



How Couples Can Benefit From Hiring Local Wedding Vendors

Local vendors are often a go-to choice when couples are planning their wedding ceremonies and receptions. As the “shop local” movement grows in popularity, weddings present a prime opportunity to embrace this movement. Couples may have different ideas regarding where to tie the knot, but local vendors can be hired regardless of geography. Brides magazine says the biggest factor influencing wedding location is the size of the guest list and the number of people who wouldn’t be able to attend if the wedding was in a particular locale. Hometowns might be the traditional choice regarding wedding location, but the XO Group says one in four couples now host destination weddings. Once couples choose a town or city to host their weddings, they can begin exploring the benefits of working with locally-based vendors. FAMILIARITY - Local vendors will be familiar with the area and possibly even the location where the wedding will be held. That can help couples avoid having to



give directions, discuss venue protocols, and handle other tasks that must be worked out with non-local vendors. For example, local photographers familiar with a particular venue will know all of the best places to get shots, and some vendors may have preexisting relationships with venue representatives that could ensure wedding day operations go smoothly. PROXIMITY - Local vendors can meet with brides and grooms more readily throughout the planning process, making things less stressful on the happy couple. This also makes it easier to drop off deposits, attend meetings, make fitting appointments, or attend styling sessions. SAVINGS - Couples who travel for their weddings and employ

local vendors will not have to pack as much. Using local vendors eliminates the need to bring along bulky dresses, decorative items, flowers, and much more. Plus, couples needn’t pay to transport and house vendors brought along from back home. ENVIRONMENT - Individuals who take great strides to conserve resources by reducing their energy consumption and protecting the environment often find that shopping local is beneficial. Local vendors are more likely to source their materials from other local businesses, reducing their carbon footprints along the way. For example, local caterers may rely on local farmers for their foods, affording couples the chance to host eco-friendly or even farm-to-table weddings. CUSTOMIZATION - Working with local vendors often translates into getting more personalized service and attention than mass retailers or merchants can provide. Going local when choosing wedding vendors is an increasingly popular choice among couples about to tie the knot.

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Master The Wedding With Save-The-Date Cards

Many couples' weddings take more than a year to plan. Couples want all of the special people in their lives to witness their vows, and giving guests advance notice can ensure as many loved ones as possible attend the ceremony. To be certain that guests have ample notice to clear their schedules, many couples now turn to save-the-date cards, which announce weddings well in advance of the actual wedding day. Save-the-date cards once were reserved only for weddings that required travel or special circumstances, such as destination weddings. But such cards have now become commonplace for all weddings. That's because many people plan vacations or business trips anywhere from four to six months in advance. Busy people require plenty of notice to include this important date on their calendars, particularly when wedding dates fall during popular travel seasons or around the holidays. Kleinfeld Bridal, a premiere New York bridal boutique, says that



save-the-date cards are typically mailed six to eight months prior to the wedding, though some are sent as early as a year before the big day. Once a date and a location is secured, save-the-dates can be ordered and mailed. Save-the-date cards require couples to assemble their guest lists well in advance of the wedding. The leading bridal resource The Knot notes that everyone who will get a wedding invitation should also receive a save-the-date card. There's no turning back once cards are sent, so couples will need to be certain everyone they want to attend is getting advanced notice. It's acceptable to mail save-the-date cards even if some wedding day details are still up in the air. Guests really only need to know the date and location of the wedding. Couples also can use the save-the-date card to direct invitees to a wedding website where guests can learn the details of the wedding as they unfold. RSVP information does not need to be included on the save-the-date card. Save-the-date cards are much less formal than invitations, so couples can have fun with them. They can showcase couples' clever personalities or funny quirks. Keep in mind it is in poor taste to mention gifts or registries on save-the-date cards. There will be plenty of time to direct guests to registries later on. Couples are increasingly turning to save-the-date cards when planning their weddings to make sure busy friends and family will have enough time to make plans to attend their weddings.

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Tips For Choosing A Honeymoon Destination

Once couples have tied the knot, hit the reception dance floor and thanked their friends and family for joining them, their thoughts might start looking ahead to their honeymoons. Statistics vary in regard to how much couples spend on their honeymoons, but those heading overseas can expect to pay thousands of dollars on such getaways. Couples planning their honeymoons want to get the most for their money while also ensuring their first trip together as newlyweds is as memorable as possible. The destination couples choose can go a long way toward making that happen, and couples can consider various factors as they work together to choose a locale for their honeymoons.

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Some couples might want their honeymoons to be filled with activities, while others might prefer more low-key trips spent relaxing at seaside resorts. Couples can discuss which types of trips they prefer and be willing to compromise if their desires differ.

TRAVEL: Some couples may prefer to travel throughout their honeymoons, while others may want to stay at the same resort for the duration of their trips. Couples who want to travel may find a backpacking trip to Europe is a romantic way to indulge their sense of adventure, while those who prefer something more quiet may find a beach resort more to their liking.

BUDGET: Budget is a strong consideration for many couples as they plan their honeymoons. Because honeymoons can be expensive, couples



who don't want to sacrifice on their first trip together as a married couple can begin planning their trips early, even looking for ways to cut costs on their ceremonies and receptions if their honeymoons are a bigger priority. When planning their honeymoons, couples also can take steps to save money. For example, delaying a trip until a few months after the wedding can help covers get back on their financial feet and enjoy their dream getaways. Couples visiting resorts also may want to opt for all-inclusive packages, which can provide great value, particularly on food and beverages.

PLANNING: *To ensure things run smoothly and you don't have any unexpected and unwanted surprises, always use a local travel agent. Any issues, and they are there to help you! They can also suggest options you may not have even thought about to be sure you have the trip of a lifetime!*



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You've planned the date, met with the officiant, decided on what to wear, and booked the venue. But how are you going to arrive in style? Arranging wedding transportation can be tricky, even if it seems like it's a relatively minor detail. However, getting not only the bride and groom, as well as the rest of the bridal party and guests, from point A to point B and even point C is often a taller task than it seems.

The wedding planning resource The Knot says couples should begin focusing on transportation between four and six months before their weddings. If the wedding will be held during prom or graduation season, couples may want to reserve vehicles even earlier due to high demand. While rented transportation is not necessary, it's a luxury many couples prefer, as it allows them to leave the driving to someone else. Generally speaking, hired cars will pick up the bride and groom separately before the ceremony; otherwise, they will arrive to the ceremony by other means and then utilize a limo or other vehicle afterward. The transportation will then take the married couple and typically members of the bridal party and immediate family to the reception venue. Depending on the head count and how many other people will be getting a lift, two or more vehicles may be necessary. And since the limos will leave after the reception drop off, some other form of transportation will be necessary to take the couple and whomever else rode to the reception back home (or to the airport). This may require dropping



off one or more personal cars at the reception venue in advance. Budget also will dictate if transportation is provided for other guests. The majority of guests will drive their own cars to the wedding. However, if the ceremony and reception site are far apart or if the journey is arduous and out of the way, some well-meaning couples will arrange for transport. Many times couples will have to opt for function over form when tasked with transporting a large number of people. Pricing out different options can yield the most cost-effective route, which very well may be a school or charter bus instead of several limousines. Couples can start the process by asking their reception venue for transportation recommendations. Or if there are hotel accommodations after the party, the hotel may have connections or offer shuttle services.

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Wedding Registry Tips

Building a wedding registry is a task unlike any other couples may encounter during their lifetimes. Wedding registries are invaluable resources that provide engaged couples' loved ones with gift suggestions. In spite of that value, couples may find it daunting and even a little uncomfortable to build their wedding registries.

The following tips can help couples build adequate registries that benefit them without asking too much of their guests.

- REGISTER WITH MORE THAN ONE STORE. It's important to register with more than one store. Doing so makes things as convenient as possible for guests and increases the chances they will be able to shop at stores they're familiar with.

- MAKE A LARGE LIST. Some couples are hesitant to make large wedding registries, feeling that doing so gives the impression that they're asking for too much. But large registries simply give guests more options to choose from. Many industry



insiders advise registering for two to three gifts per guest. That might seem like a lot, but guests will appreciate having all of those options.

- DON'T HESITATE TO INCLUDE SOME EXPENSIVE ITEMS ON YOUR REGISTRY. Couples also may be hesitant to include especially expensive

items on their wedding registries, however, the couples' parents and other close relatives may be honored to purchase more expensive items, so couples should not feel embarrassed to include them on their lists.

- VARY THE PRICES OF ITEMS ON THE LIST. In addition to including more expensive items on the registry, make sure to include moderately priced and inexpensive items. This gives guests more options and ensures guests who might be spending a lot to travel to and from the wedding can still purchase gifts without digging too much deeper into their pockets. Periodically update your registries to remove items you have already received and to add items if many of the less expensive ones have already been purchased. This also makes things more convenient for guests.

Building a wedding registry is a unique task that couples can embrace as their wedding day draws near.



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