



SUMMER
Weddings

Hot Colors

When it comes to getting married in the summer, you can count on an outdoor ceremony being a bit toasty.

One way to lighten the heat of the day is through your color choices.

Keeping your color scheme light will help your bridal party in particular.

Below are the hottest spring and summer colors for 2015 as put out by Pantone, the corporation that produces the Pantone Matching System used in a variety of industries to find and incorporate the perfect color for a specific project.

While Pantone's list is extensive, the options below can fit best with your wedding ceremony and reception to give them the hue you're looking for.

BLUE IS IN

We all know the saying, "Something borrowed, something blue." Brides who like to mix this motto into their wedding décor are in luck.

Pantone describes scuba blue as an "energizing shade that takes us off to an exotic paradise." Who doesn't want their wedding to emit that vibe?

Even if your wedding colors aren't strictly blue, you may be able to match this rich tone with other colors to find your perfect combination.

Other popular blue options this year are the classic vari-



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ety and aquamarine, both of which inspire calm, confidence and harmony when displayed effectively.

TONE IT DOWN

You may think vibrant reds

or bright yellows when conjuring up summertime colors. According to Pantone's list, you may want to tone it down a bit.

Toasted almond, for example, is a sun-tanned neutral that can be paired with nearly

any other color. Pantone calls the shade "timeless and versatile — an organic that speaks to authenticity and all that is neutral."

If you're looking to spice it up a bit without evoking wintertime or holiday emotions,

tangerine could be the shade for you. "Good natured and friendly," according to Pantone, this color will give you a bright hue to work with when choosing your invitations, tablecloths and even bridesmaid dresses.

The Dreaded Gap

Try as you might, every little detail on your wedding day will not likely go as you envision. One of the areas that can cause a big hiccup is the time between the ceremony and the reception.

Let's say your church can only coordinate a noon ceremony and the reception hall you want to book can only open its doors around 5 p.m. Unless you're putting together the longest ceremony in wedding day history, you're going to have a time gap.

You and your wedding party will likely have no issue filling this time. With pictures and limo rides around town, you'll be on the way to the reception before you know it.

But what about your guests, who traveled from near and far to celebrate your special day with you? How are they supposed to fill their time between the two functions?

Even if you think you already have enough to worry about, it would be a considerate gesture to offer some ideas and options for this conundrum. Here are some ideas:

Distract Your Guests: Is there someone in your family with a larger house nearby who wouldn't mind hosting a get-together?

Start asking early in the planning phase to avoid overwhelming them, and offer to pay for all of the snacks, finger foods and drinks so you're not putting too much of a burden on them.

Give Them Options: If pos-



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sible, include in the invitations a list of fun options that your guests could check out while you're wrapping up your photos.

Do you have any nearby

museums, galleries or other tourist attractions? Don't forget to include ideas for transportation — or even bus passes — if you'd like to go the extra mile for your close

friends and family.

Rent a Boat: Particularly if your wedding is near the water, you can really impress your guests by renting a boat to take everyone out between

the ceremony and reception.

A couple of hours on a relaxing boat with cocktails, appetizers and music beats waiting in your car for the reception to start.

Dress-Shopping Mistakes

The process of buying a wedding dress should come with a manual. It's the most important dress you'll ever wear, and there are many things to remember, from proper sizing to fabric care.

The experience can be overwhelming, which is why so many brides-to-be have found themselves regretting their dress-buying decisions come wedding day. Don't let that be you.

WHEN TO SHOP

A common mistake when it comes to dress shopping is settling on a particular size or style too early in the planning process. Even if you fall in love with a dress during your initial online searches, there is no reason to order your dress more than a year ahead of time.

This means waiting to visit bridal shops until you are financially ready to buy. An average wedding dress costs more than \$1,200, according to the XO Group, Inc., a global media and technology leader.

That's a big investment. Imagine shelling out that kind of money for a dress too early in the planning phase and then finding another option for the same price — or even less.

Buying a dress is like buying a new car. If you settle on the first test drive, you could be missing out on other options that may actually better fit your tastes.

TOO MANY OPINIONS

Behind every great bride-to-be is a great mother or bridesmaid-to-be. So stop there when it comes to inviting people out dress shopping with you. Take the people whose opinions you value the most and make it as relaxing an experience as possible.

Remember, you're not looking for people to tell you what you want to hear. Sometimes, only your mom or best friend will have the courage to tell you if a dress just doesn't look right.

Not only will you be less stressed trying to coordinate a day of dress shopping for a party of 10 people, but your invitees will feel more special that they were included in your special day.



Your Health

When you say “I do” to your spouse, you are promising to offer love and support for as long as possible. That’s why taking care of your own health both before and after your wedding day is so important.

If you aren’t committed to your own health, how can you be dedicated to preserving the wellness of your spouse and future family members, if you plan on having children?

Your family’s overall health starts with you. It’s time to take charge.

EXERCISE REGULARLY

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend adults being active for at least two-and-a-half hours per week. “Being active” can include a long walk on the beach with your new spouse or taking a romantic bike ride through a winding trail.

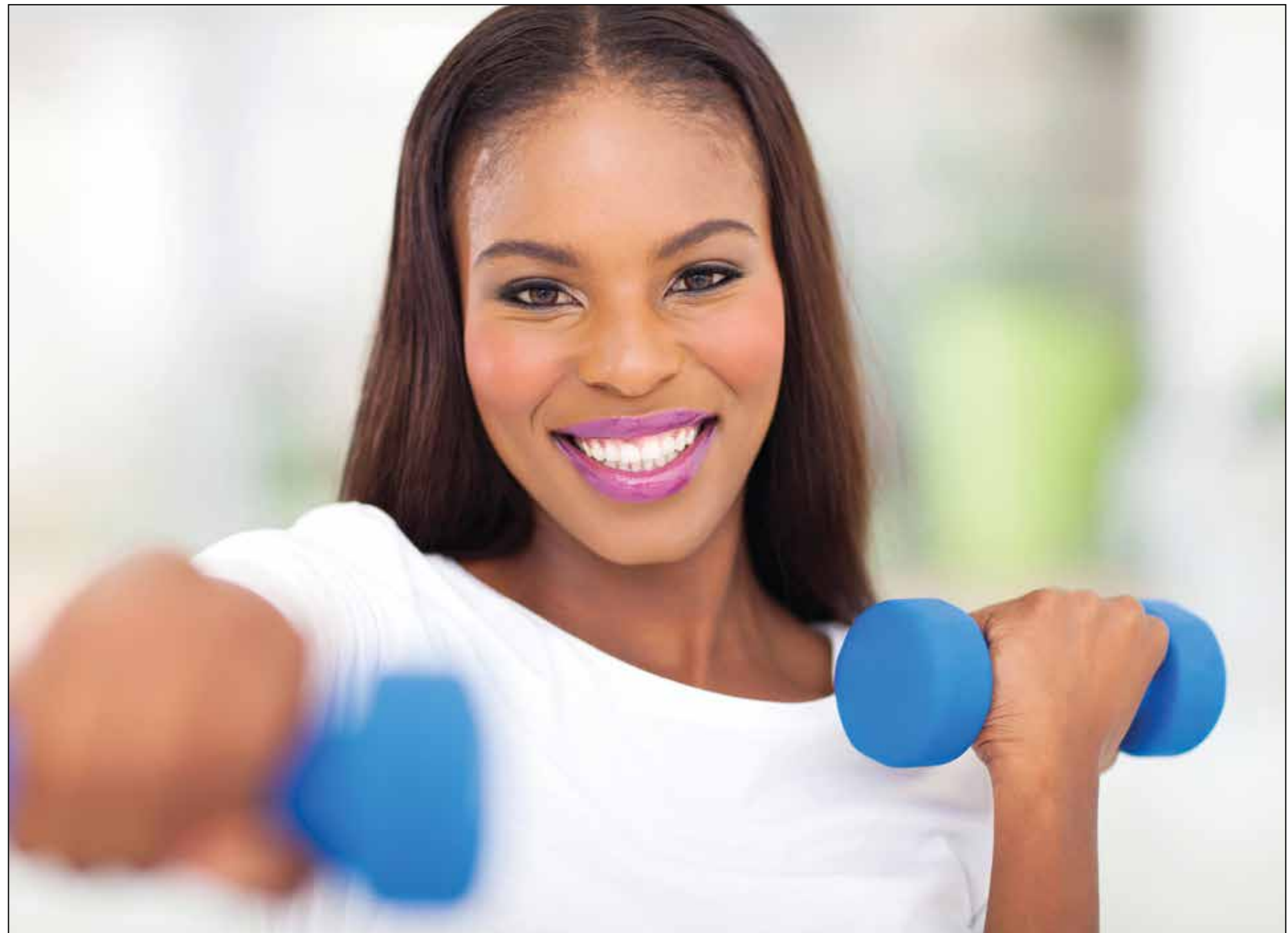
Anything that raises your breathing and heart rate, as well as strengthens your muscles, is ideal.

Spread your activity out during the week for maximum impact on your body, breaking it into smaller chunks of time during the day.

This can help keep you both motivated and energized to work out as you try to keep in shape, either to reach your pre- or post-wedding weight goals.

GET A CHECK-UP

You regular physician is the



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best resource in determining exactly what type of workout or diet routine you should undertake. Check with your doctor to see if he or she rec-

ommends any specific tests.

Their suggestions will be based on your age, sex and health history. The CDC says that regular health exams and

tests can help find problems early or before they start, when your chances for treatment are better.

You might need a com-

pletely different regimen than your friends or family members, so be sure to find out what will work best for your personal health goals.

Superfoods for Your Heart

Stress can cause us to make unhealthy decisions when it comes to our diets. As your wedding day nears, how many times have you stopped to assess your personal eating habits?

As you try to balance all of your different responsibilities, it can be hard to count calories or make sure you're taking in the right vitamins to keep your heart in prime working condition.

You may have heard of certain fruits, vegetables and meats marketed by companies as superfoods. The American Heart Association warns that, as with any kind of food, overeating is not a smart part of a healthy diet.

But the AHA does agree that many superfoods can be good for your overall health, concentration and stress levels — all important for any bride.

The Association recommends checking with your physician if you're having symptoms such as headaches, sleeping problems, a short temper or low morale. These can be signs of harmful stress that could potentially harm your heart.

It also recommends consuming certain superfoods in moderation to help stave off heart issues.

SALMON

The American Heart Association recommends eating at least two 3.5-ounce servings of fish per week for a healthy heart. It says the fish is low in saturated fat in high in



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omega-3 fatty acids. They can decrease the risk of abnormal heartbeats, reduce triglycerides and slow the growth of plaque in the arteries.

NUTS, LEGUMES AND SEEDS

These types of superfoods

are good sources of protein and polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats when eaten in moderation, says the American Heart Association.

This group offers great variety, including unsalted almonds, peanuts, pistachios and walnuts.

Four servings per week is the recommended portion

from the American Heart Association.

BERRIES

The American Heart Association recommends eight or more servings of fruits and vegetables a day for maintaining heart health.

Berries are a vital part of

this recommendation, as options such as blueberries and strawberries have high levels of phytochemicals called flavonoids.

One study reported by the American Heart Association found that women who consumed more blueberries and strawberries had a lower risk of heart attack.

Pack Lightly

You just wrapped up the most stressful month — or months — of your life, and what's the first thing you're going to do now? Lug around a bunch of luggage all week on your honeymoon?

This week should be all about simplicity.

By packing too many outfits, shoes and unnecessary beauty products, you're only complicating your relaxing trip. So while you're preparing to head out to Hawaii or even somewhere local, keep a goal in mind to only pack what you really need.

You'll thank yourself later as you enjoy a more pared-down vacation with your new spouse.

THINK SMALL

Bigger isn't always better when it comes to luggage. In fact it rarely is. You'll want to think as small as possible — as long as you're still able to fit your essential items.

Obviously, every honeymoon will call for different essentials. If you're going on a safari through the Australian wilderness in the heat of the summer, you'll need plenty of T-shirts, shorts and sun-protective hats.

A cruise through the vast Alaskan landscape will require plenty of sweaters, hats and scarves, especially if you're going to be doing some nature sight-seeing.

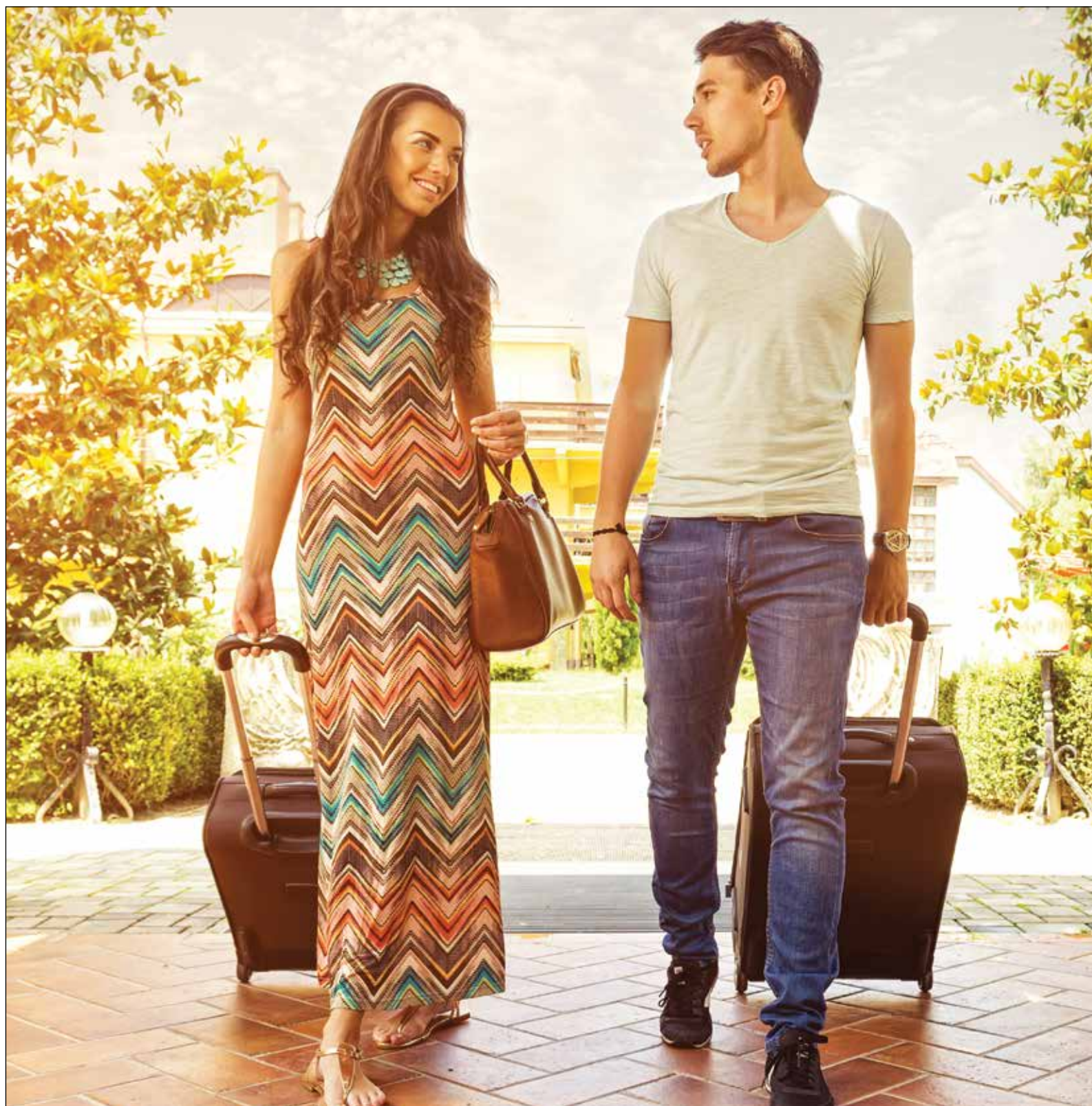
Whatever your outfit needs call for, try to fit everything into a reasonably sized bag.

THE EXTRAS

When packing for your trip, you're not likely to forget the most obvious, such as like clothes, passports or plane tickets. It's the little things that can be overlooked when you're in a rush.

You'll want to remember all of the medications that you usually take, as well as any pain relievers, anti-nausea and anti-itch remedies, as well.

Don't forget some extra spending money that isn't in plastic form. Bring along about \$50 to \$100 in cash for tipping, especially if you're going on an all-inclusive resort. Your room, food and drinks may be paid for, but your service professionals will be expecting a little recognition of their efforts.



The Rules of a Great Toast

As sweaty palms and a racing heart work in tandem to try to make you forget the speech you prepared for the wedding toast, just remember to take a deep breath. Relax. You're among friends.

The job of a maid of honor or best man is all fun and games until it comes time to deliver the perfect speech. That's when some people can get nervous or worried about saying the wrong thing.

The truth is, as long as you keep your toast appropriate, you really can't say the wrong thing. The bride and groom have selected you for this role, and your words of encouragement on their special day will help mark their transition from engagement to marriage.

KEEP IT CLASSY

You want to be remembered for delivering a great speech, not for shouting vulgarities or making a fool out of yourself. So if there is alcohol involved, know your limits and stick to them.

KEEP IT SHORT

Your bridal party is on a schedule. Dinner is served at a certain time. The father-daughter dance starts at certain time. Even the DJ begins his service at a certain time.

Talk to the bride and groom ahead of time about how long they would like your speech to be. If they leave it up to you, shoot for three to five minutes.



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Anything longer can turn into a ramble that may distract from the celebration, and anything less may convey that you really didn't put much time into your prepara-

tion.

KEEP IT SWEET

Humor is a great way to break the ice during a speech,

but you shouldn't rely on it for your entire time with the microphone.

The key to a great speech is knowing when to incorporate humor into personal anec-

dotes. You know you've knocked out a winning speech when you can garner a mix of tears and laughter from the crowd.