

A romantic wedding scene at night. A bride in a white lace gown and veil and a groom in a dark suit are kissing. They are standing in a stone archway with a large lantern hanging above them. The background is filled with lush greenery and a warm sunset glow. Decorative floral elements are placed around the text.

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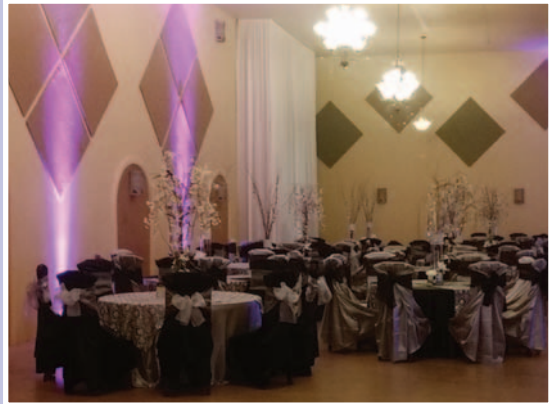
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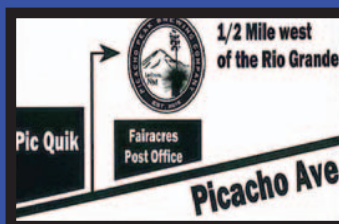
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Vintage details

DRESS UP WEDDINGS IN 2018

BY AVRA ELLIOTT

Photo by Taylor'd Photography & Videography

While one couple may choose a color scheme as vibrant as New Mexico sunsets and another prefers the elegance of slate grey and cream, the options available for soon-to-be newlyweds in Las Cruces promise an occasion as unique as your love story.

CAKES

Bringing nature to the wedding has become a popular trend, with fondant making way for more natural cakes and earthy hues, with rustic décor and decorative wood joining in the cake displays.

"I'm really enjoying the trend," Stephanie Baumann, owner of Let Them Eat Cake, said. "It can go from elegant rustic to hoedown. There are nuances you can work with, so the couple's unique perspective comes through."

Flavor is just one way to express a couple's individuality, with some choosing to have their cake flavored with a favorite coffee or other tastes tied to the couple's memories. Baumann said cupcakes are still a popular option, with many couples choosing a variety for guests and a smaller personalized cake for cutting.

Whether you choose a stacked cake with elements of copper, a popular color right now, according to Baumann, or a variety of cupcakes as different as your guests, the cake represents the couple and their love. "It doesn't matter what everyone else is doing," Baumann said. "Do what you like."

FLOWERS

With the return of vintage and bohemian trends, wild and overgrown bouquets with waterfalls of ivy are gaining popularity in a big way. There is a renewed appreciation for succulents as artful and desert-friendly centerpieces.

"I'm really excited about the garden feel of this trend," said Desarae Terrazas, manager of Barb's Flowerland. "We are seeing bouquets with fewer flowers and more greenery and succulents."

The rustic look is still in with muted and neutral-toned bouquets, but brides are beginning to embrace an organic look while incorporating rich jewel tones and pops of color. Terrazas said eucalyptus is a popular greenery choice, lending jade tones to neutral bouquets.

While most brides have an idea of what they'd like, Terrazas enjoys when a bride simply tells her the colors and lets her do what she does best.

At Flowerama, Donna Watson has found brides still hold a deep love for a classic rose bouquet, while others look to Pinterest and bridal magazines for inspiration.

"Every bride is different," Watson said, regardless of trends.

Whether a bride wants the elegance of a pure white bouquet, a colorful fiesta arrangement or an ostrich feather for glamour, the florists of Las Cruces are prepared to make couples happy on their big day.

➤ CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

JEWELRY

With bohemian and vintage style and colors abounding, it's no surprise that vintage glamour is also showing up on brides' fingers. Old world romance has returned with oval cuts and rose gold rings, while the brighter hues of gemstones like sapphires gain appreciation nationally as unique options.

"We have a lot of women picking marquis, pear shape or oval," said Baquera Jewelers owner Gail Baquera. "They like the antique look." Yellow gold is popular among the brides of New Mexico, Baquera said, but white gold and platinum are still most women's first choice. For the fashion-forward bride, mixing metals with stacked rings is another way of carrying your everyday style into your wedding accessories.

Baquera advises brides to not be afraid of going against the trend if it doesn't fit their personal style, and for those wanting something uniquely their own, Baquera's Jewelry offers custom designs.

VENUES

After-parties, a tradition of prolonging the reception long into the night, have continued to gain popularity. With venues offering local brews and gorgeous views, who can blame guests for wanting to stay a little longer?

While we aren't quite ready to say goodbye to our DIY weddings of burlap, lace and barns, wedding planners are seeing couples change their focus to create an overall mood for their wedding rather than a theme. Industrial settings are in, but why not take advantage of the weather and horizons at one of Las Cruces' many outdoor wedding options? Grapevine Plaza offers both indoor and outdoor options as well as craft brews. There's New Mexico State University Conference Services if perhaps you met your sweetheart on campus among the impressive architecture and fields of New Mexico State University - or if you just enjoy a spacious venue with lovely views. If you are looking for a venue with a story, consider the New Mexico Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum, both for your reception and as a location for your photos. ♥



Photo by Taylor'd Photography & Videography



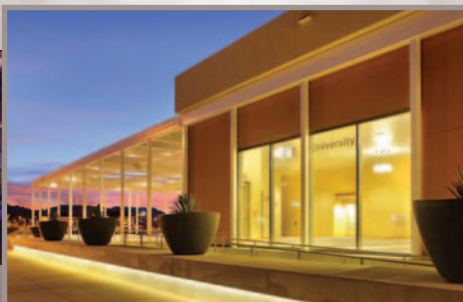
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Something borrowed, something blue

WEDDINGS ARE STEEPED IN TRADITION, MYTHS

TRACY ROY Photos by Taylor'd Photography & Videography

The superstition that it's bad luck for a bride and groom to see each other before the wedding dates to the old tradition of arranged marriages. If a husband saw his bride-to-be before the wedding ceremony – and didn't like what he saw – he'd have a chance to back out.

The bridal veil, too, is related to arranged marriages, and prevented the groom from seeing his bride's face until the very last second - too late to run. The veil was also thought in many cultures to keep the bride safe from evil spirits.

Though it may not seem ideal, especially if your wedding is an outdoor one, but rain on your wedding day symbolizes cleansing or fertility in many cultures.

Giving knives as gifts is bad luck – a gifted knife is thought to “cut” the friendship between giver and recipient.

In medieval times, carrying the bride across the threshold was important to preserve her chastity. In many cultures throughout history, though, the symbolic crossing of the threshold was used to ward off malevolent spirits and ill fortune. Spirit intrusion was

a heavy concern, and since they usually entered through the soles of the feet, a bride was carried over the presence-heavy threshold of the home.

By breaking a glass at a wedding, a couple can get a glimpse at how many years of wedded bliss they'll have ahead of them. Each piece the glassware breaks into stands for another year happily married.

Crying on your wedding day may be a good omen - the tears shed by a bride on her wedding day are thought to symbolize the last she'll shed in her life, now that she's happily wed.

And as if the bride didn't have enough on her mind the day of her nuptials, she's also supposed to carry with her something old, something new, something borrowed and something blue. Why? Something old signifies a couple's desire to carry on the traditions of their forebears as they come together as a new family; something new indicates the couple is looking ahead to happiness, good fortune and wealth; something borrowed gives the bride's family and friends a chance to lend her a token of their love and warm wishes; and something blue symbolizes the bride's fidelity to her husband. ♥



What's your season?

SEASONAL CONSIDERATIONS CAN HELP TAILOR YOUR CEREMONY

BY JEN GRUGER Photo by Taylor'd Photography & Videography

The first weekend in October has recently edged out June 18 (and other summer dates) as the most popular wedding day, according to www.theknot.com.

Here in southern New Mexico, we are lucky to have enjoyable weather all year long.

There are many factors when choosing a wedding date, but if you're able to concentrate on the look and feel of the event, think about the season that suits you and your spouse-to-be the best. Are you winter lovers, primed for a cozy, holiday setting? Or are you outdoorsy fitness fanatics and want to remember this special day in our beautiful late spring climate?

Consider the season as you choose everything.

What fresh foods and flowers are seasonally available? What colors reflect both your personal style and the season? Can you have a little fun with Save the Date cards by announcing a summer wedding in the cold of winter? Keep in mind the comfort of your guests.

Considerations include pricing and availability. In the months that are least popular for weddings, January, February (except Valentine's

Day) and March, you may get discounted prices. The most popular months in southern New Mexico are June, August, September and October.

Here are some other considerations for each season.

WINTER

If you have your heart set on a winter wedding, consider a destination wedding at a ski resort or a mountain lodge. Book ahead, and be prepared for winter driving. Is your focus going to be on the winter weather, or the holiday season? Can you incorporate fun things like hot cocoa or hand out ear warmers and lap blankets?

SPRING

Early spring can be a tough time to find flowers in bloom, but lots of greenery with a few flowering embellishments is a popular alternative to keep expenses down. You're also going to need to be prepared for inclement weather, but everything can be worked in to

the event nicely – think umbrellas and wind chimes!

SUMMER

Don't be afraid of the outdoors in the summer, especially if you can find a venue with outdoor lighting options for the evening. Nothing is more romantic than a beautifully lit garden setting.

FALL

Even if it gets a bit cooler in the evening, consider fire pits, tiki torches and heaters. Fall flowers can be challenging, but this is the perfect opportunity to get creative. Incorporate unexpected plants like wheat, crabapples, and ornamental gourds. ♥



Photos by Taylor'd Photography & Videography

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Incorporate culture into your wedding vows

BY JEN GRUGER Photo by Taylor'd Photography & Videography

Your wedding day can be one of the best ways to honor culture and family traditions. It can also be a way to introduce new traditions or resurrect old ones. What matters to you, your heritage, and your culture can be the central theme of your wedding, or you can choose to incorporate small pieces of things that matter. Here are just a few ideas.

- Don't be afraid to use different languages. If you and your spouse-to-be both speak another language, include some phrases in the ceremony, or conduct your vows in those languages.
- Consider building the menu around your culture. Be sure to decide early however, so you can be sure to find a venue and/or caterer willing to accommodate.
- Incorporate colors, garments and flower arrangements unique to your culture.

I attended a wedding once where the groom's Swedish culture was acknowledged by the fact that the bride and groom walked each other down the aisle. Additionally, the bride took lessons in advance from his father's side of the family, so she was ready for traditional Ethiopian dancing at the reception.

I was recently honored to officiate a ceremony for a couple who incorporated the Hispanic tradition of wedding coins or arras. "Arras" means "pledge" in Spanish and the ceremony involves exchanging a set of 13 (traditionally gold) coins that ultimately end up in a beautiful box. The custom developed from pledging a dowry that represented the groom's commitment and ability to care for the materials needs of the home.

Today, most couples depend on two incomes, as was the case for my friends, so we crafted the words that accompany the passing back and forth of the coins to express this contemporary reality. Some say there are 13 coins to represent prosperity in each month of the year, plus one extra for others in need. For this couple, the arras represented not only their commitment to care for each other, but also for those who may come seeking their care and kindness in the future.

Whatever you do, be mindful of ways to help guests learn more about the choices you've made. Consider including a printed program with a little bit of information about your bonding ceremony, or background on the history of a family heirloom you incorporated. This will help broaden the horizons of guests who aren't familiar with your culture. ♥



An "arras" or "coin" ceremony - Photo by Elva K. Österreich

TIMELINE FOR WEDDING PLANNING

Two years to 12 months before the wedding

- ☐ Set a date
- ☐ Determine budget and discuss
- ☐ Shop for and choose ceremony, reception locations
- ☐ Determine the need for a wedding planning professional

Twelve to nine months before the wedding

- ☐ Select wedding attendants
- ☐ Select wedding officiant
- ☐ Determine wedding colors and themes
- ☐ Shop for and choose wedding dress and accessories
- ☐ Shop for and choose bridal party clothes, accessories
- ☐ Determine guest list
- ☐ Choose professionals such as a photographer, videographer, disc jockey, caterer, musicians and florist

Six to nine months before the wedding

- ☐ Select flowers for bouquets, centerpieces, altar displays, corsages, etc.
- ☐ Reserve wedding-day transportation
- ☐ Make honeymoon travel accommodations
- ☐ Reserve accommodations for out-of-town wedding guests
- ☐ Register for wedding gifts

Four to six months before the wedding

- ☐ Select tuxedos for groom, groomsmen, fathers of bride, groom
- ☐ Select wedding cake

- ☐ Purchase rings
- ☐ Choose and order invitations and other printed material
- ☐ Advise employers, schedule vacation time accordingly

Two to four months before the wedding

- ☐ Select reception accessories
- ☐ Mail invitations two months in advance
- ☐ Purchase attendant gifts
- ☐ Write or select wedding vows and meet with officiant to review ceremony
- ☐ Make bar/beverage arrangements

One month before the wedding

- ☐ Do final fittings for all attire
- ☐ Confirm all reservations
- ☐ Make appointments for massage, hair, makeup and manicure
- ☐ Obtain all legal documents and apply for marriage license

One week before the wedding

- ☐ Confirm head count with catering hall
- ☐ Begin packing for wedding day and honeymoon

Night before the wedding

- ☐ Attend rehearsal dinner
- ☐ Give out wedding attendant gifts
- ☐ Lay out wedding attire
- ☐ Get a good night's sleep

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“Weddings on the labyrinth are wonderful and have a completely different feel than traditional weddings. Rather than the traditional walk down the ‘straight and narrow’ of the church aisle, the couple walk around the paths and turns of the labyrinth – a much more accurate metaphor for the journey they are embarking upon.”
– Helen Curry, author of “The Way of the Labyrinth: A Powerful Meditation for Everyday Life.”



Tailor your ceremony with alternative ideas

BY JEN GRUGER Photos by Taylor'd Photography & Videography

Some of the most important decisions a couple makes are about the ceremony itself. Sometimes, the approach is obvious and requires almost no discussion, perhaps because of your religious affiliation or your culture.

However, even if religious or cultural precedence is set, there are still ways to incorporate meaningful moments that might be considered non-traditional.

For couples looking for alternatives, there are numerous online resources of course and your wedding officiant should be able to provide guidance as well. (See article on page 16.) Here are a few non-traditional elements I have seen work out beautifully:

- Ask a dear friend to be the officiant. It is a simple process to be ordained in a nondenominational congregation and can be done online in most cases.
- Conduct more than one ceremony – a traditional one for that side of the family, and a non-traditional one for everyone else.
- If both newlyweds are bringing children into the blended family, consider having them take part in the ceremony. The eldest male child may be the perfect one to give the bride away, or a daughter might be just the right officiant.
- The bride and groom might escort each other down the aisle.
- Honor deceased family members by incorporating keepsakes into the ceremony.
- Consider a labyrinth wedding.

- Set the tone by choosing a playful song for the wedding party to dance down the aisle to, encouraging the guests to dance as well.

Making the decision to move away from the traditional ceremony can be a point of contention with important family members, especially elders. Sit with them in advance and explain your choices and why you've made them. They are likely to appreciate your perspective and understand that you need to do what is going to be most meaningful for you and your spouse.

It is fine to sway from tradition, but whatever you decide, the important thing is to feel that every moment of the union is meaningful and the right start to your future together. ♥





HOW TO KEEP YOUR BIG-DAY STRESS AT BAY

Photo by Taylor'd Photography & Videography

- **Have support:** When stress starts to build, a support person can help you sort through priorities and stay focused on the most important matters at hand.
- **Take a break:** Sometimes, you must step away from wedding planning and return refreshed when you're ready.
- **Stay connected:** Schedule time for non-wedding-planning quality time with your soon-to-be spouse, friends or family.
- **Take care of your body:** Eat well, exercise, drink lots of water.
- **Journal:** Writing is an easy way to vent emotion and clear your head.
- **Don't be afraid to delegate:** Lean on friends and family to help with tasks. Chances are, they'll be delighted to participate.



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What to expect from your officiant

BY JEN GRUGER

Photo by Taylor'd Photography & Videography

Your wedding ceremony is the most sacred part of the big day, so selecting someone to marry you is a big deal. Whether you pick someone you have known forever or find someone who compliments you and your partner as a couple, it's an important decision that will set the tone for the rest of the day — and the rest of your lives.

As an ordained minister, I can tell you that performing a wedding ceremony is a significant commitment. To be an effective instrument of this intimate event, I am prepared to answer anything the couple might ask. Whether your officiant is someone you know closely or not, here are a few questions you should ask.

Will you create a ceremony that is meaningful to us?

Will the officiant work with you on the content and design? You may know exactly what you want for some parts, but may need help for others. Is he or she flexible? What is the officiant's spiritual nature? Make sure it's a good fit.

What is your experience?

Don't be afraid to ask for a resume. It is also appropriate to ask for referrals or even request videos of ceremonies they've performed.

Do you have a contingency plan?

Every part of your wedding should have a back-up plan and the officiant is no exception. Does yours have a colleague who can fill in on short notice? This is a good time to ask how the officiant handles unexpected moments during the ceremony — a noisy guest or an intrusive noise.

How often will we meet?

In addition to initial discussions to figure out the basics, you may want to meet a few times. It is also common for the officiant to run the rehearsal. Some clergy require couples to have counseling. If this is the case, confirm the schedule.

What is the fee?

Know the fee and what it covers. If your officiant will be traveling out of town for your wedding, discuss transportation, hotels and meals. The wedding officiant is often the person who fills out the wedding certificate and files it with the county clerk. Is that included?

Will the officiant be joining you at the reception?

Depending on how familiar you are with the officiant, you may or may not want to invite him or her to the reception. Don't forget to include them in the catering count. ♥

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CLASSICS STILL POPULAR, BUT MANY EXPERIMENT WITH GARB VERSATILITY AND COLOR

BY AVRA ELLIOTT

Photo by Taylor'd Photography & Videography

From princess capes to moto jackets, wedding gown designers have provided options for both the brides who played princess and those who'd rather leave the reception on a dirt bike than a white horse. But for many New Mexico brides nothing surpasses the texture and beauty of a lace gown.

"Lace is the 'it' look," Roxanne Kidd, owner of Renee's Bridal said. "We love the classic lace, and each designer is adding their own spin with three-dimensional crochet patterns and micro-detailing."

Kidd said she also enjoys the less-is-more option of sleek clean lines where brides have the choice of dressing the gown up or down depending on their jewelry and shoes.

"By simply changing their accessories or adding a jacket, the bride creates a whole new look," Kidd said. "Guests often think it is a different dress at the reception."

In choosing a wedding gown, it's always best to keep an open mind. Kidd said a bride might come in absolutely convinced she wants a lace mermaid gown with sleeves and end up leaving with a satin ball gown with a belt. Kidd said it's best to avoid convincing yourself you'll only like one design and be open to trying on several looks, but don't try on all of those looks in one day!

"When brides schedule fittings back-to-back, they are not always considering how physically and mentally exhausting it is," Kidd said. Brides may get overwhelmed with choices, so Kidd recommends

spacing out the fittings and keeping the wedding dress search party small. She says the fewer opinions a bride must weigh, the easier the process will be.

More brides are parting from traditional white in favor of ivory or subdued champagnes and blushes.

Another new trend Kidd has recognized: Men are choosy about their style.

"Men are becoming more particular about the fit and cut," Kidd said. Grooms in New Mexico, she said, still lean toward the rustic and romantic, such as a navy or slate suit with a tweed vest. However, she is seeing more men branch out into more color with burgundy tuxes and black lapels. She also has noticed an uptick in a variety of blues, such as indigo suits and tuxedos, veering from the common navy blue.

Choose a gown for your body type

Bridal gowns come in many styles, materials, colors, lengths and prices. Below are some dress styles, and how they mesh with various body types. Professionals at bridal shops are experts at helping women find that perfect fit.

A-Line: A fitted bodice that flares out to the hem creating an A

➤ CONTINUED ON PAGE 18

shape. This flatters women who are larger and want to hide their tummies.

Ball gown: A fitted top and a full skirt. This is ideal for women who want an elegant look and may want to hide below-the-waist problem areas.

Basque Waist: The waistline begins below the waist, forming a U or V shape. It's slenderizing and a good choice for brides with wide hips.

Draped A-Line: Similar in design to the traditional A-Line, the draped version has layered folds along the skirt. It is not for women who are short or thick, but works well on thin or long-legged women.

Empire: Cropped body, high waist, slightly flared skirt; it's generally not a good choice for brides that large-busted.

Fit and flare: An hourglass style that highlights a trim waistline. It is good for women, tall and short, who have curves and want to show them off.

Mini-skirt: The hem is above the knee, and typically has a train either short or long. Good choice for showing off legs.

Princess: A fitted top and a flared, vertically seamed skirt. This type is flattering for tall, slender women.

Shirtwaist: A woman's blouse or bodice styled like a tailored shirt, a blouse with buttons down the front.

Slip dress: Also called sheath, this style features fabric that continues down the body from the shoulders to the ankles for a close-fitting look. This is a good choice for small or informal weddings, and it looks best on tall, trim women. ♥



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QUINCEAÑERA COUNTDOWN

10-12 months before the event

- ☐ Determine budget, date, colors and theme
- ☐ Contact event planner

8-10 months before

- ☐ Look for attire
- ☐ Reserve church
- ☐ Contact sponsors
- ☐ Make guest list
- ☐ Confirm caterer, florist, musicians or DJ, photographer/videographer
- ☐ Finalize guest list

6-8 months before

- ☐ Order quince girl's dress
- ☐ Finalize menu
- ☐ Order invitations
- ☐ Reserve hotel rooms for out-of-town guests
- ☐ Order invitations and thank-you notes
- ☐ Reserve a baker for cake
- ☐ Order attire for court and parents

4-6 months before

- ☐ Contact florist and choose flowers
- ☐ Order party items and quinceañera accessories

2-4 months

- ☐ Purchase party favors
- ☐ Create list of events for program
- ☐ Mail invitations
- ☐ Confirm travel arrangements for out of town guests
- ☐ Make hair and make-up appointment, request trial run
- ☐ Begin waltz practice with court

1 month

- ☐ Discuss music selections with entertainer
- ☐ Get final dress alterations
- ☐ Finalize "day of" events with planner and vendors
- ☐ Prepare seating chart
- ☐ Make maps for out-of-town guests

1-2 weeks before

- ☐ Give caterer final count
- ☐ Deliver seating chart and place cards to venue
- ☐ Prepare toasts/speeches
- ☐ Confirm final payment
- ☐ Confirm men have had final fittings
- ☐ Hold final dance practice with court

Source: New Mexico Event & Wedding Planner



WEDDING PLANNING TECHNOLOGY



Photo by Taylor'd Photography & Videography

Whether it's staying organized, keeping family and friends updated or finding inspiration and a little bit of help, there are several ways you can utilize technology to make your big day a success.

Apps

- WeddingHappy
- myPantone
- Mint
- Tie The Knot
- Wedding LookBook
- Joy
- Wedding Planner by the Knot
- Evernote
- Cozi

Websites

- www.appycouple.com
- www.theknot.com
- www.mywedding.com
- www.ewedding.com
- www.pinterest.com
- www.weddingwire.com



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A moment in time

PHOTO, VIDEO PACKAGES CAPTURE MORE THAN THE COUPLE

BY AVRA ELLIOTT Photo by Taylor'd Photography & Videography

Sharing your special day with loved ones who are unable to attend has become easier than ever with live videos, drone-recorded weddings and guests hash tagging their own photos for couples to enjoy later on Instagram or Facebook.

Wedding guests sometimes become unofficial photographers, but if you prefer to tell your friends and family to leave their phones in their pockets, enjoy the moment and trust the professionals, Las Cruces is home to many photography studios offering a variety of photo-package options.

For many, the photos begin long before the big day. Elise Taylor of Taylor'd Photography & Videography said today's couples are choosing to show off the first moment of their engagement with

surprise-proposal photo shoots.

"This means whoever is popping the question has a little more planning to do to make sure the moment is picture perfect," Taylor said.

Taylor said websites like HowHeAsked.com and certain Instagram accounts exclusively feature proposal photos.

"Another trend gaining popularity among brides is a 'First Look' with their father," Taylor said.

While brides still request photographers to capture the exciting moment their future spouse sees them in their gown for the first time, the parent-daughter spin-off provides an opportunity for a special moment between the bride and the ones who loved her first. "As a photographer, I love this idea," Taylor said. "I can capture

emotionally rich and even tear-filled moments of the bride and her father.”

Taylor said each wedding has its own personality and dynamic, filled with emotional moments, but the couple’s first walk down the aisle remains a favorite of hers.

“The expressions and smiles are so genuine and unguardedly joyful that this shot always makes my top 10 from any wedding,” Taylor said.

In choosing the photographer that’s right for you, it’s good to familiarize yourself with their work. Find someone whose photos you love, and someone who has experience photographing weddings. Good photographers learn about a couple and the details of a wedding to help them fulfill a client’s wishes.

When considering your photography package options, Taylor recommends looking for one that includes plenty of coverage time on wedding day.

“From getting-ready photos to a sparkler send-off from the reception, you will want your photographer there for all the important events,” Taylor said.

Videography is another important option to consider. Full production of wedding videos – with support from the idea phase to post-production – is something many couples purchase. Drone footage is an emerging trend, as well.

Package pricing will vary depending on the services chosen and the complexity of the event.

Taylor’d Photography & Videography offers videography services, as well as Palamora Productions in Las Cruces, among others.

Learn more about Taylor’d Photography & Videography at taylordphoto.com. Learn more about Palamora Productions at www.palamora.com. ♥



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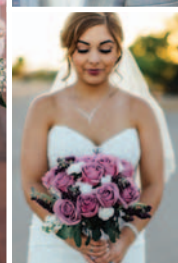
COLOR YOUR WEDDING WITH MEANING



Photos by Taylor'd Photography & Videography

Consider linking your wedding flower colors to their symbolism.

- **Red:** Love's passion and desire, beauty and courage. Roses, carnations, tulips, red protea, peonies.
- **White:** Often associated with modesty and elegance, humility and reverence, and pure beauty. White roses, gardenias, lilies, baby's breath, chrysanthemums.
- **Lavender:** Emblematic of femininity, refinement and grace. Waxflower, statice (sea lavender), snapdragons, lavender matsumoto asters, lavender stock.
- **Blue:** Peace, calm and serenity. Hydrangea, delphinium, iris, larkspur, blue stock.
- **Pink:** Happiness, gentility and grace. Pink rosebuds, long-stemmed roses, camellia, carnations, blushing lilies, tulips, pink stargazer lilies.
- **Yellow:** Happiness, joyful new beginnings. Daffodils, chrysanthemums, lilies, gerbera daisies, alstroemeria, cymbidium orchids.
- **Purple:** Royalty and dignity. Violets, alstroemeria, purple carnations, tulips.
- **Orange:** Symbolize passion and confidence. Orange Asiatic lilies, gerbera daisies, carnations, rust chrysanthemums, fiery lilies, birds of paradise.
- **Green:** Nature, optimism and renewal, and can complement every other bloom. Green carnations, button spray chrysanthemums, green viburnum, cymbidium orchids.



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Tie the Knot winner

NEWLYWEDS RECALL WHIRLWIND WEDDING DAY

BY AVRA ELLIOTT Photo by Melissa J. Koko Natural Light Photography

The process of planning a wedding can be daunting no matter how early you begin, but last year's winners of the Tie the Knot contest, Kathleen and Jeff Moya, had the unique challenge of planning their wedding in only 10 days.

The contest, held in conjunction with the annual Las Cruces Bridal and Special Events Showcase at the Las Cruces Convention Center, provided the couple with everything they needed for their special day, which then takes place during the showcase.

"It was overwhelming, but exciting," remembers Kathleen with a laugh. "I found out in the morning, and by three in the afternoon I was making decisions with most of the planners."

Jeff and Kathleen chose color schemes, wedding attire rentals, and centerpieces while their daughters, ages 2 and 4 at the time, went along with the whirlwind.

"The florist added flower-girl baskets for them," Kathleen said. "It was very sweet."

Kathleen brought her mother and mother-in-law-to-be to the dress fitting, and said it became one of her favorite moments, as she ultimately chose a dress she hadn't considered when planning the original wedding.

"It was magical," Kathleen said. "I'm also glad it was a rental and now I don't need to store it."

Kathleen and Jeff have been together eight years, and she said winning the contest simplified what might have been a more drawn-out process.

"We had control, but the decisions were quick, so there was never

any conflict or arguing," Kathleen said.

Thanks to two-day shipping, the bridal party was ready for the wedding, and any guests unable to plan transportation on short notice were able to attend live via Facebook live.

When planning for a wedding they thought would be five months away, one decision the Moyas had already made was to ask their friend, Doña Ana County Director of Public Information Jess Williams, to officiate. Serendipity stepped in, as Williams has traditionally officiated the Tie the Knot winners' ceremony. Officiating for friends was a pleasant surprise for Williams.

"I've had friends ask me to officiate," Williams said, "but that was just wild."

As an introvert, Kathleen said the prospect of standing on a stage in front of strangers to exchange vows was nerve wracking, and she worried about making it up the stage's steps without tripping. However, once she arrived, any strangers gathered amid the 50 guests invited by the couple were largely out of sight.

"I wasn't wearing my glasses," Kathleen said, laughing again, "so I could only see Jeff, and that was to my benefit."

One year later and life is still good for the Moyas.

"Jeff has a new job, and the girls are doing great," Kathleen said.

For Kathleen and Jeff, the key to being happy newlyweds is learning to communicate with your partner and taking it one day at a time — and they can attest more than anyone that sometimes one day is a life-changing one. ♥



HOW TO GET A MARRIAGE LICENSE

Photo by Taylor'd Photography & Videography

- Before your ceremony, go to the Doña Ana County Clerk's office, 845 N. Motel Blvd., or visit donaanacounty.org/clerk/marriage, to fill out a marriage application information form. The clerk's office is open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.
- You'll need social security numbers and photo identification for the bride and groom. The fee is \$25 in cash. No cards, no checks, no exceptions.
- Both applicants must appear in person. If one person can't be there, the authorization to issue the license must be provided by a district judge.
- Once you have the license, you are cleared to perform the ceremony, have witnesses sign it and return it to the county clerk's office within 90 days of your wedding day.



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DON'T FORGET THANK-YOU NOTES

Photos by Taylor'd Photography & Videography

Hand-written thank-you notes are still the warmest way to show true appreciation for people who took time to attend your wedding and bring you a gift.

- It is worth the effort to assign someone – an attendant or relative – to identify gifts and make a list of who gave what. The bride and groom will be too busy with the wedding, so be sure to delegate.
- This is an easy task to forget. Schedule a reminder on your phone or planner to jog your memory post-honeymoon. Use your invitation list to get the addresses you'll need, then mail them.
- Personalize each note, acknowledging the specific gift and how you'll use it. Each gift contributes to a fresh start on the journey of marriage, and for that, you should be grateful.



TIPS FOR GIFTING WEDDING ATTENDANTS

Photo by Taylor'd Photography & Videography

Thanking the people closest to you for helping with your wedding is important. A gift of appreciation is both a token of appreciation, and remembrance of your special day.

- **Price:** Consider what you've asked them to spend when deciding what's appropriate to spend on a gift. Did your maid of honor buy a plane ticket and a bridesmaid gown? If so, \$75-\$150 for her gift alone would be about right. Include this cost in your budget at the outset, so you can treat your attendants right.
- **Timing:** Bridesmaids' gifts are typically given at the rehearsal dinner, but shop for them much earlier so you are not stressed to find the perfect gift on deadline.
- **What to give:** Consider personalizing gifts for each attendant instead of getting them all the same thing. The personal touch can make a difference. Aim for something useful and timeless, like personalized charm bracelets or a set of wine glasses that can be used for years to come.
- **Helpful tip:** Use the "Would I want it?" test to decide if a gift is fitting. Would you like it? Would you use it? If the answer is yes, you're on the right track.



STEPS TO CHANGE YOUR NAME

Photo by Taylor'd Photography & Videography

To change your name or not? Some do, some don't, some hyphenate. If you decide to change your name, there are some important steps to take. This list will get you started.

- Visit the U.S. Social Security Administration office, 2141 Summit Court in Las Cruces, to fill out an application to change your name. You'll need your marriage license, proof of identity and proof of citizenship. You should receive your card within 10 business days. Alternatively, visit www.socialsecurity.gov/forms/ss-5.pdf, fill out the form, mail it along with the documents requested to prove your identity, and your new card will arrive, along with your documents.
- Next, go to the Department of Motor Vehicles for a new license. Bring your marriage license and your new Social Security card. The fee is \$18 for a four-year license and \$34 for an eight-year license.
- Store up some patience and take time to list all your personal accounts, from Netflix and PayPal to your bank accounts and cell phone providers. Follow each institution's procedure for changing a name. Often this includes mailing or faxing copies of your marriage certificate or other documents. At the bank, bring your driver's license and marriage license and get new debit cards and checks. Note: There may be fees associated with ordering new cards and checks.
- Remember to take time to update your will, power of attorney or advance directive with your new name and status.



TIPS FOR PLANNING A HONEYMOON

Photo by Taylor'd Photography & Videography

Know your budget. If you need to fly to your destination, remember that airline fares can play a significant role in your budget. If you are a frequent traveler, save your mileage and try to use your accumulated mile points.

When do you want to leave? The month that you marry may affect your destination choice due to Mother Nature. You don't want to honeymoon in the Caribbean at the height of hurricane season.

What type of honeymoon are you looking for? Discuss exactly what is most important for you to experience while on your honeymoon: adventure, relaxation, touring, a little of everything?

What kind of resort are you looking for? All-inclusive? Would you like adult-only? All-inclusive options allow you to know exactly how much you are going to spend. Some resorts go a step further and include excursions with their packages. If you choose a hotel that isn't all-inclusive and you're on a tight budget, many resorts have menus on their website, so you can get a general idea of what you might spend on meals.

What kind of deposit do you need? When is final payment due? When do you need to pay? Most tour companies that travel agents utilize only require a minimum deposit with final payment, usually due 45 days prior to departure. Ask your travel agent about a payment plan should you need one.

Do you need a visa or a vaccination? Some destinations do require visas; your travel professional will be able to advise you of that requirement and assist in obtaining them. Also important is what type of passport you are traveling under, as many countries now require passports valid for six months. If you're traveling to an exotic destination, it's best to confirm with your doctor about recommended or required vaccinations for travel in those regions.



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