

How to choose the perfect wedding vendors

Contributed by Jo Anna Zaffree
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Ok ladies and gentlemen, here is a great lesson on how to choose the people who hold the wedding of your dreams in their hands.

In America, the average wedding costs \$27,852. For most couples, this is the largest event you will ever host. It is the most money you will ever spend, for ONE day, on products and services you have never used, with people you have never met.

Your wedding vendors. The people you choose to handle the finest of details for the largest, most meaningful event of your lives. Your wedding day.

The first thing to remember is that the vendor is not your adversary. Wedding vendors are professionals in their fields. The vendor is a businessperson, in business to make a profit. If a vendor is not making a profit, they probably cannot and will not provide a service or product of any value.

When interviewing vendors, you must be very clear about your vision for your wedding. Offer pictures, fabric swatches, etc. to communicate your vision.

Ask to see pictures of past events. Are they tasteful, original, with various themes? You want to choose a vendor who can create your vision, not a cookie cutter version of their past events.

You must be very up front about your budget. How much can you, are you, willing to spend on his or her service? Most vendors have handled events of varying budgets.

Do not hire a vendor on price alone. Dare your vendor to be creative in ways to create your vision on your budget. Ask what else they can offer to add value to their service. For example, a florist may add free greenery, fruit or ribbon, to enhance your simple bouquet.

Meet with at least three vendors in a category. Do not be afraid to walk away if a vendor cannot, or, is unwilling to work within your budget. Let your vendor know that you are shopping and what it will take to get your business.

Get referrals. Referrals from other respected vendors, as well as recommendations from recently married couples are very valuable. Ask for and call at least three references.

Choose vendors that you can work without throughout the planning process. With some vendors, such as photographers, you will spend the majority of your wedding day together. Choose someone you like personally, and who you feel has your best interests in mind.

Make your vendor a partner in your big day. A happy vendor = a happy couple.

Cheers!

Jo Anna Zaffree is a professional wedding consultant and author of Your Personal Wedding Planner. A complete wedding organizer for busy and budget minded brides, with over 275 Money Saving Tips on everything from attire to transportation.

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