

Over 300 Local Resources for Planning Your Dream Wedding

WISCONSIN BRIDE

OUTDOOR
WEDDING
DOs and
DON'Ts

24 THINGS
every BRIDE
SHOULD
KNOW

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REHEARSAL
DINNER EVER

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GOWNS

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in DOOR
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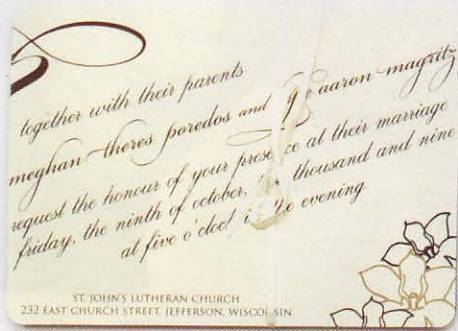
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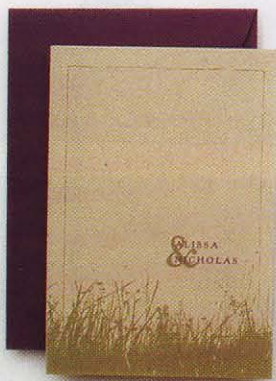
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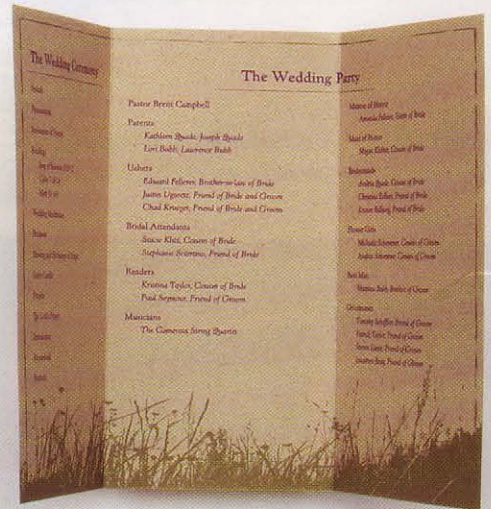
GIVE YOUR GUESTS A PEEK INTO YOUR WEDDING THEME WITH A PERSONALIZED INVITATION BY A LOCAL STATIONER.



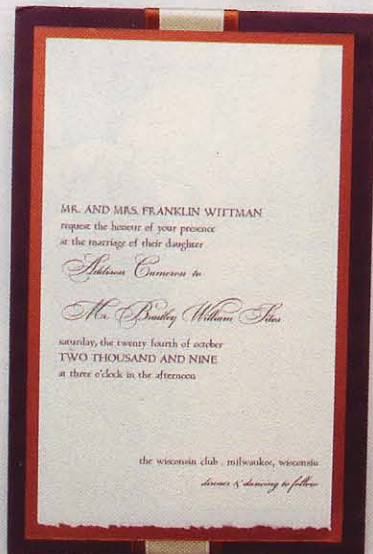
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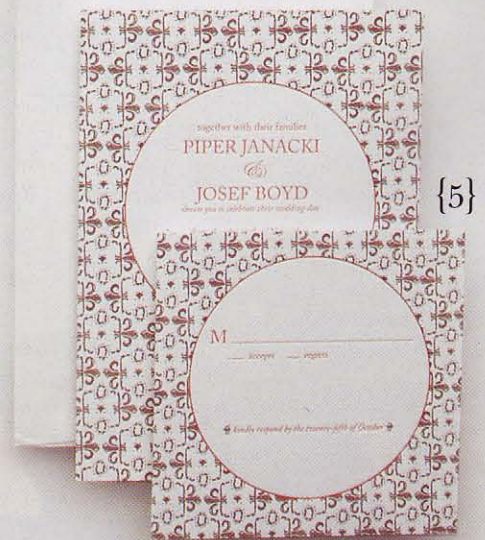
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1 Romance rules

For their classy outdoor wedding, this bride and groom wanted to set the stylish tone early. Tara Scheuerman of Cracked Designs worked one-on-one with the couple to represent their celebration in an elegant suite—invitation, RSVP card, reception card and an additional invitation to a day-before picnic. Angled text was printed on heavyweight textured felt paper in an array of neutral colors, including ivory, chocolate and champagne. *Cracked Designs, Milwaukee, 414.687.8803, cracked-designs.com*

2 Eco-elegance

This suite is not only down-to-earth in style; it's also good for the Earth in substance. Stationer Kathy Marcelle of Sugar Pear Design, who created this "green" invite, offers various eco-friendly alternatives, including recycled, cotton and handmade papers. This outdoorsy couple opted for the recycled choice. Whatever your priorities, a custom design can translate your special day onto paper in a unique way. *Sugar Pear Design, Madison, 608.288.8976, sugarpearadesign.com*

3 Dashing doodles

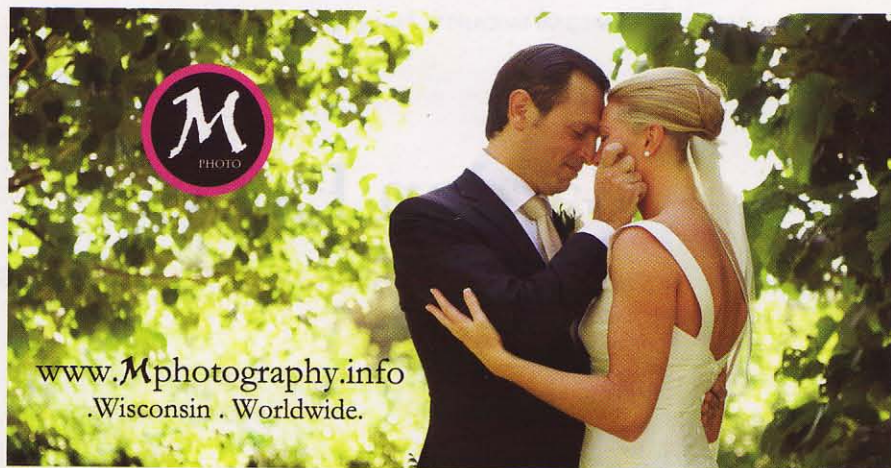
We love a good success story. Letterpress print shop Bella Figura hired Milwaukee-based designer Jamie Lea Bertsch in 2008 after she won a high-profile design scholarship. Bertsch mixes handmade charm with an understated elegance—courtesy of her own artistic hand, not just a computer program—as shown in this invitation. Often her patterns, inspired by colors and prints in her home and studio, stem from doodles in her sketchbook. Those drawings evolve into lush letterpress invitations such as this swirling design, appropriately called "Flourish." *Jamie Lea Bertsch for Bella Figura, Milwaukee, 866.699.6040, bellafigura.com/designers/bertsch.html*

4 Uniquely understated

A Napa Valley engagement followed by a wine-themed wedding inspired this stately design. Robin Dworak of Robin's Paperie translated the vino motif into a classic invitation trimmed in plum and copper. She also produced tags for the couple's reception wine bottles from the winery where the groom had dropped to one knee. Dworak is a stickler for timeless designs. "I always tell clients, 'It's not a party—it's your wedding.'" *Robin's Paperie, Cedarburg, 262.377.6555, robinspaperie.com*

5 The lavish life

You have to touch this invitation to believe its luxury—a European paper mill produces 100 percent reclaimed cotton paper exclusively for Bella Figura. In addition to the requisite invite and RSVP card, brides can tailor other pieces in Jamie Lea Bertsch's "Caprilla" design to best fit their event (for starters, we suggest coordinating coasters). Customized envelopes—and even envelope liners—add another personal touch. *Jamie Lea Bertsch for Bella Figura, Milwaukee, 866.699.6040, bellafigura.com/designers/bertsch.html* *



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Frequently Asked Questions

WISCONSIN'S TOP WEDDING VENDORS SHARE THEIR MOST COMMON BRIDE INQUIRIES—AND ANSWER THEM.



WHILE YOU MAY ONLY MARRY ONCE, cake bakers, catering managers and other wedding vendors have been through the “I do” process with countless couples. Here, a few of the state’s seasoned professionals answer the questions they receive from brides most often.

Formalwear

Q: *Our groomsmen are located all over the country. Where should we order tuxedos?*

A: Try to rent tuxedos from a store as close to the wedding site as possible, says Jackie Glassburn of Nedrebo’s Formal Wear in Madison. They should all be borrowed from the same place to ensure matching color and style.

Q: *Where should the groomsmen get their measurements taken?*

A: Most men’s formalwear stores do complimentary measurements. Call, fax or e-mail those numbers to the store where the tuxedos will be rented.

Invitations

Q: *How can we send eco-friendly invitations?*

A: There are many ways to create environmentally conscious invitation suites. The first step, from the stationer’s view, is to find out what this means to you, says Kathy Marcelle of Sugar Pear Design in Madison. If you want to avoid tree-based invites, Sugar Pear Design offers paper made from cotton, bamboo and silk. You may also want to consider where the products are produced; the closer to home, the smaller the carbon footprint. For a sentimental touch, use your invites as a memorial: “I’ve used plantable paper where the paper contained seeds, and was planted on a loved one’s grave,” Marcelle says.

Cake

Q: *Do I have to order one piece of cake for every guest?*

A: Karen Smith, otherwise known as The Cake Lady, says yes, you should indeed order at least one piece of cake per person. While some guests may not eat a single slice, says the St. Francis-based baker, others might dig in for a second serving. You do not want to run out of cake at your wedding.

Q: *When will my cake be delivered?*

A: This is not up to the baker, but the reception venue. When your cake is delivered depends on factors such as when the site opens and when the cake table—complete with tablecloth—will be set up.

Photography

Q: *Do we receive a high-resolution file of the photos?*

A: The industry standard is to include a disk of photographs, says Amy Gaerthofner of Ardent Photography in Neenah. It’s important, however, that brides and grooms also own a finished product, like an album or prints, and not just a disk. One of the benefits of hiring a professional is that he or she will touch up the photographs before each reprint. Disks should be used mainly for archival purposes.

Q: *Is the engagement session included in the package?*

A: For many photographers, yes. An engagement shoot is an important opportunity for the photographer to build a relationship with the bride and groom.

DJ

Q: *What if our DJ gets sick?*

A: DJ companies should always have a back-up plan, says Chad Torkelson of Midwest Sound DJ Entertainment, based in Waukesha. They should have on-call DJs available at all times—suits pressed and gas tanks full.

Q: *What kind of experience should a DJ have?*

A: The DJ you hire should be proficient with weddings, not high school dances. Companies that specialize in wedding entertainment can provide DJs with the most relevant experience.

Q: *Will I have control over what music is played at my wedding?*

A: Of course. Your event, your music.

Catering

Q: *What kind of beverage services do you recommend?*

A: Services vary by company, but one option is a hosted bar, where the bride and groom pay for each drink their guests consume, according to Maria Bartolotta of The Bartolotta Catering Company & Events in Wauwatosa. Or you can consider a package bar, where you pay one fee per guest for the first hour, regardless of the number of drinks they consume. After that hour, the per-person fee increases each hour. The third option is a cash bar where guests pay as they drink.

Officiant

Q: *How do I begin my search for the right officiant?*

A: According to Reverend Jane Stewart of milwaukeeweddingminister.com, before you decide on a wedding officiant, make sure you and your fiancé's spiritual expectations for the day mesh, then decide how you want to remember your ceremony. How do you imagine it—casual, fun or traditional? In the end, you want your wedding, and your officiant, to reflect the way you live.

Q: *Is a rehearsal necessary?*

A: If your party includes more than three bridesmaids and three groomsmen, yes, you should conduct a ceremony run-through before the big day.

Hair and Makeup

Q: *How long will my hairdo last?*

A: It should stay in place all day, says Britt Leach of The Ultimate Spa Salon in Monona. To accommodate a day of hustling and bustling—including many hugs, getting in and out of cars and even some stepping on your veil—Leach sends off bridal parties with complimentary hairspray and bobby pins. The salon should also be prepared to help your hair survive windy or rainy weather.

Q: *Do stylists offer false eyelashes and hair extensions?*

A: Yes. Brides can purchase extensions and the stylists can attach them.

Q: *Can we bring food in?*

A: Yes, most salons allow a hungry bridal party to snack while being pampered.

Flowers

Q: *How do I know which flowers will be in season for my wedding?*

A: If you're concerned that your flowers be locally grown, it is best to be flexible, says Andrea Berto of Madison's Fleurishes. Though more and more flowers grown around the world are now available at all times (roses, lilies, iris, orchids,

lisianthus, stock, carnations, daisies), Berto enjoys embracing the season, featuring flowers that match the time of year.

Q: *Should I coordinate flowers to my attendants' dresses?*

A: It's rare to find flowers that exactly match the color of a dress. Instead, achieve a beautiful palette by using contrasting or complementary colors.

Planning

Q: *How can a wedding planner help me?*

A: According to Madison-based Bill Reed—more commonly known as The Wedding Guy—coordinators can provide a stress-free day, managing all the vendors and assuring that everything you want is accomplished.

Q: *How do you recommend vendors?*

A: Planners make recommendations based on your budget and wish list, whether it's a specific flavor of cake or a certain photography style. Each couple's wedding-day vision varies, so coordinators will ask about your wants and needs before recommending vendors.

Bands

Q: *How far in advance should I book a band?*

A: Bands book dates well in advance, says Pat Dunn of Dunn Entertainment in Stevens Point. If you have your heart set on a particular band, reserve them as soon as you confirm your wedding date. If your favorite band is booked, consider moving your wedding to a Friday night, which tends to be less popular than Saturday weddings.

Q: *How much do bands charge?*

A: Cost varies depending on the time of year and day of the week you exchange vows. Saturdays in summer and fall often book quickly, so expect to pay top price. Other nights and seasons might offer more flexibility.

Rental and Décor

Q: *What's the most popular dinner setup?*

A: Many couples are now choosing eight-foot-long banquet tables in lieu of the more traditional round tables, says Farrah Slinger with A to Z Event Essentials in Madison. Slinger also recently purchased square tables, which are becoming more popular. For a more relaxed, lounge feeling, host an hors d'oeuvres reception using tall standing tables.

Q: *How many people does a rented tent hold?*

A: Tents can accommodate as many as 500 guests. What a rental company doesn't have in stock, they can usually obtain for you. *

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