

Do You Take This Man or Woman? Yes I Do



"Having the Perfect Wedding
without Going Dead Broke"!

by Terry Clark

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Are Modern Weddings Replacing Tradition?

With the passage of time we find that traditional weddings are slowly being replaced by modern ones. Nothing lasts forever is a common enough sentiment and people are leaning toward the modern when getting married. Some of the familiar wedding traditions that were carefully preserved for generations past are now being replaced by exciting new traditions stemming from the amazing growth of technology.

In this article we take a look at some of the more modern trends that couples are adopting for their weddings.

Wedding websites

The coming of age of the internet allows couples to set up what has been termed the 'wedding website', something that was unheard of a while back. Couples can choose a website provider and domain name and have their own personal wedding website set up. Alternatively, there are many free sites that allow you to select a template and set up a site. The website usually contains information about the bride and groom to be, photos before and after the wedding, invitations, thank you notes, video and audio clips and lots more.

Wedding websites come in a variety of shapes and sizes and it is an excellent way to put out information to family and friends. With a detailed website in place you will not be answering a zillion questions on what time the church service is scheduled for or where it is being held or even how to get there! Use the wedding website as a personal planner and save yourself additional stress.

Wedding cakes

Another area of the wedding ceremony that has been bitten by the modernization bug is the wedding cake. Traditional

cakes were frosted and decorated with flowers, nothing very remarkable really! Today you have elegant, tiered cakes and technology in all its glory has been brought to bear on wedding cakes resulting in laser cut designs, any concept imaginable and three dimensional cakes.

Couples can choose a cake that reflects their personalities; get a cake that is funny, sophisticated, just plain cute or even whimsical. The cake can reflect the couple's hobbies or careers in an animated or mechanized version. How about a cake that has sparkers inside and goes off when the bride and groom take their first bite! Technology and art come together to produce one of a kind character wedding cakes the modern way.

The above are just two examples of the areas of a wedding where the traditional is moving over to make room for the modern.

Best Food Ideas for Wedding Receptions

Weddings are not all morning weddings or evening weddings, they can be held at different times of the day and obviously the food served will differ. It is important that you know what kind of foods to have served to match the time of your wedding reception. If people come expecting dinner and get only cocktails and finger food you are going to have very unhappy guests.

Make sure that your wedding reception invitation clearly lays out the time of the reception and specifies what the guest is being invited to whether cocktails or lunch or dinner. Some wedding ceremonies take place early in the morning and a buffet breakfast may be served, so guests should know what to expect.

Let us take receptions in the order of the day and see what the best foods to be served for each meal are.

Morning receptions are one of the easiest to cater for. You are not going to be giving your guests steaks and roasts so food choices get simplified. You can arrange for a traditional breakfast to be served which includes fruit, cereals, cured meats and a selection of eggs. Beverages will consist of coffee, tea and juices and this sort of meal will really keep the cost down. You may want to serve wine, champagne, bucks fizz or mimosas if your budget runs to it.

If your wedding is late morning around 11 am or so, you could consider a brunch. This will require some mainstream foods being served together with a few breakfast selections. It could be a champagne brunch or you could stick with wine or mimosas to take care of the beverages.

Evening receptions are for the most part expensive because you have to serve a full dinner and guests who are invited to an evening wedding certainly expect it. Here the food will need to consist of steaks or roasts, cold cuts, salads, maybe some pasta choices. Often couples choose the food to blend with the theme of the reception. If you have for

example a Mexican theme you will need to serve some Mexican food as well. You could serve snack items like nachos and salsa dip and then have the regular foods served. Chinese food goes down well with most people; a pork roast, rack of lamb or roast chicken could make up the main course.

Buffet style receptions are becoming increasingly proper as they tend to get rid of the very formal air created by sit down meals. Buffets are good for any time of the day and you can serve pastas, chicken, meat or pork dishes that stay well.

Choosing Clothing to Suit the Style of Wedding

Weddings have come a long way from the traditional, staid affairs they once were. Don't misunderstand; there is nothing wrong with choosing an all traditional formal wedding. But these days, wedding styles have actually evolved to showcase the personal styles and preferences of the people who are getting married.

Wedding styles can be broadly classified into formal, semi formal and casual weddings. It has rightly been said that clothes make the man; in the case of weddings, the clothing chosen for the occasion dictates the style of the wedding. Here is an explanation of the kind of clothing that suits different wedding styles.

The bridal couple will decide on the style of the wedding and if it is going to be a formal wedding, the bride will generally wear a formal gown with a long train and veil. The groom will be attired in black tie or even a tuxedo. Guests will be informed in the invitation as to the type of attire to be worn. This is by way of the dress code instructions that state either formal or semi formal, smart casual or relaxed.

There are certain factors that the couple should consider when planning the wedding attire for themselves and their guests. If, for example, you are going to have a day wedding in the month of July and the reception outdoors, you cannot in all good conscience expect your guests to show up in formal black tie. The seasons and time of day when the wedding is held will wield considerable influence over the right clothing to be worn.

You will find the following review of dress codes for weddings quite useful.

A very handy guide to the kind of clothing you need to wear to match the wedding style is the invitation. It should inform you about the expected dress code. If, for whatever reason it doesn't don't worry! The kind of invitation itself that you receive is a good indicator - if the invitation is a very formal looking engraved black script with formal language on heavy paper, go with formal attire. On the other hand if the language is less formal and the quality of the paper not so very elegant, go with smart casual.

Next thing you need to consider is the venue. Outdoors in summer means no black at any cost. Forget modesty in favor of the practical and if you are hesitant, think about the wind factor. That will help you make up your mind. High heeled shoes are out if you have to walk on sand or grass. If the wedding reception is to be held indoors like a hotel or club, you need to choose something dressy, well tailored and smart.

For a daytime wedding, ladies should wear floral print dresses or smart skirt suits with good shoes. There are plenty of stylish skirts available in stores, which will work well for a wedding reception in the daytime. Find a matching top and accessories and you are set for the wedding. You could also wear a light colored suit and hat to compliment the outfit. For the guys, it is best to go with a light colored linen or seersucker suit.

Evening weddings are different and where daytime weddings tend to be a bit more casual, evening weddings are at least semi formal if not formal. You need to dress for the wedding as if to the theater or a formal dinner. Black is good for evening wear, so go with a classy dress suit or cocktail suit. Dark colors look sophisticated and beads and fancy bits are not done if it is a formal reception. Black tie for ladies means a floor length dress or formal gown if you have one. Accessorize with formal jewelry and bring that black beaded purse out of hibernation!

Men are generally best off choosing a black or dark suit with tie for formal settings. Tuxedos are good provided the wedding will be held after 6 in the evening. It is not the done thing to be seen wearing your tuxedo in the daytime.

Semi formal or casual weddings held in the evenings generally means slacks, tie and blazer or jacket.

It is better to dress up than down for weddings and honestly, just go and have yourself a great time!

Decoration Ideas for Outdoor Weddings

For couples who marry in a season of good weather like the springtime, an outdoor wedding is a favorite choice. No one wants to be cooped up indoors in lovely spring weather. A balmy spring evening wedding in the garden is just perfect for such a memorable event.

Decorations for outdoor weddings are not very difficult to handle and you can even save money by taking care of it yourself. When you have your wedding reception outdoors, nature lends a hand and quite a bit of the decorations can be natural greenery and flowering plants. All you need to do is make use of what nature has provided to make some additions.

You will need an arch to walk down and that is quite easily constructed with very fine flexible bamboo. Once the structure of the arch is constructed it can be firmly fixed into the ground and then decorated with lots of greenery and flowers. All you need to ensure is that the décor is in keeping with your color scheme and wedding theme.

Next you can make use of candles stuck into tall torch holders but make sure they are the insect repellent kind, to line the aisle. You can also use flaming torches or tikki torches as they are commonly referred to. Again the kind you choose should tie in with your theme.

String lights over the bushes, shrubs and even the trees for a really gay atmosphere. Hang colorful lanterns off the trees to add a touch of elegance to the décor. Make sure all the cabling is well tucked away and out of reach of mischievous little fingers!

If you have a flower rich garden there really is no need to overdo things and add more flowers, you could ruin the décor that way. Even centerpieces for the tables can be something other than flower arrangements. If you have a fountain or pond in your garden decorate with lights and floating candles for a great effect.

The music you play should also blend in with your outdoor wedding reception theme; if you are having a serene setting don't go blasting heavy metal!

There is so much you can do with an outdoor wedding reception in terms of decorations using lights and flowers to maximum effect. Whatever you choose should be in line with the wedding colors and the reception theme. Understated is better than overstated because it can make the show look gaudy and you don't want that.

Exploring Wedding Reception Themes

There are several wedding reception themes available for you to choose from to make this momentous occasion extra special. Get your creative juices flowing and express your thoughts and ideas at your reception. You will need a central theme for the reception and this article provides you with some good ideas to get you started.

The seaside theme has become rather popular and you can use the blue backdrop of the sea to build on. A wedding on the beach will perfectly suit a marine theme or if you are not so inclined but still want to feature water opt for a poolside wedding. You can also choose a harbor side, boat house or cruise ship wedding. Make innovative use of shells, plants, mermaids, crystals and rocks. Lots of choices for food with a variety of seafood dishes, but consider the people who don't eat seafood and make sure the menu has some of the mainstream foods on offer as well

Traditional period themed weddings are quite the rage and though not everyone can hire a castle there are ways to make the dream come true. The dress code will call for the ultimate in style and grandeur to blend with your theme. Beginning with the church, you can choose a cathedral that is very grand with high arched ceilings, columns, frescoes and stained glass windows. Then you move to a reception hall that has a feeling of being back in a period piece drama. The décor you choose can transform any room successfully

and you should take maximum advantage of the play of light on the setting. Serve traditional food and drink using fancy crockery and silver cutlery.

Garden weddings are a great choice if you marry when the weather is good. You can have free reign with the décor and setup. Go for a carnival atmosphere by setting up gaily colored tents and furniture or have a formal sit down setting amidst the greenery and color of nature. If you don't have the space for a garden wedding on the lawns of your home you can always approach the management of the garden of choice to rent the lawns for your wedding reception.

Country style wedding themes are a great way to celebrate nature and you can choose a particular region, for example Spain or the Mediterranean for a touch of the exotic. Use the natural surroundings to maximum effect and fill the place with traditional flowers and other decoration items that will enhance and compliment your theme. Serve a mix of Spanish, French, Italian and other foods to add flavor to the theme. Play music that is fitting and a great time will be had by all.

Factors to Consider When Choosing a Wedding Cake

You want your wedding to be flawless and that includes choosing the wedding cake with care. How do you go about picking the right wedding cake for that special day? First

you need to decide how much you are willing to spend on the cake because be warned that wedding cakes come expensive. Do you want the whole nine yards with tiers reaching skyward or will you settle for one layer of real cake and the rest made of Styrofoam?

Take the following factors into consideration when choosing your wedding cake and you should be fine.

You will need to choose the style of cake you want to have. Tiered cakes are the most common choice for weddings. Then you have single tier or sheet cake, themed cakes, laser cut cakes, three dimensional cakes, monogrammed cakes and the list goes on. Nothing is ever easy when it comes to weddings - there are a gazillion decisions to be made on everything! Bakeries specializing in wedding cakes will be able to produce photo albums for you to look at as well as cake books for you to choose from.

There's a famous cliché which states that 'the proof of the pudding is in the eating', so get to tasting. You will need to decide on the flavor, filling if needed and the icing. Professional bakers will set up a cake tasting session for you and they will prepare a sample just for you to taste. As with anything that has to be perfect don't rush the decision.

Your budget needs to be realistic and after talking to a select group of bakers you will have a better idea of how much a really good wedding cake will cost. A budget of at least a thousand dollars will give you a cake to die for;

a budget of two hundred dollars means you get what you pay for. If you have budget constraints, it is far better to choose cupcakes or fruit muffins and a novel way of doing the wedding cake bit rather than buying a cheap wedding cake. If you choose a themed or monogrammed cake you could very well end up spending over a thousand dollars.

Make sure the bakery does a sketch of the cake you have discussed before you sign the final order. This will ensure that the two of you are in sync over what your expectations of the wedding cake are.

Getting Married on a Cruise Ship

To be married at sea has such a romantic ring to it and surely a good majority of the brides-to-be would jump at such an opportunity if given the chance. However, weddings on a cruise ship can be an expensive affair and unfortunately not in everyone's budget. In this article we cover some of the more salient features of getting married on a cruise ship to help make your decision a bit easier.

Weddings on cruise ships are actually quite popular and people are happy to combine it with the honeymoon. It does save the couple a bundle when compared to having a land based wedding ceremony and reception. This money can be spent on a cruise which will include the wedding ceremony and honeymoon. Couples are also able to take their parents and give them a vacation as well.

When you decide to marry on a cruise ship you are in effect planning a wedding event more than just a ceremony. Many couples invite their closest friends and make it one grand party. Some of the things you need to know about weddings at sea are detailed below for your use.

Sorry to put a damper on your enthusiasm and excitement but marrying at sea does not actually happen. The ship needs to have a special license which allows you to marry while it is sailing. Otherwise it is not considered a lawful wedding because you cannot marry in international waters. Therefore the wedding will take place on the ship but in port. For the marriage to be legally recognized in the US it has to take place in US territory, for example you will get married in Fort Lauderdale or any US port and then set sail for your cruise. Couples are advised to thoroughly research this point before finalizing their decision.

Allowing the cruise line to take care of the planning is a wise move; they take care of everything and you just need to make choices from the selections they give you. The planning will be done based on the size of the wedding party, wedding date, space availability and more. You will not be running around checking out reception venues, dealing with caterers, photographer, videographer, band, florists and getting the mother of all headaches to boot! Give the organizer the color scheme for your wedding and the flowers will be arranged. Of course if you like a particular kind of flower you can always request it.

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