Ballroom at
THE RESERVE

Wedding To-Do List

1. **Set your wedding budget. -** This is crucial before you begin booking things to know the overall picture of how much you want to spend and where. Most of the budget will go towards your venue and feeding your guests, so your guest list is the next crucial part in deciding which venue is best for you and how many people you want at your celebration.
2. **Determine your guest count. -** Many family members will give input on whom you should invite, but make sure your guest list represents you and your fiancé. A good rule of thumb is to think of those people whom you know will be in your life in 5 to 10 years from now.
3. **Book your wedding venue - we hope it's us. -** Pick the venue that represents who you are. First of all - you as a couple and then imagine throwing the best party you could ever throw in that space. How do you want your guests to feel when they walk in the door? Pay attention to your initial reactions when you walk into the space.
4. **Book your hotel room block. -** Nearby hotels can book quickly, so be sure to check in and make sure rooms are available for any out of town guests. We have one hotel right off of our parking lot and another boutique hotel partner about 5 miles away.
5. **Book your caterer. -** Since this is one of the biggest investments, it's important to get an idea of what the overall cost is and book your favorite early on. Make sure to take into account taxes and the service fee - for most caterers the service fee is 18%-20%.
6. **Book your photographer.** - This is one of only things you will take with you after the sun goes down on your wonderful day. Do your research and find someone who will capture who you are as a couple. This can be another large investment in your day but the only one that is lasting.
7. **Book your other vendors - *Florist, Planner, Officiant, DJ/ Music, etc***
8. **Purchase your wedding dress and pick bridal party dresses/suits.** - Many dress stores have long lead times, so you want to be sure to shop around and find the perfect dress for you and make sure that it will be here on time for alterations and steaming.
9. **Take Engagement Photos -** Many photographers will include this for free with a wedding booking. If you have "Save the Dates" to send out, its nice to use these photos for those announcements.
10. **Send out "Save the Dates" -** If you have a lot of out of town guests or people with weekend jobs, it is important to get your date out there and a good place to utilize those awesome engagement photos you had done.
11. **Set your bridal shower and bachelor/bachelorette party dates -** people are so wonderfully generous when anticipating the union of two people they love so make sure people can attend and get your dates on the calendar. Enjoy it and have more than one.
12. **Estimate your guest count.** It is good to have an estimated number when deciding on decor. The guest count will determine the number of centerpieces you may need. There is a little math you can do to help determine your final count. Take 2/3s of your list and then take the remaining third and divide in half and add it to the other 2/3s. If you invited 200 guests - two thirds would be 133. Then half of the other third would be 33. So your estimated guest count is around 166. I usually will tell couples who invite 200 to expect between 160-180 people to attend.

13. Decide on all your wedding decor. - Are you going to have a vendor do this or are you a DIY kind of bride? These things take time. A good rule of thumb is to do one thing every week until the wedding week. Wouldn't it be nice not to have any last minute things to pull together the week of the wedding? Then you could enjoy all those out of town guests flying in! Have your deadline be 7 days before the wedding. You will not regret it.

> **A. Possible Decor Items:** Welcome Sign, Ceremony Backdrop, Aisle Decor, Gift Table, Seating Chart, Guest Book Table, Memory Table, Centerpieces, Chargers, Wedding favors, Head Table Decor, Food Display Platters (for desserts or appetizers).

14. Design and print/order and send your wedding invitations. A lot of people forget about this exepnse. This can be more expensive than you are thinking - especially postage - you usually need two stamps for every invite. Do your research to know what size envelope and weight you need to get away with one stamp for the invite. If you do a postcard RSVP- postcard stamps are usually around 12 cents cheaper than forever stamps.

15. Obtain Marriage License/Order passport if needed for honeymoon. All cities have different rules about when to get this done. Do your research.

16. Send out Shower and Party thank you cards. The last thing you want is a pile of to-dos after the wedding is over. Do yourself a favor and get everyone to write their name and address on an envelope at the party. Then you just need the stamp and to personalize the card. This trick has been around for awhile but that's because its the best.

17. Determine order of events and responsibilities for the Wedding Day timeline. Communicate with all vendors about venue rules and timelines. It is helpful to create a contact sheet for all vendors and to share it with your venue owner/operator.

18. Create a wedding weekend itinerary for everyone involved in the festivities. I.e. rehearsal, rehearsal dinner, wedding day salon, photos, etc.

19. Create a list of photos you would like your photographer to take during the wedding and reception and in between. Make a list of family photos desired and share that list with your family so gathering people is not a burden. Put a trusted person in charge of gathering the stragglers.

20. Finalize seating chart and share it with your venue operator. Be sure to number the tables and communicate any information regarding the seating arrangement - I.e. place-cards, seating chart poster, high chairs, adding or removing chairs from a table, etc.

21. Make your rehearsal dinner arrangements. If you are booking The Ballroom at the Reserve, talk to your coordinator about having dinner catered to the ballroom free of charge so you can decorate, rehearse, and then eat and enjoy family and friends in one place.

22. Rehearse for your ceremony. Have a plan. It saves a lot of time.

23. Get a good night's sleep. If you can't sleep, do a journal entry. It tells your brain you took care of all those things on your mind and allows you to sleep.

24. Enjoy your wedding day! Even if little things do not go exactly as you had planned, it will be ok. Don't let the planning keep you from enjoying the spontaneity of the day. Take a moment during the ceremony to look out at your guests. Take a moment during the reception to not think of anything else except your life partner.

25. Relax and Enjoy the Honeymoon. Some people have a hard time letting go of the wedding day. Keep it all in perspective. Talk through the day with your new spouse. And then kick back and relax.

26. Open those gifts and cards. Send out your Thank You cards and write vendor reviews. Don't forget about all your wonderful vendors that would love to hear from you. Enjoy