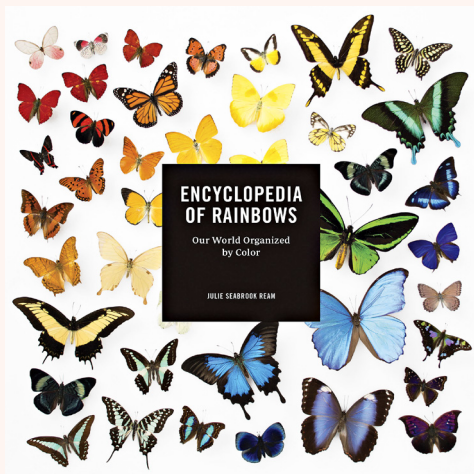


# The PLANNER



## IN LIVING COLOR

Summertime is all about vibrant colors, and we've uncovered the one tool you need to stylishly work them into your wedding (turn the page to see it). When you're picking your palette, remember that inspiration can come from anywhere, like this fun new photography book filled with rainbows made of everything from flowers to stamps to sweets.

TEXT BY LEIGH CRANDALL



From *Encyclopedia of Rainbows*, by Julie Seabrook Ream, published by Chronicle Books (2017). It features 80 different rainbows!

### In This Section . . .

Secrets to Picking the Perfect Color Palette

Summer-Camp Wedding Venues

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**BEHIND THE WHEEL**

You know that friend who always puts colors together in artful, unexpected ways that you never would have thought to try? Well, there's a trick that lets you do that, too: Just consult the color wheel, a tool that lays out the spectrum in circular form. Colors can be combined in a variety of ways according to their position relative to one another on the wheel. To help narrow down the options, use the season, the aesthetics of your venue, and the mood you're looking to set as inspiration.

**Monochromatic**

This color scheme is one of the easiest to execute and lends itself well to a subtle, sophisticated celebration. Simply combine tints, tones, and shades of any single hue.

**Analogous**

This combo incorporates two or more colors next to one another on the wheel. Because they're often found together in nature (like the blues and greens of the ocean, or the colors of a sunset), analogous color schemes are a great choice for outdoor weddings and generally make for a serene, comforting design.

**Complementary**

Use colors located directly across from each other on the wheel to design an impactful, high-contrast color scheme. To soften the look, opt for less-saturated hues.



MONOCHROMATIC



ANALOGOUS



COMPLEMENTARY

**6** weeks before your wedding is the ideal deadline for guests to RSVP.



**SHIRA SAYS**

"Be sure to take your time when you're walking back up the aisle at the end of the ceremony. Make eye contact with guests and each other, and take it all in. Pause at the top of the aisle, too, and maybe share a kiss—not only does it keep you in the moment, but it also makes for great photos."  
—Shira Savada, real weddings editor

ISTOCK/GETTY IMAGES (WHEEL); JIM FRANCO (MONOCHROMATIC); JOHNNY MILLER (ANALOGOUS); RAYMOND HOM (COMPLEMENTARY); STEPHEN KENT JOHNSON (SHIRA)



**WELCOME-BAG TREATS**

Tampa, Florida-based planner Anna Lucia Richardson suggests giving your wedding guests a mix of practical, celebratory, and sentimental trinkets, including:

**Something to Sip On**

"Go beyond bottled water and include a cocktail set with liquor, mixers, and garnishes," says Richardson. One easy idea: cans of tomato juice, mini bottles of vodka, and Tabasco sauce for Bloody Marys.

**A Nod to the Venue**

"Add a favorite locally sourced treat or, if it's a destination wedding, something that's useful in the location," she says. Think a subway card or museum pass in the city, trail maps for the woods, or sunscreen for the beach.

**A Keepsake**

"Incorporate playing cards, a hat, or another token that guests can reuse long after the party is over," says Richardson. Keep in mind: Attendees will need to travel home, so favors that can squeeze into carry-on luggage are best.

**Fabulous Packaging**

"Rather than using items' original packaging, work with your stationer or planner to create custom labels," Richardson advises. "It can be as simple as repackaging treats in waxed-paper bags with a label in your wedding's palette, or placing items in decorative tins."

**A Personal Greeting**

A note written specifically for each guest is the most important part of making guests feel welcome. Richardson also suggests including a list of wedding events so that guests can access the information quickly.



**Should We or Shouldn't We? FIRST-DANCE LESSONS**

Classes are a popular way to learn a routine or improve your moves for your dance-floor moment. But are they right for the two of you? Three couples weigh in on their dance-floor prep, and an instructor shares her tips for getting the most out of the experience.

**We Did, to Learn a Routine**

"We started dance lessons 13 months before the wedding, then began rehearsing a choreographed number in May, four months before we got married. I'm a trained dancer, but it doesn't come naturally to Robin, so having choreography helped him feel more comfortable. Not only are lessons fun, but they boost your confidence for your wedding day—and any other time you hit the dance floor. And the experience improved our communication as a couple."  
—Vanessa Delmer, married to Robin Delmer

**We Did, for Fun**

"We took dance lessons because Edson was a dancing novice and I wanted lessons myself. Our wedding was in October, and we took eight lessons total, on a weekly basis, beginning in July. While our instructor taught us different steps to create a routine, we decided to freestyle for our first dance to avoid the day-of stress. Knowing different steps from our lessons was useful, because we could use them when we felt like it. Plus, certain moves had our guests cheering!"  
—Lizette Gutierrez, married to Edson Gutierrez

**We Didn't**

"We discussed the possibility of taking lessons or learning a choreographed dance. But in the end, we decided not to, because we wanted to relax and not focus on memorizing turns or getting steps right. We didn't practice and didn't worry about making the dance perfect, but just enjoyed the moment, surrounded by our friends and family."  
—Adrienne Victor, married to Chris Formisano

**An Instructor Says . . .**

"Preparing for a first dance is so much more than mastering a few steps. You also learn coordination and performance skills—and you have to do it all with a partner. For a fully choreographed dance, I recommend lessons once per week, starting at least seven months before the wedding. For those looking to feel comfortable with the basics, I suggest beginning at least four months in advance. As for song choice, the optimal length is about two and a half minutes. If your song is longer than that, invite your guests to join in for the last couple of minutes."  
—Szewai Lee, Duet Dance Studio, in Chicago



FROM TOP: KATE HEADLEY; CARRIE PATTERSON PHOTOGRAPHY





## HAPPY CAMPERS

Summer camp-style weddings are trending, and for good reason—it's tough to beat simple pleasures like s'mores around a campfire with your besties. From actual camps for rent to hotels with "glamping" options, these venues make it easy to embrace the great outdoors. **TEXT BY COLLEEN CLARK**

### 1. Camp Pinnacle

*Flat Rock, North Carolina*  
Weddings at this woodlands camp include accommodations for up to 240 guests in rustic cabins, some with attached tree houses! An amphitheater-like area overlooking the water offers a peaceful setting for a ceremony, while the reception can be held in the retro open-air basketball pavilion or the new dining room, which overlooks the lake. But the real draws here are the waterborne activities: A white-sand beach fronts a floating playground with a rope swing, a water trampoline, and many a boat (canoes, kayaks, rowboats, and more). **Top Tip:** The camp chef is an award-winning ice carver, so be sure to take advantage of his skills for a fun bar centerpiece.

**THE DETAILS:** From \$8,500 for entire camp rental with accommodation, [camp pinnacle.com](http://camp pinnacle.com).

### 2. Firelight Camps

*Ithaca, New York*  
Want an *Out of Africa* look without flying across the Atlantic? Consider this safari-style tented camp in upstate New York. On the grounds of La Tourelle Resort & Spa, outdoorsy guests can bed down beneath the stars

in one of 19 luxe tents, while others can opt for the comfort of a traditional hotel just up the hill. Although the tents are off the grid, they come with battery-powered lanterns, which also charge phones, and an upscale bathhouse provides big-day essentials like hot showers, hair dryers, and bath products. Staff tends the morning and evening campfires, where guests sip local coffee or choose from a list of Finger Lakes-region wines and craft brews. There's also a bocce court beneath fairy lights, perfect for the after-party.

**Top Tip:** Plan a prewedding hike with your guests to the waterfalls and gorges of Buttermilk Falls State Park—the trailhead is steps from the campground.

**THE DETAILS:** Site fee from \$4,500, [firelightcamps.com](http://firelightcamps.com).

### 3. Camp Wandawega

*Elkhorn, Wisconsin*  
This lakeside camp is a Wes Anderson movie come to life (think impeccably styled retro cabins with arrows and souvenir pennants as wall art, plaid throws atop vintage beds, and rocking chairs lining porches). The entire camp must be rented out for weddings, so up to 50 overnight guests have

their pick of accommodations, from tepee to tent, cabin to A-frame. The pièce de résistance? A two-story tree house with space for dancing in front is an ideal spot for the reception. **Top Tip:** The groom and his guys can get ready in a refurbished motorcycle garage and pose for photos on an antique motorcycle with a sidecar.

**THE DETAILS:** Rental price upon request, [wandawega.com](http://wandawega.com).

### 4. The Suttle Lodge

*Deschutes National Forest, Oregon*  
Spread over 15.5 acres on the shores of Suttle Lake in Deschutes National Forest, this getaway for up to 100 overnight guests, operated by the hospitality team behind Ace Hotel Portland, has all the same hipster-chic hallmarks—including locally made microbrews, French-press coffee, and Pendleton camp blankets. The Eagle Scouts on your guest list can bed down in rustic cabins (warning: no running water), while the less adventurous will feel pampered in well-styled deluxe cabins, each with its own canoe. The chef at top Portland restaurant Ava Gene's created the lodge's

menu, centered around haute takes on comfort fare. **Top Tip:** A variety of watercraft means you can make quite the entrance to a lakeside ceremony. (Who needs an aisle when you can arrive via rowboat?)

**THE DETAILS:** Site fee from \$15,000, [thesuttlelodge.com](http://thesuttlelodge.com).

### 5. El Capitan Canyon

*Gaviota, California*  
Just 30 minutes north of Santa Barbara, perched across from a dramatic stretch of El Capitan State Beach, this venue provides the best of a beach and a forest wedding in one. Up to 300 guests can sunbathe in the morning, then gather around the campfire at night. The property's mix of safari-style tents, yurts, and cabins (with private bathrooms) means there's lodging for everyone, from the intrepid backpacker to the spider-averse city slicker. And with bikes, hikes, a high-ropes course, a pool, and a massage tent, guests can be as busy—or as relaxed—as they'd like. **Top Tip:** Throw your day-after brunch at the nearby Cold Spring Tavern, which serves up hearty breakfast fare in a fun log cabin-style setting. **THE DETAILS:** Venue rental from \$2,500, [elcapitancanyon.com](http://elcapitancanyon.com).





## BEST PARTY EVER!

What's the secret to a truly memorable bash? Thoughtful hosts. (That would be you!) Claudia Hanlin, contributing editor and founder of the Wedding Library, in New York City, explains how to plan a considerate celebration. **TEXT BY JAIME BUEGER**

### Put Comfort First

When it comes to setting priorities, think through the logistics of your particular celebration and "be mindful of what's best for your guests' experience," says Hanlin. During the ceremony, she suggests, use a microphone or have your officiant wear a lapel mic so that everyone can hear your vows. Be sure the seating is comfortable (chairs with backs and cushions), particularly if you're planning a service longer than 30 minutes. If it's hot, hand out fans; if it's chilly, pass hot drinks or have wraps available. And if rain is in the forecast, provide inexpensive umbrellas for guests to take home. Hanlin also suggests solving the issue of transportation. If it's a long distance between your ceremony and reception locations, hire

cars or buses—even if that means forgoing other details. "Guests won't remember not getting favors," she says, "but a day that goes off flawlessly will stick with them."

### Meet and Greet

You don't have to come up with elaborate get-to-know-everyone exercises, but you should still find ways to encourage guests to interact. One easy idea: Make sure your ushers know the full scope of their role. Yes, they'll hand out programs and show people to their seats, "but it's really about chatting guests up and making them feel welcome," says Hanlin. And if you do like fun little icebreakers, Hanlin's a fan of cocktail napkins that double as conversation starters. "Print them with facts about the bride or groom, or the cocktail you're drinking—or easy questions

that lead to a cute story guests can have a laugh over together."

### Make It Personal

Welcome bags at hotels are a great way to make out-of-towners feel at home—just be sure to include a thoughtful note. At dinner, consider eschewing formality and using friends' and family's nicknames on escort cards for a personal tone. At the wedding itself, make every effort to personally greet all your guests, even if that means you and your spouse divide and conquer while working the room. And, says Hanlin, unless you have a special send-off planned, stay as late as you can at the reception. That way, you can catch up with anyone you haven't had the chance to talk to, and you won't miss out on any of the fun.



## The Art of the Thank-You Note

We get it. After the rush of your wedding, it can be hard to sit down and get the thank-yous done. But with a little planning, putting your gratitude into words can be a cinch.

### 1. Stay organized

Order thank-you cards at the same time as the rest of your wedding stationery, and add a "gift" category to your list of invitee addresses. Update the list with the gift sent as soon as you receive it, so you won't forget who gave what.

### 2. Time it right

It's ideal to send a thank-you as soon as you receive a gift, but when you're in the throes of wedding planning, that can be a tall order. A realistic goal is to send your notes no later than three months after your vows. To make it easier, write three a day until you're done, rather than tackling them all in one sitting.

### 3. Divide & conquer

For a streamlined approach, you and your spouse can each tackle your respective family members. Just make sure that both of you sign your names at the bottom of the note.

### 4. Use your words

Your thank-you should mention the specific gift and how you plan to use it. If someone sent a check or gift card, you can still be specific about where you'll spend it: "Thank you so much for the generous gift. It will be put to good use as we furnish our new home."  
—Jaime Bueger

FROM TOP: BELATHÉE PHOTOGRAPHY; LAUREN KRYSKI

## Everything You Never Knew You Needed to Know About ICE

The coolest thing at any reception? Ice—whether it's cubed, crushed, or carved into a towering sculpture. **TEXT BY ALAINA DEMOPOULOS**



The idea of selling ice first began in 1806, when entrepreneur Frederic Tudor began shipping ice made from pond water around Boston—insulated with sawdust and hay—to the warmer climates of the Caribbean, Singapore, and India.

### CRYSTAL CLEAR

Artisanal ice is all the rage, but what's the difference between your standard freezer cubes and the gourmet upgrade? Simple aesthetics—artisanal ice is completely transparent and thus a little prettier than "normal" ice. "The secret to completely clear cubes is that the air's forced out of the water during the freezing process," says Swan. Artisanal ice suppliers use a specialized machine to chill water from the bottom up, which eliminates air bubbles and keeps ice clear.

## CLINK, CLINK

While all ice is (literally) created equal—by chilling water to below 32 degrees—that doesn't mean it's all the same, particularly when it comes to cocktails. Richard Swan, national beverage director of event bartending service the Grand Bevy, explains that the type of ice you can expect to see in your glass depends on the drink.

**CUBED ICE** Best for highballs and cocktails, this traditional shape chills drinks quickly but melts slowly enough that drinks don't get overly watered down.

**SONIC OR NUGGET ICE** Made up of lots of tiny shards thrown together to create nuggets, it melts quickly, which is ideal for slushy tropical drinks or muddled cocktails like mojitos. "This sort of ice helps to keep crushed ingredients like mint and

berries suspended in the drink, which prevents them from clogging up your straw," says Swan.

**LARGE-FORMAT ICE** This ice is typically cut from large solid blocks into a variety of separate one-to-two-inch shapes, such as squares or spheres. "Because they're larger, they melt more slowly—ideal for single-spirit sippers who want to control dilution and take their time drinking."

**CYLINDRICAL ICE** "Tubular, or 'Collins,' cubes are long, narrow pieces of ice designed to fit tall highball or Collins glasses."

**SHAVED ICE** It's "brilliant for dessert but tricky to use in alcoholic cocktails; it waters down a normal drink too much," says Swan. "A shaved-ice cone is flavored with extra-concentrated ingredients to account for the extra water."

## MIX IT UP

If you like the idea of serving craft cocktails but don't want to purchase and prepare all the ingredients, try **Herb & Lou's Infused Ice Cubes** (\$16 for 12, [herbandlous.com](http://herbandlous.com)). These cocktail starters come premixed and packaged in cube form, with flavor combos like cucumber and watermelon with honey and thyme, so all you have to do is freeze them, add one to your favorite liquor, shake, and serve.

Dry ice isn't made of water—it's actually the frozen form of carbon dioxide.



### "BREAKING THE ICE"

While we now apply this term to warming up chilly social situations, it originally described the breaking up of ice floes to allow boats to pass through frigid waters.





**Ensemble cast:** Be sure to ask your photographer to take a group shot with your guests to capture the cohesive look.

## DRESS CODES, DECODED

What are we all wearing? It depends on the wording.

TEXT BY ANTHONY LUSCIA

Guests' outfits play a role in determining the look and vibe of a celebration, so lots of couples opt to provide a dress code. Don't worry about coming across as bossy—many of your loved ones will thank you for simplifying the wedding-guest-attire dilemma. Guidelines should be stated clearly at the bottom of invitations or reception cards, as well as on your wedding website, to make sure no one misses them and unwittingly commits a fashion faux pas. Here are a few common dress codes to consider.

### You Say: Black Tie

**It Means:** You want your guests to look like they stepped out of a casino scene in a James Bond film. Tuxedos on the gents; floor-length gowns on the ladies. It's classic and

will always look stylish. **Note:** If you're requesting this level of formality from your guests, your event needs to *feel* tuxedo-worthy (i.e., an evening affair with a formal, seated dinner in a stylish space).

### You Say: Formal, Black-Tie Optional, or Cocktail Attire

**It Means:** You want people to dress their best, but you're flexible. Tuxedos are fantastic, but a suit and tie will do the trick, too; ladies should don a cocktail dress or a gown. The more-relaxed dress code also takes pressure off your celebration's having to live up to black-tie-level swank.

### You Say: Beach Chic (or any other combo of location + style)

**It Means:** You're letting the location inspire and allowing guests to interpret that in

their own way. To help keep folks at the same level of formality, it's okay to provide parameters, like a preferred color palette or inspirational imagery, on your wedding website. This same concept can also work for seasons. Think "summertime soirée" or "winter wonderland."

### You Say: All-White Attire (or another color or combo of hues)

**It Means:** Guests should honor the request and dress in the suggested palette. Everyone dressed in white looks fantastic, works for a formal or casual wedding, and is easy enough for guests to pull off. If you're envisioning guests in a broader palette, be sure to include examples of the desired hues on your wedding website (because *pink* means something different to everyone).

**More Creative Sartorial Suggestions**  
Boots + Bow Ties • Gatsby Garden Party  
Summer Sundresses + Seersucker • Brooklyn Chic (or any combo that fits your location)

## Hidden Figures

Some of these costs can be found buried in your vendor contracts; others seemingly pop up on the fly. Here's a quick breakdown of the items and services that can quickly derail your budget.

**1. POSTAGE:** Consider that most invitations are heavier than everyday letters, thanks to extras like reply cards (which etiquette says should also include postage) and envelopes, and accommodation and direction cards—so postage costs add up quickly. To be safe, budget up to \$1.75 per invite.

**2. UNDERGARMENTS:** A gown is only as good as its supporting garments, so plan to budget about \$200 for specialty bras, a waist-cinching corset, or tummy-flattening shapewear.

**3. ALTERATIONS:** When you're creating your dress budget, don't forget to factor these in. Most gowns need some nips and tucks to fit you like a glove, and professional tailoring can run up to \$700, depending on what's being done.

### 4. WELCOME-BAG DELIVERY:

It's a nice touch to give out-of-town guests a welcome bag filled with essentials and local treats. But if most of your loved ones are staying at a hotel, prepare to pay a delivery fee between \$1.50 and \$15 per bag for the staff to place them in rooms before guests arrive. As a wallet-friendly alternative, ask the concierge if they can be stashed at the front desk and distributed as guests check in.

**5. TAXES AND TIPS:** These aren't always included, so be sure to review your catering contract to see if they've been factored into the final quote; if they haven't, apply your state's tax rate for food and drink to the total, and set that money aside. Same goes for tipping waiters and bartenders—sometimes gratuity is added to the contract; sometimes it isn't. Other vendors who often receive tips, such as hair and makeup artists, musicians, DJs, and parking attendants, typically do not add gratuities to their contracts, so you'll want to budget a 10-to-15-percent tip for a job well done. —Jaime Buerger