

Wedding Guide

Questions to ask *when vetting wedding day vendors*

The process of planning a wedding involves the coordination of many different components, including people. It can be stressful and it can be exciting. Chances are the couple-to-be will be handling conversations with vendors they may have never worked with before.

It may be tempting to simply sign on the dotted line when hiring wedding vendors and hope for the best. But the process can prove more fruitful when couples prepare for it by compiling a list of questions designed to ensure they know what they're getting before they enter into a contract.



Is the date available?

The most important question to ask is whether the vendor is available on the day you have chosen to get married. The house of worship or place where you will be exchanging vows should be set first, and then additional vendors can be interviewed to confirm their availability and the scope of their services.

How long have you been in business?

How long a company has been in business, and more importantly how much experience they have with weddings, can be a telling detail. Experience is not always indicative of ability, but vendors with long track records of success may prove easy to work with.

Are you insured?

Check if the vendor is insured. It can be a risky proposition to work with vendors who are not insured.

Will you be on site to oversee things?

From florists to private caterers to specialty performers, it is acceptable to ask vendors if they will be there the day of the wedding to manage things or if it will be a third party or another representative. Confirm all pertinent details, including who will be there on the day of the wedding, in advance.

What is your payment schedule and cancellation policy?

Understand how the vendor expects to be paid. Many businesses require a deposit up front to book the date. Some may want payment in full a week or so before the wedding day. Others may enable you to make monthly payments for a set period of time. Ask how the vendor handles cancellations, and whether any deposit or portion of the money already paid will be refunded.

When is the last possible date for making changes?

Know how long you have to make any changes to your plans, colors, music choices, or other details.

Are there any additional fees?

It's important to determine if gratuity, travel, overtime charges, cleaning fees, or any other charges are included in the contract or if it leaves room for additional expenses.

Is mine your only wedding that day? How do you handle conflicts?

Figure out if the vendor handles just one wedding per day or if they have staff to cover multiple weddings on a given date.

Do prices differ depending on time of day, month or year?

Certain dates are busier than others. Find out if the vendor charges a premium for holidays or particular times of the year. Couples are urged to exercise due diligence and ensure contracts with vendors specify all details before signing on the dotted line.

Pointers for post-wedding brunch

A post-wedding brunch is a nice way to wrap up a wedding weekend and gives a newly married couple a chance to spend more time with close friends and family, particularly if the couple isn't immediately leaving for the honeymoon. A brunch is the perfect way to send guests on their way with a few extra hugs and full bellies.

A brunch is not a necessity by any means, but it is a nice gesture and a good way to wrap up a wedding weekend. Couples who plan on hosting brunches can consider these tips.

-- **Delegate:** The happy couple already has a lot of details on their plate to ensure the wedding occurs with minimal hiccups. A parent or member of the bridal party may want to take on the task of planning the brunch to alleviate stress on the newly betrothed.

-- **Funding:** There are no hard rules about who will pay for the brunch, but typically it is the person who hosts it. Couples may want to set aside funds in their budgets for the brunch, or parents of the couple may want to contribute.

-- **Timing:** Seeing as it likely was a late evening prior, the

brunch should occur as late as possible in the morning, with 11 a.m. or noon a good start time so everyone has a chance to sleep in and recuperate.

-- **Ease:** The brunch planner should make it easy on himself or herself by finding a venue that is close by. Sometimes that venue may be a lodging location if the couple arranged for overnight accommodations. For example, if overnight guests stayed at a hotel near the reception site, that hotel may have a small conference or party room where brunch can be held. The brunch planner can work with the hotel staff to cater the brunch; otherwise, find a nearby restaurant that specializes in breakfast or brunch foods that is convenient to most.

-- **Invites:** For those with big budgets, anyone can be invited to the wedding brunch, but it may be more manageable if it is restricted to only close friends and family, or only those who opted for the overnight wedding accommodations.

-- **Gifts:** There is no need to offer another favor at the wedding brunch. However, if any favors from the wedding were left behind, they can be displayed at the brunch in case any guests forgot to take theirs.



-- **Duration:** A 2- to 2-1/2-hour brunch is sufficient.

-- **Food:** Brunch implies a mix of breakfast and lunch treats, which can include bagels, muffins, omelets, waffles, cold cuts, and quiches. While cocktails like mimosas or bellinis may be offered, they're not necessary after a night of indulgence. In fact, coffee and tea may be more coveted.

A post-wedding brunch is the perfect way to wrap up a successful wedding celebration.





THE BALLOON STYLIST

EMILY GOODSON

903.907.2312

EVENTS WITH EM COORDINATING SERVICES

PACKAGE ONE

- Coordinate Rehearsal and Day of Wedding
 - Create Day of Wedding Schedule
 - Make sure ALL Vendors are paid in full by Wedding Day
 - Most importantly, I am there to take the Stress off you and help create the Wedding of your dreams!
- *Does NOT include cleanup**

PACKAGE TWO

- Includes ALL of Package One PLUS...
 - Help Book Vendors, Pick Up Rentals, etc.
- *Does NOT include cleanup**

Customized Package Available as well

We can book the following vendors:

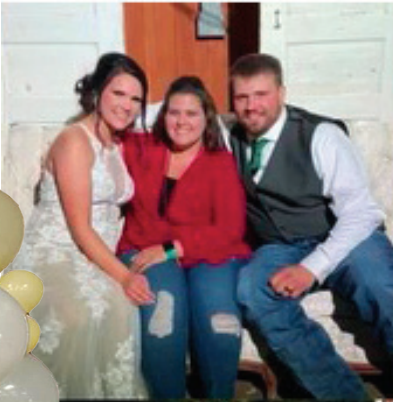
Venue -- DJ -- Catering
Linens -- Florist -- Cake
Photographer -- Videographer

"I can even find a preacher if I need too!"

high quality balloon garlands, arches, centerpieces, and backdrops



ask one our many happy couples about our attention to detail



Wedding Guide

What to know when

picking a wedding reception menu



Lots of details require a decision when planning a wedding. Engaged couples may or may not enjoy tending to much of the minutiae involved in wedding planning, but the reception menu is typically one popular point of interest.

When picking a wedding reception menu, couples typically get to sit down with their venue operator or caterer and take a taste test so they can decide what to include and exclude come the big night. That typically results in some happy hearts and full bellies. But there's more to picking a reception menu than taste, and the following are some pointers couples can consider as they aim to provide a tasty meal for their wedding guests.

--**Resist the urge to make the menu reflect your personal preference.** Couples, particularly those footing the bill for their own weddings, may be tempted to pick exclusively foods they like for the reception. Though it's important that couples get to enjoy their first meal together after tying the knot, it's good to ensure that guests get to have an enjoyable meal as well. Resist any urge to let personal preferences dictate the menu, particularly if you have a restrictive diet. For example, vegans need not insist everyone eat a vegan meal at the reception nor should meat lovers insist that every plate end up with some red meat on it. Diversify the menu so people with various preferences can fill up and enjoy their dinner.

--**Inquire about food allergies.** When inviting guests, ask them to cite any food allergies they may have when they RSVP. Many banquet halls and caterers are now accustomed to accommodating diners with food allergies, but the earlier that information is communicated, the more time couples have to pick delicious foods that won't compromise the health of guests who must avoid certain dishes or ingredients.

--**Align food with degree of formality.** It's important that couples consider the ambiance of the wedding when picking a reception menu. A pig roast might be ideal for a backyard wedding, but something more formal is called for when dining in a lavishly decorated banquet hall. Couples can keep this in mind when choosing the menu. It's also notable that caterers tend to have a creative side, so they might be able to present certain foods in ways that match the vibe of the wedding even if those dishes would not ordinarily align with the ambiance of the reception.

--**Leave the experimentation to the cocktail hour.** If couples have certain exotic foods in mind, they can still serve those items but do so during the cocktail hour. Guests can simply turn down the chance to try exotic foods during the cocktail hour without going hungry. But a sit-down dinner should ensure every guest has something to fill their belly.

Picking a reception menu is a fun and filling component of wedding planning. Keeping some simple pointers in mind can help couples pick a menu everyone can enjoy.

Simple Tips

to plan a fun and relaxing cocktail hour

With so much on their docket in relation to wedding planning, engaged couples can be forgiven if certain components garner less attention than others. The ceremony and reception are bound to stay on couples' radar, but what about the time in between saying "I do" and cutting a rug on the reception room dance floor?

Cocktail hours are a great way to keep guests entertained between the ceremony and the reception. Many couples use this period to take their bridal party wedding photos, so offering guests a little food and some drinks during a cocktail hour can benefit everyone. Planning a cocktail hour

is not a significant undertaking, but couples can keep a few pointers in mind as they plan this interim period between the ceremony and reception.

--**Opt for an outdoor cocktail hour when possible.** Couples tying the knot in spring, summer or fall at a venue with ample outdoor entertaining space can choose to host the cocktail hour outside. This reduces the likelihood that guests will feel cramped and it also sets a positive tone for the remainder of the evening. A balcony, patio or rooftop entertaining area can be great spaces for guests to mingle prior to the reception.

--**Offer seating.** Cocktail hours tend to be stand-up affairs where guests mingle with long-lost friends or relatives while enjoying some light hors d'oeuvres. However, older guests or guests with small children will appreciate some seating. Couples need not ensure there's a seat for each guest, but some strategically located high-tops and more traditional tables for guests with mobility issues can ensure anyone who needs to sit down can do so.

--**Give guests something to do.** If the cocktail hour will be a full hour or more, couples can consider ways to help guests pass the time. Some may be content to relax and chat with friends and family over a drink, but others may grow a little



bored as the hour drags on. A photobooth or selfie station so couples can have a ready-made wedding album before the reception begins can be fun for guests. For less formal affairs, consider providing some popular outdoor games, like cornhole and bocce.

--**Set a tone with music.** Music can help set the tone for a cocktail hour, which is not meant to get the ball rolling on the dancing-heavy revelry to come during the reception. Some simple instrumental music, whether it's provided by a live string quartet or pre-recorded, can establish the cocktail hour as a peaceful period to relax, chat, eat a little, and enjoy a drink before the reception begins. Reserve the dance music for when the reception hits full swing.

It's easy to overlook the cocktail hour when planning a wedding. However, some simple tips can ensure guests enjoy the time between the ceremony and reception.

Dig into these wedding cake options

Something sweet comes near the end of a wedding reception and that is the joy the couple experiences knowing they have their entire lives ahead of them to enjoy together. However, there is another sweet treat that is shared near the conclusion of the wedding and it is typically served with tea and coffee: the wedding cake.

Wedding cake traditions can be traced back to the ancient Greeks and Romans. Cakes represented good luck and fertility for the couples tying the knot. The first wedding cakes were rather bland and bread-like, representing purity and virginity. Some were quite like the fruitcake now enjoyed during the holiday season. Eventually wedding cakes transformed into the sweet confections that are known today. The modern wedding cake as most know it debuted at the 1882 wedding of Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany. His wedding cake was actually the first to be completely edible. Previously, some cakes featured wooden broomstick pillars covered in icing, but the Duke's cake used a hardened type of icing, according to Edible Art Bakery and Dessert Café.

Couples today have many options when picking their wedding cakes. The following are some wedding cake tidbits to chew on.

-- **Couples can choose among various cake styles.** Many opt for a classic style, which is typically a white or ivory tiered cake with simple, elegant decorations. Rustic cakes may be much less ornate, while modern cakes may be rectangular or square and feature clean lines and minimalist decoration. The cake should fit the overall theme and scope of the wedding as it is another complementary component of the larger celebration.

-- **Wedding cakes can be quite costly.** Wedding Wire estimates the average wedding cake costs around \$500. One way for couples to save on their cake is to have a faux cake on display, with one tier that is made from cake and can be cut. Guests will then be served slices of a sheet cake that is much less expensive.

-- **Couples have many flavors to choose from.** Vanilla is classic and quite popular because it appeals to a vast number of people. Lemon, chocolate, and carrot are some other popular cake flavors.

-- **When it comes to frosting a cake,** there are various outer coatings that will encapsulate the cake to make it both beautiful and durable. Buttercream, Swiss meringue, fondant, cream

cheese, and ganache all can be used in various applications. Some bakers attest that Swiss meringue, due to the addition of egg whites, makes it a more stable option over traditional buttercreams, particularly during warm weather. Of course, couples can opt for a "naked cake," which usually has a scant amount of frosting so that the cake underneath peeks through.

on your special wedding day...
depend on us for your bouquet

Freeman's Flowers

903.389.5887 101 West Commerce, Fairfield
903.390.0788 (inside Armadillo Emporium)

Dessert
by mommacakes

903 | 389 | 0007
105 S. Mount St. | Fairfield, TX 75840
LoveMammaCakes.com

*It's not just a cake.
A wedding cake should be customized to represent each couple
Both beautiful and delicious... the whole package.
Pricing to fit most budgets.
Serving venues throughout Texas.
Let us help host your special event.*

a buttercream bakery specializing in
wedding cakes custom cakes
custom cookies dessert catering

Let us help you prepare for your special day!
for your Wedding or Valentine's

FANCY NAILS

903-389-9018
347 W. Commerce St. | Fairfield

Wedding Guide

The Perfect Venue with Authentic Southern Charm



Photo by Dare to Aim Corsicana, Texas



*Every love story is beautiful,
but yours should be unique!*

Weddings, Receptions, Rehearsal Dinners,
Bridesmaids Luncheons, Engagement
Parties, Showers, and Bridal Portraits

The Moody-Bradley House
A Registered Texas Historical Landmark Built in 1860
318 Moody Street Fairfield, Texas



For more information on
Rental Rates and
Availability:

Visit us at
www.moodybradleyhouse.org

Find us on Facebook at:
fairfieldhistoryclub
moodybradleyhouse

Call: 903.388.6011
or 903.390.1863

FARM HOUSE RESTAURANT

Catfish, Steak & Seafood
One Bite and You're Hooked!



Let us handle your catering service needs!
Call **NOW** to book your catering
event for the holidays!

- Holidays
- Church Events
- Weddings
- Appreciation Dinners
- Reunions
- And More!

Gift Cards

Buy a \$50 Gift Card,
Get a \$10 Gift Card **Free**

Buy a \$100 Gift Card,
Get a \$20 Gift Card **Free**

Become a loyalty member and receive a **\$5 reward** for every \$100 you spend, plus a **FREE** birthday meal up to \$9.99, and more! Sign up by texting "farmhouse" to 888-608-0956!

Order online at farmhouse.takeout7.com | RV Spots Available (Nightly, Weekly, Monthly)

Check Out Our Daily Lunch Specials on Facebook | [F/FARMHOUSERESTAURANT](https://www.facebook.com/FARMHOUSERESTAURANT)

254-472-0512 | 1401 E. Milam, Mexia | www.farm-house-restaurant.com



620 Hickory Creek Ranch - Crockett, Texas 936.222.4562

The Barn at Hickory Creek is located just 5 miles from Crockett off State Highway 21 East on 360 beautiful acres that make up Hickory Creek Ranch. It sits hillside overlooking a private 33 acre lake.

Ivory draping and crystal chandeliers add to the stunning view. Together they create a rustic elegance that will make your event a night to remember.

The Barn comes with handmade wooden tables and chiavari chairs complete with ivory cushions. There is a new grooms cabin and a bridal suite as well as bar, prep kitchen, and patio. Wedding ceremonies can take place inside or outside so weather is not an issue. It will accommodate 50 to 330 people.



Curtis Coe Jewelers

Over 100 Years of Combined Experience
Custom Designs - Repairs
(ALL Repairs performed in-house)
Loose Diamonds



254-799-3478

2812 Bellmead Drive, Waco

Songs tailor-made *for father-daughter dances*

Weddings can be as novel or traditional as couples prefer. Couples who go the traditional route will undoubtedly include certain spotlight dances in the reception.

The father-daughter dance is a staple of a wedding reception. According to the experts at Fred Astaire Dance Studios, the history of father-daughter dances can be traced back decades. The dance once was one last nod to Dad before the bride’s husband became the most important man in her life. Now it’s more symbolic of general love and affection.

Times have certainly changed from the first father-daughter dances and this tradition no longer carries the same meaning. In fact, despite what the name may imply, father-daughter dances needn’t take place with a father at all, especially if he passed away or is not in the bride’s life. She can choose any special person, whether a father figure, uncle, brother, mentor, etc. to honor during the dance.

Traditionally the father-daughter dance (and mother-son dance) takes place immediately following the newlyweds’ first dance together. However, some opt to have it after the toasts or before the cake cutting. Couples can make their preferences known prior to the reception and schedule these dances any time they desire, especially since they are frequently preceded by a special announcement.

While many brides prefer to dance to a slow-paced, heartfelt song, this needn’t always be the case. In recent years, some daddy-daughter duos have opted to put on shows with humorous dances or even entertaining showcases of fancy footwork to songs of all types. The song should match the vibe of the wedding. That said, certain songs seem tailor-made for the times during the reception when love and gratitude are expressed during these bittersweet dances.

Country

- ♥ “The Man Who Loves You the Most,” Zac Brown Band
- ♥ “My Little Girl,” Tim McGraw
- ♥ “Just Fishin’,” Trace Adkins

Big Band

- ♥ “Unforgettable,” Nat King Cole
- ♥ “The Way You Look Tonight,” Frank Sinatra
- ♥ “Swinging on a Star,” Bing Crosby

Indie/Singer-Songwriter

- ♥ “You’ve Got a Friend,” James Taylor
- ♥ “Let it Be Me,” Ray LaMontagne
- ♥ “Father and Daughter,” Paul Simon
- ♥ “Wildflowers,” Tom Petty
- ♥ “Constellations,” Jack Johnson

Rock

- ♥ “Sweet Child O’ Mine,” Guns N’ Roses
- ♥ “When You Need Me,” Bruce Springsteen
- ♥ “Scarlet Begonias,” Grateful Dead

R&B

- ♥ “Ain’t that Love,” Ray Charles
- ♥ “Daddy,” Beyoncé
- ♥ “Dance with My Father,” Luther Vandross
- ♥ “Love of My Life,” Brian McKnight

Tried and True

- ♥ “Butterfly Kisses,” Bob Carlisle
- ♥ “Wonderful World,” Louis Armstrong
- ♥ “Hero,” Mariah Carey
- ♥ “You Are So Beautiful,” Joe Cocker
- ♥ “Lullabye (Goodnight My Angel),” Billy Joel



Did you know?

Brides- and grooms-to-be rely on trusted friends and family to be part of their wedding parties. It is an honor to be asked to participate in the ceremony and share in the magic of the day. Many couples wrestle with the question of how many people to include in the wedding party. The trusted wedding resource The Knot says old school wedding etiquette experts advise there should be one groomsman and one corresponding bridesmaid for every 50 guests, but this isn’t mandatory. Brides magazine reports that American weddings tend to feature five bridesmaids and five groomsmen. According to YoungHipandMarried.com, at weddings in Canada, the wedding party can expect to spend roughly \$366 to be in the wedding celebration. A 2018 Bankrate study indicates members of an American bridal party can expect to pay an average of \$728 to attend a wedding and other related events. However, in recent years this price may have increased due to inflation and the rising cost of travel.

Brides- and grooms-to-be rely on trusted friends and family to be part of their wedding parties. It is an honor to be asked to participate in the ceremony and share



Own the memories,
Rent everything else.



RED HAT
RENTALS

www.redhatrentals.com

Tables • Chairs • Linens • Tents • Dishes • Flatware
Candelabras • Drink Machines • Chandeliers • And much more

341 I-45 West, Fairfield 903.389.8665 • 3210 W. Oak Street, Palestine 903.729.3400 • 951 N. Loop 7, Athens 903.677.3850

Wedding Guide



State-of-the-art Event Center boasts 20,000 square feet of entertainment space.



Spacious veranda, full sized catering kitchen, bridal room, expansive main hall and both large and intimate rooms for rent.

Located in historic Corsicana, a picturesque town just off of Interstate 45 and within 30 minutes of Interstate 35. Centrally located for Waco, Ennis, Waxahachie, Athens, Fairfield, Teague, Mexia and all towns in between.

**Book Your Event With Us;
Your Event Is Our Business!**



To reserve contact

Holly Martinez

I.O.O.F. Event Center Director

Bus: 903-641-6607

Email: events@ioofeventcenter.com

I.O.O.F. Event Center

601 N. 45th Street (corner of 45th & 2nd)

Corsicana, Texas

Find us on Facebook!

Popular wedding

Photography packages

Capturing the memorable moments of a wedding is a necessity. Hiring a talented photographer is an important component of wedding preparations. The best way to preserve a wedding day for years to come is through photographs and videography.

The Knot 2022 Real Weddings Study indicates 88 percent of survey respondents hired photographers for their weddings, and the average cost for a professional photographer is around \$2,600.

When couples begin to vet local photographers, they quickly will learn that many photographers bundle their services into packages. Each package will contain some standard offerings, which typically expand as the price goes up. Although each photographer will do things a little differently, here is a generalized idea of what wedding photography packages may entail.

Base photo package

The base package likely will include the services of one photographer and potentially a helper. The photographer will be available for a predetermined period of time to capture both the ceremony and the reception. This package will include an agreed upon number of edited proofs, of which the couple can choose a specific number that will be processed for viewing, sharing or printing. The photographer may sign over print rights, or you may need to use them exclusively for prints depending on the package and price. Proofs and processed photos typically are shared through an online link.

Intermediate photo package

An intermediate photo package will build on the base and will include additional services. The photographer may take photos at a set number of alternative locations. This can be advantageous if you'd like to take photos at a nearby park or seaside location. This package also may extend how long the photographer will be with you, with some arriving early to take "getting dressed" photographs.

Intermediate packages may include a full printed and bound wedding album for the couple, and print rights to even more processed photos in an online gallery for sharing. This package also may allow couples to share the gallery with others so they can view and print their own photos.

Advanced photo package

A soup-to-nuts photography package is often the most expensive and extensive package a photographer offers. It may include an all-day commitment from the photographer and an assistant, unlimited locations for photo shoots, exclusive print rights to the couple for any photos that have been captured and processed, and other perks like extensive retouching and photo editing of photographs.

More inclusive packages also may include engagement photo sessions and even after-wedding bookings for post-honeymoon or first anniversary shoots.

In addition to online galleries and a printed wedding album, an advanced package may feature albums for parents and matted and framed portraits. If the photographer contracts with a videographer, packages also may combine photo and video services and share the digital files accordingly.

Photographers often have various packages that can accommodate couples working on budgets of various sizes.



The wedding party lends helping hands

It's been said it takes a village to raise a child, and it also can take one to plan a wedding. Despite most weddings only filling one day, many, many weeks of planning and various tasks are involved in creating magical and memorable events.

Bridal parties can prove invaluable during the wedding planning process and the wedding day if couples utilize their talents. According to the wedding resource The Knot, a typical wedding party consists of roughly four to five people on each side. That means around 10 individuals can provide extra help a happy couple needs. Here's how the wedding party can assist future newlyweds.

- Assisting with choosing vendors

- Helping to pick out attire
- Putting together invitations
- Planning and hosting parties, like the engagement party, shower, and bachelor/ bachelorette parties
- Helping the bride and/or groom dress
- Participating in photography sessions
- Serving as moral support for the couple, and helping to tame nerves or serving as a sounding board

Two members of the wedding party may go above and beyond the others in their roles. These include the maid /matron of honor and the best man, traditionally. However, there are no rules dictating that a bride needs to have a woman as her close attendant

nor the groom a man. These roles can go to whomever the couple desires, regardless of gender, and the title can reflect couples' choices.

The maid /matron/man of honor is the bride's right-hand person. This person handles many wedding day details, including signing the marriage license and helping the bride get situated before walking down the aisle.

The best man/woman acts as the groom's personal advisor and assistant. This person is a master of ceremonies and presides over the other groomspeople. He or she will be the other signature on the wedding license.

Both of these individuals will provide

speeches at the wedding reception and may also offer words at other events throughout the wedding-related activities.

The parents of the couple also will enjoy roles of prominence during the wedding. They can provide support and share their own experiences. They may help offset the costs of rehearsal dinners or other pre-wedding parties. Parents may share their own special toasts and can participate in wedding day traditions, such as first dances.

Wedding party members can ask the couple which tasks they can manage and the bride and groom should feel comfortable delegating to alleviate some wedding planning stress.

Wedding Guide

Clever ways to invite people to be in your wedding party

Plenty of love and effort goes into coordinating a dream wedding. Although the happy couple garners most of the spotlight on such momentous occasions, they're not the only ones who will feature prominently in the wedding.

The wedding party is made up of bridesmaids, groomsmen, a ring bearer, a flower girl, ushers, and other guests of honor, such as a couple's parents.

Choosing who will be included in the wedding party requires forethought and should not be rushed. The rule of thumb is to ask roughly a year to eight months before the wedding so those asked have time to prepare. When that time comes, these fun ideas can help couples invite loved ones to be in the wedding party with style.

-- **Say it with a treat.** Remember those heart-shaped candies that come out at Valentine's Day that are printed with various sentiments, like "Be mine"? Replicate the idea by giving prospective wedding party members cookies iced to look like tuxedos and bridesmaid gowns with a phrase like "Will you?"

-- **Give personalized drinkware.** Whether it's wine glasses or flasks, have drinkware engraved with the names of who is being asked so that everyone can toast when they say

yes. In the event that someone declines, that person will still have a thoughtful memento.

-- **Make custom scratch-off cards.** This is one gamble that is likely to pay off when you present loved ones and friends with scratch-off tickets that reveal the question, "Will you be my bridesmaid/groomsman?"

-- **Put together swag bags.** Take a page out of fashion shows or celebrity parties and package some luxury items into gift bags for those special people you want to stand by your side on your wedding day. High-end grooming products, jewelry, electronics accessories, and more can be great gifts for those who are likely to be in your wedding party.

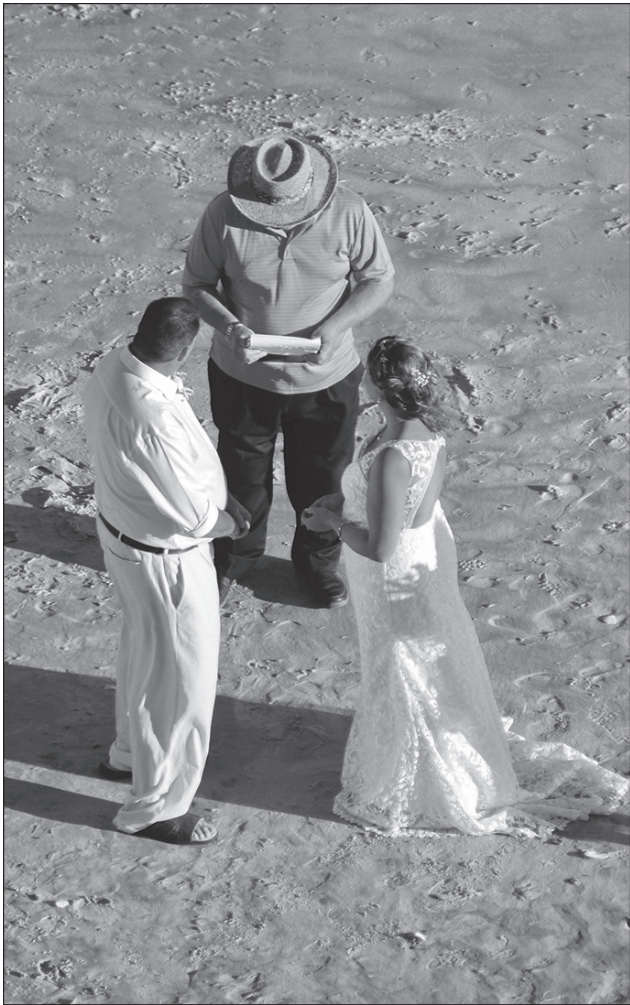
-- **Gift robes or T-shirts:** Plan ahead for staged and coordinated photos by purchasing matching robes or T-shirts for all the besties in the wedding party. Those who are up for having a good time will have no problem wearing the matching outfits when out for wedding-related events.

-- **Fill balloons with confetti and messages.** Ask friends and loved ones to pop ballons to reveal your request that



they be in the wedding party.

Engaged couples may have many close friends and loved ones they want to stand by their side during the wedding. There are plenty of fun ways to ask them to be part of the celebration.



Can anyone be a wedding officiant?

Though it's been awhile since the poll was conducted, in 2017 the data-tracking firm Wedding Report surveyed couples who had recently tied the knot, and one of the questions participants answered concerned who officiated their weddings. Roughly 25 percent of couples indicated a friend or family member had served as their wedding officiant, and that figure pales in comparison to older studies, one of which determined the number was around 40 percent. But anyone who has attended more than one wedding in recent years has likely noticed that it's no longer unique to see laypersons officiate a wedding instead of more traditional officiants, which historically has meant clergy or other individuals with some formal affiliation with a house of worship. Though local or provincial governments may have their own unique rules and restrictions, in many places it's easy and open to anyone to become a licensed officiant. Couples who want a friend or family member to officiate their wedding are urged to make that request well in advance of their wedding, which can assure the person has ample time to complete the licensing process.

Time-honored wedding traditions

Weddings are special events that celebrate two individuals' love for one another. Weddings bring together friends and family to witness couples share vows and devote their lives to each other.

Wedding guests recognize that certain components are commonplace in ceremonies and receptions. Perhaps you were once a ring bearer or caught the bouquet? There's a rich history behind the traditions that feature prominently at many weddings. Here's a look at traditions past and present and the meaning behind these customs.

Marriage

The custom of marriage can be traced back thousands of years to when hunters and gatherers started coming together to form societies and farm land. In order to ensure the success of communities, couplings were developed to produce offspring and maintain households.

Tie the knot

Getting married is sometimes referred to as "tying the knot." This stems from the custom of "handfasting," which is a common practice among various cultures around the world, and notably in ancient Rome. The bride and groom's hands are tied together for the duration of the ceremony, not to be released until the wedding is made official. This isn't something you see too often at modern weddings, but can be something unique couples may want to consider.

Bridal bouquet

A bouquet of beautiful flowers is held by the bride on her wedding day. Roses, orchids, peonies, and other fragrant blooms are often included, but in ancient times brides' bouquets were likely made of herbs. According to the resource Minted Weddings, these aromatic herbs were used to ward off evil spirits.

Veil

Evil spirits also were the basis for the wearing of bridal veils, as they were utilized to hide brides from these miscreants. Veils now are more style than substance.

Bridesmaids

In ancient Rome, bridesmaids were tasked with protecting the bride. They wore the same dresses as the bride to confuse evil spirits from finding the soon-to-be-betrothed and cursing her. Today's bridesmaids are less decoy and more helper. They may wear similar dresses to the bride and one another, but they aren't trying to fool any spirits.

Tossing rice

Rice and grains were long regarded as signs of prosperity and fertility, according to the gifting company Personal Creations. Therefore, couples were showered with rice to ensure their good fortune. Consumption of uncooked rice has been proven to be detrimental to some wildlife, so rice has now been widely replaced with bubbles or birdseed.

Cutting the cake

At the reception, many couples link hands and make the first cut in their wedding cakes. Wedding Wire says it's a tradition that around 80 percent of wedding couples partake in. It is believed this tradition symbolizes the couple's first official task performed together, and marks the promise to support and take care of one another throughout the marriage. However, in the past, brides were responsible for cutting the wedding cake alone and distributed slices to guests to aid in fertility, according to BakingNook.com.

Weddings are full of traditions with interesting histories.



Accessories, Etc.

115 E. Commerce
Fairfield, Texas

• Bridal Registry Headquarters

Tuesday - Friday
9:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Saturday
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

903-389-3018

Wedding Registry available

Withrow Furniture carries best-selling brands such as Ashley, Sealy, and many more.

We also accommodate special orders, so that you get EXACTLY what you want!

WITHROW
FURNITURE COMPANY
Est. 1930
Teague, Texas

415 Main Street, Teague
254-739-2574 • withrowfurniture.com
Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Saturday 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Sam's ORIGINAL
RESTAURANT & BBQ

Getting Married?

When you need a catering service that is guaranteed to satisfy your guests, give us a call!

For options and pricing, call us at 903-389-SAMS (7267)

390 E. I-45 in Fairfield, Texas
SamsOriginal.com

Wedding Guide

The pros and cons of two popular reception meal options

Couples planning a wedding undoubtedly know that the food and drinks served at wedding receptions are major factors in how much guests enjoy the celebration. After all, hungry, thirsty guests will not be having fun.

According to the resource Wedding Forward, the national average cost per head at wedding receptions in the United States is \$90. The wedding planning resource The Knot estimates that roughly 29 percent of a couple’s budget will go toward catering.

With so much money on the line and hungry guests to feed, couples face many decisions regarding their wedding day menus. Among the first questions a catering hall manager may ask is which type of dinner service couples prefer. Venues typically offer buffet and plated options, and the following can help couples choose which style is for them.

Plated service

A plated meal consists of all guests being seated and served a formal dinner, which usually includes an appetizer and entrée. A key benefit of this type of meal is that it ensures everyone eats at the same time. Guests sometimes pre-select their food options on the R.S.V.P, which means that catering halls have advanced knowledge of food allergies or special needs. Or they select from a predetermined menu at the reception. Plated dinners are efficient and can keep the wedding running on schedule.

Plated service features only a select number of meal

options, which can be a negative for some couples. Guests cannot sample a few other things as they might like with a buffet. More servers are needed for plated service, so staffing costs may be more for this option than they are for buffet service.

Buffet service

A wedding reception buffet features various foods in chafing dishes at a single centralized buffet station. While guests sometimes serve themselves, typically waitstaff spoon portions onto guests’ plates. There tends to be more variety with a buffet, and this option may feel more relaxing as well. Buffet meals encourage guests to mingle and provides an opportunity to sample different foods.

Some people don’t relish carrying dishes of food back to tables and risking spillage on formal clothing. Buffet also is less formal than a plated dinner. Buffets may even be more costly, since catering halls need to have a greater amount of food ready. There may be long wait times for buffet as well.

Additional options

These are not the only meal services available. A new trend for weddings is food station service. This is similar to a buffet, but has different stations situated throughout the room to avoid bottlenecks.

Food stations can be themed, with Mexican offerings at one station and French delicacies at another.

Some couples choose to eschew traditional dinners altogether. In the event of a wedding that takes place early or late in the day, a brunch or even a simple cocktail party with passed bites may be preferable.

Couples should consider food service as they plan their weddings, and choose an option that fits their wedding budgets and visions.



7 reasons *to hire a wedding planner*

The average cost of a wedding in 2022 in the United States came out to roughly \$30,000, according to a survey of 12,000 couples compiled by wedding planning site The Knot. The survey also found New Jersey and Massachusetts topped the list of most costly states to tie the knot.

When committing to as significant a financial investment as a wedding, couples may want to do all they can to ensure their big day is a hit. There are many advantages to hiring a professional wedding planner, who can take the stress out of a process that should be fun.

- 1. Serves as a sounding board:** Wedding planners can take couples’ ideas and turn them into reality. Seasoned planners know how to help a couple’s vision come alive.
- 2. Lightens the responsibility load:** A wedding planner takes time-consuming responsibilities off couples’ plates. These can include scheduling appointments, dealing with vendors, conducting walk-throughs of locations, and more. This can be a big asset to couples who work full-time.
- 3. Offers a wealth of knowledge:** A good wedding planner has years of experience handling weddings and will know which aspects will work and which may not. Also, a wedding planner can likely handle tasks expeditiously, while couples with no experience planning a wedding may not work so quickly.
- 4. Helps couples save money:** Knowledge and experience also comes with contacts in the industry that can help couples save money. The planner likely knows where to get the best deals, and may be privy to insider pricing and other discounts.
- 5. Serves as a buffer:** While everyone wants weddings to be incident-free, conflicts can and do arise. A wedding planner can serve as a mediator or run interference between challenging family members or even vendors.
- 6. Reduces overall stress levels:** There’s a measurable difference between the stress experienced by couples who don’t hire wedding planners and those who do. The main goal of a wedding is for it to be memorable and for couples and their guests to enjoy themselves. By leaving the planning to someone else, couples can arrive at the big day feeling more relaxed and ready to have fun.
- 7. There is an extra person around:** Wedding planers can field questions or handle tipping and other tasks on the wedding day, freeing up time for couples to have fun.

Wedding planners can provide support, expertise, company, and industry contacts to make weddings go smoothly.

Make Memories *with mother-son dances*

There is nothing quite like the love a mother has for her children. When it comes time for a son to get married, Mom has already seen him through plenty of milestone moments like birthdays, proms, graduations, and other achievements that showcased his transition from boy to man.



A wedding is a momentous occasion in a family’s life. During a wedding, couples opt to show their love and gratitude to their parents or guardians in many ways, including through traditional dances. The mother-son dance gives the groom an opportunity to honor the special woman in his life who saw him through thick and thin. Much like the father-daughter dance, the mother-son dance traditionally takes place during the reception after the newlyweds take their own first turn around the dance floor. However, this spotlight dance also can occur at other times during the festivities.

Typically the groom chooses a song with the right sentiments, but the decision also can be a joint effort. There are no right or wrong answers when it comes to song selection. However, for those who need some inspiration, certain songs are tried-and-true options.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| ♥ “How Sweet It Is,” James Taylor | ♥ “The First Lady in My Life,” Paul Todd |
| ♥ “You Raise Me Up,” Josh Groban | ♥ “Because You Loved Me,” Celine Dion |
| ♥ “Time After Time,” Cyndi Lauper | ♥ “YouÖre My Best Friend,” Queen |
| ♥ “Letter to My Mother,” Edwin McCain | ♥ “Thank You Mom,” Good Charlotte |
| ♥ “Mother Like Mine,” The Band Perry | ♥ “The Wind Beneath My Wings,” Bette Midler |
| ♥ “God Only Knows,” The Beach Boys | ♥ “Forever Young,” Rod Stewart |
| ♥ “Beautiful Boy,” John Lennon | ♥ “YouÖll Be in My Heart,” Phil Collins |
| ♥ “Wonderful Tonight,” Eric Clapton | |

Time management tips for your wedding day

As any married couple can attest, a wedding day has a tendency to fly by. Couples have much to do on the day they tie the knot, which can make the day feel like a whirlwind.

Certain skills can come in especially handy on a wedding day, and the ability to manage time is certainly one of them. As their big day draws closer, couples can employ these time management tips to slow the day down a little bit.

- Create and distribute a schedule.** A schedule can ensure the happy couple and all members of the bridal party know when and where they need to be at certain times during the day. Include all pertinent information on the schedule, including when and where hair and makeup appointments begin, when transportation to and from the ceremony and reception site will arrive and, of course, the start time for the ceremony. A printed copy can help, but a digital copy sent via text or email can guarantee the schedule is accessible via smartphone at all times during the day.
- Collaborate with your photographer in advance** of your wedding day. Couples can streamline wedding day photography sessions by collaborating with their photographer in advance. During these sessions, identify the bridal party shots you want to take and then create a schedule of photos so all party members know where they need to be and when. Some couples choose to schedule bridal party photoshoots before the ceremony, while others prefer theirs after the couple has made it official. Regardless of which option couples prefer, schedule these photos so no time is wasted finding bridal party members.
- Don’t forget to set aside time to eat.** Anything can derail a wedding day schedule if it’s forgotten when couples devise their initial plan for how the day will unfold. Couples might be less inclined to forget hair and makeup appointments and photo sessions because such components are integral to wedding planning. But couples should not forget to leave time for themselves and their bridal party to eat. Schedule a breakfast for all bridal party members (separate ones if couples insist on avoiding each other until the ceremony) to ensure no one sleeps in and throws off the day’s timeline. Include time to eat lunch if the ceremony is in late afternoon or early evening. If you forget to schedule time to eat, the timeline will almost certainly be thrown off when everyone gets hungry and requires some sustenance.
- Go over schedules with your vendors.** In the weeks prior to your wedding, reach out to your vendors to confirm the day’s timeline. Do this prior to handing out a schedule to your bridal party so no one is confused if any last-minute changes are made.

Couples have much to manage on their wedding days. Perhaps no component is more important to manage effectively than time.

Wedding Guide

You've made a huge investment in that beautiful wedding gown...

Now preserve it in
Heirloom Quality for the next generation.

Celebrating 28 Years of
Serving Freestone County

GOOD NEIGHBOR

LAUNDRY & CLEANERS

903.389.6206

118 W. Commerce, Fairfield

254.739.5402

254 Hwy. 84 West, Teague

Reggie and Monica Davis - Owners
Gladly serving our
community for 29 years.

Wedding day

transportaion options

Weddings involve many moving pieces that must all come together successfully for one glorious day. Transportation is among the details that need to be sorted in advance, particularly when wedding parties and guests must move between ceremony and reception sites.

It is customary for the wedding party, which tends to include a couple's parents, to be provided a ride to both the ceremony and reception. Furthermore, couples may have to figure out what to do when the wedding is over, particularly if the reception and ceremonies are a good distance apart. Here are a few transportation options couples can consider.

Limousines

Limousines are classic modes of transportation to and from momentous events. They typically feature seating to accommodate six or more people. Limousines typically bring the wedding party to the ceremony, then wait for the duration and transport everyone to the reception. Then the cars will leave from there unless other arrangements are made.



Party bus

Many couples opt for a party bus to transport themselves and/or their wedding parties. Party buses are larger than limousines, and as their name implies, often establish a festive atmosphere. Couples may ask their wedding party members to meet at the ceremony location, and then a party bus will take everyone to the reception location after vows are exchanged. Party buses often play music and have refreshments available. They can be entertaining on long rides.

Shuttle bus

Couples can consider providing a shuttle to and from the airport or between other points to facilitate ease for the wedding party and guests. A shuttle can take individuals from the reception site to a nearby hotel if overnight stays have been booked. A shuttle can bring certain individuals back to the ceremony site, a transportation hub or another centralized location where they can get to their own private vehicles and back home. The couple also will need transportation home or to embark on the honeymoon, so it's helpful to have reliable taxi service numbers or rideshare options at the ready.

Transportation is not a glamorous part of wedding planning, but it is a necessity that should be ironed out well in advance.

Helpful tips

for writing wedding vows

The exchange of wedding vows is a key component of a wedding ceremony and sometimes helps to ensure the marriage is binding in accordance with the faith of the participants. Vows also may be exchanged in service of tradition. According to the wedding resource Zola, vows are not a legal necessity for marriage and some cultures do not use them. Still, many couples like to recite vows during their weddings.

Couples have various options pertaining to the vows they share. In religious ceremonies, vows may be predetermined as part of the requirements and rituals of that faith and religious texts. Individuals also may choose to read romantic verses from poetry. Another option is to write one's own vows.

When drafting vows, here are some guidelines to follow.

-- **Utilize a template.** Scour the internet for resources on writing vows. You'll likely find sample vows or even templates where you can fill in information if you do not know where to begin.

-- **Utilize memories of when you met.** Your vows can include special anecdotes or stories of time spent in the early days when you first knew this was the person with whom you would spend your life.

-- **Explain who this person is to you.** Tell the audience what it is about this person that has you smitten. Is he or she your partner in crime? Confidante? Best friend? Or all of the above?

-- **Share what you are pledging.** Write out exactly what you are vowing to your special someone. Be definitive and draw from your personal experiences. For example, "I vow to support you each time you adopt another shelter dog." "I promise to not hog the covers." "I vow to warm your toes on cold evenings." Make it personal, heartfelt and humorous.

-- **Say you'll be there.** At the heart of vows is a promise that you'll be around no matter what life throws at you. This is a safe sentiment to include in your vows, and likely one your future spouse and other guests will come to expect.

-- **Keep things brief.** There is no need to write a novel for your vows, which may reassure you if you're nervous about the right wording and speaking in front of an audience. Outline the most important points you want to share and build on those sentiments.

-- **Reflect on the future.** Wrap up your vows by noting your excitement about what the future may bring, whether that is a family, travel or another adventure.

Wedding vows are traditional components of many weddings. Couples easily can write their own vows to personalize the ceremony even further.

Did you know?

A number of variables affect how much engaged couples will spend on their weddings. Personal preferences, location and the season in which couples get married are just some of the factors that can affect the final cost of a wedding. However, one aspect couples can count on regarding wedding spending is the reception will likely require the most significant financial investment. The Knot 2022 Real Weddings Study found that the average cost of a wedding in 2022 was \$30,000. The study also found that the biggest investment couples make is the venue. Couples indicated they spent about 37 percent of their overall budget on a wedding venue. Though some couples may spend more than that and others may spend less, engaged couples currently planning their weddings should know that the cost of the venue where they will tie the knot will likely end up requiring the most significant investment of any component related to their wedding.



Palestine's Oldest Jewelry & Gift Store

Quality Jewelry Selections

- * Exclusive retailer for Art Carved and Benchmark Wedding Bands
- * Allison Kaufman Fashion Jewelry
- * Carla Designs Earrings
- * Seiko, Pulsar, Citizen Watches



Bridal & Baby Gift Registry

We offer the greatest selection of the finest names available including:

- * Wedgewood * Lenox/Gorham * Mikasa
- * Royal Doulton * Spode * Royal Worcester
- * Block/Atlantis * Reed & Barton * Oneida
- * Towle * Wilton Armetale * Wallace * Noritake
- * Waterford Crystal & Flatware * Lundt Silversmith
- * Arthur Court Designs * International Silver



Certified Bridal Consultant
Linda Dickens, CWC



We Offer Engraving On:
Glass • Wood Plastic
Metal • Brass
and more!

Our engraving system allows us to personalize flat, deep, round and odd-shaped items using your logo or emblem or our computer applications. See us for personalizing & customizing.

Quality Repairs & Custom Designs



- * Remounting
- * Pearl/Bead Stringing
- * Engraving
- * Watch Repair
- * Appraisals
- * Eye Glass Repair

100 W. Oak Downtown
903-729-8796

Tues-Fri: 10-5
Sat. by appointment for repairs pickup and drop off, and custom design consultation
Closed Sun & Mon

Visa - Mastercard - Discover
American Express - 36 mo. Financing



Charles E. Dickens
fine jewelry
dickensjewelry.com



Wedding Guide



VAN'S
CUSTOM JEWELERS

600 West 7th Avenue | Corsicana, TX 75110 | 903.874.4700 | www.VansJewelry.com

Large Seletion of Bridal Jewelry and Wedding Bands

Fine Jewelry & Watches | Custom Design
Jewelry Repair | Watch Repair
NO CREDIT NEEDED | Layaway
0% Interest Financing Options



Tips to plan a perfect honeymoon

Couples have much to look forward to when planning their weddings. In addition to the momentous occasion when they say “I do,” couples can look ahead with excitement as they anticipate spending time with family and friends in a fun setting.

Though the wedding day is the focal point of couples’ planning efforts, the post-wedding honeymoon also merits ample consideration. A honeymoon is the first trip many couples take together after tying the knot, and many will never forget this special excursion. As couples pore over the details of wedding planning, they may want to consider these tips to ensure their honeymoon is a trip to remember for a lifetime.

- Identify your dream trip.** There are no rules regarding honeymoons. Though couples’ budgets and professional obligations may factor into where they can go and how long their honeymoon can be, couples can discuss their dream trips and then determine if they can make those dreams come true on their honeymoon. Couples who have always aspired to backpack through Europe should consider that a possible honeymoon trip. If a food tour of Italy is on couples’ bucket list, then investigate how feasible that might be for your honeymoon.
- Stay up on current events.** It can be easy for couples to get lost in the weeds while planning their weddings and miss what’s going on across the globe. However, knowledge of current events can be vital when planning a honeymoon. Faraway and exotic locales may seem tailor-made for a honeymoon, but that’s only the case if such destinations are not plagued by civil unrest, conflict, natural disasters, or other events that can affect how safe it is to visit such places. The U.S. Department of State maintains a free, easily accessible list of travel advisories at travel.state.gov. The Government of Canada maintains a similar list at travel.gc.ca. Couples are urged to visit these sites before booking their honeymoon, particularly if they hope to travel internationally.
- Consider amenities and all-inclusive packages.** All-inclusive packages can be a great deal, particularly for couples who want their honeymoon to be all about relaxing at a single resort destination. All-inclusive packages cover the cost of food and most beverages, making these options both convenient and budget-friendly. When going this route, couples also should decide which amenities they want to access on their trip. Access to a gym and/or spa, activities like parasailing, and other perks are just some of the potential amenities couples can look for as they choose a honeymoon destination.

--**Collaborate.** A honeymoon may be the first trip couples take after tying the knot, and it can lay the foundation for future collaborative efforts. Planning travel is not always so easy, so couples can work together and make any necessary concessions so each person gets what they want out of the trip.

Some simple strategies can help couples plan and enjoy a honeymoon they are likely to remember for a lifetime.



How to find your wedding florist

- It is essential for couples to spend time vetting potential florists to find one who will produce their desired vision at a price that fits their budget. These guidelines can make the process go more smoothly.
- **Establish your theme early on.** Floral arrangements will complement and enhance other elements of the wedding, including color scheme and the wedding theme. If your wedding theme ties into a specific season, you will work with the florist to find blooms and other pieces that coordinate. For example, winter weddings with white, ice blue and silver color schemes may coordinate with white ranunculus flowers, dahlias, dusty miller foliage, and viburnum berries.
 - **Bring swatches and photographs** to consultations. It is easier to explain color palettes to a florist with examples in hand. Show the florist the types of arrangements you prefer and have actual fabric swatches from bridesmaid gowns or groomsmen vests so that colors can be complemented.
 - **Create a list of desired items.** Florists may sell items a la carte or have packages of common floral pieces for wedding celebrations. Types of floral arrangements include bridal bouquet, bridesmaids’ bouquets, maid of honor bouquet, corsages for mothers/grandmothers, boutonnieres for groomsmen and fathers/grandfathers, flower girl headpiece, petals to sprinkle, table centerpieces, altar arrangements, pew or chair decorations, and cake decorations.
 - **Go easy on aroma.** Tread lightly when selecting blooms that have strong aromas. They may be beautiful, but many people are sensitive to smells. Allergies also may be exacerbated by flowers with strong aromas. Discuss options with the florist before proceeding.
 - **Explain your budget.** Research the average cost of floral arrangements and let the florist know what you can afford. This can help the florist narrow down options or make substitutions that fit your theme and your budget.
- Couples can take certain steps as they choose floral arrangements for their weddings. Cost should not be the only factor in the decision, even though it is an important one.

Creations Flowers & Gifts

Special Occasion Arrangements, Flowers, Gifts & more

Creating beautiful bouquets and arrangements for your special day!

903.389.5990

305 E. Commerce
Fairfield, Texas

Gail Farish, Owner

SPECIAL LOOKS for SPECIAL EVENTS

Call to make an appointment!

MERLE NORMAN

COSMETIC STUDIO & BOUTIQUE

309 E. Milam
Mexia, Texas 76667

254.562.2582

Monday Saturday
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

LET'S GET YOU THERE!

Begin Your Adventure TODAY

with the help of your land and cruise experts.

Culinary Adventures | All Inclusive Resorts
Beaches - Cruises - Tours - & more!
Alaska, Mediterranean, Europe, Australia, Carribean

I am excited to be your personal vacation planner.

Travel is my passion, and my area of expertise.

Let's talk soon!

kimsmithtravel.com
903-907-2818

CRUISE PLANNERS
MORE THAN JUST CRUISES

Call Kim Smith, your Travel Advisor.
find a tour, find a cruise, find a resort
ANYWHERE in the WORLD!