

Wedding Reception Planning Guide

Where to start...

Wedding Planning can put your organizational skills to the test. If you're like most first time brides, you are probably wondering where to start first. Lighted Gardens is pleased to present the following Reception Planning Guide to help you with reception planning.

Enjoy your engagement! This is a very special time that will go before you know it!

Create a planning guide: Include sections for every aspect of your special day: Showers, Attire, Clergy & Legal Papers, Venues, Florists, DJ, Caterers, Photographers, etc.

Develop a budget: Begin your planning with a realistic approach to the budget. Have an idea of the style you want to create on your wedding day and trust that there are ways to get it...not all of them have to drain your checking account.

Select a venue: Choose a venue that is easy to find, close proximity to the ceremony location, and can accommodate the number of people you are expecting. Make sure the venue is available on the date you have selected (you may want to have a short list of dates you will be agreeable to). Visit the venue and speak to their wedding specialist or sales person. Trust your instincts! If you are visiting more than one venue, make sure you read all the fine print on the contracts and menus. Not all venues and caterers are the same! Make sure you compare "apples to apples". Once you have selected the venue, reserve your date with a written agreement and paid deposit (remember to ask about the policy about date changing and cancellations). Most venues (like Lighted Gardens) have been hosting wedding receptions for years. If you need referrals for wedding professionals, who better to ask! Most wedding vendors like to surround themselves with other wedding professionals to obtain the ultimate results. Remember.....cheaper is NOT always better! Experience can be the key!

Event Planning: Find out from your venue/caterer when you need to start discussions about menus and event planning. Should the caterer need to provide food samples to you before event planning, make a special appointment far enough in advance so that you don't feel rushed into a decision. Event planning here at Lighted Gardens typically happens 4-6 weeks prior to your reception. At that appointment we will record all details for the event (itinerary, menu, décor, vendors, cake, bar services, etc.). Be prepared to have an initial estimate on the number of people you are expecting. This will be helpful to develop your floor plan and will help your décor specialist with table centerpieces.

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Find out when your final head count is due to the caterer. Ask about how they handle late reservations and whether they prepare additional meals for your event. Remember: you may have to pay for the numbers you turn in to your caterer....so be as accurate as possible.

Make sure you have asked ALL your questions of the venue/caterer.....you don't want any surprises!

The week prior to the reception: Call all your wedding vendors to make sure they have all the information they need. Double check with them the itinerary and to see if they have any conflicts or changes in their services. (Note: It is recommended that you have all your wedding professionals under contract to avoid disagreements with services).

The day before the wedding: If possible visit the venue (decorate it if it's available). Ask the caterer if they have any last minute questions or concerns.

The day of the wedding: RELAX.....you've done all that you can.....it's up to your wedding professionals now!

Helpful Hints: Be as flexible as possible! You may not get every single detail you want (budget constraints, weather conditions, vendor inexperience). For the best results: surround yourself with professionals that do wedding work on a routine basis.....and ask for referrals from your friends and co-workers. Better yet: ask your wedding professionals for referrals.....they know the best florists, DJ's, cakes etc than anyone.

CONGRATULATIONS! AND BEST WISHES
FROM THE STAFF OF Lighted Gardens!

Augue sit fugiat basellus est, fusce lectus proin, neque cras eget

Nisl id, urna tellus vestibulum arcu, at et sit pharetra odio pede