



Summer
BRIDES

Summer Wedding Details

There are many advantages to getting married in the summer. It's easier for people to take off work and the weather is more consistent, to name a couple.

Make your wedding should stand out incorporating some of the following details to your special day.

1. A self-serve ice cream bar or snow cone cart. Both whimsical and refreshing, a snow cone cart or ice cream bar give new twists on wedding desserts. They also keep guests cool as a cucumber on a sultry summer day. Check with party rental companies to see what options they can offer.

2. Signature cocktails. You can have a signature cocktail no matter the season of your wedding. But a crisp cocktail in a bright color screams summer — not to mention so many fruits and veggies are in season and at their height of flavor. Work with a local bartender to find out what's in season to combine the best drink to reflect your tastes.

3. Lawn games. The summer wedding season brings many an outdoor affair. Let guests make their own fun by offering a selection of lawn games croquet and lawn dice, which work well with players sporting formal wear.



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4. Sparklers. When things get late and it's time to take your leave, do it in style by handing out sparklers for guests to light and line your path.

5. A seaside locale. Nothing

says summertime more than a beach wedding or a lawn wedding by the sea.

6. Bright bouquets. Summer was made for bold colors — and Mother Nature agrees. Choose flowers in vivid colors

like red, pink or yellow. Pick large blooms like peonies, hydrangeas or sunflowers.

No matter what you decide to incorporate into your summer wedding, remember to always get quotes from as

many local vendors as possible. Doing so will allow you to save money, but also to uncover unique ideas that may help your special day stand out from the summer wedding crowd.

The Perfect Wedding Band

Now that you have your engagement ring and settled on your venue and dress, it's time to pick out the perfect wedding band to accompany your left-hand sparkler.

There are many factors to consider before you choose your band. Cost, comfort and overall style are a few of the most important ones. Choose wisely and compromise where necessary with your soon-to-be-spouse.

SET YOUR BUDGET

Ironically, wedding bands are one of the most overlooked costs of planning a wedding — and they can be expensive. However, you can find beautiful rings in every budget. It is important to balance negotiate what you can afford with what you want to look down and see on your hand for the rest of your life. Be sure to account for bands for both you and your significant other. Elements like material (gold, platinum or titanium) and gemstones will factor into the final price.

MATCHING YOUR RING VERSUS MATCHING HIS

Answering this question will help you narrow down your choices a lot — and help your significant other think about what type of ring he



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wants.

If you want your wedding bands to match, then you need to discuss elements that both of you do (and perhaps more importantly don't) want. Or perhaps there is a wedding band that matches your engagement ring. Be sure to discuss your options with your fiancé before hitting up a

jewelry store.

TRY 'EM ON

Nothing will help you make a decision faster than seeing potential bands sitting next to your engagement ring. After you've set your budget and discussed your options with your significant other, it's time to try on some rings.

If you have the opportunity and time, visit as many local jewelry stores as possible. You never know where you are going to find a deal and a truly breathtaking band. Plus, there is not much that beats spending a casual hour in a jewelry shop while associates bring you band after band to slip on your finger.

SET ASIDE THE RULE BOOK

There are no hard-and-fast rules to what type of wedding band you should choose, including choosing none at all!

Stay true to your own style and budget and you will end up with a ring you are eternally happy with.

Beach Wedding Tips

There is something incredibly special about standing barefoot in front of an endless ocean declaring your eternal love. Beach weddings have a romantic, effortless feel to them — but they are anything but effortless. In fact, these weddings take a considerable amount of planning.

Make sure your nuptials go off without a hitch by reading the following tips and tricks for pulling off an unforgettable beach wedding.

HIRE A PROFESSIONAL

There are many aspects of a beach wedding that hiring a professional wedding planner can take the headache out of, including things you may not consider, like needing a permit for use of a specific area or a special license for a bonfire.

And wouldn't it be nice if there was someone other than a family member who could deal with passersby or people that want to make the area just beyond your altar their camp for the day?

PICK YOUR TIMING WISELY

Sunset vows may seem like the ultimate fairytale, but think about the sun beating down on you (or blinding you) and it may seem more like a nightmare.

You don't want to be squinting in every photo. Also consider the youngest and oldest in your party — someone suffering from a heat-related incident is not the way to start off the festivities.

DRESS FOR THE VENUE

Yes, you are the bride. And yes, technically you can wear whatever you want, and definitely wear what makes you most happy.

But consider what it will actually mean to wear a ball gown on the beach before you commit to one. Ball gowns require a lot of extra fabric to achieve



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their fullness, which makes them hot and heavy. Consider dresses with lighter fabrics that will move well in the

breeze.

For the groom and his men, ditch the blazers and dinner jackets for looser

shirts — you can always wear suspenders and retain a dose of formality if that is important to you.



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Wedding Party Rentals

One of the most commonly told fibs about bridesmaids' dresses is that you can wear them again. If you have ever been in a wedding, you know this is decidedly untrue, for the most part.

Why is it that groomsmen can rent tuxes for a small fee and return them after the party while bridesmaids are left to pay hundreds of dollars on gowns they may only wear once?

According to the BRIDES American Wedding Study 2016, the average bridesmaids dress costs \$133, and the majority of brides (66 percent) pick a color and allow their bridesmaids to choose the dress style while only 33 percent match both color and

style.

This much freedom for today's bridesmaid means you shouldn't be afraid to exercise your right to rent rather than buy your dress.

RENTAL OPTIONS

Many local shops offer discount rental pricing based on dress style and number of people in your wedding party. Ask around prior to settling on your dress company to find the best deals for your bridesmaids. They will appre-

ciate both the discounted pricing and your effort in trying to ensure it.

If you have enough in your budget, offer to pay for extra jewelry or accessories to show your bridesmaids you care. You may save enough on a great rental deal to allow you to do so.

BRIDESMAID QUESTIONS TO ASK

While searching for fashion rental options, be sure to ask the following questions:

- What is your damage and incidentals policy?

- How long can I rent the dress for?

- If I like the dress, can I have the option to buy?

Let the answers to these questions guide your final decision. As the bride, remember to include your bridesmaids in the decision-making process. This will help keep everyone on the same page and ensure your friends' enthusiasm on your special day.

Something Blue



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Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue.

This sweet line from an Old English rhyme has morphed into a beloved and timeless tradition for brides in many cultures.

It remains to be as popular

as ever, and brides who refuse to allow a hint of bad luck in their nuptials (or just swoon over the tradition) continue to incorporate the hue in their special day.

JEWELRY AND GEMSTONES

A sparkly way to incorporate blue into your bridal look is by wearing a piece of jewelry or hair comb with blue

stones in it.

Ask friends and family members if they own anything that would work. Depending on how old the piece is, you could knock out old, borrowed and blue with one item.

ACCESSORIES

If you are more of a minimalist when it comes to your jewelry choices, incorporate the color with other accessories.

Blue shoes make a confident statement. A blue clutch or pale blue ribbon around your bridal bouquet make good options if you are looking for a less permanent way to add the color to your attire. Both can be set aside come reception time.

DRESS AND UNDERTHINGS

Color has never been more popular in wedding gowns! If you are a bold bride, consider one in a blue hue.

Many bridal gown designers have embraced the lighter shades. You can find gowns with blue lining, tulle and lace. If you have your heart set on white or ivory, you can always add a bit blue to your underthings.

STITCHING AND EMBROIDERY

Utilizing a bit of embroidery — such as stitching a phrase in blue thread on a vintage hankie or a heart in blue on the inner lining of your bridal gown — is a discreet way to incorporate the color blue into your special day.

This allows you to integrate the color without requiring a full commitment to having the color overwhelm your bridal look.

Buying A Pre-Owned Dress

Maybe you don't like the thought of spending so much money on a gown you will only wear once or you are on a strict budget.



Good news for you: It has never been easier to purchase a pre-owned wedding dress.

This is a refreshing addition to the wedding industry. With couture gowns ringing in for thousands of dollars, it's nice to have an option available to give a little more life to a lightly worn gown at a fraction of the price.

Before you commit to a pre-owned gown, however, consider the following points.

DEAL WITH A REPUTABLE SELLER

Unless you know the seller personally, it is best to go through a facilitator that specializes in the industry. While there are many great platforms for purchasing other items, someone with specialized knowledge will have safeguards in place to protect you.

Even a pre-owned wedding gown can fetch a pretty penny. Buying from a reputable source — preferably a local one — protects you as a consumer.

TRY BEFORE YOU BUY

After you've conferred with some reputable sources and you've made a short list of styles you love, try to find bridal salons that stock them.

Make a series of appointments

and try on as many on your list as you can. What you love on paper you may not love on your body. And you don't want to find this out after you've purchased a gown. There is generally no returning pre-owned.

ASK FOR ADDITIONAL PHOTOS

Once you've found a gown, tried it on in person and found a potential seller, don't be afraid to ask for additional photos.

Many sellers list designer photos so the dress they are trying to sell is recognizable. Ask for photos of the seller in the dress. Real wedding photos will tell you more about the dress's condition than a magazine spread.

PAY ATTENTION TO DETAILS

Many brides have their gowns altered to fit them perfectly. If you are purchasing a gown second-hand, odds are it will have been altered.

A size 10 may have been brought in closer to a size eight, or a hem might have been taken up. You don't want to purchase a gown that won't fit — or cannot be altered to fit. A local seamstress can help you evaluate the gown to see what can be done to make it yours.

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Honeymoon Packing 101

Your wedding will be beautiful and something you will remember for your entire life, but there is a small part of you that will be relieved to have the stress of planning such a major event behind you — and looking forward to some well-earned relaxation.

No matter if you've planned a relaxing week on the beach, adventure in the mountains or a quick city getaway, you want to make sure you bring everything you could possibly need.

MAKE A LIST

Making a list is the first step to ensuring nothing important gets left behind. The key is not to make your list in one sitting or just a few days before departure. You need time to come back to it. Choose things that mix and match well, and that perhaps you can get more than one use out of if you will be gone for several days.

CONSIDER GOING CARRY-ON ONLY

Not having to check any luggage makes traveling so much easier and saves you precious time! Think about it. Would you rather be pacing around a luggage carousel or be that much closer to sipping mai tais at the beachside bar? Try packing versatile pieces for your trip, or visit a local luggage store for things like pack-flat toiletry kits and packing cubes that can save serious room in your suitcase.

CHECKING A BAG

No matter how inconvenient, there are some bags you just need to check.



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Maybe your honeymoon is an extended trip or you will be hitting several destinations in varying climates. Whatever the reason, checking at least one bag might be your best

bet.

If this is the situation, planning your carry-on actually becomes more important in case your checked bag doesn't arrive with you.

Always pack at least one spare outfit, comfortable flats, a swimsuit and another spare outfit appropriate for dinner. This should get you through the first few days without your

checked luggage before it is either found and delivered to you, or give you enough time to purchase replacements of essential items at your destination.