



# Tips From the Experts:

## Spiliotis Events, Social Event Planning

[Spiliotis Events](#), a social event planning company, specializes in weddings offering knowledge, enthusiasm and attention to the tiniest of details. They are excited to share the following wedding planning tips with you!

Getting married is among the happiest of moments in life and likely one you have been dreaming about since childhood. It's also a time filled with elevated emotions, differing of opinions and stress and anxiety over mounting expenses. If you are at the point that you and your fiancée are ready to forget all the madness, hop on a plane to Vegas and get married by Elvis, it's time for an intervention.

To keep stress to a minimum, it's important to come up with a list of what your top priorities are. Not everything needs to be in the #1 spot. At the top of your list may be amazing photography that you'll treasure for years to come, and a top notch menu. Somewhere down the list may be favors and a designer bridal gown. By keeping priorities in mind and managing your budget, you will be in much better shape emotionally and financially. Here are some ideas to save you time, money, and keep your sanity. It's all about working your plan and focusing on the end result:

### **Date**

- Everyone wants to get married on a Saturday night and many venues will charge you a premium for this sought after day of the week. Why not say your "I do's" on a Friday night or Sunday afternoon?
- Consider a wedding date in November through April. These months are considered off peak, so not only will you have an easier time booking the perfect venue, but other wedding services will likely be easier to secure.

### **Reception**



- The easiest way to reduce costs on everything from food to alcohol to invitations and favors is by scaling back on the guest list.
  - Hold your ceremony and reception in one spot -- it will save on travel time and allow you to enjoy more of your reception without the mad dash from the ceremony.
  - Have bigger tables so you need fewer centerpieces and tablecloths
  - After coming up with your list of possible venues, be sure to factor in all charges from rental fees to the cost for cake cutting. Always get everything in writing so there will be no surprise at the end.
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- A reception at dinner time implies a meal will be served. Why not schedule a late afternoon reception with cocktails, hors d'oeuvres and cake?
  - Take the path less traveled and select a unique location such as a local park or beachside locale. Be sure to factor in all of the extra costs you may incur; from portable restroom facilities to tables, chairs, tents, and bug spray.
  - Ethnic food choices such as Italian in lieu of a steamship of beef will likely save you some money.

## Alcohol

- The bar bill will likely be lower at an afternoon vs. evening reception.
- If the facility allows, purchase your own liquor to stock the bar and return unopened bottles for a refund.
- Offer a limited bar with wine and beer selections. If you want to provide a little more, add a signature drink and match it to your color scheme.

## Gown



- Many Brides will want the latest and greatest designer gown, but if this is not the most important item on your list, consider buying used, borrowing or renting.
- Check out bridal shops to see if they have gowns from last season or an upcoming sample sale.
- Look for a “Running of the Brides” type of event, which Filene’s Basement made famous. Gone, but not forgotten, and some retailers are starting to host similar type events.

## Invitations

- If you love the look of raised lettering on your invites, but your wallet can’t handle the expense, consider thermography vs. engraved invitations.
- When ordering invitations, size does matter. A square invite costs more to mail than a rectangular invite. If you have a lot of invitations to send, additional postage quickly adds up!
- Always order extra invitations and envelopes. It’ll cost you more up front, but it sure beats a rush charge if you fall short.

## Flowers



- When chatting with your florist, consider flowers that do double duty at the ceremony and reception from bridal party bouquets being repurposed as centerpieces to pomanders being placed on vases of varying height.
- Selecting flowers that are in season will save you money.
- For a monochromatic look, order one kind of flowers. It will look fabulous and can be ordered in bulk.

## Photography

- Is the photographer including a limited amount of photos in your package or will they provide access to all of your digital negatives?
- Hire a professional. You may have many friends who like taking photos, but think about whether or not this is a time you want them practicing. There are no “do overs” in weddings.
- Don’t feel obligated to buy prints and albums for all of your nearest and dearest.
- Ask guests to share candid wedding photos with you. They will capture many moments that your photographer may have missed.

## Cake



- Fake the cake. A smaller cake on display for cutting and photos along with sheet cakes in the kitchen. Your guests will be none the wiser.
- While having a cake with an exotic filling like mango can sound appealing, it will likely cost more and may not appeal to the masses. Stick to old favorites like butter cream or chocolate.
- Sugar paste flowers are labor intensive and quickly add up. Why not have your cake adorned with real flowers or a satin ribbon? Both alternatives will add a little something to your cake and will leave a little more in your wallet.

## Décor

- Lots of candlelight or LED light, it sets a romantic mood and won't break the bank.
- Shop after holiday sales and buy things like candy after Valentine's Day, silver décor after New Year's Eve or a Flower Girl dress after Easter.

## Favors



- DIY wedding projects....Pinterest will rock your world!
- Favors that do double duty are a nice little thank you for sharing your special day, add the guests name to it and it doubles as an escort card.
- If you like to cook, bake cookie favors, put them in a cello bag and attach the recipe. Baked goodies are thoughtful, inexpensive, tasty and will be appreciated by your guests on the ride home.
- Reduce your stress by delegating tasks. Pick and choose the ones you want to do and delegate the nitpicky (but important) details to someone who would love to help you!

## Budget

- Lastly, the dreaded "B word." Create a budget early on and do your best to stick to it.

We're wishing you all the best as you prepare to take the trip down the aisle to forever.

\*Photo credits: Dachowski Photography, Wesley Maggs Photography, Chickadee Hill Cakes/Garone Photography, gcdspa.com

