

Planning An Elegant Wedding On A Budget

“I dreamed of a wedding of elaborate elegance, a church filled with family and friends. I asked him what kind of a wedding he wished for. He said one that would make me his wife.”

-Anonymous



Create an elegant wedding with these 10 easy steps!

- Setting the Date and Finding a Venue
- The Menu
- The Wedding Attire
- The Wedding Cake
- Flowers
- Photography and Videos
- Stationery and Favours
- Music
- The Wedding Planner
- Additional Tips



Setting the Date and Finding a Venue



Consider these options:

- Wedding date
 - If possible, avoid setting the date over a holiday, because your venue will cost a lot more than it would in off-peak times.
- Honeymoon
 - The honeymoon will also cost more during the peak travel season, so take advantage of off-peak specials where you can.



Consider these options:

- Location for your wedding and reception
 - If it's a Church wedding , find out if it's possible to hold the reception at an adjoining hall so you don't need to spend money on additional transport for your guests.
- Make use of alternative wedding venues:
 - Beaches and parks make great alternatives and may help you cut the costs of decorations and locations.



The Menu



Options to cut food costs:

- Buffet style
 - An alternative to a sit-down dinner may save you money and your guests will have the chance to pick foods they prefer.
- Consider asking friends and family to chip in to help with the reception.
 - Money or home catering are two ways they may be able to support.



Options to cut food costs:

- Bring a dish
 - A potluck will cut your food costs to almost zero.
 - Your guests can bring the recipe of their dish and you will leave with a cookbook of your wedding.
- The number of guests should be considered
 - The biggest cost can come from feeding your guests, so remember these cost-saving options.



Options to cut drink costs:

- Purchasing a limited amount of wine and beer along with some non-alcoholic choices can ensure a fun time.
- You can select some special bottles of wine or champagne to make the toasts.

It is not necessary to provide full bar facilities.



The Wedding Attire



How to get the perfect dress?

- Consider buying a pre-loved dress.
- Classic designs & end-of-season bridal sales.
- Evening wear instead of wedding attire.
- A themed wedding may be an affordable option if you rent or can easily make your outfit.
- Ask a family member to make your dress if you supply the materials.



Wedding party attire:

- Bridesmaids

- It's common for bridesmaids to pay for their own dress.
- Provide a choice in their dress selection.
- End of season sales in evening wear could save you more than making them.



Wedding party attire:

- Groomsmen
 - You can rent the groom's tuxedo.
 - If the groom already has a nice suit, that can look just as nice.
 - Buying cummerbunds and matching shirts and ties are less expensive than renting tuxedos.



*For elegant design purposes,
just keep one thing consistent
for the whole bridal party –
either the style of the dress or
the color.*



The Wedding Cake



Wedding cake options:

- Only have a small one or two-tiered cake for the bridal party, with a larger, less ornate cake for the other guests to enjoy.
- Use fresh flowers on your cake instead of those made with sugar. Sugar flowers are very labour-intensive and cost a lot.
- Re-use the flowers from your wedding ceremony to decorate the cake table.



Wedding cake options:

- Keep the inside of the cake plain and simple instead of complicated, more expensive recipes and fillings.
- Buy a couple of store bought white iced Christmas cakes when the sales are on and have them decorated for the wedding.



Stick to a couple of ideas, such as having the bride and groom figures on the top of the cake and some flowers, but other than that enjoy the cake for what it is - a cake!



Reduce your flower bill:

- Choose an outdoor venue that doesn't require as much decoration.
- Have the bride carry a few flowers on long stems rather than a full blown bouquet.
- Re-use flowers wherever possible.
- Do away with fresh flowers completely and make your own or purchase silk flowers that will last forever as a memento of your day.



Reduce your flower bill:

- In the reception area, use large tables rather than small groups. This way, you won't need as many table arrangements.
- Replace floral table arrangements with living plants in decorated pots or fruit and dried flower arrangements.



Photography and Videos



Photography/Video options:

- Ask a **minimum of three people** who will be coming to the wedding anyway to record the event for you.
 - After the wedding, have the best clips from all three videos professionally edited into one keepsake.
 - Do the same with photographs and still shots from the video recordings.
 - Have them printed and added to your album.



Your wedding album can include more items than photos. You can also save ribbons, the bride's garter, pressed (or silk) flowers, invitations, table placement cards, as well as cards and emails from well wishers.



Stationery and Favours



Stationery/Favour options:

- There are a number of programs available that will allow you to create your own wedding invitations on the computer and print them out onto specialty paper.
- The placement cards on the tables can be created by hand using the same card as you used for the invitations, especially if someone you know has calligraphy skills.



Stationery/Favour options:

- Menu cards and favour bags can also be handmade and add a lovely elegant original aspect to the wedding theme.
- Try to avoid feeling that wedding favours need to be an expensive token, rather than a heartfelt memento.



Stationery/Favour options:

- Some inexpensive favours include:
 - A piece of wedding cake.
 - A silken flower like some used for the wedding itself.
 - Confectionary, especially if it's personalized.
 - A hand-inscribed card.
 - A small teaspoon to commemorate the date and occasion.



Music



Music options:

- You and your fiancé can compile your favorite songs and combine them all on a CD or DVD. Then set them to play continuously during the reception.
- You can do the same during parts of the service where you want music.
 - It might pay to have someone manning the machine in case you have a technical glitch.



The Wedding Planner



Do you need a wedding planner?

- If you're on a budget, it may pay to do the work yourself.
- Your wedding will mean a lot more to your family and friends if they have a part in organizing it and doing those countless chores that a wedding entails.
 - You'll make a good impression on your in-laws if you invite them to help as well.



Do you need a wedding planner?

- If you feel that your mother or future mother-in-law might be a little overbearing, the most effective way of stopping that is to have a clear list drawn up at the start .
- Allocate different jobs and responsibilities to those loved ones who may be best at each task.



Do you need a Wedding Planner?

- Show your family you have a clear plan in mind that will make you and your fiancé happy.
- When the tasks create a clear plan, it's easier for everyone to help make your wedding day as special as you've always wanted.



Additional Tips: Extra Money Saving Ideas



Extra ideas:

1. Still having trouble finding that perfect wedding dress? Seek out liquidation sales.
2. Save more money on food: Try home style cooking – fried chicken, pizza, finger food.
3. Call a wedding consultant for savings advice.
4. Reserve everything well in advance.
5. Get married on any day but Saturday.



Have fun with the planning and on the day itself. A wedding is a time for joy, for sharing time with friends and family and starting on a new life with your fiancé.



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