

Not a 'do over'

By Gina Almgren
(Photographs by Cospir Photography)

Your wedding day is the most exciting & anticipated event in your life. It's the longest most prepared for day you'll ever have to put together. Some women have been envisioning their wedding day since they've been 12 years old.

But how can you be certain that what you planned for will be what unfolds? There's preparing for your wedding and then there's being prepared for your wedding day.

Here are 6 Key Solutions for Disaster Proofing Your Wedding:

1) Hire Professionals

Weddings can be an expensive endeavor. It is crucial to spend your money wisely by hiring professional vendors who've been in business for over 5 years and have many references, (call on that list). Hire wedding specialists. A photographer in business for 20 years doesn't mean they know how to shoot weddings.

True Story-

'Inexperienced caterers were hired to put together a health food buffet. Arriving 4 hours later than they should have – they served over an hour behind schedule, ran out of hors d'ouvres, presented a bland & cold buffet, and the cake was still being assembled during the Bride & Grooms first dance.'



2) Stay in Charge

Ask specifically for what you want their service to provide and don't be afraid to shop around. Generally speaking, if a vendor tries to change your mind on something it's because they cannot fulfill what you are requesting. There are, however, the very talented that will offer enhancements to your visions. These insightful vendors want what's ultimately best for you and will work to do what they can to fulfill your requests. They are the vendors for you.

3) Searching Locations

Each venue is unique in its qualities, as well as, specific to how it allows its renters to use it. Ask many questions specific to what you want to have for your wedding.

- Can we burn candles
- What type of lighting is there inside
- Are there areas off limits
- Is food/alcohol allowed on site
- Is outside catering allowed
- Refrigerator big enough to store cake
- Is there parking for limos to wait
- What's not allowed on site
- How early can I get on site
- What's the latest I can stay on site
- How many change areas are there
- Is flash photography allowed inside
- Is there a secure storage space for gifts
- What on-site security & staffing is there
- How many people are allowed
- Are centerpieces provided

True Story-

'Some locations don't allow full videography & photography throughout the entire ceremony, their entire ceremony wasn't on video.'



4) **Vendor Contracts**

Be sure to review & double check all of the contracts, as you (and the vendor) are responsible for everything you commit to in writing. Confirm your final payment deadlines, as services can be cancelled if payment deadlines aren't met regardless of what you've already put down as a deposit. Deposits are usually non refundable.

True Story-

'The Bride & Groom were last to leave the site and noticed that the tent company

had removed the tent, chairs & tables but didn't clean up the grounds. They cleaned for four hours that night to avoid the city contract penalty of \$2500.00 if not restored by dawn. When they reviewed their tent company contract, it was never written that the company would clean the grounds.

5) **Be Guest & Vendor Friendly**

Always include very clear directions for guests and vendors, especially if you have separate locations for your ceremony & reception. Be sure parking is clearly marked and if there's valet service, let them know to expect it ahead of time. Check to see if parking passes or permits are necessary. Your wedding party & family will need to know what entrances to use and especially your vendors too! Be sure to notify your venue of special deliveries coming in.



True Story-

'Guests weren't notified that the parking structure was being demolished the weekend of the wedding, but there would be a valet set up in front. Uninformed guests had to find parking around the hotel in downtown LA and walk.'



6) **Creating Time Lines**

A solid time line is a great way to make sure you have plenty of time to fit in everything. Starting backward from the end of the evening to when you wake, ask yourself (& your vendors) how long each aspect will take. If you take an hour to get ready for work, you can figure at least two hours the day of your wedding. And don't forget to factor in your Bridal Party if they too are having their hair & make up done by a professional. If wedding party photos are being taken before the ceremony, a 30 minute photo shoot can easily take an hour and a half.

Your wedding day should be beautiful, fun, life changing and everything you've ever dreamt it would be. Don't miss your own wedding by spending all of your time fussing with the details the day. Keep it as stress free as you can & work hard to prevent potential disasters.

please call me for more information on how to *Disaster-Proof Your Wedding* and to answer any of your questions. 'Your Day' Productions is available for hire at your wedding or event.

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