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The \$30 K Wedding Alternative

By Holly Bentz

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by: **Holly Bentz**

Thwart wedding bell apprehension when you explore your nuptial options.

The mayhem of a marital union can evoke enough tension to make the happiest bride say, "I don't." A second wedding, overbearing family personalities, cultural differences and financial restrictions are just a few reasons people skirt the mega marriage ceremony. For the woman, who has never envisioned the fairytale wedding, the ill trepidation of walking a mile of aisle can morph those butterflies into caterpillars.

According to a market report released by the National Association of Certified Wedding Coordinators (NACWC), the average cost for a wedding in America ranges between \$20,000 to \$25,000. Over the last four years, the cost of tying the knot has increased by 18 percent. As people wait to get married, they are tergiversating the expense. Annually, an approximated 15 percent of newlyweds pass on the wedding circus and forego the City Hall route.

Prior to actualizing, you do not wish to produce the "event" of the year, (your wedding) there is a 5-letter word that will need nullifying, g-u-i-l-t. Family guilt is one of the most potent forces of resistance to wedding rights of refusal. Unless your family insists on doling the expenditures for the big day and you are 100 percent confident that the stress will be well worth the backlash - resist the temptation. In collaboration with your spouse to-be, consider your other wedding alternatives.

An Intimate Wedding Union

Less is more. A low-key wedding can be just as memorable and meaningful as an elaborate wedding event. If your guest list includes a total of 50-75 friends and family members, figure \$5,000 to \$10,000 for a sit-down dinner. The intimacy of family, close friends melded with an exchange of vows can set the stage for a magical wedding event.

The \$30 K Wedding Alternative

The ideal location can be simplified if you don't mind being hitched at home. Beware of losing sight of the budget especially, if finances are an issue. Bringing in additional tables, seating, lighting et al can add up - rapidly. Concerning other reception venues, do not rule out places like your family's place of worship (church or synagogue), country clubs, or social clubs/lodges.

Sponsorship

Sponsorship has its privileges. If you can find local businesses to donate their products and services in return for advertising at your reception, sponsorship may be a consideration. More couples are bartering a bit of promotion along with their nuptials, for complimentary or discounted goods and services.

Not all vendors will chomp at the bit to sponsor your special day. Certain vendors will appreciate the benefit of branding their company, directly to a target audience. Plan to approach a minimum of 100 vendors. Smaller and newer companies are more apt to participate. The ideal sponsorship situation is a win-win, for all. In example, the media buy for advertising costs 3-4 times the cost of the average sponsorship.

Sample Wedding Sponsorship Letter

Dear Marketing Department:

We're seeking sponsorship in exchange for media coverage and free publicity. On Halloween, we are getting married in Las Vegas, Nevada. As recent college graduates, we're a young couple with mortgage and car payments. As a court reporter, I possess many media contacts for top quality publicity in exchange for various items for our wedding.

Our wedding ceremony is being held at the Bellagio Hotel, an exceptional venue to showcase your business and demonstrate your company's generosity. The details of our day are simple. Our guests are the perfect target audience, young single professionals.

Thank you for your consideration, I can be reached at 345.555.6666.

Appreciatively,

Mary Budgetwright

The Elopement

Elopement is self-indulgent bliss. There is nothing more relaxing then a well-planned elopement. Select an island: Kabel Santorini, Portofino, Turks and Caicos, Aruba, or wherever you prefer. If your preference is to remain in the states, conduct a search on

, using the key word

combination, "place to elope," will return some 8,000 possibilities.

Then work backwards, set a target budget for your wedding/honeymoon and let the destination dictate your wedding. Bear in mind, the average cost of a honeymoon is almost four thousand dollars. Without the added expense of a wedding, hopefully you can afford to spend a little more on your romantic getaway. Once you and your fiancé have agreed on a destination, take 1 - 2 weeks to conduct a cost analysis and logistic research.

7-Top Reasons People Elope Affordability Timesavings Maintain serenity Alleviate stress
Exhilaration Minimal planning The freedom of tradition

The Cocktail Soirée

Think outside of the bridal gown. A low-cost location, Veuve Clicquot, finger food and guests clad in casual attire is a nice way to celebrate your connubial union. Moreover, a historic landmark, a public garden or the local art gallery may feature inexpensive rental fees. With the cocktail party, all the elements that go into planning a full-blown wedding are unnecessary (fittings, rehearsal dinners, transportation, gift registration, et cetera).

Regardless of your marriage ceremony decision - it a choice you will have to live with for the rest of your life. But then again, after you are married, you have the rest of your life to plan the perfect celebration.

Holly Bentz runs a media services boutique,

. Her company is committed to providing

a menu of media services designed to inform, educate and entertain. Information products, web content and email letters are just a few of the writing products provided by her company,

Give Your Wedding Favours The Personal Touch

By Emily Tanner

One wedding seems to blend into another and looking for alternative ideas can be a struggle. Here are some great tips for making your wedding favours as unique as you are!

Ensure your wedding favours are unique wedding favours, encompassing everything you and your partner are about. Rather than going for traditional boxes or nets, why not design your own cookie wedding favour? A personalised wedding favour is so much more memorable for the guests who attend your big day. Many brides are now purchasing personalised ribbon for wedding favours. This way, brides can choose from a wide selection of favour boxes and organza bags and turn them into a

The \$30 K Wedding Alternative

personalised wedding favour by adding personalised ribbon.

Most couples choose to have their names and wedding dates printed on personalised ribbon for favour boxes, although some brides do have the guests names also printed on ribbon – a great idea for a place setting too.

Another way of providing guests with a personalised wedding favour is by attaching a tag. This personalised wedding favour tag may state the names of the bride and groom along with their wedding date or the wedding venue name or a short message from the happy couple to the guests.

A unique wedding favour such as this is well received by the guests and once the contents have been consumed, there is something left to have as a keepsake. In essence, all brides try to offer unique wedding favours to their guests but there is nothing worse than receiving a gift similar to one you have previously received at a wedding. Bear this in mind when you are deciding which wedding favours to offer your guests at your wedding because people do remember a unique wedding favour or a personalised wedding favour more than one which is non specific and seemingly not very well thought out.

Of course, not all unique wedding favours are edible. There are many gifts that can be given to wedding guests that are inedible such as wedding favour coasters, photo album favours, picture frame wedding favours and candle wedding favours. These are just as easy to present as personalised wedding favours, again with the addition of personalised ribbon or a personalised tag. Your guests may well be equally impressed with your innovative and novel ideas as you provide them with a quality alternative to edible wedding favours.

Instead of spending out on wedding favours, some brides choose to offer guests a piece of wedding cake beautifully presented in a personalised wedding favour box or a pretty organza bag. For brides who choose to give their guests some cake in a bag, they can attach a personalised wedding favour tag or tie the top with personalised ribbon. Either way, it is a lovely way of being a bit different and really offering your guests a unique wedding favour exclusive to you.

This article is brought to you by Emily Tanner – She recommends more advice and quality wedding favours and bomboniere at

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