# - *TEN* -
## Tips For
# *DESIGNING*
## Your Wedding

**PLUS** *a wedding day set-up list to ensure nothing gets overlooked*

# 10 Tips For Designing Your DREAM WEDDING

### 1  PICK A THEME

I can't stress how important it is to pick a theme for your wedding. Now, I don't necessarily mean something like 'Under the Stars' or 'Star Wars' or 'Great Gatsby.' While you most definitely can go that direction, not everyone wants a 'themed' wedding. Instead, I suggest you pick two to three words that describe the aesthetic you are visualizing. For example, you could choose something such as modern tropical, simple + rustic or garden romance. All of these describe a certain aesthetic and create a picture in your mind.

### 2  CREATE A MOOD BOARD

The next step is to create a mood board for your wedding. A mood board, in case you don't know, is a collection of images that represents your theme. Below are a few examples for inspiration.

The easiest way to create this is through a free program called Canva. They have wedding mood board templates, and all you need to do are add in your photos and change the color palette. It's super easy – I promise!

Now, why do you need a mood board? First of all, it will help convey your vision to all of your vendors. When you strictly vocalize your theme, everyone pictures something slightly different, whereas a mood board will more accurately portray the aesthetic you are picturing. Secondly, it will keep help keep you focused. Before you purchase any wedding décor, or add any new design elements, you want to ask yourself: "Will this work with my mood board?"

### 3  PICK A FOCAL POINT

One of the biggest mistakes many couples make is trying to include too many design elements. Unless you have a huge budget, this isn't effective. What I suggest instead is picking one or two focal points, spending a little bit more money on them, and doing them really, really well. For example, these could be things like: your ceremony arch, the sweetheart table, chandeliers or hanging floral over the dance floor, your guest's tables, or your favor or place card display. By picking just one of two of these, you will be able to 'wow' your guests with those elements, and they aren't going to notice that the other details are as extravagant.

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## BUDGET

Before you go on a shopping rampage, I strongly urge you to sit down with your fiancé and create a very specific budget breakdown for your wedding décor. Knowing how much you are allocating to each area will prevent your budget from spiraling out of control, and will help you focus on those couple décor elements that are really important to you.

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## THINK BIG PICTURE FIRST

Another mistake I see many couples making is focusing on the small details first. While the details matter, they aren't going to make as big of an impact if you don't first think about your wedding as a whole. (*They are also going to stress your out more than they should!)* What are guests going to see first when they walk into your reception? Is it going to be the menu on their plate or it going to be a unique layout of tables to grab their attention? Focus on those big details first, and once they are set in stone, you can move on to the smaller details. Approaching your design this way will give your wedding a more cohesive feel and will force you to do one thing at a time.

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## INCLUDE YOUR STORY & INSTERESTS

One of the best ways to make your wedding feel more personal is to pull inspiration from you and your fiancé's love story and your common interests. For example, if you got engaged in Italy, design all your stationery to revolve around famous artwork from Italy, or your create olive oil and balsamic favors for your guests. If both love to run, find really fun shoelaces to double as place cards and favors. If you are both music lovers, create a fun backdrop out of vintage albums for a ceremony backdrop or photo backdrop for guests. Make sense?

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## DON'T TAKE ON TOO MANY DIY PROJECTS

While there are many stunning DIY projects out there, don't take on too many of them. Nearly all DIY projects take longer than anticipated, and cost more than anticipated – not too mention all the Pinterest fails. If you are a crafty person and want to take on a few projects here and there, by all means, go for it! My only suggestion is to do a test run of your projects at least two months before your wedding. This gives you ample time to change your mind if it doesn't go as planned. Secondly, I recommend you finish ALL projects at lease two weeks before your wedding. I can't tell you how often I have seen couples stressing out because they have all of these projects to finish the week of their wedding and zero time to accomplish them.

## 8    PICK A COLOR PALETTE

I strongly urge you to pick more than just two colors. Now before you go out and add all colors of the rainbow, let me explain. If your wedding colors are navy and white, and every detail of your wedding is one of those two colors, your wedding is going to feel very forced and is going to feel very 'matchy-matchy.' In order to give your wedding more dimension, I would suggest either adding varying shades of blue, adding in some wooden or metallic elements, or adding lots of greenery.  Your wedding is still going to have a navy and white color palette, but is also going to have a lot more dimension.

## 9    DO A TABLE MOCKUP

One of the best ways to see your vision come to life before you wedding is to do a table mock up. In order to do this, you will need to pull together your rental company and your florist. Your rental company will set up a replica of what your tables will look like and your florist will bring an example of the centerpieces for your wedding. I suggest you also bring everything else you plan to display on the tables, such as table numbers, candles, menus, etc. This way you can see exactly what it is going to look like, and make adjustment accordingly.

## 10    PUCHASE WITH PURPOSE

As easy as it can be to head on over to Etsy to purchase a bunch of wedding related items, please don't! These items will add up quickly, and I can't tell you how often I have gone to set up for a wedding and had a couple hand me a box of items to set up where ever they 'look good.' Here is the thing: there isn't always a good spot for those items, and I find myself trying to get creative in order to display all their wedding décor. What I suggest is to only purchase items once you have a specific spot in mind. Purchasing items with a specific purpose is going to save you quite a bit of money, and is going to actually create a more purposeful look for your wedding when it's all said and done.

# WEDDING SET-UP LIST

Use this template to list EVERYTHING that is being set-up at your wedding and who will be providing it. This will end up serving as a packing list, and will ensure nothing gets overlooked.

## CEREMONY

*Ex. Chairs, arch, table for unity candles, chair treatment (ribbons or floral on chairs), aisle runner, décor at the entrance to the ceremony (floral arrangements, wine barrels, lanterns, etc), welcome signs, water station, gift table, guest book table*

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SIMPLE DRAWING OF CEREMONY:

# COCKTAIL HOUR

*Ex. Cocktail tables and chairs, belly bars, bar, appetizer table, place card table or seating chart*

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SIMPLE DRAWING OF COCKTAIL HOUR

# RECEPTION

## Place Card Table

*Ex. 6' table, linen, place cards, 'please find your seat' sign*

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## Gift Table

*Ex. 6' table, linen, card box, cards and gifts signs*

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## Guest Book Table

*Ex. Belly bar, linen, guest book, pens*

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## Cake Table

*Ex. Cake stand, cake cutting knife and server, cake plate, two forks, a napkin*

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**Guest Tables**

*Ex. 72" rounds, linen, chargers, silverware, napkins, menu, water glasses, wine glasses, champagne flutes, a floral arrangement, votive candles, table number, place cards, favors*

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**Sweetheart Table**

*Ex. 4' table, linen, chargers, napkins, silverware, water glasses, wine glasses, customized champagne flutes, floral arrangement, votive candles, mr. and mrs. sign*

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**Bar**

*Ex. Wooden bar, signature drink sign, glassware*

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**Additional**

*Ex. Dance floor, additional signs, hanging floral, pictures, lighting*

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SIMPLE DRAWING OF THE RECEPTION