



to Have and to Hold

Bridal Guide | Complimentary 2015

Wedding Day Checklist
Vendor Bridal Fair
Sassy Flowers
Choosing a photographer
Rewind your wedding

PLUS:

BrideZilla
First dance songs
Choosing the right favors
Great honeymoon

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to Have and to Hold



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Wedding Day Planning Checklist For Brides And Grooms

ATTIRE

Wedding Gown
Bridal Tiara & Veil
Bride's Shoes
Hair & Makeup
Groom's Tux
Groom's Shoes
Best Man Attire
Groomsmen Attire
Maid of Honor Dress
Bridesmaid's Dresses
Flower Girl Dress
Ring Bearer Suit
Alterations
Cleaning
Pressing
Religious Attire
Jewelry Accessories

PERSONAL WEDDING ACCESSORIES

A Wedding Theme
Accessories Collection
Something Old
Something New
Something Borrowed
Something Blue
Sixpence for the Bride's Shoe
Garter
Tossing Garter
Hankie
Bridal Purse
Emergency Kit

FOR THE CEREMONY

Wedding Bands
Wedding Vows
Jewelry Gifts for Kids
Unity Candles
Other Ceremonial Candles
Candle Holders
Flower Girl Basket
Ring Bearer Pillow
Guest Books
Pens
Flowers
Aisle Runner
Pew Ribbons
Religious Items

Gifts for Officiant
Honorarium for Officiant

STATIONERY

Save the Day
Invitations
Reply Cards
Location Map
Program
Place Cards
Menu
Thank You Cards
Envelope Seals
Printed Napkins
Stamps

FOR THE RECEPTION

Guest Book & Pen
Goblets/Flutes
Cake Tops
Cake Server Set
Garters
Bridal Purses
Heart Shaped Mirrors
Table Covers
Table Centerpiece
Gifts for Family
Gifts for Attendants
Wedding Favors
Bells
Ribbons & Balloons
Decorations

PERSONAL ASSISTANTS & CONTACT INFORMATION

Officiant
Wedding Coordinator
Best Man
Maid/Matron of Honor
Flower Girl
Ring Bearer
Wedding Attendants
Dress maker
Florist
Decorator
Caterer
Photographer
Videographer
Baker

Ceremony Location
Reception Hall
Rental Agent
Travel Agent
Accommodations
Limo Driver
Bartender
Musicians/Soloist/DJ
Calligrapher
Other

REMEMBER TO

Obtain a marriage license
Arrange for blood tests
Obtain a passport
Get Visas
Notify the following of a name and Address change
Internal Revenue Service
Social Security
Credit card agencies
Utility companies
Banks
Your employer
Post office
Professional associations
Registrar of Voters
DMV - car registration
Insurance companies
Military
Academic institutions

GIFTS

Engraveable Gifts
Personalized Gifts
Gifts to One Another
Gifts for Parents
Gifts for Grandparents
Gifts for Kids
Gifts for Siblings
Gifts for Best Man
Gifts for Maid of Honor
Gifts for Wedding Attendants
Gifts for Out of Town Guests
Gifts for Officiant
Honorarium for Officiant
Tips for Service Providers

FLORALS

Bride's Bouquet
 Maid of Honor Bouquet
 Flower Girl Basket
 Bridesmaid's Bouquets
 Corsages
 Boutonnieres
 Floral Arrangements
 Centerpieces
 Cake Table Decorations
 Memorial Table Flower

PHOTO & MEDIA

Newspaper Announcement
 Wedding Web Site
 Videographer
 Photographer
 Personal Guest Cameras
 Printing
 Photo Framing
 Photo Albums

FOOD/BEV & HOSPITALITY

Engagement Party
 Rehearsal Dinner
 Pre-Reception Snacks
 Bar
 Non-bar Beverages
 Wedding Cake
 Ceremony Site
 Reception Hall
 Guest Accommodations

MUSIC

Musicians/Soloist/DJ
 Prelude
 Ceremony
 Reception
 Cutting of The Cake
 First Dance
 Mother - Son Dance
 Father - Daughter Dance

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Vendor Bridal Fair

gives brides a chance to multi-task



1



2



3



4



5

Story-Photos by
Heather Randall
heather@uvsj.com

1. Linda Bates, owner of Sassy Flowers, assists a young, soon-to-be bride at the Southeast Idaho Bridal Fair in Idaho Falls on Jan 9.

2. Local photographer, Kendra Handy, (right) chats with a future bride about some ideas at the Southeast Idaho Bridal Fair in Idaho Falls on Jan 9.

3. Rikki Moffet of Famous Dave's Bar-B-Q hands a catering sample to some excited guests at the Southeast Idaho Bridal Fair in Idaho Falls on Jan 9.

4. Professional harpist, Janeen Rial, plucks her harp for all of the beautiful brides at the Southeast Idaho Bridal Fair in Idaho Falls on Jan 9.

5. Brides and their loved ones enjoy the opportunity to speak with several different vendors all in one place at the Southeast Idaho Bridal Fair in Idaho Falls on Jan 9.

IDAHO FALLS — Brides from all over southeastern Idaho gathered at the Shilo Inn in Idaho Falls on Jan. 9 and 10 to check out some of the best options for food, make-up, attire, music, flowers and photography for their weddings.

David Rail has been producing this event for the last eight years. This is his ninth year.

Rail plans the event for the beginning of the New Year because so many couples get engaged around the holidays.

“This event has really grown over the years,” Rail said.

He said it took about three years to get the word out, and then once locals knew about it, they started telling their friends. Pretty soon Rail had to grow his venue and start inviting more vendors.

“I wanted to have a show that would give couples the chance to talk to a variety of different vendors all in one place,” he said.

Attendees of the show were able to sample a variety of foods, talk to caterers about pricing, local photographers and even speak with consultants about attire and floral designs.

Suzie Chiles is the assistant manager of Hart's Tux and Gowns.

Vendor Bridal Fair continued

She said prices for their gowns average between \$800 to \$1,500. She said for those brides who want to do a destination wedding on the beach and aren't looking for the classic long dress, they can find a beautiful option for much less, around \$200.

"This is a great place for brides to find everything they need," Chiles said.

"I wanted to have a show that would give couples the chance to talk to a variety of different vendors all in one place," David Rail

She had already booked about 24 appointments with future brides halfway through the first evening of the event.

She said lace is particularly popular this year and that it is important for brides to plan ahead and make sure they give themselves plenty of time to have their dresses made.

Hart's also provides accessories such as veils and jewelry. For the grooms, Hart's offers 70 different colors to choose from for vests and ties.

They also have gowns for a mother of the bride that may wish to have a custom gown made.

Sara Tracy of "Lashes Stacked" stayed busy answering questions about her 3D fiber laden mascara. The bottle has two ends; the first end contains a gel that is applied directly to the lashes, the other side is the actual mascara with green tea fibers that help create a dramatic look for a bride.

It is water resistant and costs \$29. Tracy said one bottle will last about four months.

For those who needed to talk to someone about capturing all of their special moments, Kendra Handy shoots engagement photos, weddings and portraits.

"Flirty couples are so much fun!" she said.

Handy said she used to teach high school art classes, and then after becoming a full-time mother, she needed something she could do from home, so she got into photography.

"Every moment of a wedding is so full of love," she said. To view Handy's work, visit her website at www.handydandy-photography.com.

If you missed this most recent show, Rail will be having his spring show at the Kingston Plaza in Idaho Falls on April 10 and 11.

For more information, or to register, visit www.seibridalfair.com ■

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Just got Engaged? Congratulations!

Here are some helpful tips while searching for your dress.

■ How Much Time Do I Need?

Most LDS brides only have three to four months to plan their wedding. Short engagements seem to be a part of our culture. Though there are several reasons given for this short time frame, it eases no stress off the bride. Keep in mind while shopping there are only a few designers out there that make modest gowns to the LDS standard. And of those designers only a few dresses are kept in stock at the designer's warehouse. Most of your local shops try to keep as many in stock as possible but if its not the right size or color you want in the dress it can take from three to six months to get! So start as early as possible!

■ What Is Modest?

Some people assume because a dress has sleeves that it is modest. You can Google modest gowns on the internet and Pinterest and find not even one dress that would pass the LDS standard. A modest wedding gown that meets LDS standards will give you total coverage of the shoulders, have a cap sleeve and is not low-cut in the front or the back. There is a difference between a temple gown and a wedding gown that meets LDS modest standards. A temple gown must come up to your collarbone and the sleeve must reach your wrist, with no sheer laces or see through materials. Search for bridal shops in your area that cater to these needs.

■ Is It Ok To Pick The First Dress?

Randy Fenoli from "Say Yes to the Dress" fame says "Don't worry if you fall in love with the first dress you try on. There is a reason you were attracted to it in the first place!" Statistics tell us that about 90% of brides buy the first dress they try on.

■ What Does It Cost?

They skipped this step in Young Women's. The YW leaders told you where to get married and that your gown should be modest, but the sisters forgot to tell you how much it would cost. Guess what? Weddings are expensive! And so is the dress, the average modest gown costs between \$700 and \$1,200 and that all depends on how much lace and beading you want on the dress. Some gowns can run as high as \$2,000. Before you think its better to buy online read on!

■ DO NOT Buy Online!

It's the riskiest game to play with something so special. This gown is the most important item of clothing you will ever wear. This is the day you make sacred covenants and start your eternal family. The gown is a symbol of this beginning. Also think of the photos! The whole reason your even getting a gown is so you and your future grandchildren can see a photo of you on this special day in your special gown. So many brides mistakenly purchase their gowns online to find that the dress comes one week before the wedding or not at all! And when it is received its not even close to what they wanted. You'll find cheaper materials, cheaper bead work, cheaper lace and on and on. Many Chinese knock off web sites will pirate the designer photo then slap a tiny price tag on it promising custom sizing and in any color of the rainbow. Basically, if it looks too good to be true it probably is. If you're on a budget most bridal shops will have a clearance rack with some gowns as low as \$200 or less. Plus you know what you're getting and you will have it in time. Your local bridal shop will give you service after the sale. Such as steaming the dress for you, a bag and hanger all usually at no extra charge. If you order online you'll get a crumpled piece of fabric sent

to you in a plastic garbage bag! One unfortunate bride quotes "I was hoping to save money, boy was I wrong! I should have known it when they boasted this beautiful all over lace designer gown for just \$300. At first they told me it would take only 4 weeks, then 8 weeks then 12! Finally, when it was three weeks before my wedding and the dress had not showed up, I called the company I had ordered it from and the phone just rang and rang. And the website? Disappeared! I lost my money and now I'm desperately searching for a dress."

"We make fast." That was the response Ashley Kelley received to her frantic emails to a site offering a low price for the designer gown of her dreams. When it didn't arrive on the date promised and with her wedding just weeks away, these cursory replies in broken English offered little reassurance. "I began to think it would never show up," says the 20-year old student in San Antonio, Texas. When it finally did arrive, wrinkled and crammed into a big FedEx envelope, it was not the big relief Ashley expected. Her dress only vaguely resembled the one in the photo shown in the listing online, and it was poorly constructed with cheap materials. "There was tacky lace netting haphazardly stitched on with string sticking out all over the place," she says. "They had used red thread in some areas and the tie at the back of the dress wasn't hemmed on the edges." And the fit...it was completely off, despite having paid extra for 'custom measurements.' "There was no way I could wear it!" Ashley laments. When she contacted the site to return it and get a refund, she was asked to send pictures of 'what wrong' and was told they'd have to keep 30% of the \$250 she paid for fabric costs. It's

been months since Kelley sent the photos and she hasn't heard back. "I have a feeling I'll never see that money again," she says. ■

Written by Suzie Chiles, Hart's Tux & Gowns, Idaho Falls



Be smart about wedding beauty preparation

All eyes are on the bride and groom on their wedding day. Feeling beautiful and dapper can boost a couple's confidence and ensure they look back on their wedding photographs and videos with pride.

Certain beauty basics and makeup and hair strategies can help any bride look spectacular on her wedding day. The following are some do's and don'ts of wedding day beauty preparations.

DO employ the services of a professional hairstylist and makeup artist. Professionals have the experience and tools of the trade to help you to look your best. From contouring to make your face seem slimmer to enlarging the appearance of small eyes, some tricks of the trade are best left to the pros.

DON'T forget to schedule a trial run. Make this appointment several months before the wedding day so you have ample time to work with your stylists and experiment with colors and hair arrangements to fit your personality and the style of your gown. Take plenty of pictures and notes so you will remember what needs to be on hand for the wedding day.

DO allot enough time for the wedding day beauty appointment. If you will be going to a salon, block out two or more slots instead of one. This way the stylist does not overbook and will not feel rushed. Many brides opt to have stylists come to their homes. There may be an extra charge for this service, but it may be well worth the cost.

DON'T make any drastic changes to your appearance right before the wedding. This includes changing your hair color or texture, extreme tanning, using colored contact lenses, or chopping off all of your hair. It's better to wait until after the wedding to change your style.

DO bring a veil, headpiece, hair extensions, and any other accessories to your hair consult. This enables the stylist to practice working with these items.

DON'T tweeze or wax brows too close to the start of the ceremony. Redness and swelling are common side effects of tweezing and waxing, and they can be difficult to mask with makeup. Instead, take care of hair removal a day or two prior to the wedding.

DO exfoliate your skin prior to the wedding. This doesn't necessarily mean you should endure a harsh fruit acid peel or another procedure. You can exfoliate with a gentle washing of your skin with a nubby washcloth to remove any dryness and errant flakes. Moisturize well to ensure a smooth palette for makeup application.

DON'T wash or condition hair the day of the wedding. Intricate styles tend to stay better when hair has a little grip. "Dirty" hair is easier to work with than shiny, freshly washed locks. If you must wash, remember to thoroughly dry your hair before going to your appointment.

DO wear a little extra makeup than you are accustomed to wearing because it will show up better in photos. However, do not wear so much that you look clownish. A makeup artist can help you achieve the right balance.

DON'T have bridesmaids wear makeup that is bolder than yours, especially red lips. No one should upstage the bride.

DO experiment with any products you haven't used before to test for allergic reactions and see how well they wear.



DON'T wear too much under-eye concealer or one that is too light of a shade. This can draw more attention to problem areas than remedy them.

DO bring a pain relief medication in case a tight hairstyle or headpiece causes a headache.

DON'T forget that men need a little help as well. Exfoliation and moisturization can help dry skin. Guys should use a new razor and plenty of cream before shaving to avoid irritation. A dusting of finishing powder can banish shiny noses and foreheads for photo-ready faces.

Chances are more photographs will be taken of a newlywed couple than at any other moment in their lives. Certain beauty dos and don'ts should be followed so couples put their best faces forward. ■

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Sassy Flowers gives brides the best

by Heather Randall-heather@uvsj.com



Carefully selected colors are part of the foundation of every wedding that occurs. When brides begin to plan their big day, they choose a color scheme, go to a professional florist or someone who is educated about flowers and begin choosing specific flowers that will complement their vision.

For brides near or around Fremont County, Linda Bates, professional florist and owner of Sassy Flowers in St. Anthony, is the answer to any bride's floral quandaries.

Bates is aware of her clients' time and makes sure that maximum efficiency occurs in as minimal of a time frame as necessary.

"If they make one trip up here, that's all they will need," she said.

Once the bride arrives at her shop, Bates takes over.

She has slide shows, an iPad and a stocked shop full of arrangements and cut flowers to provide her clients with an optimal chance to truly design the brides perfect bouquet.

Bates said she always wants to understand the bride's vision, but she's not afraid to suggest, and/or educate her clients either.

"Educating her (the bride) allows her to make the best choice for her. If a florist fails to add style or update colors, she is not bringing her professionalism to the planning process," Bates said.

Bates has owned Sassy Flowers for 12 years. Her background includes art, business and counseling. She worked for the department of corrections for many years as an alcohol and drug abuse counselor.

Eventually, she decided to move on from that line of work to do something else. Bates handles such a large volume of flowers that she's able to purchase directly from growers, which then allows her to pass that savings on to her brides. She purchases flowers from all over the world, but tries to utilize local talent as much as possible.

"The most valuable parts of my business are my vendors and my relationships," Bates said.

Trends in flowers, just like trends in fashion, are always changing.

Bates explains what colors are trending this year. She said marsala, which is a rich, red wine shade, lucite green, is a light, slightly aqua, green. Custard grey, aquamarine, scuba and tangerine are also popular.

If a bride wants something that does not necessarily fit the industry standard, Bates is happy to accommodate, but she also does her best to ensure that her brides have knowledge of all of the latest trends so that they can maximize their options before making a choice.

Another thing Bates is excited about is that the classic, tightly bound bouquet is giving way to a little less structure, and a little more room for texture.

"Texture is what makes a bouquet interesting," Bates said. "Succulents, brunia and branches add interest and color."

If you'd like to work with Bates, it's best to plan ahead. She remains heavily booked year round. Despite spring and summer being the most popular seasons for weddings, plenty of brides schedule their special day in the winter months. In addition to all of her weddings she plans for, she also attends shows and networks with other industry buffs to ensure she is as current as possible on all of the new designs and blooms that are hitting the market.

"This isn't my job," she said, "It's my bliss."

She doesn't discredit the amount of time and effort it has taken for her to attain her current stature of premier florist in southeastern Idaho, but every bride who walks through her doors, she treats as if they were her only business, and every idea that comes out of that bride's mouth becomes one more layer of knowledge and more potential for another beautiful creation to be celebrated and shared on the bride's big day.

To contact Linda directly to set up a consultation, call Sassy Flowers at (208) 624-4414, or visit her shop at 52 North Bridge Street in St. Anthony. ■

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Factors to consider when choosing a wedding photography package



Courtesy photos by Josh Petersen Photography

Couples must make a host of important decisions when planning their weddings. Some decisions, such as choosing a venue to host the reception, require more effort and research on the part of couples than others.

One decision that couples must make carefully concerns the photography package they choose for their ceremonies and receptions. Wedding photographers play a big role on a couple's big day, and it's important that men and women about to tie the knot consider a host of factors before choosing the men or women they will ultimately task with visually documenting their wedding days.

- Engagement photoshoot: Couples who want to do an engagement photoshoot may want to negotiate such a shoot into their photography package. Some agencies include engagement shoots in their packages while others do not. If the engagement photoshoot is on your list of needs, then look for an agency that provides such services as part of its packages or agencies willing to include the engagement photoshoot for free or for an added fee.

- Party size: The number of people on the guest list should factor into your choice of wedding photographer. If your guest list is especially large, then you might want to consider hiring two or more photographers to document the day. Many agencies offer separate packages for couples who want one photographer and couples who prefer two or more photographers, so it pays to examine the price differences between such packages to see if more than one photographer can fit into your budget. Couples with relatively small guests lists can typically get by with just a single photographer to document their ceremonies and receptions.

- Travel: When discussing a wedding photography package, ask how much travel is included in the package. This is important for couples whose ceremonies are in a separate location from their receptions. If the distance between the ceremony site and the reception venue is considerable, you may have to pay extra for the photographer to travel between both sites. While a reasonable amount of travel is typically included in a photography package, it's best that you confirm this prior to signing an agreement.

- Videography: Many photography agencies also offer videography services in some of their wedding packages. Videography can be a great way for couples to document their wedding days, and it can be fun for couples to watch their wedding videos with their families down the road. ■



Registry Picks



Similar in concept to bridal registries, charity registries afford charitable men and women an easy avenue to encourage their friends and families to donate to causes they care about. Charity registries need not be

made in conjunction with special occasions, though some couples tying the knot have asked their wedding guests to make donations via their charity registries in lieu of more traditional wedding gifts. But men and women can establish charity registries simply to raise awareness and money for a cause they care about. Justgive.org, a website devoted to helping men and women find, learn about and support virtually any charity, allows visitors to the site to establish charity registries to facilitate their fundraising efforts. Once the registry is established, men and women can share their registry information with loved ones, relating their own connection to the cause while encouraging those who can afford to do so to make a donation. ■

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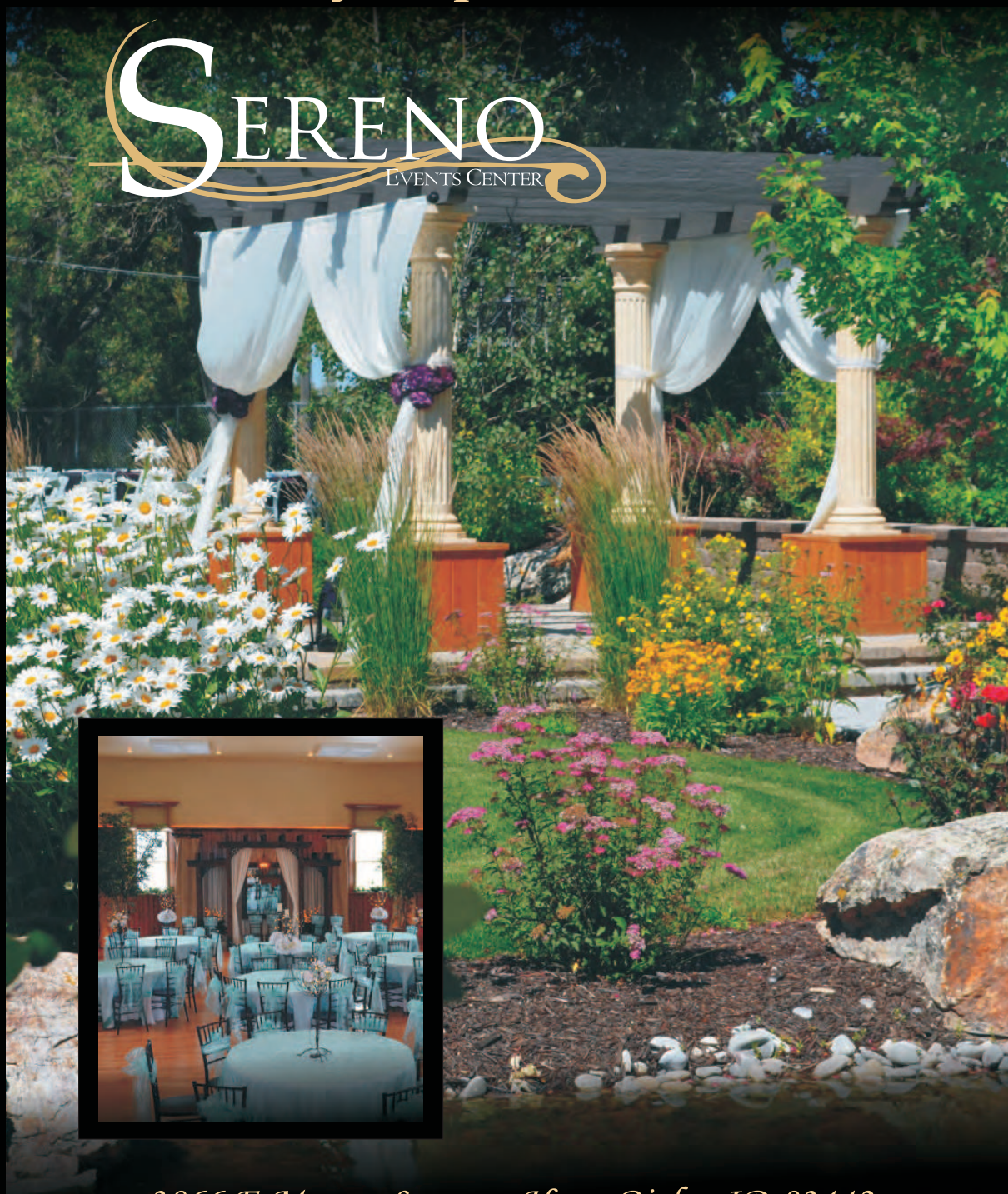
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Blushing Bride or Bridezilla?

by Amanda Hill
amanda@uvsj.com

In the city of Rexburg, it seems that most brides are the model of good behavior. But every once in a while, there's a bride that breathes fire.

Alicia Jacobson, who works at the Glass Slipper in Rexburg, said jokingly, "A really nice fiancé would come in, and we'd be like, 'We should warn him.'"

Jacobson talked about a client who behaved like a bridezilla.

"She was working with the alteration lady," Jacobson said. "She wanted something done now, but yet she wasn't getting married for six more months and was going to go on a diet and all this stuff."

Heather Weber of Rexburg's Circle of Love said a lot of times a bridezilla will get upset because of weight gain.

"They're upset that things weren't zipping like it did before or laying like they did before because their shape has changed," Weber said. "We have some brides who's blamed it, like 'Somebody has done something to my dress!' when no alterations have been started yet."

Circle of Love employee Anna Packer said she had a girl come in who bought her dress without her mother's knowledge. She then wanted the employees to pretend that it was her first time in when she and her mother arrived.

"She was like, 'When my mom comes, don't let her know I've purchased it.' Just, 'Let's try on several dresses and then tell her this is the one I want to go with,'" Weber said.

Alpine Jewelers employee Spencer Wilson has seen his fair share of bridezillas.

"There were some super, super picky girls," he said. "Their boyfriends will be like, 'What about this one?' and she'll be like, 'No, it's not big enough.' Or they'll say, 'No, I definitely want bigger. I want like a 2 carat diamond.' And he was like, 'Well, we can't afford it,' and she's like, 'Well...it's whatever.' And they're super bummed about it."

Wilson told another story of a young man whose girlfriend told him she wanted a ring that made him think of her.

So the young man did his thing and completely customized a ring for her at Alpine Jewelers.

"He got the ring back, and he took it and proposed, and she hated it," Wilson said. "She was like, 'I don't like it. I don't like that ring.' She still said yes, but she did not like the ring."

Fortunately Wilson and his team were able to help the unfortunate fellow placate his bridezilla.

Susannah DeAngelo, who works at Treasures Bridal and Tux and also as a wedding photographer, told of a bride with an impossible photo list.

"I was shooting their wedding, and they had this shot list," DeAngelo said. "It was super extensive. They had written out exactly who they wanted pictures with, and it was ridiculous."

Jacobson offered advice to bridezillas with a story from her own wedding.

"The day of my wedding, the wedding was over, but I was walking into the reception," she said. "I stepped on my hem, and I pulled the whole ruffle off my dress. My mother and people around were having meltdowns. I was like, 'Who cares? I'm married to that guy! This is the happiest day of my life!'"

She continued, "Don't sweat the small stuff. Big things will come soon enough."

DeAngelo added to the advice, saying that bridezillas should take three deep breaths and focus on what's really important.

Bridezillas do exist in our community, but many Rexburg citizens in the wedding business had mostly nice things to say about the brides they've seen.

Frank Hadry of Main Street Diamonds said, "I don't have one negative story to say." ■

If You Could Rewind to Your Wedding

by Amanda Hill
amanda@uvsj.com

Amber Kowitz, who married Kasey Kowitz



Amber Kowitz, who married Kasey Kowitz

While every bride and groom dreams up an ideal wedding before the big day, the truth is that not every wedding turns out to be the anticipated fairytale.

Idaho native Amber Kowitz, who married Kasey Kowitz in Logan, Utah in 2012, is one who would say her wedding was a little different than she planned.

Going into the planning process, Kowitz was happy to receive help from anyone, including her future mother-in-law.

But as time went on, the nightmare came to life.

“For the reception I asked Kasey’s sister and his grandma to help out at the reception, just doing simple little tasks,” she said. “Because Kasey and I decided we weren’t going to do things the way she (the mother-in-law) wanted, she wasn’t happy about it. I don’t know what she told them, but I guess she told them not to help out. And they never did help out.”

That was just the beginning. Kowitz and her fiancé wanted a

small wedding. When the day of the reception came, however, the couple realized Kasey’s mom had invited a few of her own guests behind their backs.

“At the reception there never was a quiet moment to sit and visit with anybody,” Kowitz said. “There was a constant, steady stream of people coming through the line. Let me just tell you, there were so many people who I didn’t have any idea who they were.”

The small, simple reception the couple planned ended up with around 500 guests.

Kowitz said she had so many gifts that she had to return most of them. She received triple of almost everything.

“One thing after another was just getting completely thrown out of proportion,” she said.

Kowitz handled the stress she experienced by taking it one day at a time and following the guidelines in a book called “Our Temple Wedding Planner” by Susan Evans McCloud.

Although the couple was already roped into a reception (due to their having done the pictures for the announcements) the couple finally agreed that when they were married in the LDS temple, they would elope.

“We thought about it, and it made both of us really excited to not have to deal with the drama anymore,” she said.

If Kowitz could go back, she would do a few things differently (besides not asking her mother-in-law for help).

“My advice to you is to not let it be so stressful, because it’s such a happy time in your life, to be celebrating your guys’ love forever,” she said. “It should be a happy, enjoyable experience. That’s one thing that makes me sad about the way my wedding planning went.”

Another thing she would have redone is her dress. She said her mother wasn’t one to shop around for hours, so mother and daughter chose a dress from a place in Twin Falls, had it altered and hoped for the best.

“By the time it was done, I did not like it,” she said.

Kowitz recommended not buying a wedding dress, unless you want to keep it and are prepared for the time and effort it takes to take care of the dress.

“Now I’m trying to sell it,” she said. “I still haven’t been able to sell it, and I can’t blame anyone for not buying it.”

As far as additional advice, Kowitz emphasized not trying to please everyone.

“This is your special day,” she said. “Don’t think what everybody else wants, because they have had their day. If they aren’t happy with the way they had their day, then go and tell them to get married again.” ■

If You Could Rewind to Your Wedding

Claire Fry, who married Grant Fry

by Amanda Hill
amanda@uvsj.com

Dallas Taylor, who married Heidi Taylor in Idaho Falls August 2014, and Claire Fry, who married Grant Fry in San Diego in November 2014, share things they would have done differently if they could rewind to their weddings.

■ Photos

Taylor: “I would have had more pictures. Sometimes the photographers try to rush things. They have to get all these different pictures, so they don’t really do it justice. It’s a day you’re going to remember, but more pictures help it happen, to keep more memories vivid.”

■ Choosing the right maid of honor

Fry: “It’s, from the bottom of my heart, one of the things I most regret. First of all, she was ignoring me, and I had no idea why. She got up to give a speech. Oh my gosh, it was terrible. She was making all these jokes that were not appropriate. I’m just like, ‘Holy cow.’”

■ Planning

Taylor: “The reception was supposed to go from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., and at 8:30 p.m. we still had people coming in to say ‘hi’ to us. By the time 8:30 p.m. rolled around, we had to stop the line. Heidi and I danced, and we cut the cake, but just a quick cut. We were going to have this big old program, because her family are singers. That fell through, too.”

Fry: “Once you start planning and start looking at all the things that need to be done, you start freaking out.”

“It’s possible (to plan everything in two months), but if you’re doing a do-it-yourself wedding, no. Unless you’re a magician.”

“I was like, ‘Oh, no problem, we can plan our wedding in two months. It’s no problem at all!’ And then when you actually start, it’s

like, ‘Oh my gosh!’ That’s why I ended up getting my dress before we got engaged.”

■ Delegating responsibilities

Taylor: “Instead of taking it all on ourselves, we started asking our parents and saying, ‘Well, do you have any ideas?’ And they would designate it out to people.”

“We took it a step at a time. We started to get to a point where we weren’t afraid to ask for help, because we needed it.”

Fry: “That was something that came up that was different to deal with, because we were on the phone with Grant’s best man and he had no idea the things he needed to do, what we needed him to do as best man. He thought he just needed to get up and give a speech.”

■ Health

Taylor: “I wish I hadn’t of stood on my feet so long. I was so tired that next night.”

Fry: “Focus on your health. I’m not just saying that because I have a health problem. When you get stressed out, you tend not to eat, or you forget to drink water. It’s really, really, really important to be healthy for your wedding day, for a number of reasons. Mine was that I was so tired and that I forgot a lot of things that happened on my wedding day. That’s something that I’ll always regret.”

■ Traditions

Fry: “There are certain traditions that I did not know, and it was kind of uncomfortable for me going into it with bridal party things. I didn’t know that when you ask someone to be your bridesmaid—and our generation doesn’t know this—it’s the bridal party that pays for their clothes, and I didn’t like that.

“I just wasn’t prepared for that, so I think reading up on traditions is something else that’s really important, and making sure people know how things go.”

■ Mental preparation

Taylor: “There are a lot of preconceived notions about marriage. Some of them are positive; some of them are negative. But marriage is honestly the best thing I’ve ever done.”

Fry: “When you’re getting married, and you’re dreaming about the day you’re going to get married, you think it’s going to feel different, like you are going to feel different, like a different person.

“I was so disappointed sometimes, because I had this expectation that I was going to feel different, that I was going to have this blissful wedding and engagement and all this stuff. Now, married life, I have to pinch myself sometimes. I still feel like just the same person as I was before.”

“I don’t feel different. It’s awesome; I love it. I love every single second of it. I thought one day I was just going to wake up and it was going to be different.”

Fry and Taylor offer additional advice to those preparing for their own weddings.

■ Letting it Go

Fry: “The best advice I received, and I got it from multiple people, was just to forget about everything else and focus on Grant.”

“What is your wedding day for? The wedding is really about the covenants and promises you’re making with your spouse. If you’re focusing on everybody else and not focusing on your spouse, it’s not going to be as meaningful of a day.”

“Focus on your spouse, and let everything else fade away. The most important thing is that the two of you are making that bond. Just love them.”

■ Making it your own

Taylor: “We kept it so our wedding was ours. We let them know it was ours. They were still excited to do everything.”

“We did have a few times where the mother-in-law wanted to take over, but when Heidi wants something she gets it. So she just outright said no.”

Fry: “I think a lot of times, because the bride’s parents are paying for the wedding, the bride’s mothers feel like they have control because it is coming from their pocket. Respectfully, that is the case. I think you just have to be conscious of the fact that you’re not paying for your wedding. You need to be graceful and grateful and just have a sit-down discussion.

“It really just depends on what you’re wanting, what’s most important to you. It did mean a lot to me that I had personal touches at my wedding.”

■ Involving parents

Taylor: “Gauge how controlling your mother-in-law is. If she’s not controlling, give her all the freedom in the world.

“Our parents ended up kind of taking over. They’d been through it before; they knew what to do. While we were worrying about who was coming, they were there saying, ‘This needs to happen, this needs to happen.’ They were spending their time behind the scenes making every-

thing run smoothly.”

Fry: “I just got lucky. She (the mother-in-law) was super, super helpful and awesome.”

■ Pinterest

Fry: “The smartest thing that I did planning-wise was create a Pinterest board. I had never seen the use for Pinterest until I was getting married. I created this online board in which I could take all of the ideas and put them in categorically.

“Then I just shared that with Grant’s mom and my mom and the florist. I was able to just take my Ipad wherever I went and show people exactly what I was looking for and exactly what I wanted. Everybody was on the same page. Once I showed everybody the Pinterest, I just backed off. Everybody did their thing, and it turned out exactly how I wanted.”

■ Checklists

Fry: “I downloaded a bunch of different apps and tried a bunch out to see. There are also online checklists. I had a checklist from a magazine that I found after the fact and wished that I had used.”

■ The Right One

Taylor: “I was just super happy. It was a transition period that I knew I was doing what’s right...I just felt peace.”

Fry: “Make sure the person you’re marrying is someone you’re extremely comfortable with.”

“There’s nothing selfish about that—just loving the person you’re going to be with for the rest of your life is awesome.” ■

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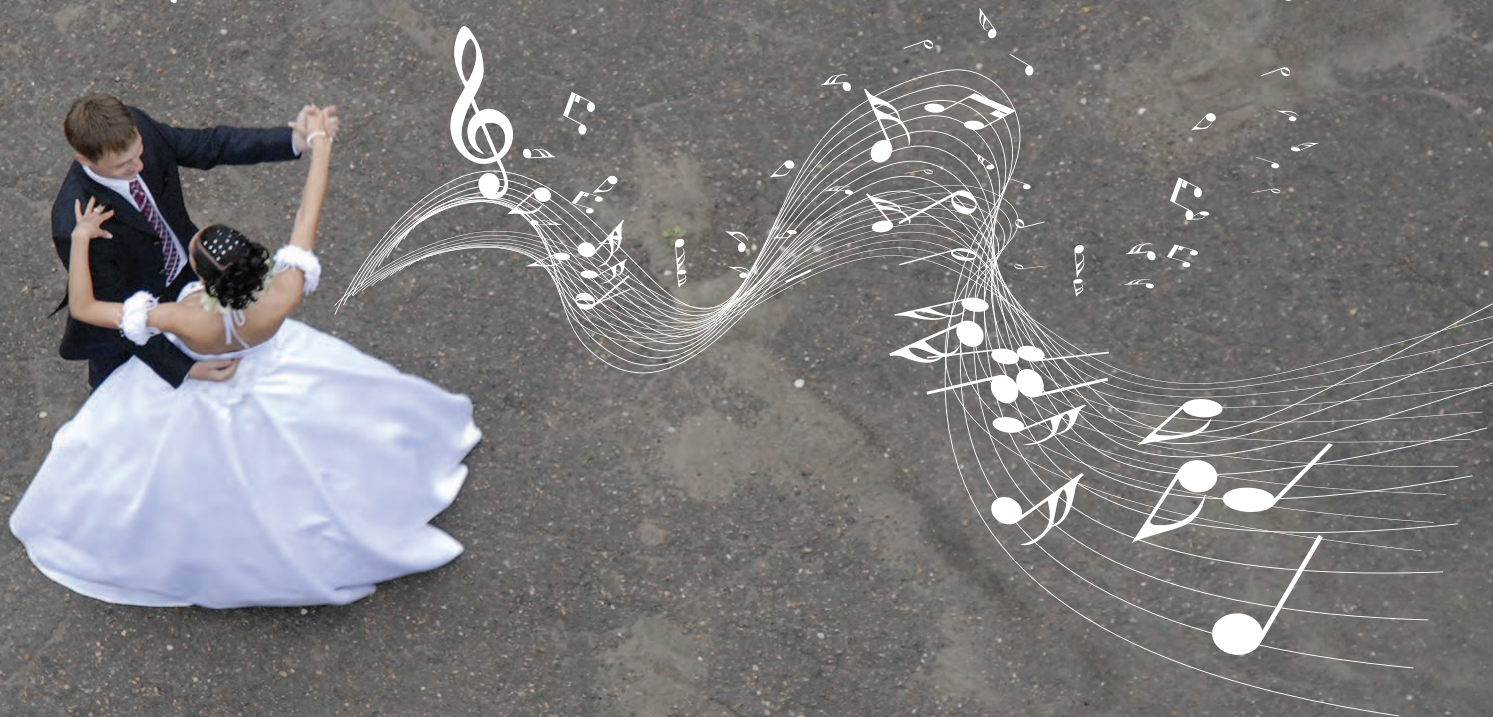


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Popular and modern first dance songs



A couple's first dance as man and wife is a cherished wedding tradition. While the first dance can help set a positive tone for the reception, it also can negatively impact the festivities if a poor song is chosen.

Couples may feel pressure to choose the perfect song. Yes, this is a song that the couple has selected to represent their love for each other, but it also should be one that will speak to the masses and can be thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Couples want to avoid a song that does not seem to fit with the festivities. For those couples who need a little musical inspiration, turn to many of the modern hits you're bound to hear on the radio, which may help you to shine in that first dance.

- "A Thousand Years" by Christina Perri: "Twi-hard" fans enjoyed this romantic song during the pivotal wedding scene

between Bella Swan and Edward Cullen in the popular "Twilight" movie "Breaking Dawn." Couples looking to recreate the magic of these star-crossed lovers can embrace Perri's delicate tone and tender lyrics.

- "All of Me" by John Legend: It's been hard to escape this popular love song by R&B artist John Legend. An ode Legend wrote to his wife, this song has quickly become a popular choice for a couple's first dance.

- "I Choose You" by Sara Bareilles: This peppy song by singer/songwriter Sara Bareilles is a good choice for couples who prefer being nontraditional. It's faster paced and less sentimental than many other wedding songs.

- "Better Together" by Jack Johnson: Johnson is known primarily for his soft rock and acoustic guitar work blended with catchy lyrics. Also an accomplished surfer, Johnson's work is enjoyed by many

but may be especially prized by couples who want to their reception to be a laid back affair full of fun and whimsy.

- "I Won't Give Up" by Jason Mraz: Another acoustic ditty, this song has a country influence and talks about not giving up and staying in a relationship for the long haul.

- "I Don't Dance" by Lee Brice: Speaking of country influences, couples who want a little twang in their first dances can choose Brice's breakthrough hit. Romantic lyrics about spinning his partner around in circles despite not liking to dance illustrates what one partner will do for the other when in love.

Couples can make that first moment on the dance floor a special experience by choosing modern classics for their first dances.

Cake-cutting etiquette and guidelines

The presentation of the wedding cake marks the culmination of the day's festivities and a final symbol of a happy couple's new partnership. Many people eagerly await the cake as much as they may anticipate catching a glimpse of the bride in her beautiful gown. While the cake in all its finery can be a beautiful sight to behold, a cake can only last so long before its fate as a delicious dessert is sealed.

As is the case with many wedding traditions, there is some established etiquette with regard to cutting and serving wedding cake. If you plan on putting your cake on display, be sure it is made with a frosting and filling that can endure room temperature. Certain creams may sour if not refrigerated, and you do not want anyone becoming ill. If you have your heart set on perishable fillings, keep the cake refrigerated and then have the big reveal right before it is cut.

The cake cutting usually comes near the end of the wedding reception. Schedule the cutting so that older guests or young children can leave without feeling as if they would be offending anyone. The emcee of the evening typically announces the cake cutting, and the band may play a quirky tune or revisit the wedding song while the first slice is being cut.

A bride should hold the cake knife with her right hand, while the groom places his right hand over hers before they proceed to slice down together. If the cake has a foam or cardboard support, be careful not to cut through

it. Use a cake server to grab the first piece.

Traditionally the newly betrothed will feed each other a bite of the cake to symbolize their first meal as a couple. Couples can feed each other a small amount, taking care not to spill any. Many couples no longer embrace the once-popular tradition of smashing cake in each other's faces, but whether or not couples follow this tradition is up to them.

Some couples like to serve their parents a piece of cake. Traditionally the bride should serve the groom's parents and the groom the bride's parents.

If there is a groom's cake, guests may prefer a slice of both cakes. Guests may also want to take home a slice of the groom's cake. Tradition states that a piece of the groom's cake should be presented to an unmarried woman attending the wedding. The woman is not expected to eat the cake, but rather to put it under her pillow. Superstition held that this tradition would help an unmarried woman find a husband. Make arrangements for proper packaging of the groom's cake, so guests can take home a slice if they so desire.

The waitstaff typically handles the slicing of the cake. The uppermost tier is reserved for the couple to save, and the remainder of the cake will be served.

Recognize that not all guests like cake, but it's better to err on the side of caution and have a cake that will feed all of the guests. You also may want to offer a dessert bar for guests who prefer another type of sweet treat. However, this is a luxury, not a necessity.

The cake-cutting ritual at weddings has withstood the test of time, and many couples still prefer to present the cake with fanfare and excitement. ■



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Choosing the **right** wedding reception favors



One of the final components of weddings is the favors guests will take home with them as mementos of the festivities. Though favors don't require immediate attention, that does not mean couples should wait until the last minute to made decisions regarding their wedding favors.

Brides and Grooms-to-be should not underestimate the importance of handing out wedding favors, a tradition with a rich history. A wedding favor is considered a symbol of good will to guests, and there are many different wedding favors on the market. Finding the right one can take a little work. It is usually a good idea to find something that suits the theme of the wedding and is both long-lasting and practical. Try to avoid anything that is too kitschy.



Be creative

Wedding favors can be just about anything, so there's no need to stick to Jordan almonds or wine bottle stoppers. The more creative couples are, the more receptive their guests will likely be. For example, for an autumn-theme wedding, fill Mason jars with the ingredients for a spiced cake and give the recipe directions on a tag. For a summer wedding, gift guests with a sun and surf survival bag, full of sunblock, a beach towel and sunglasses.

Complete the theme

Some weddings follow a particular theme from start to finish, and wedding favors should stick with that theme. Couples who will showcase their love of travel on their wedding days may want to give guests keychains or purse holders that feature popular landmarks around the world. Those who are admitted beach bums may want to present a small fishbowl with sand and a goldfish inside, reminiscent of days at the seashore.

Go traditional

Couples who opt for universally appealing favors can lean toward some popular options, such as silver cake servers, candlestick holders, decorative photo frames, or engraved keepsake boxes. Aim for favors that have utility. Otherwise, favors may end up collecting dust on someone's shelf.

Favors are often integral to wedding celebrations. Selecting a favor that will be appreciated and fit with the wedding is often a fun and stress-free part of planning a wedding. ■

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7 tips for a great honeymoon

A couple's honeymoon is their first real chance to relax and unwind after the hustle and bustle of wedding planning. Couples who want to make sure their first getaway as husband and wife goes off without a hitch might want to heed the following advice.

1. Start saving early. Honeymoons are expensive, so to afford the vacation of your dreams it's wise to begin saving for the honeymoon as early as possible. It may be well worth it to compromise and make sacrifices in other areas to ensure you have enough funds for your dream honeymoon getaway. Do not expect cash gifts at your wedding to pay for your trip. If you do, you may be sorely disappointed when the time comes to take off.

2. Read online reviews. Online reviews can paint an accurate picture of a potential honeymoon destination. Look at vacationer-supplied photographs to see how the accommodations match up to the resort's own marketing materials. You don't want too many surprises, such as service fees, dirty rooms or a lack of beach amenities, to ruin your trip.

3. Plan at least one exciting outing. While on your honeymoon, be sure to go on at least one adventure. Try an activity you have never done before, such as snorkeling, traveling a zip line or swimming with stingrays.

4. Pack early. After a long wedding day and reception spent dancing into the wee hours of the morning, you probably do not want to spend time packing. Pack your suitcases and travel essentials in advance of your wedding day so you have more time to sleep in before you depart for the airport. Also, remember not to over-pack. You want to have room for the souvenirs you purchase along the way.

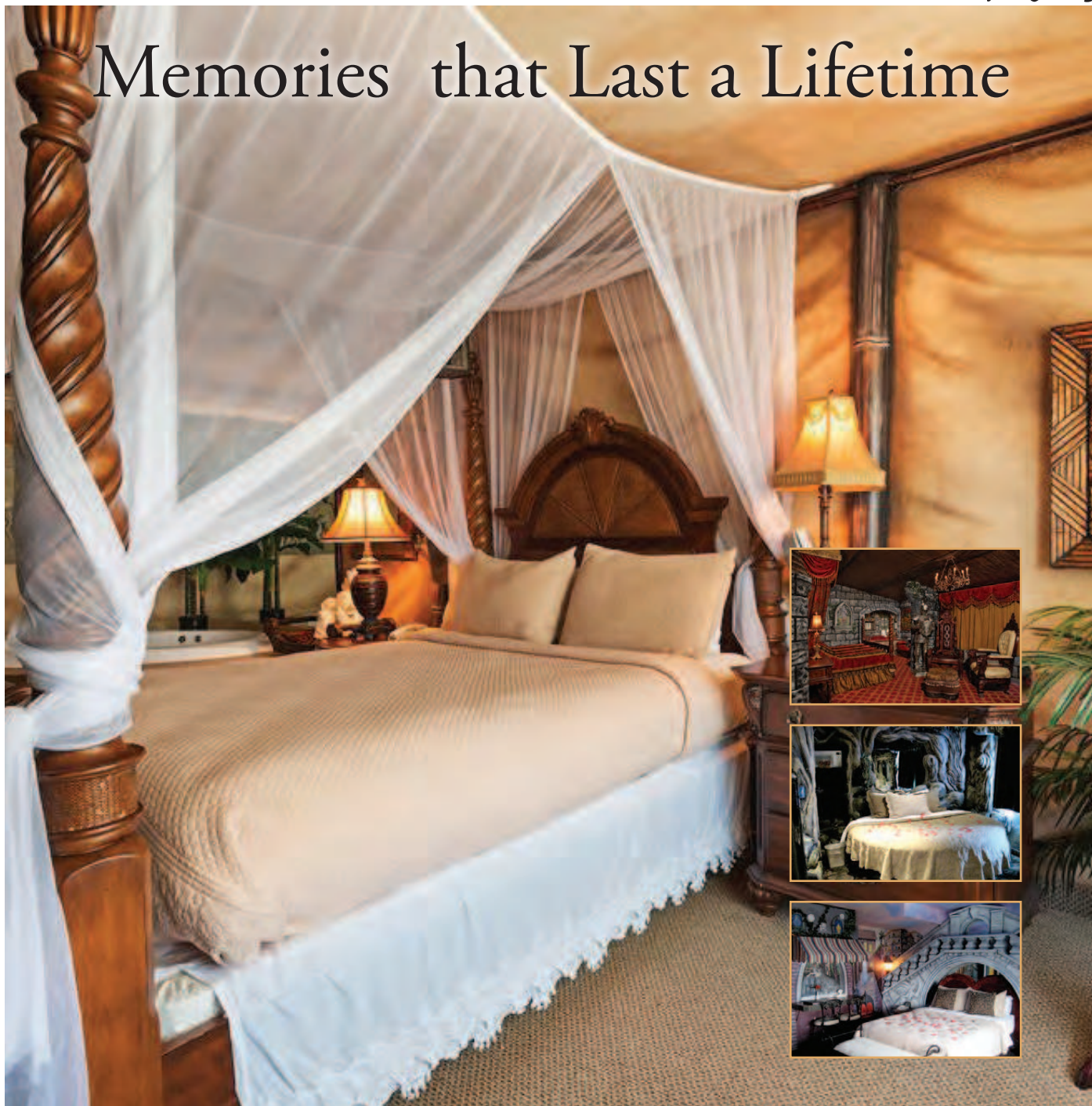
5. Enjoy your surroundings. Put down the smartphone or tablet enough to truly enjoy your surroundings. A honeymoon is an opportunity to relax, and that may not be possible if you're tied to your devices. Friends at home can wait for your status updates and wedding pictures.

6. Splurge on something expensive. Whether it's an ultra-fancy dinner or an exotic souvenir, indulge.

7. Leave your itinerary open. After scores of wedding appointments and watching the clock, it's nice to fly by the seat of your pants. ■



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