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## Inside Scoop

**Eight wedding pros reveal tips and tricks on how to be budget-savvy when it comes to planning a beautiful day. By Roseanne Dela Rosa**



Photography Yvonne Duivenvoorden. First published in Weddingbells Spring&Summer 2008.

### On Catering

- Reduce the amount of hors d'oeuvres. You shouldn't need more than one per guest every 15 minutes.
- Instead of a full bar offer a specialty cocktail before dinner, then open up the full bar after dinner.

*Melinda Limbertie, catering and event planning consultant, Daniel et Daniel ([danieletdaniel.ca](http://danieletdaniel.ca)).*

### On Transportation

- Keep the bridal party together. Instead of renting a vintage car for the bride and groom and a limo for the bridal party, keep everyone in one vehicle. This way you'll only have to rent one limo instead of two, thereby saving lots of money.
- Go with a large, reputable company as they work on volume and will be able to provide you with a better price.

*Sue Fiorini, owner, Two of a Kind Limousines ([twoofakindlimousines.com](http://twoofakindlimousines.com)).*

### On Venue

- Choose to have your wedding on a Friday or Sunday, or if your wedding must be on a Saturday, choose an off-season date (January-April).
- Reduce travel costs by selecting a venue where the ceremony, photos and reception can take place in one location.

*Nicole Pieckenhagen, managing director, Graydon Hall Manor ([graydonhall.com](http://graydonhall.com)).*

### On Photography

- Get only what you need. Decide on what's most important: shots of the ceremony, family portraits or candid pics of you and your new spouse, and make this your focus. Plan out your day and estimate how long you think this will take. If you decide it will take five hours, work with your photographer to come up with a five-hour package. If you are only interested in a DVD of the high-resolution images, which you are free to print yourself, then hire a photographer who offers this as a stand-alone service.
- If you have your heart set on hiring a photographer who is out of your budget, ask if they offer a payment plan whereby the money can be paid in installments. Having to pay a lot of money all at once can really hit the pocketbook hard, so having the option to pay over a period of time might be more economically friendly.

*Byron Brydges, photographer, Byron Brydges Photography ([byronbrydges.com](http://byronbrydges.com)).*

### **On Flowers**

- Think carefully about which flowers make the most impact and where you can compromise. Eliminate the ceremony flowers altogether. If your wedding takes place in a church, synagogue or beautiful garden, the space really doesn't need to be adorned. Another suggestion—splurge on your bouquet and scrimp on your maids.
- Go with flowers that are in season. Roses, hydrangeas and orchids (used sparingly!) year-round; tulips and amaryllis from December to April; peonies in June; sunflowers and dahlias midsummer; colourful local hydrangeas and dahlias in the fall. Bad months for local flowers are July and November—there's not much available in bridal tones in Canada, so orchids are your best bet during this time.

*Karina Lemke, wedding planner/owner of Posies Flowers ([posiesflowers.com](http://posiesflowers.com)), featured on Rich Bride Poor Bride and Petal Pushers.*

### **On Wedding Planners**

- Creative input: Wedding planners are creative thinkers who can take your vision and bring it to reality by making suggestions that can save you time and money. For example, if the budget is limited, why not host an afternoon wedding followed by a beautiful brunch accented by live music?
- Negotiation: Wedding planners have excellent relationships with vendors in every category and understand both the art and business of the wedding industry. They are realistic about what is a reasonable request for vendors and can often use their knowledge to benefit the client. Also, they are not intimidated by vendors and can ask for what they want on behalf of the client.

*Tara O'Grady, wedding planner, Bliss Events ([blissevents.ca](http://blissevents.ca)).*

### **On Cakes**

- Consider serving your wedding cake as the main dessert after dinner. Instead of paying for a dessert from your caterer, opt out and utilize the cake so that every guest can taste the gorgeous creation. When choosing the cake as your main dessert, consider getting a smaller cake (perhaps a smaller three tier) and substituting the remaining servings with sheet cakes, which are kept in the kitchen. Sheet cakes are the same as the main cake, except that they lack the decorations present on the wedding cake. This way all guests will receive a delicious slice of cake.
- Consider the design of the cake that you are choosing. Most wedding cakes are placed in front of the head table facing all of the guests. Choose a design that gives you the look you desire from the front with simpler, more economical design elements in the back; no one will even notice!

*Patricia Ivancak, cake designer/owner, Patricia's Cake Creations ([patriciacakes.com](http://patriciacakes.com)).*

## On Invitations

- Put both your ceremony and reception information on the actual invitation, this eliminates the traditional Reception Card—saving you money and trees.
- Use a wedding website (there are some nice free ones out there) to communicate wordy information to your guests. Instead of a separate directions card, you can list specific routes to your ceremony and reception locations on your website. If you are having a weekend-long celebration, list all of the daily activities on your website instead of using extra cards with your invitation.

*Corina Van Sluytman, owner/creative director Bella Invites Couture Event Stationery ([bellainvites.com](http://bellainvites.com)).*

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