is being held outside; they are re-routed so they don't interfere.

According to Simmons, every couple she meets with is different. Some have an exact idea of how they want their wedding to look, from the size of it and colors to what type of meal they would like.

But some couples, she said, have no idea what they want the wedding to look like, and that's perfectly acceptable because during her initial meeting with them, Simmons said she's happy to share ideas and explain the options available.

Wedding styles have varied, from being a traditional, formal event with a sit-down dinner to a more casual gathering, with fun decorations or a theme. Any option is possible at Evergreen. The couple can bring in whatever decorations will give the room the look they desire and ample time is allowed for decorating prior to the ceremony as well as time to remove them after the guests leave.

Venue, menu upgrades

During this past winter, Evergreen's wedding offerings were taken up a notch, according to Simmons.

“There have been changes made to add to the beauty of the reception space. A new floor has been laid in the bar room and the carpet in the reception room is being replaced to give the room a warmer and more up-to-date look,” she said. “The chef and I have also gone through the menu and have upgraded it, including adding some very elegant and tasty new items.”

Choosing the menu and type of dinner service for the event is often dependent on the budget and the number of guests who will be attending the wedding.

The room at Evergreen where receptions are held is spacious with a high vaulted ceiling, which adds to the grandeur of the space. The style is a Frank Lloyd



Wright design with massive windows. The walls have cherry stained panel accents, and the dance floor is spacious and portable, allowing for flexibility. Just outside the room is a beautiful covered patio overlooking the golf course.

Food, room options

The banquet room at Evergreen will hold 220 guests for a buffet dinner or 250 for a plated dinner.

“We offer a variety of packages with many choices in foods. Prices vary with options. When we meet, we will go through the options to help you decide on the perfect dinner choices and appetizers – one that suits your appetite and falls within your budget,” Simmons said.

Appetizers can be passed by a server or be stationary for visitors to serve themselves. Stationary choices include vegetable or fruit trays, cheese and sausage or shrimp cocktail, while passed items include rumaki, crab cakes, Hawaiian chicken skewers, Thai steak skewers, meatballs or stuffed mushrooms.

All food and beverages are purchased

through Evergreen except for the wedding cake, which can be brought in from a bakery of the couple's choosing.

The room setup for receptions is round tables that each hold eight guests. There are a few tables generally used for the wedding party or immediate family. The head table can include whomever the couple choose.

The bar is in an adjacent room, which gives more space for gathering in the main reception area.

Evergreen offers a trio of wedding packages with varying prices depending on what's included but they range from \$73 to \$111 per person and include a four-hour standard bar.

Many weddings now offer a late-night snack such as pizzas or a food bar featuring nachos, hot dogs or sliders. Others might opt for a dessert table to be enjoyed later.

Support throughout

After the initial meeting, Simmons will provide the couple with a packet with what's included in the different options, items that can be added to packages, and a list of preferred vendors such as the officiant, photographer, florist, disc jockey and shuttle services, if requested.

Simmons said her goal is to be there for the couple, to answer questions and offer guidance as they decide what will make the ideal wedding. And on the day of the big event, she will be there to see that everything goes according to plan.

Evergreen offers the elegance of a country club, including several scenic areas on the golf course that provide the perfect setting for photographs of the bride and groom.

Evergreen Golf Club is at N6246 U.S. Highway 12, Elkhorn. For more information, contact Lexi Simmons at 262-741-6203 or weddings@evergreengolf.com.



The *icing* on top



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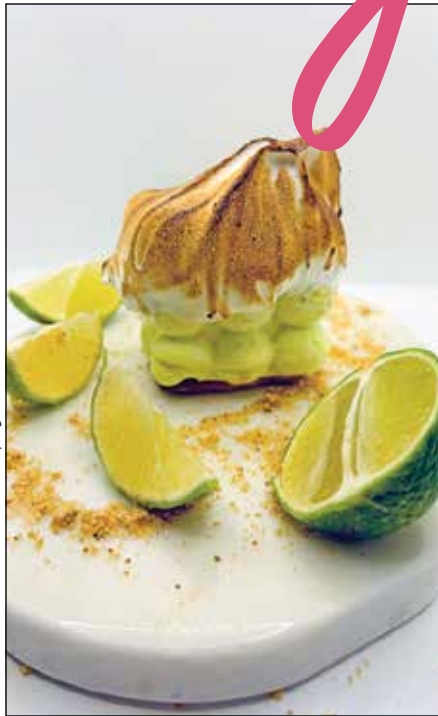


PHOTO COURTESY PASTRIES BY CHAD Spring Bridal



PHOTO COURTESY BODI'S BAKE SHOP Spring Bridal

Wedding desserts vary from traditional to casual options

by **Sandra Landen Machaj**
CORRESPONDENT

If there is a wedding in your future, choosing the wedding cake will be an important task on the list of things to do. Choosing the baker, flavor and style of cake, as well as the color for frosting, flowers and other embellishments are all part of the process.

The history of the wedding cake goes back as far as Ancient Rome. At that time a cake of wheat or barley was broken over the bride's head and was thought to signify good fortune for the newly married couple. By the Middle Ages, wedding cakes had progressed to fruitcakes, especially in Europe. Through the years, wedding cakes have continued to evolve.

Since the 1900s in the United States, most wedding cakes were white cake, with decorative white frosting and featured several tiers. For a period of years groom cakes were also popular and often whimsical in the shape of something important to the groom such as a car or truck. The tradition of the groom cakes did not last long but multitiered wedding cakes survived.

The cutting of the cake was – and still is

for some – a formal event performed by the couple while celebrating with friends and family.

Today, there are many more options as some couples bypass the traditional route and choose cupcakes, pastries, and yes, even donuts in its place.

There are many fine bakery chefs in the area who create cakes and other desserts for weddings, including Bodi's Bake Shop in Twin Lakes, and Pastries by Chad in Elkhorn.

Bodi's Bake Shop

Bodi's Bakery is well known for its donuts and custom designed cakes for special occasions, including weddings.

"I began baking special cakes, working out of a commercial kitchen in Andre's Steak House in Richmond, Illinois in 1997. I began baking a few cakes a week for special occasions and as people enjoyed them, more were ordered each week, changing the baking from a small hobby to a full-time job," owner Jane Bodi explained.

"When this space in Twin Lakes opened up, I was in need of more kitchen space, so I knew we had found a permanent home for

the bakery," she added.

Wedding cakes became a specialty for Bodi and it was not long before her cakes were part of celebrations at many of area wedding venues.

"We create cakes for weddings at Lake Lawn in Delavan, Celebrations on Wells in Lake Geneva, Geneva National, Twin Lakes Country Club and the Country Club at Nippersink," Bodi said. "We will deliver to most venues in the southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois area."

While Bodi began with cakes, when donuts gained popularity as a wedding dessert, she added them to the list of options.

"We are known for our donuts, which are hand rolled the old-fashioned way," she said.

Bodi's Bake Shop opens at 6 a.m., Tuesday through Sunday and welcomes customers purchasing donuts or a breakfast sandwich in the morning, sandwiches or soup to eat in or take out, as well as a variety of cookies and pastries.

Because of the work and time involved in creating one-of-a-kind wedding cakes, Bodi said there's a limit to how many she can do any given week, so she recommends couples call as soon as they have a firm wedding date and venue arranged.

top left: This 4-tier wedding cake by Chad Visgers is a modern version of the traditional wedding cake featuring smooth icing, greenery decorations and the couple's name on top. **middle:** This individual key lime pie pastry is a favorite mini dessert served at weddings in place of wedding cake, according to Visgers. **top right:** Elegantly decorated with flowers is this traditional 3-tier wedding cake created by Jane Bodi.

“Creating a wedding cake takes several days. The first day the layers are baked, the second day the fillings are added and on the third day the cake is decorated. Then the cake has to be packed to safely move it to the reception venue,” she explained.

If Bodi has the wedding date available, the next step is to make an appointment to decide what the couple wants.

“We make an appointment for them to come in at least three months in advance and share their dreams of the perfect cake. Today each cake is unique. I have seven flavors of cake, 10 different fillings, and three icings to create the cake of their dreams,” Bodi said. “We talk about their cake and have a tasting of some of the choices. I use a lot of butter cream icing, not fondant.”

Flowers are one of the most popular cake decorations, often in the bride’s favorite color, worn by members of the bridal party or similar to her bridal bouquet.

Bodi said not all couples have a big wedding cake.

“Some prefer a donut tower – something we are very well known for producing,” she said. “Or they may want a display of cookies and donuts, with just a small cake for the cutting ceremony and pictures.”

Regardless of which option is chosen, Bodi is ready to do her part in making sure dessert is the “icing on the cake.”

Bodi’s Bake Shop is at 306 E. Main St., Twin Lakes, and is open 6 a.m. to 3 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday. For more information, call 262-871-8090 or visit them on Facebook.

Pastries by Chad

Pastries by Chad is owned by chef Chad Visger who studied culinary at Johnson & Wales University in Denver, Colorado. After several years in the field, he moved to Chicago and worked in a high-end French Patisserie where he embraced the artistic side

of baked goods.

Upon moving to Wisconsin, he concentrated on pastries and was recently honored as the best bakery and the best dessert in Walworth County.

Visger began his business by renting a commercial kitchen from an area restaurant but when a bakery space in Elkhorn became available, he knew it was time to open his own place.

He began working on the bakery space in June 2023 and opened a few months later. It’s run by Visger and his family – including his wife Samantha, his brother, and his sister-in-law.

All along, he’s continued to create wedding cakes and other special desserts for weddings. Visger said creating a wedding cake is a tall order, but the ingredients is one of the keys to make sure the end result is everything it should be.

“Weddings are a special time, and the wedding cake needs to not only look good, it has to taste good. To be certain that our cakes both look and taste good, we use the best quality ingredients,” Visger said.

He said the wedding cakes our parents had are not the wedding cakes enjoyed today. The traditional cake that was popular for many years is no longer the most requested.

“In the past four years, the traditional large cake is a dying breed. Today’s bridal couples are not as enamored with a big cake as those over the age of 50. Older folks seem to love cake,” Visger said. “Today’s wedding cake is smaller and often only two tiers instead of the three or four that were popular in the past. Or they have a tiered cake but only the top layer is real. It still has the look for pictures and the cutting.”

He said many of his customers opt for a smaller wedding cake along with a variety of petit fours.

Visger said a variety of petit fours are often preferred for guests. They are

extravagant sweets, appeal to a variety of tastes and there are many options to choose from.

He said the finishing touches on wedding cakes have also changed. They are decorated with a much cleaner look and instead of massive amounts of frosting, are often smooth with pops of color, from fresh flowers, or gold, silver, or bronze accents. Toppers are often the last name or a symbol important to the couple.

Some of the decisions made are also a result of the budget for the wedding.

“In an effort to save money on the cake, couples may order a small cake and then a sheet cake to be served,” Visger explained. “There used to be a time when groom’s cakes were popular. They were often in the shape of a car, boat, or football. Today they are rarely seen.”

Couples interested in seeing what Pastries by Chad can do for their wedding are encouraged to reach out and set a time to meet with Visger for a complimentary tasting.

“We will have you choose four different petit fours and up to three cake flavors. We will discuss cake and frosting colors and special flavors,” he said. “We will also discuss other options such as a donut wall, or cookies to take home. The petit fours are made in a variety of flavors including apple pie, key lime pie or the flavors of your choice.”

In addition to wedding cakes and desserts, Pastries by Chad has a variety of fresh bakery items including breads, donuts, crescents and pies, making it not only a bakery for special cakes but also everyday bakery treats.

Pastries by Chad, 29 N. Wisconsin St., Elkhorn, is open 7 a.m. to 2 p.m., Tuesday to Saturday. For more information, call 262-379-1187, visit pastriesbychad.com or follow them on Facebook.



far left: Chef Chad Visger (right) and Ryan Burnes stand in front of the 75-year-old baking oven still in use today to create a variety of baked goods.
at left: Jane Bodi, owner of Bodi’s Bakery is known for her wedding cakes, old-fashioned donuts and cupcakes.

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Considerations when choosing 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. Make a point not 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



There are several factors couples might want to consider as they aim to provide a tasty meal for their wedding guests. One suggestion is to align the food choices with the degree of formality the wedding will present.

STOCK PHOTO *Spring Bridal*

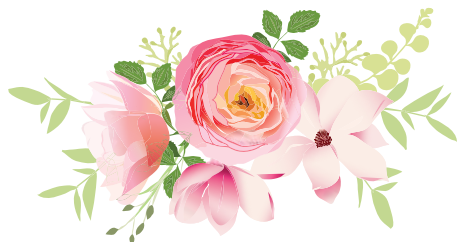
choosing the menu. It's also notable that caterers tend to have a creative side, so they might be able to present certain foods in ways that match the vibe of the wedding even if those dishes would not ordinarily align with the ambiance of the reception.

- 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 likable to eat.

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

(METRO CREATIVE)



Questions to ask when vetting wedding vendors



The process of planning a wedding involves the coordination of many different components, including people. It can be stressful and exciting.

Chances are the couple-to-be will be handling conversations with vendors they may have never worked with before.

It may be tempting to simply sign on the dotted line when hiring wedding vendors and hope for the best. But the process can prove more fruitful when couples prepare for it by compiling a list of questions designed to ensure they know what they're getting into before they enter a contract.

Is the date available?

The most important question to ask is whether the vendor is available on the day you have chosen to get married.

The house of worship or place where you will be exchanging vows should be set first, and then additional vendors can be interviewed to confirm their availability and the scope of their services.

How long have you been in business?

How long a company has been in business, and more importantly how much experience they have with weddings, can be a telling detail.

Experience is not always indicative of ability, but vendors with long track records of success may prove easy to work with.

Are you insured?

Check to see if the vendor is insured. It can be a risky proposition to work with vendors who are not insured.

Will you be on site to oversee things?

From florists to private caterers to specialty performers, it is acceptable to ask vendors if they will be there the day of the wedding to manage things or if it will be a third party or another representative.

Confirm all pertinent details, including who will be there on the day of the wedding, in advance.

Is mine your only wedding that day? How do you handle conflicts?

Figure out if the vendor handles just one wedding per day or if they have staff to cover multiple weddings on a given date.

What is your payment schedule and cancellation policy?

Understand how the vendor expects to be paid. Many businesses require a deposit up front to book the date. Some may want payment in full a week or so before the

wedding day. Others may enable you to make monthly payments for a set period of time.

Ask how the vendor handles cancellations, and whether any deposit or portion of the money already paid will be refunded.

When is the last possible date for making changes?

Know how long you have to make any changes to your plans, colors, music choices, or other details.

Are there any additional fees?

It's important to determine if gratuity, travel, overtime charges, cleaning fees, or any other charges are included in the contract or if it leaves room for additional expenses.

Do prices differ depending on time of day, month or year?

Certain dates are busier than others. Find out if the vendor charges a premium for holidays or particular times of the year.

Couples are urged to exercise due diligence and ensure contracts with vendors specify all details before signing on the dotted line.

(METRO CREATIVE)

Couples are encouraged to prepare a list of questions for wedding vendors. They are designed to ensure the bride- and groom-to-be know what they're getting into before they sign a contract with a vendor.

METRO CREATIVE Spring Bridal



Wedding venue is the biggest investment, study shows

A number of variables affect how much engaged couples will spend on their weddings, from the bride's dress and flowers to a photographer and disc jockey or band.

Personal preferences, location and the season in which couples get married are some additional factors that can affect the final cost of a wedding.

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

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

Couples indicated they spent approximately 37 percent of their overall budget on a wedding venue. Some couples may spend more than that and others may spend less.

Regardless of how much is spent overall, 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 big day.

(METRO CREATIVE)

The responsibilities of wedding party members

A couple's wedding day is one they will never forget. Guests' focus is squarely on the happy couple on the day they're set to make their union official.

However, happy couples are not the only ones with important roles to play during a wedding.

Being asked to be in a wedding is a unique honor. With that honor comes responsibility, as each person in a wedding party can do their own part to ensure a couple's wedding day is a success.

Maid or matron of honor

A maid of honor and matron of honor perform the same functions. The terms are simply unique because a maid of honor refers to a person who has not yet gotten married, while the term matron of honor is used for a person who has gotten married. Some brides choose a man to serve as man of honor.

Whatever title is appropriate, the person who serves in this capacity will help the bride plan the wedding, including being there to offer insight when shopping for a wedding dress.

This person also may coordinate the bachelorette party and periodically speak

with bridesmaids to ensure everyone is on schedule. The maid of honor will typically give a bridal toast during the reception.

Best man

Don't let the title fool you, as many couples now choose to have a best woman. Like the maid of honor, the best man (or woman) may be asked to help with wedding planning and is typically tasked with organizing the bachelor party and toasting the groom during the reception.

The best man also can help to ensure groomsmen are on schedule with tuxedo fittings.

Bridesmaids/Groomsmen

Bridesmaids stand beside the bride during the wedding ceremony. They can help with planning and help to resolve any last-minute issues that may arise on the big day, such as a vendor arriving late.

Groomsmen stand next to the groom during the ceremony and may be asked to help the best man plan the bachelor party.

Both bridesmaids and groomsmen also may be asked to help host events leading up to the big day, such as a shower or engagement party.

Ring bearer/flower girl

The roles of ring bearer and flower girl are typically filled by young relatives of the couple, such as nieces, nephews or cousins.

The flower girl walks down the aisle in advance of the bride, spreading pedals as she goes. The ring bearer carries the wedding rings down the aisle.

Parents of the couple

If they choose to do so, parents of the happy couple can help to pay for the wedding. The custom of the bride's parents paying the entire bill has largely fallen by the wayside, as many modern couples now pay for their own weddings.

Parents can offer to pay for the engagement party and/or rehearsal dinner, but such generosity is not expected of them.

Serving in a wedding party is a unique and humbling honor. The roles of each person in the party vary, and party members who want to do their best for the couple can study up on their responsibilities in advance of the big day.

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