



Summer BRIDES

Summer Venue Questions

Summer can be a great time for a wedding, but also a challenging one. From weather to mosquitoes, you'll want to choose a venue that will be prepared for anything that might throw a wrench in your summer celebration.

HOT, HOT, HOT

If the locale for your celebration is known to sometimes get dangerously hot during the summer months, you'll want to make sure your guests will be safe and comfortable. If an outdoor ceremony or reception is on your wish list, make sure the venue also offers a backup indoor location in case the mercury soars to dangerous levels or a storm rolls in. Ask if electricity is available for a cooling station for guests or an air conditioner for the tent during the reception.

You might decide to hold your wedding later in the day to avoid the afternoon heat. Check that the venue can accommodate this schedule.

LOGISTICS

Summer weather also can bring the risk of causing a makeup meltdown. Will the bride have a properly cooled space to prepare for the ceremony? If the bride's changing area is very far from the ceremony, ask if there's a golf cart or similar mode of transport to get the bride safely (and coolly) to the aisle.

What about appropriate changing space for the wedding party? The hot and sticky summer will make it pertinent that your entire wedding party



© FOTOLIA

can stay cool while glamming up.

PESKY PESTS

An outdoor event in the

summer is always at risk of unwelcome guests: mosquitoes. If the venue has any water features, such as a fountain or pond, make sure it's

well maintained to keep breeding mosquitoes at bay. If there's a lot of brush, woods or a field, ask if the field is sprayed to prevent a mosquito

invasion. Pretty much any outdoor space can be susceptible to mosquitoes during the summer, so ask how the venue plans to address the issue.

Summer in Bloom

The lush blooms of summer make for endless options for vibrant arrangements. This means the summer bride can have her pick of the many in-season flowers for her bouquet.

YELLOWS

Sunflowers, yellow roses and daisies are all great choices for the summer bouquet. These sunny hues are undeniably fun and offer a uniquely summery vibe.

Snapdragon and hypericum are great for filler and offer lighter tones.

PINKS AND PURPLES

Hot pink Gerbera daisies are eye-catching and pair well with yellows. Pink roses are classic, while bright stargazer lilies also are a summery sight.

Deep plummy calla lilies make a statement, while cooler purple aster, flox, freesia and alstroemeria also are appealing. Add punchy pinks to a mass of lavender blooms for a unique aesthetic.

ORANGES

Orange-hued blooms also seem to have been ripped from the landscape of summer. Gerbera daisies, oranges, carnations and snapdragons all can add a warm touch to a bouquet.

SOFTER COLORS

If you want your bouquet to play a less prominent role, use a more subtle palette. Mix pale pink and yellow roses, or pair yellow and white blooms



© FOTOLIA

for a light, airy feel.

MIX IT UP

If your color scheme embraces a wide variety of vibrant colors, a host of summertime flowers fit the bill. Carry a rainbow of alstroemeria

blooms, Gerbera daisies, roses or day lilies. The sky is the limit when it comes to incorporating colorful blooms.

CENTERPIECES

A white metal basket spilling over with weighty peonies.

Bright daisies resting in crystal clear glass vases. Clumps of lavender in blue-tinted glass jars. Summer flowers are made for adding punches of color to centerpieces. To add height to the table, the reach of striking phalaenopsis

orchids draw the eye upward.

FOR THE CEREMONY

Add interest to the aisles with kissing balls of blooms, either hanging from each chair lining the aisle or a shepherd's hook, or lying on the ground.

Playing Dress-Up

From feminine floral prints to all-grown-up plunging back lines, the trends in summer wedding gowns are decidedly girly.

PRETTY FLOWERS

Floral prints are practically made for summer, and they're a trend that's goes hand in hand with weddings. Florals have been big in the fashion world at large for a few years, and brides are getting in on the trend, too.

If your theme is ultra-feminine, incorporating pretty pink roses and creams, a floral gown will be a perfect match — from an all-over print to flowery details such as cascading blooms made of lace and beadwork.

Florals also are suited to more colorful looks, such as a print with bright purple blooms. You're limited only by the types and shades of flowers found in nature itself.

SHOWING SOME SKIN

A trendy place to incorporate visual effect on a wedding gown is the back. Designers are using super-sleek low back lines, as well as illusion details that seem to float. Pearls draped across the back and intricate lace designs are popular aesthetics in bridal gowns.

Deep V necklines also are showing up on wedding gowns, as well as off-the-shoulder straps. Both make for seamless transitions to back line details.

These skin-baring styles have the added benefit of



© FOTOLIA

keeping the bride cool in style during a summer wedding.

SUBTLE COLORS

Gone are the days of the all-white wedding gown. A current trend for the trip down the

aisle is lightly-hued wedding dresses in blush and cream.

Flowing lightly colored tulle and coordinating flowers in the hair make for a super girly look.

Pair similarly colored pearls

with rose gold jewelry, which is currently experiencing a spike in popularity.

MORE DETAILS

Brides are adding a long, loosely tied belt to accentuate

the waist. A neutral-hued belt is adds interest to a pale-colored dress. Another detail that's taking hold is feathers. Flowing from the waist or back, covering the skirt or contouring the bodice.

Paper Wedding Crafts

For the do-it-yourself bride, paper offers versatility and affordability that can't be beat. It's easy to add paper touches to everything from the aisles to the favors, so you can see why brides are getting crafty with paper.

Pinterest is awash with ideas for paper creations for your wedding. Your options are endless, with scrapbooking and craft papers of every hue and texture and die-cutting machines galore on the market.

A PAPER FOR EVERY LOOK

Choose chic vellum or coarse kraft paper for just the aesthetic you want.

Rustic weddings themes can make great use of natural and earth-tone papers. From the invitations to placecards to guest books, mix textures and shades of browns, creams and even leafy green to keep the look natural and accessible.

CRAFT YOUR OWN FLOWERS

Cut or fold paper into floral shapes and patterns for affordable but beautiful decor. With a little practice, you can make floral arrangements that are indistinguishable from the real thing.

Punch sheet music or pages from old books into heart shapes to make confetti for tables at the reception or for showering the couple as they leave the festivities. These media also make for great bouquets or boutonnieres.

Add paper flowers to the outside of cheap paper lan-



© FOTOLIA

terns for simple hanging decor.

Craft paper butterflies to peek out from floral centerpieces. Hang a wall of paper flowers spaced evenly down the length of twine for the look of a floral curtain.

FUNCTIONAL CREATIONS

If you expect the day to be hot, cut intricate patterns into circle-shaped sheets of scrapbooking paper and fold into a fan. Add craft sticks at each end for a unique take-home favor.

Use thick stock paper to

make favor boxes or accent cardboard boxes with a greeting.

Make quick work of crafting placecards with a paper and font to match your wedding theme.

When it comes time to thank your guests, there's

nothing a die-cutting machine and imagination cannot do.

Use your imagination to create a card that says "thank you" in style.

As you can see, the versatility of paper affords you the opportunity to get creative — just a little or a lot.

Rose Gold Rings

In the 2000s, platinum was all the rage in wedding jewelry. White gold is a more affordable option, while yellow gold is timeless. Now there's a new metal on the block. Enter rose gold.

Rose gold is technically a gold and copper alloy, according to jeweler Do Amore. More copper makes for a ring with more red tones, while less copper produces a pink effect.

Before you go ring shopping, here are a few things to consider.

PROS

Durability. The copper content in rose gold makes it more durable than white or yellow gold, according to Diamonds.com. So if you're looking for a piece of jewelry that will stand the test of time, consider rose gold.

Affordability. Although rose gold is gaining in popularity, copper is very affordable, making rose gold a budget-conscious choice.

Versatility. Rose gold complements warm and cool skin tones, making it a good choice for many women. Although it can be used in modern and more classic ring designs, rose gold is best in a vintage-inspired piece. Rose gold also can be mixed with yellow and white gold to achieve a unique look. Pair rose gold with colored stones to create a conversation piece.

CONS

Allergies. Some people may not be able to wear a rose

gold ring due to a copper allergy. It is not considered to be hypoallergenic. If the love of your life has sensitive skin, think twice before shopping

for rose gold. Yellow gold tends to produce fewer allergic responses.

Availability. You may have a harder time finding the style

you want in a rose gold setting. White and yellow gold are more common metals for engagement rings, so you may have to search near and far

for just the right piece. The good thing is that more couples are choosing rose gold settings, so your options will likely increase with time.



Let Them (Not) Eat Cake

The tradition of serving a wedding cake may seem to be as old as time. In fact, the beginnings of wedding cake traditions were documented in ancient Rome and medieval England.

From early recipes containing wheat and barley to sweeter varieties couples have relished the opportunity to playfully smash in each other's faces, cake has been part of our wedding traditions for hundreds of years, according to Gastronomica.com.

Today, however, it is becoming more common for couples to ditch the wedding cake altogether in exchange for more modern sweets.

Intricately decorated petit fours, cake pops, cupcakes, ice cream, sorbet and other sweets are finding their way to the table at the reception.

ALMOST CAKE

Cupcakes are a culinary trend that's found acceptance from the food truck to the formal wedding affair. But that doesn't mean they have to be ordinary. Consider a tower display of lacy cupcake wrappers adorning miniature gourmet confections for a sweet that does double duty as decor.

Pies also are an option. Choose decadent cheesecakes laced with liquor or pastries filled with summer's freshest berries.

ALL THINGS MINIATURE

Whoopie pies, cream puffs,



meringue, madeleines and donuts — there's practically no dessert that can't be miniaturized to make an impression at the wedding reception. Pick a handful of options so

guests can sample.

FROZEN DELIGHTS

Guests looking to cool off during your summertime affair will welcome trendy frozen

creations. Consider a do-it-yourself sundae bar or a selection of fruity sorbets.

HAVE IT ALL

If you're overwhelmed with

options and your sweet tooth can't make a decision, consider a desert bar where guests can help themselves to a variety of options. After all, you can't have too much of a good thing.

The Hues of Summer

Choosing colors for your wedding is, of course, an entirely personal matter. But that doesn't mean the experts haven't attempted to predict the trends for 2016.

Writing for Glamour Weddings, Brie Walter of Brie's Honeybees & Flowers predicted a classic palette of soft colors, such as blush and creams, would be popular this year.

On the flip side, Leah Weinberg, of Color Pop Events, and Amanda Hansen, of Decoration, Inc., predicted that couples will choose brighter colors.

Print color authority Pantone recommended a list of 10 of its colors for this year's brides in its Fashion Color Report for Spring 2016. Among its picks were rose, peach, sky and nautical shades of blue, buttercup yellow, aqua, a grayish purple, an orange-hued red, a coffee-inspired brown and a bright yellow-green.

GO MULTI-TONAL

Another wedding trend creates a great opportunity to let brides be a little more creative with their color choices. It's becoming popular to style bridesmaids in vary-

ing tones of a single color. For example, if you opt for greens, let each bridesmaid choose a unique gown in shades from pale mint to candy apple. You also might mix shades of hot pinks with bright oranges.

Another option is to consider an expansive color palette, with the wedding party sporting varying muted shades of some of Pantone's top-10 swatches.

GO FOR CONTRAST

If you're feeling adventurous, mix the two ideas for a rustic or woodland theme accented with vibrant pops of color. Subtle wood tones make a great neutral background for bright pops of color that evoke summer's abundant flora. Of course, a more classic rustic theme can make great use of pale rose and cream, as well.

Whatever aesthetic you choose, your personal touches will make your wedding your own.

