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A SPECIAL PUBLICATION OF

The Clayton Tribune

The Dahlonega Nugget

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# contents

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Enoch Autry, Editor/Publisher  
Debbie Martin, Marketing Specialist

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John Bynum, Editor/Publisher  
Chauna Utterback, Marketing Specialist  
Carrie Bennett, Marketing Specialist

## The Northeast Georgian

Keith Barlow, Publisher  
Yvonne Marinelli, Marketing Specialist  
Jentry Elliott, Marketing Specialist

## WHITE COUNTY NEWS

Jerry Grillo, Editor/Publisher  
Erin Etris, Marketing Specialist

### Designers

Jimmy Eden  
David Highsmith  
Terry Hulsey

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Helpful tips for writing  
wedding vows  
**6**

Planning your  
wedding day timeline  
**12**

Curating your  
reception playlist  
**28**

Honeymoon planning  
pointers  
**46**

Unique wedding favor ideas  
**58**

Wedding day menu  
**72**

Wedding checklist  
**74**

7 reasons to hire a  
wedding planner  
**76**

Wedding etiquette  
**77**

Can't-miss photos for  
your wedding  
**78**

Advertiser Index  
**79**



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## 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. ●



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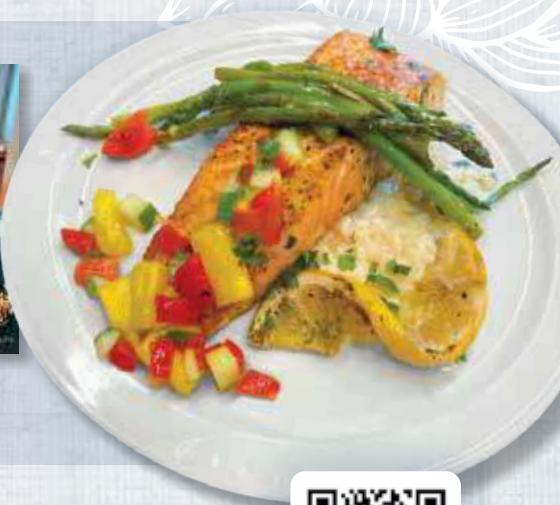
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# Planning your wedding day *timeline*

The notion that “timing is everything” is applicable in many situations, perhaps none more so than on a couple’s wedding day. Many couples spend months, if not years, planning their weddings in the hopes that all that hard work will ultimately result in a day they will cherish forever.

The sheer volume of things to do on a wedding day can make couples feel overwhelmed. Those feelings can be overcome by emphasizing timing on the day of the wedding. Wedding day timelines will differ depending on variables that are unique to each couple’s wedding, but the following are some factors to consider as couples organize the big day.

- **Venue(s):** The schedule couples adhere to on their wedding day will be greatly affected by their choice of venue. Does the venue have somewhere on premises for the couple and their party to get ready? Are the ceremony and reception being held at the same venue? Before creating a timeline, consider the location of the ceremony and reception venue(s) and the accommodations each provides. Getting to and from multiple facilities won’t be an issue if couples choose a multipurpose venue where they can get ready, tie the knot and dance the night away all in one place. Couples who will be moving from venue to venue throughout the day must build the time it takes them and their party to get about into their timelines.



- **Wedding party:** The size of the wedding party also bears consideration when planning a wedding day timeline. Large parties will require more time to get ready, and that should be factored into couples’

timelines. Large parties also may be harder to corral and transport from place to place, so couples should build some extra time into their timelines to account for that.

Small wedding parties can be easier to manage, so couples with small parties may be able to begin their timelines a little later in the day than those with large wedding parties.

- **Weather:** Weather is the most unpredictable variable couples need to plan for on their wedding days.

As the wedding day approaches, couples can monitor the day’s forecast and then make any necessary changes to account for inclement weather. Getting around in a rainstorm will likely take longer than moving about on a sunny day, so some minor tweaks to the timeline may be necessary if storms or another type of inclement weather is in the forecast.

Couples can access wedding day timeline templates on various websites. But it’s important that couples remember that their weddings are unique, so online guidelines might not be realistic. A careful consideration of a handful of variables specific to couples’ weddings can help them craft timelines that make their big day go smoothly. ●

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**Chota Falls is a destination** hosting both intimate gatherings of 25 or more and grand celebrations for up to 250. As attested by multiple positive online reviews and features on websites including The Knot, The Wedding Wire, and Cosmopolitan, a recent Google review is typical:

*“This is the most beautiful property in Georgia...The owners and the staff truly love their guests.”*



**Chota guests can experience** lush gardens, serene streams, and breathtaking mountain views over three states, each providing a most unique background for photography and an unforgettable personal experience in nature. The amenities also include spacious indoor and outdoor gathering areas, indoor and outdoor lighting, signature bonfires, pond and fountain side cozy seating, as well as charming villas for your wedding guests.

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**In 2025, Chota Falls is celebrating its 25th year** with special discounts. This unique property and caring staff continue to create lasting memories and new relationships for couples who come to celebrate their weddings and other special gatherings.



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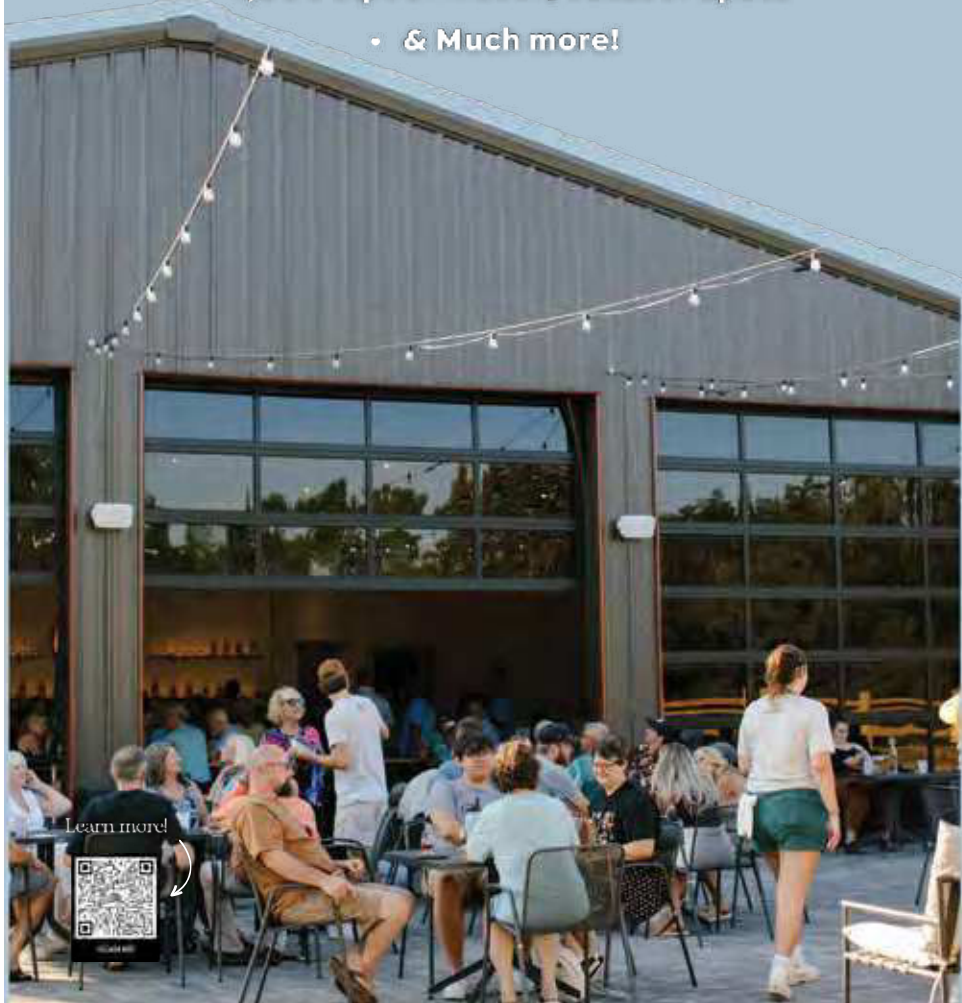


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We could tell you how lovely it is to get married at The Sautee Inn, but we thought you would rather hear it from one of our brides who tied the knot with us last fall.



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Like most brides, I worried about every detail: comfort for our guests, a smooth event, and all our requests being met. But as soon as we settled in, those nerves disappeared. The eight guest rooms were both unique and charming, combining old-world appeal with modern amenities. My bridesmaids and I spent the night before the wedding laughing and soaking in the magic, while my husband-to-be and his groomsmen enjoyed the wraparound porch overlooking the mountains.

Each morning, we woke to an incredible breakfast spread—fluffy biscuits, farm-fresh eggs, and the dreamiest pancakes. The Inn's team also arranged an unforgettable rehearsal dinner at Mully's Nacoochee Grill. Cozy, delicious, and full of warmth, it felt like we were dining with family.

Looking back, The Sautee Inn gave us the wedding of our dreams without breaking the bank. The staff made us feel at home, the mountain setting was breathtaking, and the entire weekend felt truly magical. We'll always be grateful for the love and care Rebecca, Mike, and the team gave us.

If you're looking for a beautiful, friendly wedding venue in North Georgia, don't wait—call The Sautee Inn to check for available dates. Trust me, it's a decision you won't regret.

Call today to book your dream wedding! Call: 706.878.8217



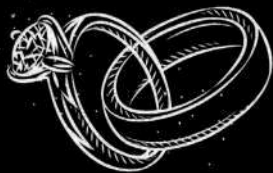
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Lake Rabun Hotel was named one of the 5 Best Hotels in GA. It's a small boutique hotel operating for over 100 years in the mountains across from Lake Rabun. It offers both unique charm and award-winning services. The Atlanta Constitution Newspaper defined it as *"a place to love or fall in love."* We specialize in love and offer a variety of venues to accommodate large weddings for up to 150 People, Small Weddings for up to 40 and elopements for those who just can't wait!

The hotel provides lodging, concierge services, award-winning farm-to-table food, custom-designed menus with Chef to fit your reception and your budget; full bar featuring custom-designed craft cocktails, excellent wine list and beer as well as non-alcoholic drinks to choose from.

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# Curating your reception

# playlist

After a formal wedding ceremony, complete with processionals and “I dos,” comes the part of a wedding that enables the happy couple to brush off the last vestiges of jitters and celebrate. A wedding reception marks the culmination of months or even years of planning. Oftentimes a hundred guests or more gather to dine, dance and toast to the prosperity of the newlyweds.

Certain components of a reception will prove more memorable than others. Food is one such element. The other component that tends to make a lasting impression is the music, which means couples curating reception playlists should do so with care and consideration.

Deejays and live bands can help couples choose music that fits the mood. But couples also can consider these tips when curating their reception playlists.

- Calculate your needs. Couples may wonder just how many songs they need for a standard reception. Unless you’re working with extra-long songs, like “Paradise by the Dashboard Light” or “Bohemian Rhapsody,” most songs are around three minutes long. That means for a four-hour reception you’ll need roughly 80 songs. However, plan for moments such as speeches/toasts and other breaks.

- Pair songs with key elements. Traditional weddings have certain mini-events within the receptions. Music enhances these moments. Jot down ideas for the following components:

- Bridal party entrance
- Couples’ entrance
- First dance (wedding song)
- Mother/son, father/daughter dances
- Cake cutting song

- Garter/bouquet toss songs
- Spotlight dance
- Any other special element
  - Select calm dinner music. After a day rushing around, most guests are looking forward to sitting down, conversing and, of course, eating. Cocktail hour and dinner music should be at a low volume and not too fast-paced. It certainly shouldn’t drown out conversation. Musician Peter Lee Johnson performs violin covers of popular Top 40 songs, and his music may be an option when choosing songs to accompany food service. Postmodern Jukebox is a group of musicians who take modern songs and give them a bygone flair. Their tunes also can be fitting.

- Tie the music to the theme. Weddings that follow a specific theme, such as a beach wedding, can be enhanced by music that coordinates to that theme. Think steel drum bands, Hawaiian stylings or even Beach Boys surfing songs.

- Be mindful of older guests. Some seniors may appreciate modern music, but they also may want to hear songs from the era when they were growing up. Pepper the song list with options across various decades to keep as many people on the dance floor as possible.

- Select a classic first dance song. Some couples opt to go trendy when selecting their wedding songs. However, certain songs have withstood the test of time. Such options include “Have I Told You Lately That I Love You,” “Here and Now,” “Stand by Me,” “Amazed,” or “Just the Way You Are.”

These tips can help any couples put together a wedding reception playlist that will help to create a memorable celebration. ●



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# From Dream to Reality: *The Journey Behind Aerial Mountain Springs*

Planning a wedding is challenging, but planning a three-day wedding weekend while building a venue? That's a whole new level of adventure! Our journey started in 2020 with a dream of a waterfront wedding in Florida, only to have plans derailed—thankfully, as the original date turned out to be a monsoon. This unexpected turn led us to the North Georgia Mountains, where Brittany's experience in the wedding industry inspired us to bring our vision of a venue to life.

With just six months to pull everything together, challenges were inevitable—catering misalignments, last-minute dress issues, and even uncertainty about whether we'd have grass or be standing in mud. But through it all, our family and friends rallied, the band performed, the dress was fixed, and the rain cleared just in time for a breathtaking double rainbow. That night, we celebrated under twinkling lights, a full moon, and the warmth of our loved ones.

This experience shaped *Aerial Mountain Springs* into more than just a venue—it's a place designed with love, experience, and an understanding of what makes a wedding truly special. If you're searching for a venue, consider these key factors:

**What's Included?** Look beyond tables and chairs—extras like decor and setup can impact cost and convenience.

**Setup & Cleanup:** Some venues handle this, while others leave it to you or charge extra.

**Bar & Catering Services:** Clarify if bartenders are provided and whether outside vendors are allowed.

**Accommodations & Accessibility:** Ensure there are nearby lodging options and easy navigation for guests.

**Weather Contingency Plans:** Ask about indoor options or additional costs for backup plans.

**Are there any hidden fees?** When searching for a venue, watch for hidden fees like service charges, taxes, setup and cleanup costs, outside vendor fees, catering and bar minimums, bartender and alcohol fees, security and insurance requirements, parking and transportation fees, decor restrictions and rental costs, overtime and late fees, weather backup charges, additional rentals, guest count increases, electricity and power fees, and lodging or accommodation costs by requesting a detailed, itemized contract upfront.

**Is it going to cost a lot to decorate or is the venue pretty enough that you only need small touches?** This is important because decorating costs can quickly add up, and a venue that already has beautiful architecture, scenic views, or elegant decor can save you money and effort. If a venue requires extensive decorations to match your vision, you may need to budget for additional rentals, florals, draping, or lighting. On the other hand, a well-designed venue with charming details may only need a few personal touches, allowing you to focus your budget on other aspects of your wedding.

*Aerial Mountain Springs* was built from experience, passion, and the belief that your wedding should be stress-free and unforgettable. Whether your journey is smooth or full of surprises, trust that it's unfolding exactly as it should. *We'd love to be part of your story.*





Satolah  
Creek  
Farm

# MAGICAL 2-DAY WEDDING EXPERIENCES

SCHEDULE A TOUR!



- Overnight stay for up to 20 people
- Flower donkeys
- Highland cow experience

- Tables, chairs, flowers, decorations
- Horse-drawn carriage ride
- Reception hall and deck

SatolahCreekFarm.com -or- 706.989.9669

## Satolah Creek Farm

### **A rustic and elegant wedding venue.**

As you drive down the tree-lined lane, Highland cows and donkeys graze nearby. A large farmhouse stands in the distance, surrounded by smaller structures that are separated by sprawling, green fields. White ducks and geese glide across the pond.



Ron and Pippa Seichrist, the owners of the 120-year-old farm, started restoring it in 1988. Then they added a woodworking studio, where the couple hand crafts furniture for the property and a pottery studio, where Pippa sculpts dog face jugs.

They adopted their daughter, Olya, from Ukraine when she was 6 years old. When she learned enough English, she told them she had two brothers. The Seichrists quickly found her middle brother, who had been adopted by a family in Spain, but it took five years to find and adopt her oldest brother.

The siblings spent summers together at the farm, so it was no surprise that when Olya decided to get married, it had to be at the farm. For her wedding, Pippa took on the ambitious project of converting the old stable into an elegant guest house and event space called the Carriage House. Ron built the dining table and the beds. Pippa created chairs from wood that had been twisted by honeysuckle vines.

Their daughter's wedding was the first held at Satolah Creek Farm, but it would not be the last. Soon after, other individuals began asking about hosting their own weddings there. In 2024, eight couples had exchanged vows on the property. This year, 20 more will do the same. The farm takes care of wedding setup and has all the chairs, farm tables, decorations and flowers you need, along with a list of local vendors who can provide anything else.

### **Stay for two, full days at the farm and have a relaxing wedding.**

There are accommodations at the farm for up to 20 people. When couples and their guests aren't busy with wedding preparations, there are forests, pastures, and gardens to explore. They can cuddle the cows, donkeys and horses, fish for trout in the pond, or take a pottery lesson. That night have your rehearsal and dinner at the farm. The Carriage House has a gourmet kitchen, and a second-story deck with a grill, tables and a great view.

### **The farm's friendly animals can be part of your day.**

Bart, the Clydesdale, pulls a white carriage. The donkeys wear flower crowns and are so excited to greet the guests. Daisy, the cow, wears a saddle bag with cool beverages. Sugar Plum, the miniature horse, can carry the flower girl down the aisle, or be your ring bearer. You can even take wedding photos with the Highland cows. With love, the Seichrists made a magical place for their daughter's wedding. Now you can have your special day there, too.

**COME FOR A TOUR AND MEET THE ANIMALS!**

**SatolahCreekFarm.com or call 706-989-9669**





# Valhalla

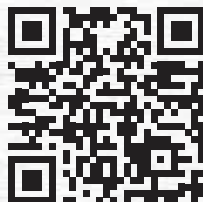
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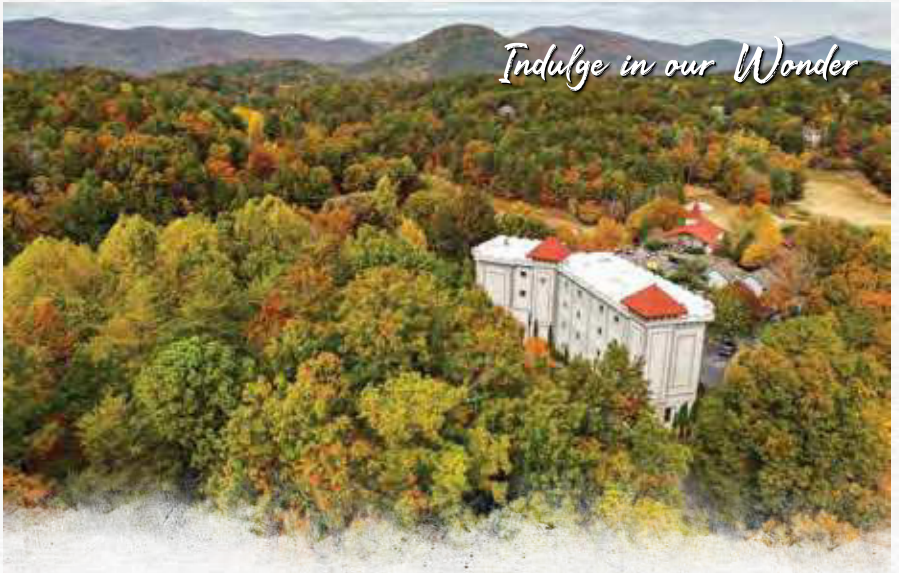
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Whether you host a luncheon in our Sky Bar, an intimate elopement in our chapel, a majestic wedding or rehearsal dinner celebration in our spacious Great Hall, our venues offer romantic settings that you'll remember for years to come.

Bring your team to enjoy a regal retreat. We offer the perfect environment to experience peace, playtime and productivity. Enjoy a private conference space with working or leisure meals from one of our restaurants. We also offer snack and beverage breaks, audio visual rentals and a variety of onsite team building activities.

With a number of event spaces available indoors and out, Valhalla Resort hosts a variety of events: weddings & elopements, rehearsal dinners, birthday parties, luncheons, baby & bridal showers, and other celebrations. Mingle, celebrate, and enjoy the decadent food and breathtaking views.



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Elegance and charm await you at the Cornelia Community House! This beauty, built in 1936 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is the perfect place for an indoor or outdoor wedding. Whether you are looking for a venue to have a large wedding or a more intimate affair, the Cornelia Community House offers what you need.

Crafted of brick and stone, the 2,500 square foot facility features two floors, a commercial kitchen and two non-working fireplaces. Upon arrival at the building from the covered driveway, your guests entering the entryway are greeted with one of the beautiful and uniquely designed stone stacked fireplaces. Beautiful glass double doors open onto a balcony overlooking the City Park and stairs on the lower level. An onsite elevator helps to facilitate moving between the upper and lower floors.

The upper-level features high vaulted ceilings which showcase rustic debarked tree trunks that also line the inside walls of the building and provide a spacious area for your wedding ceremony or reception. The hard wood floors on both levels are perfect for you and your guests to dance the night away. The kitchen has commercial appliances, separate icemaker, and ample storage.

The lower level provides a cozy setting for your special day whether it be the wedding, reception or bridal shower with the same rustic feeling located throughout the facility.

The grounds of the Cornelia Community House, located inside the thirty-three-acre City Park, provide a picture-perfect backdrop of wooded areas, lush green trees and abelia bushes for your spring and summer wedding photos. The many colors of the fall season would highlight pictures during autumn.





For more information about the Cornelia Community House or if you would like to schedule a self-guided tour, please go to [www.cornelia.city](http://www.cornelia.city) or contact Cristina Simmons, with Cornelia City Hall at 706-778-8585.



# MEADOWS

at mossy creek

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## **Meadows at Mossy Creek** Cleveland, GA

Imagine saying “I do” under a canopy of blue skies, with the majestic Appalachian foothills stretching out in the distance. Meadows at Mossy Creek offers couples a picturesque outdoor ceremony space that highlights the beauty of North Georgia’s countryside. From spring’s vibrant blossoms to the fiery hues of autumn, this venue transforms with each season, creating a unique atmosphere for every wedding.

For those who prefer an indoor setting, the venue combines modern and mountains elements. Think vaulted ceilings, exposed wooden beams, and large windows that flood the space with natural light. This blend of elegance and warmth allows couples to personalize the space to match their vision, whether it’s a chic black-tie affair or a laid-back country gathering.

What truly sets The Meadows at Mossy Creek apart is its sense of community. The venue is locally owned and operated, and the owners go above and beyond to ensure each couple feels like family. Their commitment to creating a welcoming, inclusive space is evident in every interaction, making couples and their guests feel right at home from the moment they arrive.

Whether you’re planning an intimate gathering or a grand celebration, Meadows at Mossy Creek offers a versatile and idyllic setting for your big day. Its serene environment, dedicated team, and stunning landscapes make it a standout choice among wedding venues in Cleveland, Georgia, and beyond.

Planning your wedding? Discover the magic of The Meadows at Mossy Creek and turn your dream day into a reality. For more information, visit their website or schedule a tour to experience the venue’s charm firsthand.





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[www.thefarmatashleyridge.com](http://www.thefarmatashleyridge.com)

*The Farm at Ashley Ridge sits on 53 acres of hidden beauty and boasts a stunning mountain view as a picturesque background for wedding ceremonies. The open air reception barn, which accommodates up to 200 guests, merges together a rustic mountain feel with the glam of antique style chandeliers to dine, dance, and make memories beneath. Our couples and their guests can enjoy dancing the night away on our 1200 square foot dance floor or relax next to the outdoor firepit and par 3 golf hole just adjacent to the dance floor.*

*We also provide a separate indoor/outdoor space for cocktail hour along with a catering kitchen and luxurious bridal and groom suites. Our staff will take care of every detail to ensure each guest has a memorable experience and our couples can create their perfect day. We offer multiple packages, including a new option for micro weddings tailored for intimate gatherings of 50 or fewer.*

*The Farm at Ashley Ridge welcomes outside vendors, allowing you to select the team of your choice. We have a fabulous vendor list for couples to pull from if they would like, but there is no obligation to use it. What's more, the venue has comfortable overnight accommodations for up to 6 people offered in our two day package for the evening before the wedding.*

*Wedding days are our passion and we would be honored to be a part of yours so contact us by phone, text, or email today to set up a visit.*

*Let us help make  
your special day  
unforgettable!*



# Honeymoon planning pointers

Planning a wedding is a tall task, so it's no wonder why so many couples look forward to their honeymoons. After months of planning and then saying "I Do" in front of family and friends, couples have earned a little R&R.

With so much already on engaged couples' plates, it's easy to overlook honeymoon planning. But finding time to plan a honeymoon can ensure the trip is one couples will cherish for the rest of their lives. The following planning pointers can help the trip go smoothly.

- Pick a pass-port-friendly destination. When it comes to honeymoons, couples' options run the gamut from domestic locales to faraway destinations on the other side of the world. That suggests couples can pick anywhere within their budgets and simply book a trip. However, that's not necessarily true. According to the U.S. State Department, many countries require that travelers have six months of validity remaining on their passports before they will issue a visa permitting them to enter. So couples should look at their passports to determine how long it is until the document expires. If the document expires within six months of their passport expiring, couples may not be able to enter the country they hope to visit. In such instances, couples should ensure they leave enough time to renew and receive their passports.

- Utilize a travel agency. Contrary to popular belief, travel agencies are still around and remain useful resources, especially for travelers visiting a destination for the first time. Many honeymooners fit that bill, so

they can benefit much from working with a travel agency. Couples tasked with planning a wedding already have a lot on their plate, so letting a travel agency take care of the honeymoon planning can ensure a memorable trip without requiring couples to do any legwork.

- Purchase travel insurance. The need for travel insurance has never been more apparent than in the last few years. Since the pandemic began, air travel has been a somewhat risky proposition. According to Flightaware, the first six months of 2022 featured more domestic flight cancellations in the United States than the entire 2021 calendar year combined. International travel could prove an even riskier proposition. Though the potential for cancellation should not deter couples from traveling by air for their honeymoons, the sheer volume of cancellations underscores the importance of purchasing travel insurance. Before purchasing a travel insurance policy, couples are urged to read it in its entirety to ensure it provides the protection they're seeking.

- Plan early. With so much other work to do involving a wedding, couples can be excused for putting a honeymoon on the back-burner. But planning early can make the trip much more enjoyable. The benefits to planning early include more flights to choose from, a wider selection of rooms/lodging options at your destination, and more time to budget for the trip.

Honeymoon planning can be made simpler with a few simple strategies that also can ensure couples enjoy the trip of their dreams. ●





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Book your tour of the venue today.

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SAUTEE NACOOCHEE CENTER

## Charming & Affordable Event Spaces!



The **Sautee Nacoochee Center** is a great place to host a wedding ceremony, reception or shower. Our **Community Hall** (above) is a beautiful space with hardwood floors, a commercial kitchen and plenty of natural light, and can accommodate 100.



For larger events, the **Historic Gym** (right) can accommodate up to 299 people. With a big stage, available lighting and sound equipment, this spacious building can be transformed to fit any style.



For more information, visit our website (scan QR code at right) or call Lisa Gassman Stagers at (706) 878-3300, Ext. 312.

Scan here to find out more!



283 Highway 255 N, Sautee Nacoochee  
SauteeNacoocheeCenter.org



SAUTEE NACOOCHEE CENTER

**Is your dream of something simple and kind of rustic  
or fancy with a touch of class?**

**At the Sautee Nacoochee Center, the choice is yours.**

Located in the beautiful Sautee Valley, the Sautee Nacoochee Center has rental spaces of various shapes and sizes that you can make your own. Do you want to host a dance? Have a bridal party wiffleball game? Hold the ceremony in a garden?

#### **Community Hall**

Airy and bright with wood floors and a wrap-around dining porch, the Community Hall is perfect for a bridal shower, rehearsal dinner or wedding reception. This easy to decorate classic facility accommodates 25 to 100 people. While roomy, the Community Hall also feels intimate, not too big or not too small. It's just right. Food set-up and serving are easy with generous counter space, a wet bar and commercial kitchen. Wi-fi, AV, tables, chairs, tableware and linens are available.

#### **Historic Gymnasium**

At first glance, it's easy to see that our gym is a historic building. Built in the 1930s and upgraded in the 2000s, it is remarkably flexible. It can hold up to 299 people and has a large stage, bar service area and vintage wooden bleachers. There is enough floor space to hold a wedding and reception all in one. With a sprung wood floor, the Historic Gym is a great space for dancing. The gym has AV capabilities and is equipped with an amazing sound system and a sound person to run it. Tables, chairs, tableware and linens are available.

**And then there's the SNC campus.** This 8.5 acre space offers lovely viewsheds, sweeping greenspace and gardens. Hold a large gathering on the lawn under mature oak trees or an intimate group in the Native Peace Garden, a quarter-acre space celebrating native plants. An 1850s cabin with gentle landscaping is also on the property along with an outdoor stage that is perfect for hosting a live band or dressing it up for the ceremony. Did we mention that there is a playground onsite?

SNC is a place where your family and guests can spend the day shopping, learning, relaxing and playing. Conveniently located 5 miles from Helen, they will find museums, art exhibits, gallery shops, a playground and a walking path..

**The Sautee Nacoochee Center is open year around. For more information, to schedule a tour or reserve a location, contact the rentals and facilities director at (706) 878-3300, ext. 312 or at [rentals@snc.org](mailto:rentals@snc.org).**

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A romantic wedding scene featuring a bride and groom. The bride is wearing an off-the-shoulder white gown and holding a large bouquet of white flowers. The groom is in a dark blue suit. They are standing in a field of white cherry blossoms, with a wooden fence in the foreground. The background is filled with more blossoms and greenery.

# BM

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# BM

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Settled just an hour north of Atlanta and minutes from the historic town of Dahlonega, Georgia lies North Georgia's premier wedding and event venue, Blue Mountain Vineyards. This beautiful family owned and operated venue offers breathtaking vantage points from their three-acre vineyard, open air ceremony site, and 5,000 square foot event barn to perfectly host your wedding ceremony or reception, corporate event, church event, or family gathering. With years of experience in the wedding and event planning industries, the family at Blue Mountain Vineyards prides themselves on making your dream event a reality.

Blue Mountain Vineyards accommodates 250 guests in their hand-crafted and originally designed barn, which sits atop a hill overlooking both the vineyard and ceremony site. The event barn is a work of art, combining function and quality to deliver thirty-foot ceilings, a stacked stone fireplace wall, solid wood beams that were milled on site, and a live-edge black walnut bar for guests to enjoy. Above the main floor in the barn lies a private 300 square foot bridal suite for the wedding party to enjoy prior to the ceremony.

Seating and tables for up to 250 guests are available, including ten farmhouse tables designed and built onsite by the Tardonía family.

Check out our venue photos to get a feel for how truly beautiful this venue is, and to begin planning your day with us! Contact us today to schedule a tour of the venue or to reserve your event on our calendar!

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## Unique wedding favor

# ideas

Guests bring gifts to weddings to express their love for couples. Gift-giving also tends to be reciprocal, with couples making sure that guests leave the celebration with their own tokens of affection and mementos of the special occasion. Although favors are not mandatory, they often are included in wedding planning to make the celebration that much more special.

Favors run the gamut from simple, such as tulle-wrapped Jordan almonds, to elaborate, like crystal vases. While there are no rules regarding the type of favors couples can offer, most soon-to-be-newlyweds prefer something that is not only unique, but will have utility as well. The following are some favors to consider.

- **Food-based favors:** Guests who already have a drawer full of personalized shot glasses, pens and drink stirrers with couple's names and wedding dates may appreciate the simplicity of a favor they can enjoy without having to store. A gourmet cookie, special jerky, small bottle of olive oil or maple syrup, or another food item that is widely enjoyed can be practical and affordable.

- **Thank-you cards:** Offer each guest in attendance a heartfelt thank-you for attending the wedding. Personalize the sentiments to each guest. If you have a photo of yourself with that guest, include it in the card.

- **Candy or snack bar:** A wedding takeaway can be as simple as letting guests

fill up decorative containers with various candies and other treats displayed on a special table at the reception. For a fun twist, try to find old-fashioned candy or items you remember eating as a child to stir up nostalgia.

- **Flower seeds or seedlings:** Sustainable gifts such as flower seeds or small seedling plants can let guests plant something as a remembrance of the day.

- **Scratch-off lottery tickets:** The opportunity to return home from a wedding with a winning ticket and a few extra dollars in their pockets can appeal to guests.

- **Charitable donation:** Rather than giving guests favors, you may want to offer donations to a charity instead. This is a popular gesture among modern couples.

- **Temporary tattoos:** As a funny gag gift and segue to entertaining photo opportunities, give guests temporary tattoos that have your photo on them. They're clever and will not go to waste.

- **Luggage tags:** Guests will always think of you when they travel far and wide thanks to luggage tags printed with sweet sentiments.

- **Wine stoppers:** Customized wine stoppers will keep guests' bottles of wine fresh without taking up much space in a home bar.

Unique favors will help wedding guests feel even more special at the end of the celebration. ●



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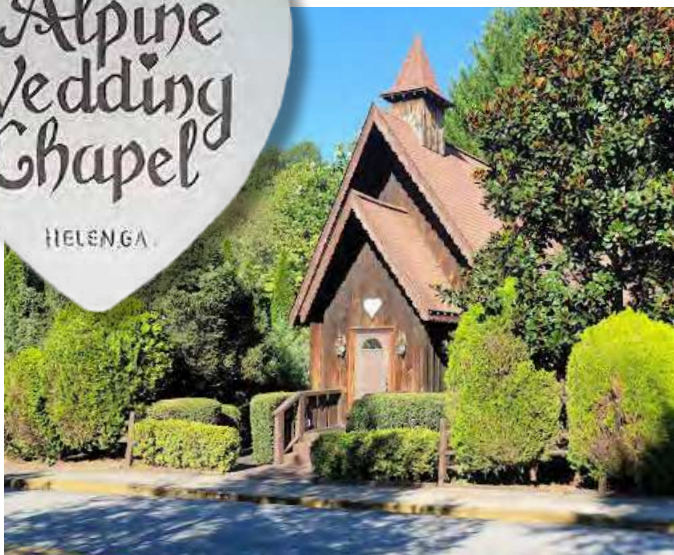
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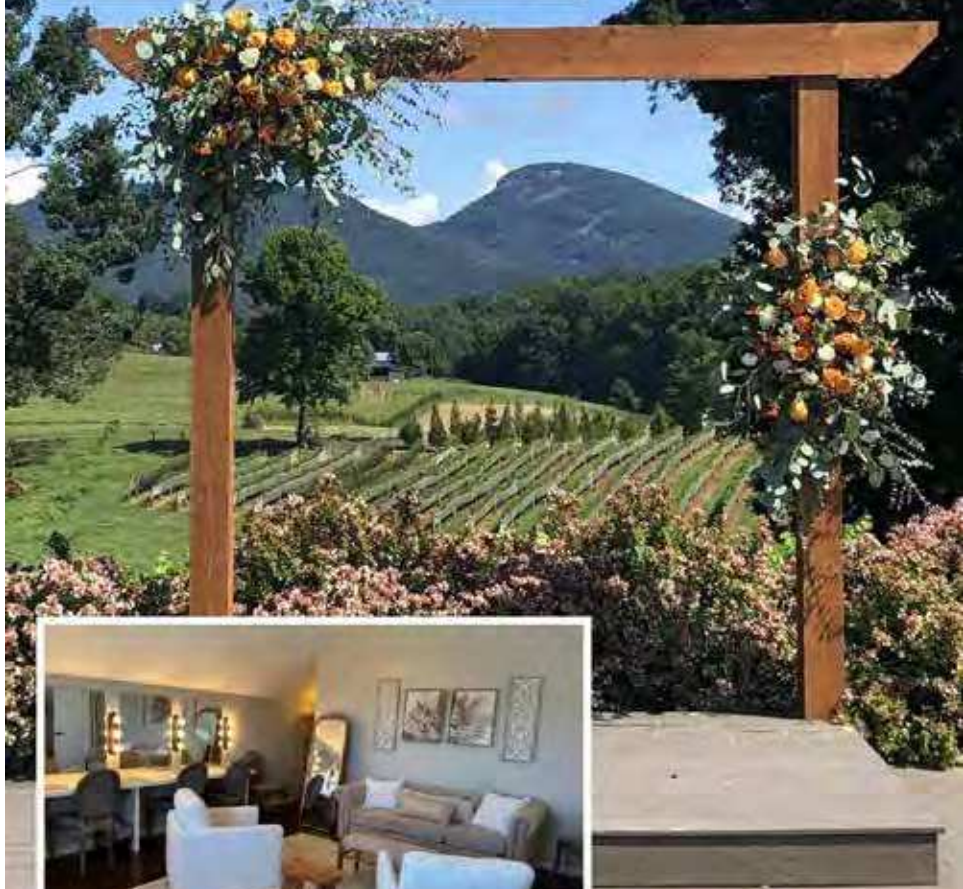
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**CeNita Vineyards & Winery** is one of the few "estate wineries" in Georgia. Enjoy a glass of wine made right on the CeNita property from our own grapes. We are family friendly so plan to enjoy an afternoon of live music while the kids play on the playground! Or gather your girls for that one-of-a-kind bachelorette weekend where you can experience our wines & stay right on the property! CeNita's Tasting Room is open six days a week, Sunday, Monday, Wednesday & Thursday until 7pm and on Friday & Saturday nights until 9pm! Join us in the evenings and listen to live music while soaking in the sunset views!

**CeNita Venue** rests on 40-acres overlooking the 5-acre vineyard surrounded by scenic mountain views. The lush landscapes combine elegance and nature to create the perfect setting. Our beautiful, newly remodeled venue offers 3,240 square feet of reception space, prep kitchen, & bridal suite. It is the epitome of modern & chic blended with a casual, comfy feel. Yonah Mountain provides the perfect backdrop for our ceremony site while overlooking dramatic views of our winery & family vineyard. CeNita is the quintessential venue for celebrating life, love & all the joyous moments in between.

**CeNita Lodging** is just steps from our Tasting Room. It's great for a relaxing get-away, a bachelor or bachelorette weekend, or on-site lodging for your wedding party. We currently offer two AirBnb's on property. One of which is a small sweetheart cabin for two. The other is a large family-friendly home that sleeps 12 people and offers a large deck across the back that is the perfect spot to watch the sunrise over the vineyard.

No matter what you are planning, CeNita is the perfect spot!  
For Tasting Room reservations, email [reservations@cenitavineyards.com](mailto:reservations@cenitavineyards.com) For weddings or events, email [marybarrett@cenitavineyards.com](mailto:marybarrett@cenitavineyards.com).





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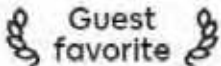
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# Choosing your wedding day *menu*

French queen Marie Antoinette is credited with a phrase that loosely translates to “Let them eat cake.” Guests at a wedding certainly will have their chance to enjoy cake, but it’s likely that wedding planners will need to offer a bit more sustenance to guests than this confectionary creation to keep them happy.

Many things stand out as memorable on a wedding day: the dress, the music, the adorable children who trip up or do some sort of zany antics down the aisle, and the food. Guests often look forward to a wedding to wish a couple well in their new lives together, but also to enjoy a great meal. Couples should give careful consideration to their wedding reception menu so everyone ends the night with great memories and full bellies.

## **Decide on the type of service**

Buffet, plated dinner, server-passed foods, or food stations are the options at couples’ disposal when planning reception dinners. The type of service often dictates the formality of the event. For example, a cocktail party where guests mingle and sample small bites throughout the night may be a more casual affair, while a plated multi-course meal is much more formal. Couples can decide which type of service fits their budgets and ideas of for the reception.

## **Expand your options**

Largely gone are the days when guests

select dishes on the R.S.V.P. months in advance and then are locked into their choices. Now guests have more options and flexibility, particularly because couples and catering venues offer greater variety. A buffet-style meal gives guests chances to sample various foods in one sitting. However, even if couples choose a plated meal, they can select packages that offer guests the greatest number of options. Be sure to include a vegetarian or vegan option, a fish option, and a standard beef or chicken option to appeal to most.

## **Confirm food allergies or sensitivities**

It’s likely someone on the guest list will have a food allergy or sensitivity. Making sure there is no cross-contamination is a serious consideration for such guests. The person or persons should be consulted about what the person can and cannot eat, and then those requirements should be conveyed to the catering manager.

Certain people with food allergies are so leery about eating out that they may prefer to bring their own food to ensure it is safe. In this instance, ensure that the kitchen staff will be able to safely heat up or plate the food.

Food will likely be on the minds of wedding guests. Couples can ensure that their guests are satiated by making food a priority at their events. ●



# *Hand-n-Hand Ceremonies*



Pennye Westbrook, Wedding Officiant

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# Wedding *checklist*

*A timeline of things to do before the big day*

*Many brides find it helpful to keep a wedding checklist timeline of things that still need to be done before the big day. Outlined below are some of the most crucial tasks, as well as a general timeframe for when they should be completed.*

## **11-13 months before the wedding**

- Choose a wedding date
- Decide on a budget
- Run announcement in your local paper
- Plan an engagement party
- Hire a wedding consultant
- Select a ceremony site
- Choose a reception location
- Choose your bridesmaids and groomsmen
- Begin shopping for the wedding gown

## **8-10 months before the wedding**

- Choose your wedding officiant
- Select a caterer
- Hire a band or DJ
- Hire a wedding photographer
- Hire a videographer
- Finalize guest list and gather addresses
- Decide on bridesmaids dresses

## **5-7 months before the wedding**

- Sign up for wedding gift registry
- Purchase wedding stationery
- Order custom postage stamps
- Select your wedding cake
- Arrange accommodations for guests
- Decide on a honeymoon location
- Apply for passport
- Begin marriage counseling sessions



#### **4 months before the wedding**

- Send Save the Date cards
- Book your wedding florist
- Purchase your wedding bands
- Reserve a limousine

#### **3 months before the wedding**

- Select tuxedos
- Arrange for rental items
- Finalize costs and menu with caterer
- Order wedding favors

#### **2 months before the wedding**

- Send your invitations
- Choose your wedding songs
- Confirm with DJ and other vendors
- Shop for bridal party gifts
- Make plans for wedding rehearsal
- Reserve a rehearsal dinner venue
- Book a hair appointment
- Book a makeup appointment

#### **1 month before the wedding**

- Design your wedding program
- Apply for marriage license
- Purchase wedding accessories
- Trial run of hair and makeup
- Get your formal bridal portrait

#### **2 weeks before the wedding**

- Call guests who haven't responded
- Give your caterer a final guest count
- Pick up your marriage license
- Design seating plan for reception
- Confirm rental and floral deliveries
- Book a nail appointment

#### **1 week before the wedding**

- Pack for honeymoon
- Confirm all reservations

#### **1 day before the wedding**

- Get a manicure and pedicure
- Give rings to Best Man

# 7 reasons to hire a *wedding planner*



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 planners 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. ●

# Wedding. *etiquette*

*Cultural backgrounds and individual convictions heavily influence the decision-making process in wedding etiquette. Nevertheless, the following is a general guide that should be construed as such... and adopted as you deem fit.*

## **Who Pays for What?**

### **The Bride typically pays for**

- the wedding ring for the groom
- gifts for the attendants
- accommodations for out-of-town attendants
- the wedding gift for the groom

### **The Groom typically pays for**

- the bride's rings (including the engagement ring)
- the honeymoon
- the wedding gift for the bride
- accommodations for out-of-town groomsmen
- flowers for the bride
- the going-away corsage and corsages for mothers and other special ladies
- the boutonnieres for men in the wedding party
- the gloves, ties and accessories for the men in the wedding party
- fee for officiant

### **The Groom's family typically pays for**

- clothing for the wedding
- travel and lodging expenses
- rehearsal dinner
- the wedding gift for the newlyweds

### **The Bride's family typically pays for**

- the cost of the reception
- the bride's wedding attire
- invitations, announcements and thank you notes
- the seating arrangement chart, napkins and any mailing expenses
- photographer/videographer
- ceremony costs
- bridesmaids', flower girl's and ring bearer's accessories
- transportation for bridal party on wedding day from ceremony to reception
- all gratuities for parking and security services
- bridesmaids' luncheon

# Can't-miss photos for your *wedding*

Couples who hire a professional photographer to capture their weddings may end up with anywhere from 400 to 600 images, with some photographers promising even more. Although it is likely that a wide array of shots will be taken, couples who do not want to leave things up to chance should sit down with their photo professionals and discuss the key shots they want to capture.

Once the big day has passed, there will be no opportunity to go back and arrange missed shots. This list of must-have photos can ensure that the wedding album has all the shots couples desire.

## **Before the ceremony**

- Wedding day outfits hanging in the wardrobe or placed over a chair
- Wedding invitation surrounded by bouquets
- Wedding rings side by side
- Outfit accessories, such as shoes, jewelry, a veil, and cuff links
- Bride and bridesmaids getting hair and makeup done
- Groom and groomsmen laughing and having fun
- Bride getting zipped up into her dress

## **At the ceremony**

- Guests entering the ceremony site
- Ushers escorting guests to their seats
- Close-ups of the couple separately waiting to see their soon-to-be spouse
- Cute kids participating in the ceremony coming down the aisle
- Parents of the couple coming down the aisle or seated prominently awaiting the start of the ceremony
- Shots of all members of the wedding party
- Guests of honor, such as grandparents

- Partner coming down the aisle and the partner's reaction
- Exchange of rings
- First kiss
- A wide shot of the guests at the ceremony
- Signing the marriage certificate
- The processional with the newly hitched couple beaming
- Couple in the limo backseat

## **Portraits**

- Couple with bridesmaids and groomsmen
- Bride and maid/matron of honor
- Groom and best man
- Couple with each set of parents and siblings
- Couple with close family members

## **At the reception**

- Couple's first entrance
- Special signage, decorations or photos of the scenery
- Wedding cake details
- Toasts and speeches from key people
- First dance as a couple
- Father/daughter, mother/son dances, if applicable
- Couple mingling with guests
- Guests dancing and having fun
- Shots of the musicians or any special entertainers
- The cake cutting
- The couple's grand exit and wave goodbye

These are some of the customary images that couples will want to request. Photographers likely will cover most of them without prompting, but couples should be sure to point out any special photographs they'd like captured throughout the day. ●

# Advertiser *index*

52 West Brewing.....	52	New Food Factory.....	29
AC Bridal.....	80	Noelle Planning & Events.....	62
Aerial Mountain Springs.....	30	Public House of Dahlonega.....	7
Alpine Wedding Chapel.....	64	Satolah Creek Farms.....	32
Barry's Menswear.....	13	Sautee Inn.....	20
Big Creek Distillery.....	18	Sautee Nacocochee Center.....	50
Big Mountain, Inc.....	53	Spirits Tavern.....	47
Blue Door Dahlonega.....	71	Sunmed Modern Wellness.....	55
Blue Mountain Vineyards.....	56	The Farm at Ashley Ridge.....	44
Cavender Creek Vineyards.....	48	The Revere.....	14
CeNita Winery, LLC.....	68	Tida Nails.....	16
Chicago's Pizza.....	63	Unicoi Lodge.....	8
Chota Falls.....	2	Valhalla Resort.....	34
Cornelia Community House.....	38	Vintage Charm.....	59
DahloneGO.....	70	Waffle's English Tea Room.....	60
Elite Excursions.....	67	Wolf Creek BBQ.....	37
Forrest Hills Mountain Resort.....	10	Wolf Mountain Vineyards.....	22
Habersham Chamber of Commerce.....	66		
Hand-n-Hand Ceremonies.....	73		
Honeybrook Catering/Sylvan Valley Cellars.....	61		
Huddle at Crooked Creek.....	5		
Lake Rabun Hotel.....	26		
Lane Collins Wedding Co.....	25		
Meadows at Mossy Creek.....	40		
Mountain Lakes Resort.....	3		
Natalie Jane's Catering.....	54		

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