



# Tips From the Experts

## Choosing your Photographer

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#### He asked; you said yes. Now what?

Congratulations, you're engaged! Now you're wondering, "What the heck do I do next?" Here is some helpful advice from New Hampshire's Rick Bouthiette Photography, a 2013 WeddingWire Bride's Choice Award winner, to help you with the very important area of choosing your photographer.

#### What style do you want?

Today's wedding photography, like everything else, comes in many styles. You have traditional which is more posed, journalistic which is more candid, and then you might have a blend of the two. When it comes to your formal pictures you might like the look-at-the-camera-and-smile approach, a glamorous and serious look, or maybe something really artistic with more landscape to show the beautiful surroundings in which you are a small part of the picture. Depending on your personal taste and if you plan to use the images for an album or wall art, these are all things to consider.

#### What are you looking for?

While one bride might want a nice, leather-bound album as a keepsake, another might enjoy scrap-booking and want just the digital files. You might be more interested in something for your wall like a large gallery wrap or a wall grouping. As for the photography shot list, is preparation important to you? Are you doing the First Look? Are pictures of the entire reception important? How about the family pictures? All of these considerations affect the hours of coverage. Allowing ample time to cover all aspects of your photography will mean more in terms of an investment, but pre-planning and allowing extra time will make your day much more relaxing.

#### What is your budget?

Typically, we find that our clients' budget for photography is about 12-18% of their total wedding budget. Depending on how important pictures are to a couple it might be even higher. According to a recent article in the Huffington Post, 21% of the brides polled said they would spend more on photography if they could do their wedding again.

#### How much? Is that really the only question?

You've never planned a wedding before much less had to choose a wedding photographer. The only thing we know to ask is "How much?" It's OK to ask for package and pricing information in your initial email but there are a lot of other things to consider when choosing a photographer. We suggest making an appointment to meet and discuss your wedding once you have narrowed your choices down to 4 or 5 photographers. A face-to-face meeting can reveal a lot of things (both positive and sometimes negative) that can help with your final decision.

#### How many pictures?

We've heard it all... including that one photographer was going to deliver 3,000 pictures on a disk. Do you really think that many images are needed? It doesn't take 3,000 pictures to tell the story of your special day and you will go crazy sorting through that many pictures.



### **Websites: Do they tell the truth?**

Photographers put nothing but their best work on their website. Sure it's impressive, but it might be a good idea to see more. When you meet with a photographer ask if you can see a whole wedding. That gives you a pretty good idea of what you can expect as far as quality, consistency and overall style. Did they capture the day without gaps? Did they capture the emotion? Did they capture the ambiance of the venue?

### **Have they worked at your venue? Does it matter?**

A lot of people ask and think it makes a difference if a photographer has photographed a wedding at their chosen venue in the past. Does it matter? We don't think so. We are pretty sure the sun rises and sets the same and that our equipment will perform as well at any venue. It's about being prepared. A photographer should consider visiting the venue prior to the wedding to plan concepts and an outline for your photos.

### **What do others say?**

Ask other people what their experience was with a photographer. Check reputable websites like WeddingWire.com and TheKnot.com for client reviews. Ask your wedding planner or wedding coordinator for their opinion or suggestions.

### **It's a long day. Do you "Click"?**

You will spend more time with your wedding photographer than anyone else on your big day. That's another reason we highly recommend you meet face-to-face. As human beings, our relationships are based on personal taste. We're all different. While one person might find a photographer to be friendly and personable you may not. Make sure your personalities "click" so that your comfort and ease will show in your pictures.

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Photography Courtesy of Rick Bouthiette Photography