



TIPS FOR PLANNING AN Outdoor Wedding

Outdoor weddings can be extremely breathtaking if thought out and planned correctly to ensure the comfort of the guests. When planning an outdoor wedding, there are many logistical items to consider other than mother nature. I hope that these tips listed below are helpful for you when planning your dream day outdoors.

Take your guests into consideration:

Depending on the season you choose, keep the weather in mind, as you want your guests to be comfortable while present at your event. Climate control is so important in making sure there is adequate ventilation. During the summer

months, think about renting large electric fans, or even having air conditioning installed in a tent. Hydration is mandatory, so be sure to offer your guests iced water, fruit tea, or punch upon arrival. Some couples choose to have a water bar upon arrival and throughout the evening if all outdoors. Ice water bar includes water with sliced cucumbers, oranges, lemons slices, etc. For the winter months or those nights that will be chilly during spring, consider renting heaters. This may take extra power supply, so a generator could possibly be needed (keep the power supply in mind for all of your electrical needs). Perhaps offering hot tea or hot cocoa in addition to coffee would be appreciated. Be sure to plan for bugs when outdoors. Have a first aid kit on hand with wasp spray and Benadryl for those with horrible allergies. Be sure the lawn has been sprayed or manicured appropriately. Citronella candles around the perimeter can always help keep them away.

Lighting, lighting and more lighting:

Think about the time of your ceremony. If the sun will be setting, you want to be sure your guests are facing the opposite direction. Be sure to plan accordingly for those sunsets by looking up the time of sun set for your wedding day. It is imperative that you not only provide ambient lighting, but adequate lighting for your guests

to move around is a must. There is a difference between ambient lighting and real lighting to find your way to the restroom or parking lot. If there is an uneven walkway or drop off, be sure to have those areas well lit, as you would not want guests falling and breaking a leg. Proper lighting is so important for your professional photographer and videographer. When investing in these professional services, you should be sure you invest in a lighting company to provide adequate lighting to be sure they capture all of the details of your dream day. If the guests can't see the sparkle in your eyes when dancing with your groom, the photographer and videographer probably can't get the details either. Colored lighting can even help; warm tones such as a golden tone complement skin tones.

Décor:

It's a plus to be surrounded by beautiful backdrops of the outdoors, but when thinking of décor for your wedding and reception consider the wind. Tall arrangements and décor must be weighted down at the bottom. The linens should be pinned down to be sure they don't fly away in the wind. If you are planning to have a seated dinner, the escort and place cards need to be tied down as well. The wind provides a wonderful

breeze for you and the guests but at the same time can ruin your décor if not planned appropriately. A wedding can be an investment, so go the extra mile by budgeting for drapery if you plan to have a tent. The elegant white or ivory fabric can hide ugly metal tent poles and make your tent look like an elegant location for a wedding. You don't want to have bare poles as they just stick out and look bare. This small detail makes a huge difference to the overall effect and will be money well spent.

Sound system:

Be sure that all of your guests can hear the minister during the ceremony clearly. If you have a guest sitting in the back and there is no microphone being used they might as well have stayed home if they can't hear what you are saying. It's important to hear the vows, readings, vocalists and musicians.

Planning the menu:

Make sure the food will be appropriate for the season you are planning an outdoor event. Avoid items that will spoil when not kept at an adequate temperature. Ask the catering staff how they prepare the food to ensure that it stays at the needed temperature. Inquire about your caterer providing trash cans or if these need to be rented. Most

locations require the trash to be hauled off, so make sure that is coordinated. In some instances, the caterer will provide the ice as well. This is a must for an outdoor reception to keep drinks iced down. Having an ice truck is a great investment for the day of your wedding.

What if it rains?

A back up plan is essential. You must have a back up plan indoors if heavy rain is the forecast. A heavy rain could ruin a ceremony and/or reception. If you choose to have a tent request for it to be put up a few days before, as this will help shield the ground from a heavy rain. In some instances, the tent should go up as late as possible so the ground has time to dry. The mud can be a problem, so plan for that. Hay and straw does a great job in soaking up the mushy ground. Runners certainly don't work with mud. Think about another way to outline your bridal pathway with flowers or garden décor.

Choosing the proper tent:

When shopping for a tent, take into account the reason you are investing in a tent and what type of tent you would prefer as there are different types. Clear tents are beautiful, but not if it is very humid out, which can cause moisture on the top, which blocks the view of the moon and stars.

Incorporate your favors:

Parasols are a great idea for shielding the sun if you are having an afternoon ceremony and the forecast calls for a sunny day; the ladies would love these classy favors. Sunglasses are always a fun way to involve the guests, especially the men. Providing sunscreen in small tubes with your name and date is another idea for a hot/sunny location in the midst of summer. Favors that will melt are not recommended for outdoor events during the summer months.

Keep in mind that you only have one chance to plan this amazing event outside, and you want it to be a memorable one for you and your guests. It is all about creating that perfect experience that everyone will talk about for the next year. One of your responsibilities is to ensure the safety and comfort of your guests. If it is possible visit your venue one-year prior to check it out during the same month or season of your event. This can be very beneficial in planning the perfect outdoor wedding.

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