

2023

WINTER

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GUIDE



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Journal Review

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Winter Florals

At first blush, it may seem like winter flowers don't have the pizzazz of summer and spring bouquets.

ON-TREND PETAL PALETTES

Winter adds a layer of texture to your bouquet in that frosty hues and accents are perfectly acceptable. This year, white and blue are great colors to work with. Frosty roses and ranunculus pair perfectly with blooms in all ranges of blue and deep greens. Pine cones make great accents, as do fir branches and other fragrant greens appropriate for the season.

A white and green palette is also great to work with, especially for brides on a budget. Greenery takes up much of the bouquet, and you'd be surprised at the shades of green your florist can

get their hands on. From the whisper whites of dusty miller to the pale blues of evergreen to the deep, glossy greens of fern and other foliage, a green bouquet can be a perfect accent to your perfect day.

GO RED

Red is another stunning holiday color. There's the classic blooms of red roses, but also look to berries, holly, carnations and other stunning blooms to make up your bouquet. Deep red looks great against a white wedding dress and a snowy backdrop, and it's the perfect season to go all out with this darker jewel tone. You

can also mix red in with pops of red-tinted leaves, ribbons and other accents.

ADD A PERSONAL TOUCH

A winter wedding can also be a good time to think about mixing in unique but personal items into your bouquet. Think peacock feathers, cotton bolls, succulents, trailing ribbons and more. Work with your florist to understand what will hold up in your bouquet and what might be more at home in a centerpiece.

OTHER FLORALS TO CONSIDER

While most of the attention

might be on the bride and her bouquet, remember that there are other floral arrangements to plan for at a wedding. The groom and groomsmen will need boutonnières, the bridesmaids traditionally carry small bouquets, and the flower girl will need her petals. Also think about centerpieces, altar arrangements and other bouquets that will need to be made.

Talk with your florist and the manager of the space where you plan to hold your wedding to determine what you can and cannot add and what is typically used in weddings at that venue and in your area.



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Photos were taken by Abbey Elaine Photography

Hiring a Photographer

A wedding photographer is one of the most important vendors you'll hire for your big day.

They'll capture the memories of your wedding day and, if you don't like the finished product, it's not like you can go back and do it again. You'll also be spending a lot of time with your photographer, so it's important that you work well with them. Here are some questions to ask to make sure you get the right person for your once-in-a-lifetime photos.

Are you available on my wedding day? While this seems like a no-brainer, you want to check photographer availability as soon as you possibly can. If you have any flexibility with your date, let the photographer know. If an associate is going to shoot your wedding, ask to meet the photographer as early as possible so you can make sure you'll work well with them.

Have you ever shot a wedding or a reception at our venue? If the photographer regularly works in your area, the answer is probably yes. Ask to see a full wedding gallery from that venue to make sure your photographer can



handle all lighting and social situations. Look for a cohesive wedding gallery that has the feel you're looking for. If they haven't shot at your venue, ask to see a recent gallery at a similar venue and make sure they're available to walk through the venue with you before your wedding day.

What is included in your most popular wedding package? Have a clear understanding of your budget, what you can afford, and what is included in the package that you choose. Some photographers may include all images in your final wedding gallery while others will just give you a certain number and sell you

more. Confirm how many hours of shooting is included in your package, if an engagement shoot is included, and how many photographers are included in that price. Some special wedding moments require more than one photographer to capture the full scene.

Also make sure you understand how and when the photographs will be delivered. If there's a print permit, make sure you understand how that will be delivered. Lastly, ask if that package includes any travel and accommodation fees. If you're planning a destination wedding, you should understand how your photographer will be getting to your venue and where they'll be staying — and if you're expected to pay for it.

What happens if you're unable to shoot our wedding? Things happen. Equipment breaks, people get sick.

Make sure you know if your photographer requires a retainer, what the refund and cancellation policy is, if they use backup equipment and what the quality of that equipment is, what will happen if they can't shoot your wedding personally, and, lastly, if the photographer has liability insurance should anything happen.

'Tis the Season

Here are some ways to incorporate the holiday season into your big day.

ORNAMENTS

Customizable Christmas ornaments can pop up throughout holiday weddings. Include them in your welcome bag for guests, put them in centerpieces for people to take home, use them as favors, have guests write things on them and hang them on a tree for you to memorialize your wedding. The ideas are as numerous as, well, ornaments on a Christmas tree. They can also fit into any theme or color palette you can imagine.

DECK THE HALLS

... or tents, or aisles in yards of Christmas-y evergreen. Use garlands normally draped down halls or over stair railings in unusual ways, such as lining chandeliers. Accent the classic holiday decor with berries and red ribbon for a storybook feel.

FLAVOR PROFILES

When it comes to food, Christmas has a whole menu of flavors to work with. Have a special eggnog cocktail at your reception, feature cranberries in the entree, work peppermints into the decorations.

JINGLE BELLS FOR WEDDING BELLS

Hand out tiny bells (they can double as escort cards for dinner) and have your guests ring them as you walk out of the venue instead of throwing rice or blowing bubbles. It makes for an unforgettable holiday moment as well as a joyful noise to being your life together.

LIGHT IT UP

Twinkling lights are a great way to incorporate Christmas cheer into your wedding and reception. Consider dimming the house lights in your venue, taking advantage of thousands

of tiny Christmas lights to lend a romantic atmosphere to your vows or your reception. The same with another traditional Christmas light — the candle. Just make sure your venue allows open flames.

INVITATIONS

Combine the traditional Christmas card with your wedding invitation for a festive nod to the season. Style your paper goods with ornaments or ribbons to keep the holiday feel going. This will also let your guests know that you're fully embracing the holiday season.



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Winter Honeymoons

Forget the beach. Winter weddings call for a honeymoon where it's cold outside.

If the thought of frolicking in the snow warms your heart as much as your honey does, then keep reading. We've got the honeymoon trip for you.

FINLAND

Get cozy with a honeymoon in the winter paradise of Finland. The Lapland region in the country's north offers a gorgeous winter landscape lit by Northern Lights for more than half the year. Look for excursions like reindeer-drawn sleigh rides, skiing and sled dog adventures. Take time to meet the Sami, the only indigenous people in the European Union.

WYOMING

Nature lovers can enjoy the grandeur of Yellowstone National Park or Grand Teton National Park. Or hit the snow in places like Jackson Hole, home to some of the best skiing in the country. Watch the elk pour into the National Elk Refuge during the winter migration, or go wildlife watching for black bears, eagles, bison and more.

JAPAN

Winter is a quiet travel season



for Japan, meaning you may be able to snag some great off-season rates and won't see as many crowds in popular places like Mount Fuji. There are also beautiful snow festivals to see, as well as world-class skiing. Don't forget to hit up a natural hot spring spa for the experience of a lifetime.

LAKE TAHOE

Crystal waters and beautiful mountain vistas make Lake Tahoe a natural honeymoon destination. This California hotspot is known for its hiking and skiing. Visit Squaw Valley, home to

the 1960 Winter Olympics and have a drink at the glass-walled Terrace Restaurant and Bar while taking in some epic views.

NEW ZEALAND

If you're getting married in the summer but still want a winter honeymoon, never fear, New Zealand is here. Glaciers, ski slopes and more await during America's summer months, where it's winter Down Under. Explore geothermal hot springs, bright blue lakes and a breathtaking shoreline. Queenstown, where bungee jumping was

invented, is called the adventure capital of the world for good reason.

MAINE

Want to hit the snow but not head out West? Then try the slopes at Camden, Maine, where you can gaze out at the frosty Atlantic from the ski run. If nature is your thing, head up to Acadia National Park. For food, definitely try the Maine lobster any and every time you can, and the state is full of charming bed-and-breakfasts and cabins for rent for a romantic getaway.

An old fashioned setting for
New Beginnings



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Modern Engaging Rings

An engagement ring is meant to last a lifetime, but there are definitely some trends year-to-year.

And if you think that the COVID-19 pandemic hasn't reached into even this market, you'd be wrong. Experts say that, after two years of postponements and uncertainty, more couples are tossing the rules and going with their gut when it comes to engagement ring purchases.

TOI ET MOI

Multistone rings are big this year. Double- and even triple-stone rings are popular, as are combinations with precious stones and pearls. "Specifically, the double stone visually showcases the coming together of two people," Katie Zimmeran, chief merchandising officer at Blue Nile, told Brides magazine. "We've increasingly seen people choose unique diamonds and gemstones to further elaborate on the love story that's being told with the two gemstones."

A three-stone ring can represent the past, present and future of the relationship. More stones also allow for more creativity.



COLORED GEMSTONES

Colorless diamonds are moving over in favor of bold, bright gemstones, with emerald, morganite and sapphire particularly popular options. Black stone engagement rings are also making a statement. When the "Sex and the City" reboot, "And Just Like That" aired, fans were reminded of Carrie Bradshaw's black diamond engagement ring. Onyx-hued stones saw an accompanying uptick in popularity.

BIGGER IS BETTER

When it comes to traditional diamonds, bigger is better this year, including bold shapes and halo cuts, where a ring of smaller diamonds surrounds a larger stone, packing a huge visual punch. Oval shaped stones are also more popular. The soft, oblong shape draws attention and makes the fingers appear longer. Oval solitaires, in particular, are a feminine shape with a timelessness that's attractive to today's buyers.

VINTAGE RINGS

In the same vein as thrifted and vintage clothing are vintage rings. Heirloom pieces are often one-of-a-kind, unique pieces that are a great expression of love for modern couples. If it's a family piece, vintage rings can offer an emotional connection to past generations. Add a modern band that compliments it and make it your own. You can also have a jeweler add a new diamond or other stone to make a special piece your own.

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Marriage Licenses

The ceremony may be beautiful, the bride a vision in white, but the wedding itself isn't legal unless there's a marriage license.

This is the document that legally binds the couple together and clears the way for the marriage certificate, which is proof that you are officially married. Here's what you need to know about both documents.

MARRIAGE LICENSES

You will typically have to file your marriage license in the county in which you plan to get married. Some counties and states have expiration dates on their licenses, so you'll not only need to know the place where you plan to get married, but also the date. There may also be a waiting period from the time you file to the time you get your license. In Texas, for instance, you must wait to get married for at least 72 hours after applying for a license.

You'll most likely get your license from the county clerk, and that office will tell you everything you'll need to bring with you. Each county is different, but generally, this is information such as proof of identity, such as a drivers license or



passport; a birth certificate; a certificate of divorce or death certificate if this isn't your first marriage; information about your parents, such as their full names, birthdates and birthplaces; and cash for the license fee.

Three people will generally need to sign the marriage license, usually after the ceremony. That's the couple themselves, the officiant and one or

more witnesses. The officiant will then turn in the marriage license to the county.

MARRIAGE CERTIFICATES

After the officiant turns in the marriage license and the county processes it, you'll receive a marriage certificate. This document usually comes several days after the ceremony, after the county clerk files your completed license with

your state's vital records bureau. In Florida, for instance, the filing process takes an average of 60 days.

Marriage certificates often include much of the same information as the license and are acceptable proof that a marriage has taken place, was finalized and is recorded with the state. In other words, it's proof that you're legally married.

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