

How to Pick a Wedding Venue

You are engaged, congratulations! If you live in Texas that means that almost immediately you have to start thinking about a venue. As both a professional coach and a venue owner I'd like to ask you questions to help you narrow down your choices.

Since you already have thought about some of the most obvious considerations I want to ask you questions and offer suggestions from less traditional angles.

1. What words would you use to describe the feeling that you want your guests to have throughout the day? Which venues do you feel like that at?
2. Budget is likely important to you. How will you compare what costs are included and which ones are extra, possibly "hidden" extras? (These can really add up.) I recommend listing all the costs for your wedding and creating a cost comparison between different venues.
3. Which service and product providers do you really want to work with? Will the venue allow you to use these vendors?
4. How do you want to feel during the day? If you want a relaxed experience, for example, you may want a venue that gives you longer hours.
5. If your date is fairly firm and fairly soon, start by seeing who has availability before spending a lot of time sifting through details.
6. If a venue doesn't fit your needs or is booked, ask them who they would recommend. We have been so amazed at how cooperative the venues are with each other.
7. Which part of the whole wedding day is most important to you? Does the venue do that part the way you want? E.g. A great dance floor may be very critical to you.
8. Do you have some key values that you want to align with for your venue selection, e.g. busy downtown feel or nestled in nature?
9. What balance do you want between on-site support from the venue and privacy and freedom during the event?
10. Is it important to you to have your ceremony and reception in the same place? Each way has advantages - weigh them in light of the experience you want for yourselves and your guests. Will the venue(s) offer great photo opportunities?

How to Plan a Day You'll Remember

The amount of work and stress that goes in to planning a beautiful wedding day can be enormous. Not only do you have to pay special attention to your own relationship during this time but many other relationships in your life can become strained with the desires and demands that will be expressed to you.

It is so easy to get caught up in the details of the day and having everything be perfect. We want to encourage you to plan your day in a way that allows you to be very conscious and fully present with each other and within your self. The joining that is marriage is very spiritual and yet can be lost in the busyness of the day.

Here are some things to consider:

- * What is a morning practice that you could include in your day to set the tone for the rest of the day?
- * Will it be important for you to have some time either alone or some time just as a couple in the morning to reflect, meditate, pray, practice gratefulness or share hopes and dreams? What do you want that to look like?
- * Would you like to write each other a letter to be read as you begin to get dressed for your wedding?
- * Consider bringing in someone to lead just you, your wedding party, or you as a couple, in a yoga class or meditation the morning of your wedding.
- * Take time to journal before the hectic pace of the day kicks in.
- * Celebrating by drinking alcohol is fun but can take away from how fully present you may feel with each other and with your special guests. Find ways to limit your alcohol so that you can really enjoy every moment fully.
- * Let people help you and plan for their help in as many ways as you can possibly think of ahead of time. Some of us find it hard to let others help - this is the day to go ahead and do that.
- * There will likely be people at your wedding that you do not get along with well. What strategies do you need to have in place so that your contact is either minimal or so that someone can run interference for you?