

Destination Wedding Timeline & Checklist

Destination Weddings are weddings that take place away from where the bride and groom live. They happen in some of the most exotic and wonderful places in the world. These types of non-traditional weddings provide the bride and groom with dreamy settings, while doubling as an opportunity for guests to experience a place they have never been before. But, because destination weddings mean traveling far away from home, the bridal couple and their guests may need additional time for all planning components. They must also apply a little more due diligence on research side than they would do for a traditional wedding.

Following is a destination wedding timeline which can be modified to suit your individual destination wedding vision.

12 Months or more

- Create a wedding binder. Keep all ideas, swatches, photos, correspondence, etc. and keep it in an easily accessible place.
- Set a budget and stick to it.
- Consider purchasing wedding insurance to protect your special day.
- Compile a reasonable guest list. Don't over invite assuming guests won't come because of travel. Invite anyone you want to have present (budget permitting) and allow the guest to decide if they can/want to travel.
- If you are getting married outside of the country, consider hiring a wedding consultant who specializes in destination weddings.

11 Months prior

- Set up a profile of the type of destination wedding you want
- Research, research, research locations before you book. Note distance from airport to hotel, weather, seasons and time of year (consider hurricanes) amenities, etc.
- Settle on a wedding date.
- Send save the date cards. (optional).
- Verify marriage residency requirements.
- Research travel and accommodation options for guests
- Consider visiting the destination to be sure this is THE spot for you.

10 months prior

- Make destination wedding planning trip, if necessary
- Set up meetings with any stateside wedding professional who may be traveling to your wedding locale.

9 Months prior

- Start putting together any legal documents required to marry at the destination wedding location.
- Make travel arrangements to the destination wedding site, if possible.
- Book the lodging accommodations for wedding attendants

- Complete itinerary for tours or any other extra curricular activities for guests, if applicable
- Make your own travel arrangements for the wedding

8 Months prior

- Register for gifts
- Determine style, formality and colors of wedding
- Consider style of stationery, invitations

7 Months prior

- Select your wedding gown
- Choose and order bridesmaids wedding dresses
- Order groom and groomsmen attire
- Shop for wedding rings

6 Months prior

- Make final selections on wedding cake baker, florists and décor, and transportation necessary.
- Work on ceremony details and buy any necessary items
- Finalize menu and wedding cake order

5 Months prior

- Purchase fiancé's gift (optional)
- Order favors (optional)
- Buy gifts for wedding attendants and parents

4 Months prior

- Finish addressing wedding invitations and mail out

3 Months prior

- Update your budget
- Review contracts again and familiarize yourself with arrival times, etc.

2 Months prior

- Start creating seating charts. Yes, it is hard but it must be done.
- Call guests who have not yet responded

1 Month prior

- Release any unnecessary rooms
- Finalize all wedding day itineraries
- Confirm travel arrangements with the hotel/resort

3 Weeks prior

- Send out emails to wedding providers who have been contracted to finalize the details.

3 Days prior

- Arrive at wedding destination
- Meet with banquet manager
- Go over details
- Bridal beauty - manicure, pedicure – no change in facial products at this time. Any change in cleansers or makeup should be done at least one month prior to the wedding.

The day of

- Relax, say “I DO” and live happily ever after!

Borrowed from www.topweddingsites.com

Your Catering Manager will...	Your Wedding Coordinator will...
<i>Answer any questions, provide event venue suggestions and act as your primary resort contact throughout the planning process.</i>	<i>Assist with etiquette and protocol for invitations, family matters, ceremony and toasts.</i>
<i>Act as menu consultant for all food and beverage selections, to achieve value for your dollar, while meeting the required contracted minimums.</i>	<i>Create a time line for your entire wedding day, including the ceremony and reception.</i>
<i>Detail your Banquet Event Order outlining the event specifics, confirm any outside equipment rentals including Patio Heaters or Market Umbrellas.</i>	<i>Work with you to organize and coordinate your ceremony rehearsal. Remind bridal party of all pertinent instructions on the wedding day.</i>
<i>Create an Estimate of Charges outlining your financial commitments and deposit schedule to the Resort.</i>	<i>Confirm details with any contracted vendors several days prior to the wedding day.</i>
<i>Establish contact with a Reservation Manager for guestroom block (if applicable), who will monitor the status of reservations.</i>	<i>Be the liaison with your family, bridal party, vendors and Resort staff.</i>
<i>Personally oversee the details of the bride and groom's room reservation.</i>	<i>Assist the Bride and bridal party with dressing, ensure delivery of corsages, bouquets and boutonnieres.</i>
<i>Oversee the setup of the ceremony and reception venues, food preparation and other Resort operations.</i>	<i>Deliver and arrange ceremony programs, place cards, favors and any personal items.</i>
<i>Ensure a seamless transition to the Resort's Banquet Manager on the day of your event.</i>	<i>Coordinate timing of ceremony and reception. i.e. cueing music, grand entrance, cake cutting, first dance etc.</i>
<i>Review your banquet checks for accuracy prior to the completion of your final bill.</i>	<i>Collect and/or store any personal items you may have brought at the conclusion of the reception. Count and collect all wedding gifts and deliver to appropriate location.</i>