



# Weddings

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# Weddings



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## 3 Tips for Couples Considering Friday or Sunday Weddings

The cost of weddings continues to rise. In its 2016 Real Weddings Study, bridal resource The Knot found that the average wedding cost couples and their families more than \$35,000. With such a high price tag, it's no wonder happy couples look for ways to save money.

One of the ways couples can save a sizable amount of money on their weddings is to tie the knot on Friday or Sunday instead of hosting a more traditional Saturday afternoon or evening wedding. Wedding ceremony and reception venues may charge considerably less to host weddings on Fridays or Sundays. Reception venues tend to be the largest wedding expenses, so reducing those rates can go a long way toward helping couples stay within their budgets.

While the cost-savings of Friday or Sunday weddings may be the main focus for happy couples, it's important that grooms- and brides-to-be recognize that planning Friday or Sunday weddings may require some unique planning.

### 1. Avoid Holiday Weekends.

Three-day holiday weekends may seem like the ideal time to host Friday or Sunday weddings, as guests likely already have Friday or Monday off

from work. But the cost of travel and lodging may be much higher on holiday weekends than non-holiday weekends. That may compel some guests to decline their invitations. In addition, many families have holiday weekend traditions and it may be unfair for couples to ask them to interrupt or cancel those plans to attend their weddings.

### 2. Consider The Timing.

When hosting a Friday wedding, couples may want to start the ceremony later than they might if they were getting married on a Saturday. That's because out-of-town guests who don't want to use more than one vacation day to attend the wedding may be flying in on the day of the wedding. A later start time gives guests more flexibility when booking flights. Starting later also allows local guests to work a full day and still make it to the ceremony on time. Couples who opt for a Sunday wedding may want their ceremonies to start earlier than they would on Saturday to accommodate guests who need to go to work on Monday morning.

### 3. Confirm Vendor Availability.

Wedding vendors are accustomed to working on Saturdays, when the vast majority of weddings take place. So couples should not simply assume



a favorite deejay, band or catering company will be available to work their Friday or Sunday weddings. Couples who have particular entertainers or caterers in mind should confirm the availability of these vendors before booking a wedding and reception facility. It's also important that couples getting married on Sundays confirm that hotel rooms will be clean and ready in time for their guests to make it to the ceremony. Many hotels host wedding parties on Fridays and Saturday nights, and some might not be able to turn rooms around in time to accommodate Sunday wedding parties.

Tying the knot on a day other than Saturday can save couples money and help make their weddings more unique. But it's important that couples consider more than just cost-savings before agreeing to get married on a Friday or Sunday.



# WEDDING WEBSITE

## DO'S AND DON'TS

**T**echnology continues to infiltrate all areas of life. So it should come as no surprise that apps and digital organization play a prominent role in many couples' weddings. Couples may now feel it is necessary to design a wedding website to keep their guests up-to-date.

Though they're useful when planning a wedding, websites are not a must-have, according to bridal etiquette experts. However, those who choose to delve into the world of wedding websites can keep these pointers in mind when navigating.

**DO** use the wedding website as a central hub for putting pertinent information about the wedding that may not

be covered on invitations or save-the-date cards.

**DON'T** ignore the potential for identity theft and privacy. Wedding websites can put quite a deal of personal information out for public consumption. Not only will the website advertise when the wedding takes place (when your home and the homes of all your guests will be empty), but also it could include birthdays, maiden names, and other information that would normally be more difficult to track down.

**DO** use a wedding website provider that gives you the option to password protect your website. Urge guests not to share this protected information with others.

**DON'T** caption engagement photos, bachelorette party photos and more with dates and names on the wedding website and on other social media.

**DO** skip the wedding website if you are strongly opposed to it. When properly composed, a wedding invitation will convey all the pertinent details. A group email or phone calls can alert guests to any changes after the fact.

**DON'T** forget to link to gift registries.

**DO** use the wedding website to collect responses and then make a table seating arrangement online. This will help you stay more organized and streamlined.

Wedding websites are yet another tool couples can use to stay organized as they plan their weddings.



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# Embracing An Ethnic Wedding

Couples are more culturally diverse than ever before. Engaged couples are embracing that diversity by incorporating elements of their heritage into their ceremonies. Global-infused details are a growing trend in ceremonies and receptions. Multicultural touches can help make weddings unique.

## Traditional Dress

With many countries embracing the tradition of wearing “wedding white,” couples are once again tapping into ethnic dress to add that wow factor to their weddings. Fashion can impart elements that borrow from ancestral homelands and tried-and-true wedding tradition. Distinct attire, such as sarees, kimonos, khmers, and kilts, may be center stage at ceremonies and receptions. Some couples opt to have a change of clothes so they can wear traditional dress for the ceremony and wedding gowns and tuxedos for the reception.

## Ethnic Entertainment

In addition to a band or DJ, couples may want to incorporate some sort of ethnic entertainment into the festivities. Caribbean couples may want a steel drum band. Japanese weddings may be enhanced with the addition of a Taiko group that showcases the art of ensemble

drumming. Although bagpipes are often associated with Irish or Scottish heritage, they’re included in folk music from different regions of Europe, Africa and the Persian Gulf as well.

## Multicultural Dance

Some of the most entertaining parts of a wedding involve dancing. With the right music and a few cocktails guests’ inhibitions may relax. Couples can even increase the fun factor by incorporating ethnic dance customs and music into their playlists.

If budget allows, hire a dance troupe to guide guests on the proper steps. Otherwise, ask the band or DJ to play the music that inspires the tarantella, salsa or Bollywood moves and learn as you go.

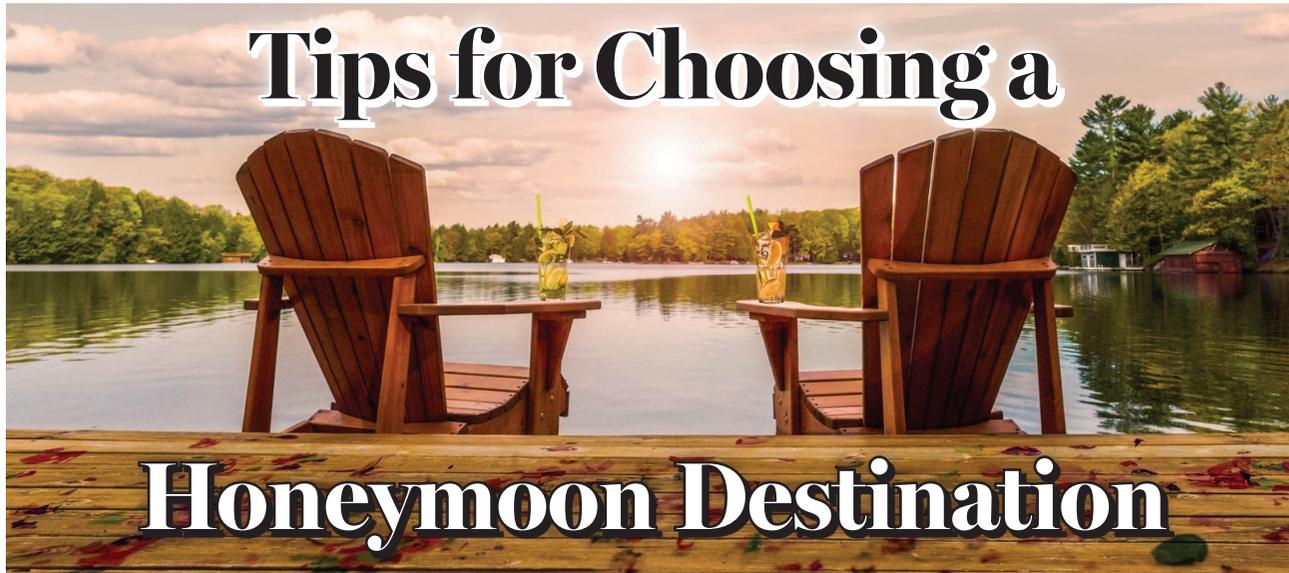
## Ethnic Cuisine

According to New Jersey Bride magazine, today’s millennials have long been exposed to multicultural cuisine and have exotic palates. Food can reflect the couple’s culture or simply harken to cuisine they enjoy the most. The New York Times predicted that food inspired by Africa and the Philippines is hot for 2017, so couples may want to opt for flavors from these areas of the world.



When exotic offerings are presented, it can be a good idea to also have some traditional wedding foods so less adventurous guests have options.

Couples planning to incorporate multicultural elements into their weddings will need to find a ceremony and reception site that can accommodate those needs.



# Tips for Choosing a Honeymoon Destination

Once couples tie the knot, hit the reception dance floor and thank their friends and family for joining them, their thoughts start looking ahead to the honeymoon.

Couples want to get the most for their money while also ensuring their first trip together as

newlyweds is as memorable as possible. The destination can go a long way toward making that happen, and couples can consider various factors as they choose a locale for their honeymoon.

### Activity Level

Some couples might want the honeymoon to

be filled with activities, while others might prefer more low-key trips spent relaxing at seaside resorts.

### Travel

Some couples may prefer to travel throughout their honeymoon, while others may want to stay at the same resort for the duration of the trip. Couples who want to travel may find a backpacking trip to Europe a romantic way to indulge their sense of adventure, while those who prefer something more quiet may find a beach resort more to their liking.

### Budget

Budget is a strong consideration for many couples as they plan their honeymoon. Because honeymoons can be expensive, those who don't want to sacrifice on their first trip together as a married couple can begin planning early, even looking for ways to cut costs on the ceremony and reception if the honeymoon is a bigger priority.



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# Most Costly vs. Most Affordable Areas To Get Married

**M**any couples know that weddings are expensive. Whether couples finance their weddings themselves or rely on the generosity of their parents, the final price tag may be several thousands of dollars.

The price of tying the knot can vary significantly depending on geography. According to data compiled by the online wedding resource The Knot, the following are some of the more expensive places to get hitched in the United States. If budget allows for traveling, it may be worth it to head to a nearby state to save considerable dollars, particularly if couples reside in the New York/Tri-State area of the East Coast, where weddings tend to be the most costly.

## 10 Most Expensive Places

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. New York - Manhattan<br>(\$82,299)                  | 6. Massachusetts - Cape Cod<br>(\$54,334)  |
| 2. Illinois - Chicago (\$61,265)                       | 7. Rhode Island (\$50,266)                 |
| 3. New York - Westchester/<br>Hudson Valley (\$57,501) | 8. New York - Outer boroughs<br>(\$46,682) |
| 4. New York - Long Island<br>(\$56,950)                | 9. California - Palm Springs<br>(\$44,646) |
| 5. New Jersey - North/Central<br>(\$54,334)            | 10. Louisiana - New Orleans<br>(\$44,178)  |

If those prices seem exorbitant to some couples, fortunately there are still a few places where couples can find wedding bargains.



## 10 Least Expensive Places

- |                            |                                   |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Alaska (\$17,361)       | 6. North Dakota (\$20,211)        |
| 2. South Dakota (\$18,890) | 7. Idaho (\$20,245)               |
| 3. Texas - West (\$19,261) | 8. Montana (\$20,322)             |
| 4. Arkansas (\$19,856)     | 9. Oregon (\$20,456)              |
| 5. New Mexico (\$20,114)   | 10. Illinois - Central (\$21,818) |

Although there are no directly comparable statistics for Canadian provinces/territories and wedding expenses, it's fair to assume that the more costly areas to buy a home in Canada would also be the ones where wedding costs are higher. Toronto-based website Rentseeker posted the average costs to buy a home across the country in 2015, and based on the assumption that the more expensive areas would also generate higher wedding prices, couples can probably expect to pay more in Ontario, British Columbia and Saskatchewan. These areas are followed by Alberta, New Brunswick & Nova Scotia, Manitoba, Newfoundland, and Quebec. According to Wedding Trends 2015 from WeddingBells.ca, the average cost of a wedding in Canada in 2015 (including the honeymoon) was \$30,717.

Weddings can be expensive ventures. Choosing the location smartly can shave several thousands of dollars off of the final price tag.

# What to Consider When SHOPPING FOR RINGS

Engagements precede wedding dresses, flower arrangements, limousines, and even a couple's wedding vows. And no proposal is complete without a ring. Knowledge of rings and stones is essential for those who plan to propose in the near future.

A recent survey from the wedding resource *The Knot* in which 12,000 brides and 1,200 grooms in the United States were asked about their rings, found that people spend an average, of \$5,978 on engagement rings. Recognizing the potential cost of engagement rings can help ring shoppers prepare for their purchases.

In addition to considering costs, couples can employ the following tips to shop with confidence.

- Cut costs with style. Engagement rings can be costly, but many couples feel they are worthwhile investments. According to *In Style* magazine, a ring with a classic solitaire of one carat weight can cost thousands of dollars, while a band covered in just under one carat of tiny pavé diamonds will offer plenty of sparkle for a lot less money.
- Know your settings. How the diamond is framed can affect how big it looks and even how much it sparkles. Gems framed with a bezel can give the illusion of a larger stone.
- Get the desired cut. A skilled jeweler knows how to properly cut a stone to bring out its best radiance. From round to princess to emerald to marquise cut, cut styles can affect how the stone looks as well as the price.
- Know ring metals. Platinum and gold are some of the most popular ring setting metals. Platinum costs considerably more than gold or silver, but is long-lasting. Couples should weigh the cost versus benefit of splurging on a more expensive metal, or speak with a jeweler about a suitable substitute.
- Investigate personal style. Men should pay attention to the jewelry their girlfriends wear so the engagement rings complement their style. Some women love modern jewelry, while others gravitate toward vintage pieces.
- Come in under carat. Buying just shy of the next carat weight can save between 20 and 30 percent, offers *The Knot*. Plus, the size discrepancy probably will not be visible to the naked eye.

- Think about trading up. Some couples like to replace engagement rings with a more elaborate ring for a big anniversary. Some jewelers will accept the purchase of the engagement ring toward the price of a future ring.

Jewelry stores are in the business of developing relationships with their customers. When purchasing engagement rings, couples can discuss their desires in regard to a ring, as well as their budgets.



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# 7 Ways to Recycle a Wedding Gown

**W**hen planning their weddings, many brides-to-be devote a large portion of their wedding budgets to their wardrobes. Statistics released by The Knot in 2014 indicated the amount the average woman was willing to spend her gown was \$1,281.

Wedding gowns are among the most costly wedding expenditures. Because wedding gowns can be so expensive, many brides elect to have their gowns cleaned and preserved. Reusing a wedding gown is a cost-effective and earth-friendly idea. Women have many options when it comes time to putting their wedding gowns to use after they have tied the knot. The following are just some of the great ideas couples can explore.

1. Save it for younger generations. One of the primary reasons to preserve a wedding gown is to save the dress for a daughter, granddaughter or another relative to wear at her own wedding.
2. Transform it into other attire. There are a number of different occasions when wearing white is acceptable. Religious ceremonies such as baptisms and communions qualify, and a wedding gown in the hands of an experienced seamstress or tailor can be transformed into a baby's Christening ensemble or a beautiful dress for a youngster about to receive First Holy Communion.
3. Donate the gown. Brides in need may not have the funds to purchase their own beautiful gowns. Work with an organization that will provide dresses to the less fortunate. Or donate it to an organization that can sell the gown to fund projects for others in need. Another option is the Mary Madeline Project, which uses wedding dress fabrics to create burial outfits for stillborn infants.
4. Cut it up into usable fabric. Wedding gown fabrics can be used in various applications. Dresses can be transformed into decorative pillows or other wedding mementos. Stretch the fabric across a frame and use it as a blank canvas for a photo keepsake. The fabric also can work for baby cribs and infant basket skirting.
5. Use it as a Halloween costume. Dress as a bride for Halloween. Otherwise, tailor the dress to fit a child and she can use it for any number of dress-up opportunities.
6. Donate it to a costume archive. Theatrical companies may be able to use the fabric to create costumes for their productions.
7. Create a keepsake. Cut a small piece of the fabric and put it into a pendant or locket. A piece of tulle or

lace also can be placed inside a clear Christmas ornament and hung on the tree for years to come.

Wedding gowns can be upcycled into many new and innovative items. Doing so eliminates long storage times and can benefit others.



# ‘I Do,’ Take Two

## *Guide to a Second Marriage*

Couples are returning to the altar in increasing numbers, as second and third weddings are becoming ever more popular. Pew Research Center indicates that, as of 2014, 64 percent of divorced or widowed men have remarried, compared with 52 percent of previously married women.

Lavish second weddings were once uncommon, but that trend is also shifting. Couples who are taking another crack at marriage are tying the knot with renewed vigor and with weddings that may rival some first-timers’.

Men and women who are remarrying after divorce or being widowed may not know how to approach planning their upcoming nuptials. The following are some guidelines to making the wedding sequel a success.

### **Wardrobe**

Couples who have been married before often find that they have more leeway with regard to their wedding wardrobes than they did when tying the knot for the first time. Brides may choose something less traditional than a long, white dress. In fact, this can be a time to let loose and select something that is festive or even funky. This also may provide a great opportunity to choose clothing styles from different cultures or ties into one’s heritage. This freedom also allows brides to broaden

their horizons with regard to where to buy their wedding wardrobes.

Grooms may opt for something more casual than a tuxedo or coordinate with their brides-to-be so they are on the same creative page. Colored tuxedos and vintage suits are acceptable, even though such attire might have raised a few eyebrows the first time around.

### **Guest List**

The guest list doesn’t have to be a source of anxiety. Others will understand that there may be a melange of people at a second wedding. Children from previous marriages as well as divorced spouses or former parents-in-law are not out of the question. Even if exes will not be included, make sure they know about the nuptials in advance of others. It’s common courtesy, and it can help head off feelings of ill-will.

Some couples choosing to tie the knot again scale back the size of the wedding this time around, feeling something smaller and more intimate — with only the closest of friends and family — is more suitable.

### **Registries And Wedding Gifts**

Considering couples who have been married previously likely have many of the housewares and items for daily living that first-timers may not, registering for these



gifts is not necessary. What’s more, some of the same guests may have been present at first marriages and gifted then. In lieu of gifts, couples may ask guests to donate to a specific charity or forgo gifts altogether.

### **Vows**

Couples can use experience to draft vows that have personal meaning to their unique situations and make the wedding ceremony even more special.

People getting married again can impart their own personalities into the ceremony and party to follow. There are no hard rules governing second weddings, so couples can plan their weddings with good times in mind.

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