



Devoted Ohio Weddings

Guiding you to - I DO!



Wedding Planning Guide

Spring/Summer 2021



Year at a glance 2021

January

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AlphaSuit

Letter

from the editors

Like our name – Devoted – we're DEVOTED to helping you with planning the wedding of your dreams during a time where face coverings have replaced bright smiles, social distancing guidelines have reduced wedding guest counts, and a time when coronavirus is the primary reason so many couples chose to postpone their 2020 weddings to 2021. One thing that 2020 has taught us – Even during a pandemic, love will not be conquered and weddings have prevailed!

As Ohio's number one regional wedding resource – now in Columbus, Cincinnati and Dayton -- we are more Devoted to helping all engaged couples in Ohio plan their dream wedding. Some of the Devoted resources available to you include blog posts full of wedding inspiration, private Facebook groups, wedding shows, Wedding Resale Market events, online wedding vendor directory, money-saving discount coupons, online education, planning, resale market shoppe, podcasts and so much more. Planning a wedding in 2021 & 2022 will present its own challenges with COVID-19, but we are Devoted to helping you and your fiancé plan the wedding of your dreams.



Jamie M Rapavy
Wedding Specialist
DevotedColumbus.com



Kathy Piech-Lukas
Devoted Diva
DevotedCincinnati.com

Photo by: Luxe & Art Michael Bambino

Congratulations!



Photo by Holly Anne Photography

Finding the person you want to spend the rest of your life with is the best cause for celebration! While this is a very exciting time, the planning process can be overwhelming. Where do you even begin? Look no further! This guide focuses on matching you with great Columbus-based vendors and giving you helpful tips and inspiration.

Let's get started

Not sure where to start your wedding planning adventure? Here is a list of the top 10 things to do to kick start your planning process!

1 *Call your parents, siblings, and closest friends.*

Personally call or pay a visit to your closest family and friends to tell them the exciting news. This is a major milestone in your life and should be shared with your loved ones in a personal, intimate way. After the most important people in your life have heard the news, it's time to post about it on social media, change your relationship status to "engaged," and watch tons of likes roll in!

2 *Get your ring insured and sized.*

Now, this isn't the most romantic thing you can do during such an exciting time, but it could wind up saving you a lot of hassle in the future. If your ring fits perfectly, fabulous! If not, take it back to the jeweler that it came from and get it resized ASAP. The original jeweler should do this for free. The last thing you want is for it to slip off your finger and get lost or damaged. In the off-chance that it does get lost or stolen, you'll want to make sure your ring is insured. This way, you can replace it without having to buy a new one.

3

Celebrate your engagement!

Take a few weeks to relax and enjoy this time before the craziness of wedding planning begins. Whether it's taking a little vacation with your new fiancé or planning an engagement party with your closest friends and family, make sure to take time to celebrate your love!

5

Discuss and plan a budget.

Talking about money can be uncomfortable, but this is one of the most important steps when it comes to planning your wedding. Have an open and honest discussion with your fiancé and your families to establish a budget you can all agree on. Doing this will help save time and put you in the right mindset for planning your wedding.

7

Research wedding venues.

You won't be able to pick a date until you know your dream venue is available and within your budget. If you already have an idea of where you want your wedding to be, give them a call to find out the availability, pricing, and other important details. If you aren't sure yet, do some research online and see what is out there.

Check out www.engagedcolumbus.com to explore videos of local venues! Make sure to take a tour of the venues you are interested in and try to visualize your wedding in the space.

9

Pick a style and gather inspiration.



With your venue, vendors, and date in mind, it's time to start figuring out the style of your wedding and gather inspiration! There's no need to make final decisions yet, but creating folders and Pinterest boards will help you stay organized and explore your options.

4

Determine your wedding size.

Talk with your fiancé and each other's families (if their input is important to you or if they are footing the bill) and make sure you are all on the same page about the size of your wedding. This will help when it comes to planning out your wedding budget and finding the right venue.

6

Take engagement photos.



Photo by Robb McCormick

Engagement photos can be a great memory to have with your fiancé! Many photographers offer great packages to help you save money, and it's a great way to become comfortable in front of the camera. Plus, you and your partner can pick a location or certain shots that are special to the two of you!

8

Interview vendors and/or planners.

Now that you have set your budget, it's time to start planning! Some brides want to plan every detail themselves, while others decide to hire a planner to help them with the process. If you decide to hire a planner, ask around for referrals, do online research, and conduct interviews to find the perfect fit for you. This process applies to vendors as well. The sooner you are able to get your vendors booked, the better.

10

Think about your wedding planning timeline.

When you're ready to jump into planning, make a timeline of everything you need to accomplish for your big day. This will ensure everything gets done in plenty of time. Flip the page to check out our suggested timeline!



Wedding Planning Checklist

1+ year

- Purchase engagement rings
- Decide on type of wedding (formal/informal-big/small)
- Select a wedding date and time
- Discuss & set budget/who will pay for what expenses
- Choose your wedding attendants
- Estimate total number of guests
- Start your guest list

10 months

- Send engagement announcement to local newspaper
- Decide on roles for wedding party
- Reserve reception location
- Select caterer if one is necessary
- Reserve ceremony location
- Determine who will officiate at the ceremony
- Begin researching honeymoon spots
- Start looking for wedding dress
- Order the bridal gown and accessories
- Decide on premarital counseling
- Start health and fitness program
- Plan color scheme
- Book a photographer
- Get engagement photos taken
- Decide on wedding insurance
- Start your guest list

8 months

- Prepare budget for honeymoon & talk to travel agents
- Book honeymoon
- Purchase wedding rings
- Plan your reception
- Select ceremony and reception music (DJ and/or band)
- Reserve blocks of hotel rooms for out-of-town guests
- Order and send the Save the Date notices
- Research invitations, thank you notes and wording
- Book your videographer
- Select a florist, choose floral arrangements and pay your share of florist's bill
- Select decor and lighting professional
- Reserve rental items

6 months

- Order bridesmaid dresses and accessories
- Discuss gowns with mothers
- Give guest list to bridal shower hostess
- Shop for trousseau
- Set up formal wear options for the groomsmen
- Book the rehearsal dinner location
- Investigate wedding day transportation
- Select a wedding cake
- Select and order invitations, prepare maps if necessary
- Purchase ceremony accessories
- Start wedding registries
- Purchase reception accessories
- Send hotel reservation information to out-of-town guests
- Shop for wedding bands and get ideas for engraving
- Finalize the guest list
- Secure necessary travel documents, such as passports
- Meet with ceremony officiant & begin planning ceremony
- Decide on new living arrangement for after wedding day

4 months

- Purchase bride accessories
- Purchase bridesmaid accessories
- Schedule hair stylist and/or make-up artist
- Groom and groomsmen get measured for tuxedos
- Confirm that bridal attendants have purchased/rented attire
- Schedule bridal gown fittings
- Purchase groom accessories
- Research money matters for after the wedding
- Address and mail invitations
- Order wedding favors
- Schedule taste-testing and decide on reception menu
- Purchase gifts for fiancé(e), bridal attendants and parents
- Decide who will be reading and/or performing in wedding ceremony
- Decide where bridal party will dress/get ready





1-2 weeks

- Schedule mani/pedi for the day before the wedding
- Schedule groom haircut
- Arrange bridesmaids/groomsmen to pick up formal wear
- Have dress cleaned and pressed
- Leave honeymoon itinerary with someone in case of emergency
- Reconfirm honeymoon reservations and details
- Give final headcount for rehearsal dinner to location
- Finalize number of guests with planner
- Finalize seating chart for reception
- Pack for honeymoon
- Designate people to be responsible for wedding day errands
- Purchase items for out-of-town-guest gift bags
- Begin assembling place cards in alphabetical order
- Finalize wedding program

2 months

- Be fitted for bridal gown
- Send rehearsal dinner invitations
- Make sure bridesmaids have gowns ready
- Find out how to obtain a marriage license in your state
- Do trial-runs of hair and make-up
- Plan bridesmaids luncheon
- Finalize honeymoon details
- Select readings and songs for ceremony
- Write vows
- Write thank you notes as you receive shower and/or wedding gifts - Keep a careful list of all gifts received
- Begin writing ceremony program
- Arrange for a babysitter, if necessary
- Get pre-wedding haircut
- Begin receiving RSVPs in the mail
- Obtain marriage license (must be within 60 days)
- Select person to handle guest book & pass out programs
- Order liquor and wine, if not provided by facility
- Pick up wedding rings
- Finalize decor
- Schedule final food tasting with facility/caterer
- Review & confirm with florist - give final centerpiece count

1 month

- Pick up wedding bands
- Schedule final bridal gown fitting
- Remind Maid/Matron of Honor and Best Man to prepare toast
- Book wedding night location
- Prepare a must-have photo list for photographer and/or videographer
- Prepare must-play and do-not-play lists for DJ or band
- Wrap attendant gifts and attach a note of thanks
- Have bridesmaid call all guests who have not RSVP'd
- Create seating chart and room layout
- Order seating chart frame or escort cards
- Have wedding program & table number/names printed
- Plan out-of-town welcome bags & thank you notes
- Finalize wedding vows
- Write speeches for rehearsal and wedding dinner
- Finalize details with all wedding professionals

the day before

- Attend pedicure and manicure appointments
- Gather bridal accessories and emergency items
- Set aside gratuities in separate envelopes for vendors
- Arrange for officiant to be paid
- Take marriage license to rehearsal
- Attend rehearsal and rehearsal dinner - don't forget bridal party gifts
- Take favors, place cards, guest book, etc to the ceremony site
- Settle any last minute financial matters so you don't have to deal with them on wedding day

the day of!!

- Attend hair and make-up appointments
- Try to greet every guest
- Have fun and enjoy your day!!

after the wedding

- Have gown and veil cleaned and preserved
- Change your name if applicable & notify important parties
- Have bouquet preserved
- Make arrangements for all tuxedos to be returned along with any rental items
- Mail wedding thank you notes within 3 months
- Send announcement and wedding picture to the newspaper and mail announcements
- Mail vendor thank yous



Ways to save on your big day

1 *Decide what is most important*

Pick your top three priorities and allocate a little extra money for them (like your gown, catering, and band). Next, pick the three things that come lowest on your priority list and budget accordingly.

2 *Centerpieces*

Think of favors for your guests that can double as a centerpiece. This way, you have multiple uses out of them and guests can take them home and off your hands when the reception is over. Potted flowers, flowers in glass cubes, picture frames, candles, wine bottles and glasses with fruits are some examples. Use what you are given at your facilities and enhance it. Also, think about renting your centerpieces from your local rental company.

3 *Pick a different date*

Saturdays are prime time for most weddings. Try to have your wedding on a Friday night or Sunday afternoon. Also, consider having your wedding on a holiday weekend. Some venues give discounts when you have your event on a Sunday before a holiday on Monday. Also consider having your wedding during off months (Nov-April).

4 *Borrow*

Friends and family come in very handy for this. Jewelry, shoes, decorations, candles/candle holders are just some examples of things you can ask to borrow and will cut down on your spending.

5 *Extend your engagement*

Give yourself more time to save money by extending your engagement. You will also have more time to plan & compare pricing.

6 *B.Y.O.B.*

Book a facility that allows you to bring your own alcohol.

7 *Get crafty*

Buy your own fabric and make your own overlays or runners to add a touch of elegance.

8 *Keep it simple with flowers*

Instead of a large bouquet, consider one or two large blooms, like tulips or sunflowers. This will cut down your flower budget and still allow you to have beautiful flowers on your wedding day. You can also re-purpose your flowers from ceremony and use for reception. Consider tossing one of your bridesmaid's bouquets instead of ordering one.



9 *Passed hors d'oeuvres*

Have your hors d'oeuvres instead of doing food stations. Guests will eat less and you save more this way. Keep the fruit, cheese and veggie trays to a minimum. Most guests just nibble on these and a lot goes to waste.

10 *Cut the guest list*

We know it's tough, but one of the fastest and most effective ways to lower your wedding cost is to cut down the invitees. Get out that red pen! At \$100 a head, taking 10 guests off the guest list saves \$1,000! Also consider the size of your wedding party: gifts and transportation are cheaper for 4 verses 12.



How much alcohol do you need on your wedding day?

Typically guests will drink two beverages per person during cocktail hour and one beverage per person per each additional hour that the bar is open



Beer

For beer, it is safe to assume that the typical beer drinker will have at least four beers! So multiple the number of beer drinkers by four to decide how many cups, bottles, or cans you will need!

Liquor

For liquor, the recommended amount is three 750ml bottles of each spirit per 50 people!



Wine



For wine, you can get about four glasses from each bottle so the recommended amount is four bottles of red wine per 50 people and six bottles of white wine per 50 people!

It is also recommended to have 100lbs of ice per 50 guests!

Information provided by Ohio Bartenders for Hire.



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Live markets are held several times a year. Located in Columbus, Cincinnati, and Dayton!! Check out the websites for details!



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Ultimate DIY *wedding guide*

DO's

- Know your limits.
- Make your own beautiful wedding decorations. It can be easy to make showstopping centerpieces
- Make your own favors. This adds a personal touch and saves you money!
- Hire a wedding day assistant to help ease your stress.



DON'Ts

- Try to make your own wedding cake. A cake disaster can be a hard one to fix. Leave this to the professionals!
- Take your own photos. A wedding day photographer is an expert in capturing the perfect moments.
- Make all your own food. Cooking for all of your guests can be extremely time consuming and stressful. You do not want cooking to be the main focus on your wedding day.



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So, what's the average cost of a wedding in Ohio?

Flowers - 7-9%

Ceremony Site - \$50-800
Reception Site - \$800-2000
Bride's Flowers - \$100-200
Flower Girls - \$30-60
Bridesmaids Flowers - \$50-100 each
Mens Boutonnieres - \$15-20 each

Reception - 44-45%

Food/Drink - \$45-60/person
Rental Fee - \$0-5000
Service Charges & Tax - 18-25%

Reception Music - 6-9%

DJ - \$600-2000
Band - \$1500-10000

Other/Misc - 10-12%

Cake - \$1.50-10/person
Videography - \$1000-5000
Transportation - \$500-2000
Bridal Suite - \$0-300

Attire - 7%

Gown - \$1000-3000
Headpiece/Jewelry - \$150
Shoes/Accessories - \$100
Groom's Formal Wear - \$200-300
Bride's Gift - \$200-400
Attendant Gifts - \$200-600
Favors for Guests - \$200-600

Ceremony - 2%

Site Fee - \$75-200
Marriage License - \$65
Officiant Fee - \$150-350
Ceremony Music - \$125-625
Decorations - \$100-500

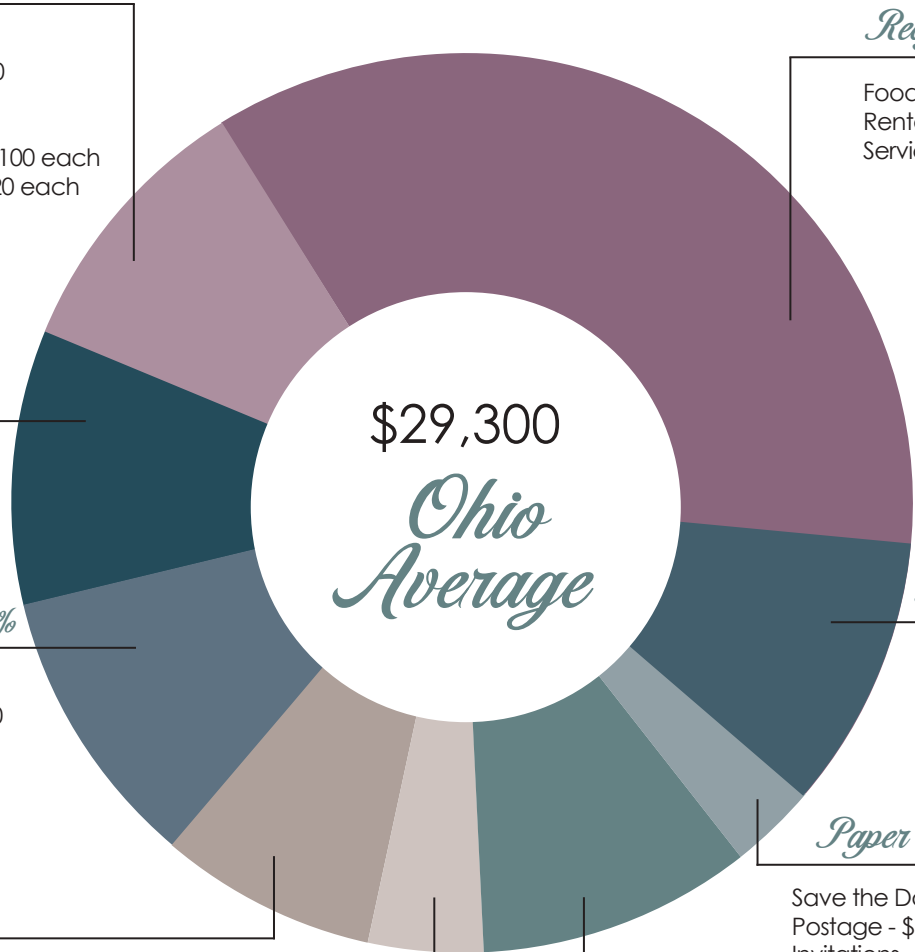
Photography - 9-10%

Paper Products - 3-4%

Save the Date - \$.75-2.00
Postage - \$.50/.71/.92
Invitations - \$1.50-10.00
Reception Cards - \$.75-1.50
Thank You Notes - \$.75- 1.75
Place Cards - \$.65-2.00
Programs/Menu Cards - \$1.25-3.50
Envelope Addressing - \$.45-2.50

Wedding Planner - 9-11%

Hourly - \$25-300
Wedding Weekend - \$700-1000
Full Service - \$2000-10000



Typically Not in Budget

Wedding Insurance - \$150-550 Honeymoon - \$4000 Rings - \$2000-6000
Gown Preservation - \$250-700 Flower Preservation - \$150-700

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Trendy in 2021



Cheese



Yes, believe it or not one of the biggest suspected trends at weddings in 2021 is cheese! Due to the rise of the Instagram-worthy charcuterie board, it is safe to say that cheese will be making the menu list at a lot of weddings this coming year!

Microweddings

Due to the pandemic of COVID-19 that struck in 2020 it is fair to say that we will see a lot of microweddings occur in 2021. Microweddings, for those who don't know, are small intimate gatherings with just a few wedding guests. This is not only a socially distanced approved option, but also an alternative for weddings that had to be rescheduled. These weddings will definitely be a common occurrence moving into 2021.



Sustainability

Given everything the earth went through in 2020, people will be yearning for ways to give back to the planet. Look out for biodegradable confetti options, recycling vintage mirrors or doors for wedding decor and some couples might ask guests to withhold from giving gifts and instead donate the money to eco-friendly charities.

Fun Bridesmaid Gifts

Your bridesmaids play a vital role on your big day! Show them some extra love with these four adorable gift ideas!



Customized Glasses



Champagne



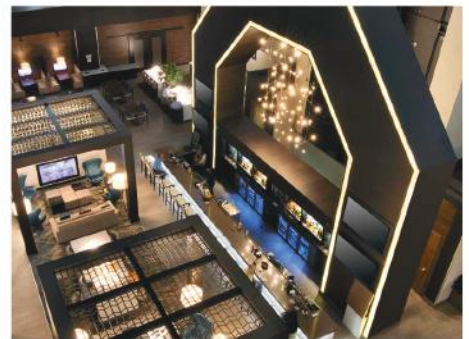
Matching Robes



Pampering Gift Set



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Choosing your Wedding Officiant

Are you having a religious or secular wedding?

Religious

Meet with several officiants from different churches that align with your religion. Once you meet, ask how comfortable they are with officiating weddings, and make sure that your partner is also comfortable and/or agrees with your beliefs and what you want as far as your officiant.

Questions you should ask

- How many weddings have you officiated?
- Will you give a sermon/homily?
- Can you work with an interfaith ceremony?
- Do we have to get married in a church, etc.?
- Can we write our own vows?
- Do we need to make a donation?



Secular

For a secular ceremony, you can choose between a civil officiant or someone that you know. A civil officiant is always safe since you know that they know what they are doing, but they do not know you personally, which is why a friend or family member would be great as well.

Questions you should ask

- How long have you been an officiant?
- Will you give a speech?
- Do you personalize each ceremony?
- Can you help us write our vows?
- What is your typical outline?
- What will you wear?
- What is your fee?

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Honeymoon Packing List

Clothing

Long Sleeve Shirt
 Short Sleeve Shirt
 Tank Top
 Shorts
 Skirt
 Swimsuit
 Day Dress
 Formal Dress
 Pants
 Dress Pants
 Dress Shirt
 Coat
 Light Jacket
 Underwear
 Bras
 Socks
 Sandals/Flip-Flops
 Sneakers
 Formal Shoes
 Purse
 Backpack
 Hat
 Scarf
 Gloves
 Sunglasses
 Rain Gear
 Jewelry
 Watch

Misc.

Local Map
 Pen/Pencil
 Notebook
 Planner
 Travel Guidebook
 Journal
 Book/Magazines
 Contraception

Health

Hand Sanitizer
 Protective Mask
 Anti-Bacterial Wipes
 Prescriptions
 Band-Aids
 First Aid Ointment
 Pain Relievers
 Cold/Flu Medication
 Vitamins
 Anti-Diarrhea Pills
 Anti-Malaria Pills
 Antacids
 Tissues
 Antihistamine
 Bug Spray

Documentation

Passport
 Driver's License
 VISA Documentation
 Tickets (Plane, Train, Etc.)
 Credit Cards
 Bank Contact Information
 Local Currency
 Insurance Card
 Photocopy of your passport/I.D.
 Proof of Vaccination
 Local Embassy Contact Info

Toiletries

Toothbrush
 Toothpaste
 Floss
 Deodorant
 Contacts
 Eyedrops
 Glasses
 Razors
 Face Cream
 Body Lotion
 Sunscreen
 Tampons/Pads
 Nail Clippers
 Tweezers
 Makeup Bag
 Perfume
 Cologne
 Chapstick
 Q-Tips
 Hair Brush
 Hair Ties
 Blow Dryer
 Curling Iron
 Hair Straightener
 Shampoo/Conditioner
 Ear Plugs
 Sleep Mask

Electronics

Cellphone (+ Charger)
 Laptop (+ Charger)
 Camera (+ Charger)
 Headphones
 Local Adapters
 Tablet/iPad
 Memory Cards
 Extra Batteries
 Portable Charger





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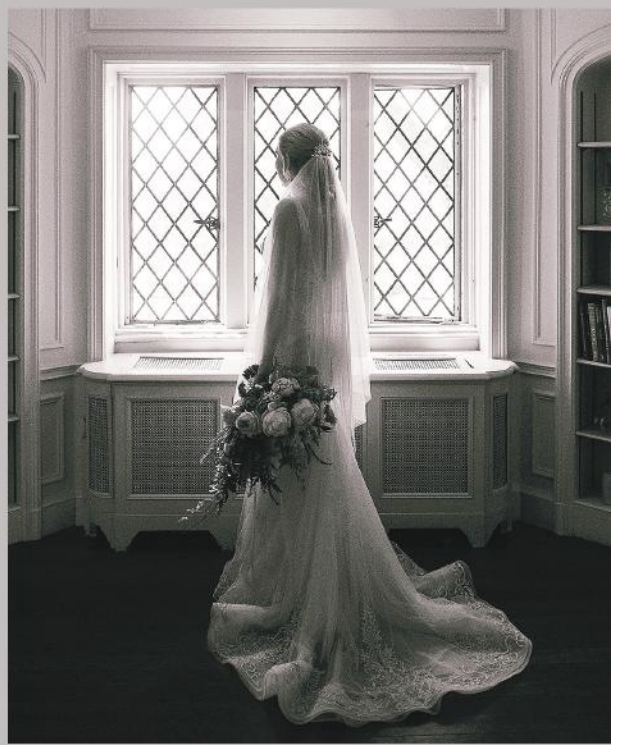
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- Catering**
Eli's Barbeque
- Cake**
Three Sweet Girls Cakery
- Disc Jockey**
Sound for Days Deejays
- Dress**
Luxe Redux Bridal
- Alterations**
Karla Louise Bridal Designs

Sarah & Chad



6/27/20



Nora & Mirria



10/31/20

- Photography**
Leah Kelley Photography
- Venue/Bar Service**
Grandview Theater and Draffhouse
- Hair**
NStyle by Nicholas
- Makeup**
Emily Orr
- Flowers**
Sunflower Kate Florals
- Catering**
Schmidt's German Sausage Haus
- Cupcakes**
St. Anne the Tart
- Gluten Free Cupcakes**
Bake Me Happy
- Dresses**
David's Bridal
- Rings**
Diamonderé and Sapphire Design Studios
- Photo Locations**
Grandview Theater, Gateway Film Center, Hilton Columbus Downtown, and the Whetstone Park of Roses



Photography
614 Wedding Photography

Venue/Bar Service
Heart of Africa Center at Columbus Zoo

Hair/Makeup
Hey! Pretty Beauty

Menswear
The Black Tux

Flowers
Jenny Littleton Hornbeck

Catering
Nourish Events

Cake
Our Cupcakery

Disc Jockey
Platinum Music Productions

Dress
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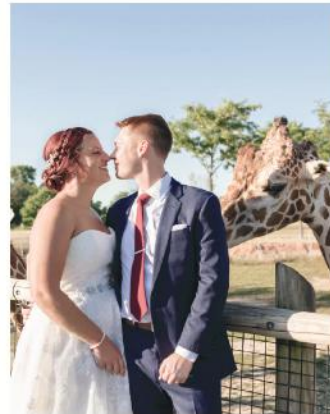
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R. Leigh Photos LLC

Transportation
Carnival Transportation

Ashley & Christopher



9/5/20



Sarah & Luke



11/7/20



Photography

Robb McCormick Photography

Venue/Bar Service

Nationwide Hotel & Conference Center

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J.Bentley Studio & Spa

Programs

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Flowers

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Videography

Kodjoarts Videography

Cake

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Alterations

Kelsey Taylor Design

Dress

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Escort Cards

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Insuring Your Wedding Rings

Many couples may forget about insuring their wedding rings, especially if they choose to take them off when it comes to work and activities of that sort.



Photo by Sam and Grace Photography

When

If you choose to insure your rings, start off with just your engagement ring which would be before your wedding, and soon after you get engaged.

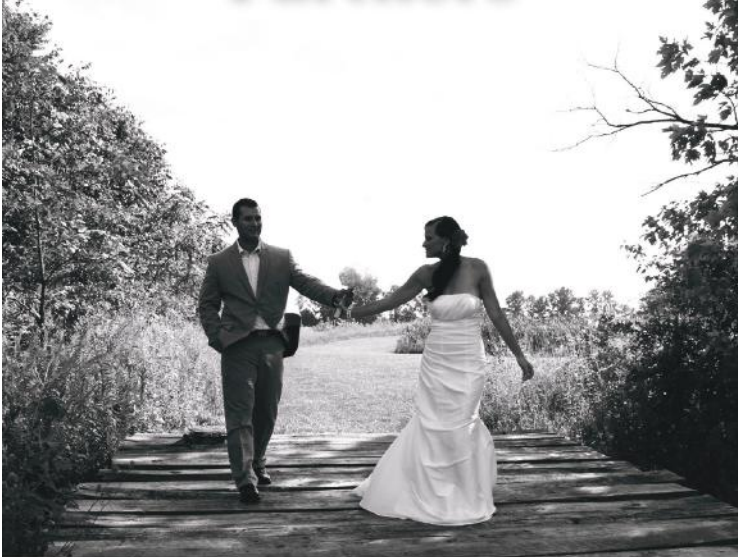
Where

Most insurance agencies can help with insuring your rings, but you just have to know what kind of insurance to buy.

What to Expect

When it comes to insuring your rings, choosing the floater policy or an extension to homeowner's or renter's insurance, or jewelry insurance are the best options. Be sure to ask which kind of insurance covers damages or burglaries when it comes to jewelry and rings, and that may also help you decide which type of insurance to buy.

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Boho is Boss in 2021!



Move over rustic chic and roaring 20s glam -- The hottest trend in 2021 wedding style is BOHO! Boho wedding fashion features iconic 70s fashion trends such as huge bell sleeves and statement lace. Bridal gowns use natural and flowy fabrics, such as chiffon, silk, and cotton organza. Using rich colors, informal silhouettes or even jumpsuits will make your bridesmaids attire pop. Adding huge floral crowns for the bride and bridesmaids can really pull the Boho look together.

Boho florals tend to focus on big, brilliant blooms such as ranunculus, garden roses, and anemones. Succulents are a popular choice too, loved for their natural splendor, uniqueness, and hardiness. Lots of small vintage bottles and vases with just a few blooms or sprigs of greenery throughout the space also add Boho charm. A floral wall is a beautiful ceremony backdrop that can be reused as a selfie-station for guests. For something more simplistic, try an antique or vintage-inspired Persian or Oriental rug at the head of the aisle. If you purchase instead of rent this rug, incorporate it into your home after the wedding as a sweet daily reminder of your wedding!

Choose contrasting colored linens and napkins to really make your guest tables pop. Instead of big centerpieces, try vintage bottles with just a few blooms or even feathers! Lots of candles, vintage-looking lanterns, upcycled mismatched china and vividly colored goblets will add to the Boho ambiance. Swap the traditional head table for a sweetheart table with rattan peacock chairs, lushly draped fabrics behind the head table, or a velvet loveseat instead of individual chairs. Instead of traditional white wedding cakes, Boho trends suggest that colorful cakes are in – Use tinted frosting, or watercolor-inspired painted designs on your desserts.

Remember, most important part of wedding planning is that your wedding should always be an expression of who you are as a couple.





Bachelorette Party Tips

No wedding is complete without one last unforgettable girls night! Here are some quick tips and tricks to keep in mind when you are planning your bachelorette party!

Night out or night in?

Look at the guest list. Is it a group of people who love to party or a calmer crowd? Base your festivities off of what the group as a whole will enjoy.

Budget

You want to make sure you are planning an event that is not out of your guests' budget.

Weekend getaway

Maybe take your girls night to a girls weekend. If it is within your budget and availability, why not make the fun last a little longer!

Games

Having fun bachelorette themed games prepared is important to keep the party momentum going!

Pictures

This is going to be a night you don't want to forget! Make sure you are taking lots of pictures! Also providing cute decorations will also make great photo ops!



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Ceremony & Reception Items Checklist

When planning your wedding, there are a lot of little items that may be forgotten about. Check out this list to ensure you have everything you'll need!

Wedding Stationery

- Invitations
- Announcements
- Reception enclosures
- Maps
- Hotel cards
- Bows, ribbons, & wraps
- Lined inner envelope
- Printed envelopes
- Save the date cards
- Response card & envelopes
- Decorative seal
- Note cards
- Thank you notes
- Calligraphy pens
- Bookmarks
- Pew cards
- Programs

Ceremony Options

- Ring bearer pillow
- Unity candle/candelabra
- Flower basket
- Aisle runner
- Taper candles
- Guest book, photo book, etc.
- Guest book pen
- Pew bows
- Garter
- Gratuity envelopes
- Parents' gifts
- Marriage certificate
- Memory box/vase
- Ceremony send-off items
(bells, confetti, bubbles, etc.)

Reception Options

- Place cards
- Escort cards
- Guest book
- Cake knife & server
- Memory or photo albums
- Guest favors
- Money card box
- Up-lighting
- Toasting glasses
- Votive candles
- Glass vases for bouquets
- Ribbon
- End of evening send-off
(sparklers, luminaries, etc.)

Most Common Invitation Questions

When should we send our save the dates and invitations?

Save the dates are typically sent out four to six months before the wedding, and invitations can be sent out six to eight weeks prior to the wedding.

How long should we give guests to RSVP?

Set your RSVP deadline date about two to three weeks before your wedding. This will allow enough time for you to give your caterer a final count and to finalize your seating chart.

Should we include our registry information on the invitations?

No, because this can come across as rude. A better option is to include your wedding website on the invitation and have your registry information listed on the website.

How do we tell guests the dress code?

Including the dress code on your invitation isn't a must. If you do choose to include it, the most common place to have it is the lower right-hand corner of the invitation.





Tips From Wedding Pros



Hotels

Embassy Suites Columbus Dublin

If possible, only set up a wedding room block at 1 hotel. This will give you more "buying power" by directing your guests to just one location. The more rooms you can give your sales manager, the more they can do for you!

Embassy Suites Columbus

Don't procrastinate. Take care of confirming and paying all of your vendors 7-10 days prior to your event. Run as many errands as possible 3-5 days prior to your event. Designate or ask others to help. Leave the day before your wedding for you - for relaxing and rehearsing with friends and family.

AlphaSuit Mens Formalwear

Be sure to get your Groomsmen to start the suit ordering process no less than 3 months out from the wedding. Insist that all suits are ready to wear one month out for the wedding date. We all know how guys can procrastinate, so make your life easier by starting the process early, 6 months would be optimal.

Graystone Wine Cellar Rehearsal Dinner

Check with the hosts of the reception about what reception meal choices will be. You don't want to choose the same meals for the rehearsal as for the reception.



Photo by Ce Moment Photography



Compass Travel Honeymoons

Many travel agents don't charge research or booking fees for most honeymoons. That means you get the expertise and services of a travel agent without having to pay extra for it!

Andrea's Occasions Wedding Planning

DO NOT have friends, or anyone in your bridal party work your wedding. They should be able to enjoy the day with you, instead of stressing about the details.

Avant-Garde Impressions Invitations

Before ordering your save the dates or invitations, be sure to know how many you will need. A good rule of thumb is to always add 25 more to the order, just in case.



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Sample Wedding Day Timeline

This is the first party you, as a couple, throw for your guests!

Cocktails and Hors d'oeuvres

Be creative and trendy with your foods. Passing hors d'oeuvres is classy and a great way to save money. Fewer hors d'oeuvres are needed as guests are less inclined to take more from a person than a station. Special touch: have someone greet your guests with a glass of champagne or wine and show them where they can place their gifts. Some fun ideas during cocktail hour are a Photobooth, Flip Book and Polaroid stations. You could also entertain guests with other unique fun such as Caricature artists, Henna body art or yard games if you have an outdoor space.

Salads

Pre-setting salads is best done with buffets so the last table released to a buffet is not waiting too long to begin eating. It is also great if guests are coming from a different location for cocktail hour. Keep in mind dressing should be on the side if pre-set.

6:00

7:00

7:15

7:30

7:45

Guests are Invited to Take Their Seats

If you have several guests with assigned tables, a round table for your escort cards is very efficient for guests to maneuver. Make sure your writing on the escort cards is clear, not too small and alphabetized by last name. Special touch: have someone escort guests to their table.

Father Welcomes Guests / Blessings

Traditionally, the father of the bride is given the opportunity to thank your guests for joining you on this special day and give a small toast to the happy couple. This can also be done by any family member or even the couple themselves! Then ask your officiant or a bridal party member to offer a blessing before the meal. If you dare to be different - open the dance floor at this time.

Toasts



A common substitute for champagne is now a wine pour during dinner or guests can toast with what beverage they already have in hand. We find a lot of waste with champagne. Special touch: Make sure you mention to your best man to have the guests lift their glasses and toast so it is not missed.

Announcements

We are seeing more couples get away from a bridal party entrance and opting for just the couple. However, if you do want the bridal party announced make it fun with songs, dances, and excitement - this is the beginning of your party, get your guests excited for what is to come! If it is just the couple - they can go right into their first dance. This is a great time to first recognize parents before the couple or bridal party enter!! Special touch: have a family member do the announcing instead of the DJ to make it more personal!



Dinner

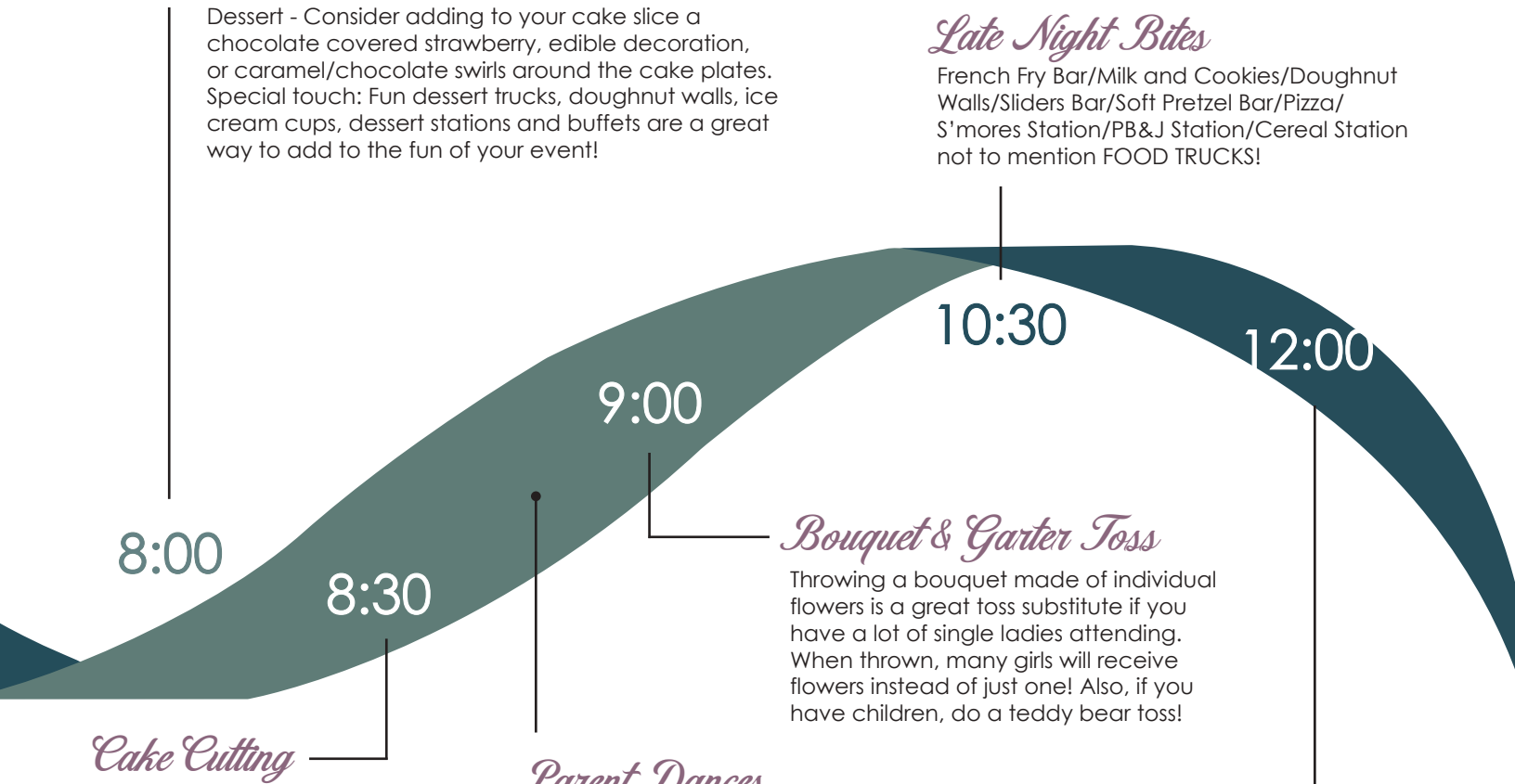
Plated - Consider a plate with 2 or 3 meats in smaller portions instead of just one on the same plate. This will save you from having to do entrée indicators for different meals. If you have a choice, remember to provide entrée indicators on your place cards that are easy for the servers to see. Some ideas may be different colored borders, cards, writing, or stickers that go along with your theme.

Buffet - No entrée indicators are needed for a buffet. Make sure guests can go down both sides of the buffet so it moves faster. Also, if you have more than 200 guests, ask your caterer for two buffets. Count is typically 1 buffet per 100 guests.

Dessert - Consider adding to your cake slice a chocolate covered strawberry, edible decoration, or caramel/chocolate swirls around the cake plates. Special touch: Fun dessert trucks, doughnut walls, ice cream cups, dessert stations and buffets are a great way to add to the fun of your event!

Late Night Bites

French Fry Bar/Milk and Cookies/Doughnut Walls/Sliders Bar/Soft Pretzel Bar/Pizza/S'mores Station/PB&J Station/Cereal Station not to mention FOOD TRUCKS!



8:00

8:30

9:00

10:30

12:00

Cake Cutting

Make sure to capture this event before everyone is done eating - this way guests are still in their seats and paying attention! Make sure the person who will cut the cake is experienced. The knife they use is key! Your once beautiful cake could look like it has been dug out with a spoon and scooped on a plate, if not cut correctly. Too small of a cut and you look cheap, too big of a cut and you might run out. Special touch: Don't forget about your gluten free guests, as many bakers can accommodate with a small cake. Tip: if there is a cake cutting fee - consider cupcakes.

Bouquet & Garter Toss

Throwing a bouquet made of individual flowers is a great toss substitute if you have a lot of single ladies attending. When thrown, many girls will receive flowers instead of just one! Also, if you have children, do a teddy bear toss!

Parent Dances

Photo by Robb McCormick



Picking a great song is key! Slow dances are not mandatory; it may be fun to do a ballroom or swing dance. Special touch: Parent dances can be done at the same time if you don't like to be in the spotlight or the mother/son dance can join halfway through the song.

Grand Exit / Music Ends

Consider giving favors to your guests upon departure instead of at the tables, especially if they don't coordinate. Some departure ideas are floating lanterns, sparklers, glow sticks, and a cool escape vehicle.

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A Bride's BFF: 911 Kit

This kit should be packed with all the essentials to ensure that if any little thing goes wrong or is forgotten; you have a back up. Below is a list we have created to make sure you are prepared for a smooth trip down the aisle.

Food and Drinks

Snacks
Caffeine
Alcohol
Bottled Water
Bottle Opener

Hair

Hair Ties
Comb/Brush
Hair Spray
Headband
Bobby Pins
Curling/Flat Iron

Miscellaneous

Rubber Bands
Goo-Gone
White Chalk
Flip Flops
Super Glue
Hand Sanitizer
Phone Charger
Needle Nose Pliers
Tampons/Panty Liners
Batteries
Door Stop
Lighter
Scissors
Straws
Wet Ones
Sharpies/Pens
Tool Kit
Double Sided Tape
Smelling Salts
Contact Solution
Wash Cloth

Wardrobe

Black Buttons
Corsage Pin
Hem Tape
Safety Pins
Panty Hose
Iron/Steamer
Straight Pins
Stain Remover
Black Socks
Wrinkle Release
Fabric Glue
Bleach Pen
Lint Roller
Sewing Kit
Body Tape
Cuff links
Earring Backs

Outside

Sunscreen
Bug Spray
Hand Fan

During the Ceremony & Reception

Wedding Music CD
Flower Girl Basket
Ring Bearer Pillow
Bluetooth Speaker
Something Blue
Mini Pack of Tissues
Fake Rings
Garter
Pens for Guest Book
Candles

Makeup

Lip Gloss
Powder
Foundation
Mascara
Setting Spray
Makeup Remover

First Aid

Band-aids
Advil/Tylenol
Neosporin
Burn Cream
Eye Drops
Antacid/Imodium
Allergy Medicine
Blister Treatment
Hydrogen Peroxide
Cough Drops

Beauty

Nail File
Deodorant
Tweezers
Q-tips
Clear Nail Polish
Perfume
Floss Picks
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Making an Exit

Check out these fun and unique items to incorporate as you leave your ceremony or reception!

- Sparklers
- Petals
- Glow sticks
- Paper airplanes
- Sprinkles
- Confetti
- Lanterns
- Bells
- Bubbles
- Pom poms
- Beach balls

- Streamers
- Feathers
- Rice
- Leaves
- Dried herbs



- Popcorn
- Fireworks
- Candles
- Balloons
- Fake snow
- Color bombs
- Fun flags
- Coffee beans
- Maracas
- Cheer poms
- Ribbon wands



Photo by Photo 243

- Glitter
- Birdseed
- Butterflies
- Silly string
- Kazoos



Pantone Colors of the Year!

On December 9, 2020 Pantone announced that its 2021 Colors of the Year are Ultimate Gray and Illuminating, shades chosen for their warmth and dependability. These are beautiful color options for your wedding day!



Photoshoot consisted of the following vendors: Photographer: Pottinger Photography; Venue: The Summit, Cincinnati; Decor: Chrissy Lane Designs; Flowers: The Flowerman; Rentals, All Occasions; Dress: Something New Borrowed & Blue, Reading Bridal District; Tuxedo: Folchis Formalwear Cincinnati

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