



WEDDING DATE, WEDDING PLANNER, VENUE AND OFFICIANT

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“

One is very crazy when in love

- Sigmund Freud

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WEDDING DATE

Before any officiators or venues can be booked, the wedding date has to be decided, so this is the time when it is important to think through:

- Are any of your intended guests seriously ill, getting married themselves, pregnant or having a milestone birthday?
- Are there overseas guests to consider - therefore when are the cheapest flights?
- Are you planning an inside or an outside wedding? And a northern or southern hemisphere honeymoon?
- Weddings on Friday or Sunday are becoming popular as more time can be spent with your guests, plus discounts can be negotiated with venues and other services.
- When setting the date and time of the ceremony, keep in mind daylight hours for a photo shoot after the marriage and before the reception.

Many brides picture a summer or spring wedding but don't disregard winter or autumn as they have their advantages and usually cost less.

Wedding locations and venues book up very fast in the popular season, sometimes a year or two in advance, so it is probably a good idea to have a few back-up dates for your ceremony and reception.

WEDDING PLANNER

The average wedding can take 250 hours to plan.

You can either do it yourself or seek a wedding planner.

Planning for your wedding as well as continuing with everyday life and work can become stressful and this is when hiring a wedding planner can save you time and money - this person can take a load off your shoulders and often has a great list of excellent contacts for services you will need at your chosen wedding location.

It is very important to find a wedding planner who will listen to your ideas as well as sharing their unique ideas with you.

Questions you may like to ask the wedding planner are:

- Have they worked closely with other wedding professionals in this locality?
- How many weddings have they organised?
- Is there a local wedding booklet available?
- How much can they help you with?
- Can you talk with the last two clients?
- What are their payment and cancellation policies?

VENUE

Decide when and where you'd like your ceremony and reception to be held.

The place where you declare your love for each other

should be special, maybe where you first met, but it does need to be accessible for guests.

Sometimes choosing a single venue where both the ceremony and catered reception can be held can reduce stress levels, as the guests only have one venue to find, thus minimising travel.

If you want an outdoor ceremony it is important to have an indoor option as the weather can be unpredictable. It does require a lot of planning as shelter from rain or heat is most important for your guests. Outdoor weddings can be held almost anywhere, for example in zoos, wineries, beaches or gardens. Boats are also popular wedding sites.

Couples who love adventure and who want a personalised and romantic wedding for just the two of them can opt for skydiving, scuba diving, horseback, hot air ballooning, surfing, skiing, biking or parachuting.

Hotels, golf clubs, restaurants, weddings-at-home or destination weddings are all other options.

Popular venues book out early so once the date is decided the venue should be contacted and booked immediately.

Questions you may like to ask the venue manager:

- Can the marriage and reception be held here? And on your date?
- What are the indoor / outdoor options?
- What is the cost of the venue?
- How many people does the venue hold?
- How many people will the dance floor hold?
- Are confetti or rose petals allowed?
- After the ceremony where would the guests have drinks while the official photos are being taken?
- What are the bar policies?
- Is there suitable parking for all guests vehicles but especially for elderly or disabled?
- When do they require final number of guests?
- What is their cancellation policy?
- How much help does the venue offer to help plan your ceremony and reception and what services can it provide?
- Overall, do you get a good vibe and feel absolutely happy with the venue?

OFFICIANT

There are two main directions you can take when choosing an officiant - civil or religious. The choice is usually quite clear - you are either religious or not.

You can be married by a minister, a rabbi, mayor, judge, ship's captain or a celebrant.

Choosing the right person to marry you can be time consuming. Ask around before you shop around and hopefully have one recommended by a friend or relative.

It is very important that you both get on well with your officiant. It needs to be someone you feel very comfortable with, someone you trust and someone who you feel cares about your wedding as much as you do as he /she will be sharing a very personal time with you as you plan your ceremony and show your love and commitment to each other.

Questions you may like to ask a marriage officiant are:

- How long a ceremony would they recommend?
- What is their fee and when should it be paid? Or is there a donation required? Are there any other fees not included with the basic service e.g. travel expenses?
- Do they have prepared readings or vows that you can choose from?
- May you write your own vows and prepare poems or other readings?
- Is your own music allowed?
- How many ceremonies have they officiated at?
- Do they have photos with past clients?
- May you speak to a past client?
- Do they have any other weddings booked on the same day?
- What will they be wearing? It is very important that you like how the person officiating at your service dresses, as they will be in all your ceremony photos.
- What is the procedure for completing the documentation?

The Celebrants Association of New Zealand website is at www.celebranz.org.nz

There will be lots of questions to ask and decisions to be made when you start planning your wedding, but once you have settled on the date, the venue and the officiant, you should find that the rest falls into place that much more easily.

Do consider using a wedding planner, and most of all, enjoy! *f*

the
wedding angel

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