

Destination Wedding

If you're planning on getting married, picking out a location for your wedding is one of the most important decisions you'll make about your special day. The location for both the ceremony and the reception will dictate a lot of things, from the cost of catering to how many people you can invite to the wedding. Many couples are moving away from the standard wedding at a church followed by a reception at a banquet hall to something much more exotic. Destination weddings are becoming more and more popular, since they mean a vacation for everyone involved with the wedding, not just a honeymoon for the bride and groom.

The phrase "destination wedding" refers to a wedding which takes place away from either the bride or groom's hometown, placing the ceremony and/or reception somewhere where everyone travels to get to the wedding. Usually destination weddings are smaller and more expensive than their local counterparts, though the added cost can be offset if the bride and groom honeymoon near the location of their wedding and ask for wedding guests to pay for their travel expenses on their own.

Destination weddings are most often held in picturesque and sometimes exotic locations, from Bali to Hawaii. Destination weddings don't necessarily need to mean that everyone has to fly; a few hours drive away from home brings some people to gorgeous, exotic areas that may as well be on the other end of the country. One benefit of relatively close destination weddings over their international counterparts is that more local weddings don't require guests to spend a great deal of money on travel costs, nor do they need to apply for passports or visas. If you're planning on having a destination wedding, realize that many guests who would otherwise like to attend your wedding simply won't be able to afford the added cost of traveling to the wedding location. Many couples who opt for destination weddings have a reception immediately after the ceremony, but then also host an additional reception back home for friends and family who couldn't attend the ceremony itself. This strikes a nice balance between having your wedding where you want while still getting everyone involved. Of course, you could always fly everyone who wants to attend the wedding to the location, though this alternative is extremely expensive and is out of the means of most couples.

If you do have a destination wedding, be sure to not leave your guests high-and-dry before and after the ceremony. Have other activities planned for the weekend and offer suggestions for side activities for your guests, as they are essentially planning an entire vacation around your wedding.