

# FOR THE BRIDE AND GROOM

## The Morrisville and Preston Progress' Wedding Guide

### They're Getting Married — Let the Planning Begin

He popped the question, and she said yes. Maybe he got down on his knees, maybe he didn't. As familiar or traditional as the simple little question, "Will you marry me?" may be, nothing can take away from the one-of-a-kind story of how they fell in love or the look in her eyes when he asked — but this isn't the time to be idling in the moment.

The engagement must be announced, the news spread. Informing family, friends and co-workers is what makes the engagement feel official. And more importantly, it is what gets the wedding planning in motion, beginning with the question, "When?"

Choosing a wedding date, one that allows the bride- and groom-to-be an ample amount of time to prepare, is a must. How much time a couple needs will vary with the size and style of wedding they choose. If planning a traditional wedding, the couple should give themselves at least nine months to a year to prepare for it.

The next step lies in selecting just the right place to exchange vows and with whom to share the experience. This will help the couple determine the size and style of their wedding. If taking a traditional approach, the couple will want to select their honor attendants — bridesmaids for the bride, groomsmen for the groom. Additionally, the two can begin compiling a guest list.

As they compile the guest list, the couple should consider their gift registry. It's best to register for gifts at more than one store, in more than one

price range. This allows guests more flexibility in choosing gifts.

Next, the couple must decide on the wedding professionals — the musicians, photographers, videographer, florist and caterer. A visit with the officiant should be arranged as well, in the event that any pre-wedding requirements need to be fulfilled.

Once the ceremony and reception sites have been booked and the necessary decisions made, the couple should consider their honeymoon. Consulting a travel agent always is a good idea. In doing so, the couple may receive discounts and other unique benefits or travel packages by making it known that they'll be newlyweds.

After the reservations have been made, the couple at last can begin focusing on themselves. In order to look as dazzling on their wedding day as smiling figurines atop a wedding cake, the bride- and groom-to-be will need to decide on their wedding apparel. If wedding attendants are involved, the bride will want to keep her bridesmaids in mind — the color and style of dresses they'd feel most comfortable wearing.

A successful wedding takes time and careful organization. To be safe, the bride- and groom-to-be should purchase a wedding planner. This way, they won't run the risk of forgetting the little things, like bands — not the kind that play music, but the kind they'll be wearing on their fingers for the rest of their lives. BR997209



### Here's A Toast To Happiness

(NU)—A wedding is one of the grandest events in a lifetime. And every couple planning a wedding wants the event to be special and memorable.

Wedding customs derive from different cultures but often bear a common thread—the toast and the wine.

Throughout the centuries, wine has become the symbol of vitality, life, kinship and love—all basic themes for festive occasions, especially weddings. Rituale, the Italian wine maker, has found a variety of wedding facts and history and compiled them in a new leaflet, *Say "I DO"—A Collection Of Wedding Treasures*. Brides-to-be can take a look at some interesting wedding customs.

In Scandinavian culture, "honeymoon" refers to the first month (or cycle of the moon) of a couple's marriage. During that first month, the newlyweds would drink honeyed wine, called "mead," hence the term honeymoon. In other cultures, the sipping of wine has been a part of the actual wedding ceremony.

It is a popular Jewish custom for the bride and groom to sip wine from the same glass following the wedding ceremony. The groom then stomps on the glass with his shoe and breaks it into many pieces. Some believe that each piece of glass represents a year of happiness, and the tradition is a reminder of the destruction of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem.



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In a traditional Chinese wedding, the maid of honor toasts the bride and groom and offers fruits and sweets to wish them a long and happy life together. When the reception is in full swing and the shark fin soup is served, the couple goes from table to table toasting their guests.

Future brides can learn some interesting facts about weddings, vows, the rings, the cake and more through Rituale's free leaflet. It offers some fun and enlightening items to help you plan your special day.

### When It Comes to Wedding Music, Don't Be Left Singing the Blues

Imagine a beautiful bride, all dressed in white, walking down the aisle without music. The eerie silence would be deafening. When choosing music for your wedding day, don't let every bride's worst nightmare become your reality — take the time and necessary precautions to avoid wedding day music disasters.

Ask friends, relatives and the local musicians union for recommendations and check references. You can call the Better Business Bureau or Consumer Affairs to find out if there have been any complaints about the music providers you are considering. To inquire about disc jockeys (DJs), you also can call the American Disc Jockey Association.

You'll need music for the ceremony as well as the reception, so consider the following when determining what kind of music will be appropriate:

- **Location** — Churches or synagogues may have certain rules and regulations about what kind of music is acceptable. Be sure to ask first, in order to avoid any costly alternatives.
- **Performers** — Chances are, you'll want different performers for the reception than you will for the ceremony. You may want a string quartet, vocalist or flutist for the ceremony, but a DJ for the reception — spinning your favorite tunes.

- **Additional performers** to consider: comedian, bagpipe players, dancers.
- **Size** — Keep in mind the size of the ceremony and location. While a string quartet might be the perfect background for an intimate ceremony, a larger hall will not share the same acoustics.

- **Style** — Is the wedding formal or informal? Contemporary or traditional? A full-piece orchestra would seem a bit lavish for an informal reception with a casual style. Aim for music that suits the style or theme of the wedding.
- **Taste** — Pleasing every guest is next to impossible, however, choosing

music that fits your guests' tastes will make for a lively, more memorable wedding. As for the reception, determine whether the crowd will be older or younger, and what you expect of them. If your goal is to have a full dance floor, choose music that will make them want to dance.

#### CONTRACTS

Once you've decided on music, it's time to get the perfect wedding signed, sealed and delivered — with a contract. Be sure to include the following items:

- Agreed-upon price, amount of deposit, additional charges (travel, early setup, cocktail-hour) and overtime rates.
- Names of specific people you want (band leader, vocalist, DJ, dancers). Specify what types of substitutions and compensation will be made if names agreed upon don't appear.
- If having a band: the number of musicians and what instruments they play.

- If having a DJ: additional duties besides music, like supplying party favors or acting as master of ceremonies.
- Date, number of hours they'll be playing music and location.
- Number of breaks, what kind of refreshments will be available to them, and how they'll fill-in the breaks (CDs, tapes, other entertainment).
- Style of dress or special costumes you'd like them to perform in.

- Additionally, if you have special music requests for the wedding, make sure that you specify this ahead of time. Providing sheet music for the band or CDs for the DJ will ensure you hear the right version of the tune. And, if the band is not familiar with it, at least they'll have time to learn.



### Bridal Flowers: Advice From The Experts

(NAPS)—Weddings this season promise to be a mix of the old and the new. While couples still prefer the elements of a traditional wedding ceremony, brides are choosing floral arrangements and wedding flowers that are more creative and personal.

To help her pull it all together creatively and with ease, is the expert guidance of a professional bridal floral designer.

Guidelines to planning a memorable wedding from the American Institute of Floral Designers and the Society of American Florists include:

- Before contacting your florist, select the date, time and place for your wedding and reception, and know the colors and styles of the gowns you and your bridesmaids have selected.

- Look through bridal books and floral guides. Sketch ideas, cut out pictures or take photographs of flowers to show your florist.



8610104M/PS Photograph courtesy of North American Precis Syndicate

- Set up an initial consultation with your florist to discuss specific design ideas that fit both your personal style and budget. Make arrangements for your florist to visit both the ceremony and reception sites. Before leaving the first consultation, a second appointment should be planned to review recommendations and budget.

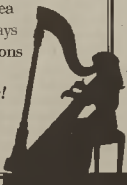
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