

Tallahassee

Pretty. Unexpected.

WEDDINGS

2020 PLANNER GUIDE



Visit
Tallahassee

Pretty. Unexpected.

VisitTallahassee.com

Visit Tallahassee

A Division of Leon County



ABOUT US

Visit Tallahassee is the official destination marketing organization for Tallahassee-Leon County. Tourism is charged with marketing Tallahassee-Leon County nationally as a premier leisure, business and sports destination through direct sales, advertising, public relations, sports, film and visitor services. In 2019, Tallahassee-Leon County welcomed over 2.4 million visitors who contributed more than \$1 billion in economic impact and accounted for over 16,000 people in our community employed in the tourism and hospitality industry.*

*As of August 2019 based on market research data provided by Downs & St. Germain Research

FOR MORE INFORMATION

GO TO:
VisitTallahassee.com

ENGAGE WITH US
On Social Media



#iHeartTally

OR CALL TOLL FREE
(800) 628-2866

At Your Service

Visit Tallahassee is here to make your wedding planning stress-free by offering a variety of services including recommending hotel options and specialty vendors to finding suitable dining venues and after-hours entertainment. Our staff of local experts has long-term, in-market relationships and offers a comprehensive, multi-faceted view of Tallahassee, tailored to your needs.

Visit Tallahassee Professional Staff:

- Serves as your liaison with the local hospitality industry.
- Prepares and distributes customized requests for proposals on your behalf.
- Coordinates site visits and area tours.
- Provides expertise and assistance with lodging and venue selection.
- Offers recommendations and/or personalized itineraries for guests and their travel companions.
- Provides complimentary welcome bags and visitor information

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Weddings in the City

Explore all there is to know about city weddings in this bonus section pulled straight from the pages of Northwest Florida Weddings Magazine.



Tips & Trends

Tips and trends from local wedding and event planner John Gandy.

» Tallahassee is a popular destination year-round. If you need assistance finding the perfect date(s), contact one of our destination experts for assistance.



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LEON COUNTY DIVISION OF TOURISM (VISIT TALLAHASSEE) THE 2020 WEDDINGS PLANNER GUIDE TO FLORIDA'S CAPITAL REGION

Visitor Information Center & Administrative Offices

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ON THE COVER:

Black & Hue Photography captures a couple's special day at Mission San Luis. The Tallahassee-based company provides photography options for weddings, engagements and events.



5 REASONS

Weddings in Tallahassee will ensure you say #iHeartTally

1

EVENTS REINVENTED

Wedding planners looking to leave their mark are looking at Tallahassee. Gone are the days of uninspiring venues and a “fend-for-yourself” attitude toward outside entertainment. Why not say “I do” overlooking the football field of the Florida State Seminoles or host your rehearsal dinner at an award-winning craft brewery? Our creative approach to supporting wedding planners has led to a rapid rise in the number of weddings held in Tallahassee.

2

PLAN WITH EASE & DON'T BREAK THE BANK

Tallahassee offers affordable options year-round and is ranked the No. 1 most affordable destination in Florida¹. Visit Tallahassee provides complimentary services ranging from RFP distribution and coordinating site visits to assisting with securing lodging.

¹Business Travel News 2017 Corporate Travel Index

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AFTER HOURS

Amp up the contemporary vibe for “after-the-event” options with dining and experiences in one of Tallahassee’s walkable entertainment districts filled with award-winning restaurants, renowned craft breweries and live music.

4

UNPARALLELED HOSPITALITY

Named a Top 10 Best Southern City by Southern Living magazine in 2019, Tallahassee reflects the grace and charm characteristic of true Southern hospitality. With our rolling hills, canopied roads and moss-draped oaks, Florida’s Capital City is more than a pretty place. Independent research shows “pretty city” and “friendly people and great hospitality” rank No. 1 and 2 in visitor impressions of the city.

5

NATURAL BEAUTY

Our natural beauty makes for breathtaking backdrops for your wedding photos. Go out and explore some of Florida’s most popular and scenic forests, rivers and trails without sacrificing comfort. Highly rated hiking, biking and paddling outings are conveniently located within minutes of modern hotels and restaurants.

Getting Here is Easy!



Whether you are visiting Tallahassee for the first time or making a return trip, Florida's capital city is a short drive or flight from major destinations throughout the Southeast.



Airport

Tallahassee International Airport (TLH) is conveniently located less than eight miles from downtown and served by three major airlines (American, Delta and Silver) providing daily direct flights to Atlanta, Charlotte, Dallas/Fort Worth, Miami, Orlando, Tampa and Washington DC. TLH also includes several rental car companies. There is a full-service facility for private charter planes nearby.



Car

Located just 25 miles north of the Gulf of Mexico and 14 miles south of Georgia, Tallahassee is situated in the Florida Panhandle with convenient access provided by four major highways: I-10, U.S. 27, U.S. 319 and U.S. 90.

Ways to Explore



Seeing the sights in Tallahassee has never been easier — explore the history, a year-round calendar of events and activities, arts and culture, local restaurants

and breweries and the more than 700 miles of trails with a guide or on a self-guided tour. Find more information and inspiration for your trip at VisitTallahassee.com.



The Perfect *Tallahassee Weekend*

After the vows have been said and the reception is done, visitors to Tallahassee can focus on having a little fun. Here's a look into enjoying the best of what we have to offer.

FOR THE LADIES

Discover the vintage clothing, handcrafted goods and other funky shops at **Railroad Square Art Park** or for a more upscale shopping experience, explore the shops in Market Square including **Narcissus** and **Hearth & Soul**.

Celebrate the nuptials with a meal at one of Tallahassee's chic restaurants. **Lucilla** offers a comfortable atmosphere and inspired takes on regional cuisine, **Cypress** is known for sophisticated Southern flavors and **Blu Halo** pairs fine dining with imaginative cocktails.

After dark, Tallahassee entertainment comes alive. Imbibe in libations overlooking the city at **Level 8 Lounge at Hotel Duval** or top off the evening with some dancing and live music at **Fifth & Thomas**.

FOR PARENTS & GRANDPARENTS

Tallahassee has a rich cultural history and natural beauty that is undeniable. When you need a break from the action, take a leisurely stroll through **Maclay Gardens** or relive the glory days of American cars at the **Tallahassee Auto Museum**. For a quiet place to discover fascinating books and enjoy an afternoon treat, checkout **Midtown Reader** and **Lucy & Leo's Cupcakery** located in Midtown.

Looking for a great lunch or dinner spot? There's something for every palate at the casual and lively **Kool Beanz Café**, or taste the freshness of farm-to-table dining at **Backwoods Crossing**. With the Capitol as your backdrop, watch the sun go down from **The Edison**, built on the site of the original power plant for Tallahassee.

FOR THE GUYS

Hit the links at **Hilaman**, **SouthWood** or the historic **Capital City Country Club** or test your lumberjack skills at **Tomahawk 51** or **Tomahawk Chop** axe throwing lanes. For some friendly competition, let the good times roll at **Hangar 38** with bowling, games, drinks and great food.

Take in happy hour at the **Proof Brewing Co.** for a sample of craft beer at its finest. For dinner, keep it casual and fun at **Madison Social** located in **CollegeTown**, or go all out with a luxurious dining experience at **Il Lusso** downtown.

FOR KIDS

Kids of all ages love to visit Tallahassee. Watch candy being made in front of your eyes at **Lofty Pursuits**. See a Florida panther up close at the **Tallahassee Museum**. Looking to burn off some energy? Head to **Urban Air** and check out their Sky Rider indoor coaster.

Refuel at the **Midtown Caboose**, a family friendly burger joint offering mouth-watering handcrafted burgers and fries. With "slices as big as your head," **Momo's Pizza** has been a Tallahassee family favorite for years.





BEST of TALLY



There's no shortage of excellent vendors and venues in Tallahassee. Below is a sampling of winners from the 2019 Tallahassee Magazine Best of Tallahassee readers' poll.

Tips From a Pro

Now that you've said, "YES!" what's next? Take a breath and get ready for some fun... it's PLANNING time! Wedding planning can feel stressful, but it should be a fun and exciting ride! It's YOUR wedding after all — so make it unique to you.

One of the many conversations I have with brides early in the planning process is about trends and if they should be followed or avoided. Trends, by nature, constantly change and evolve (remember the burlap and lace trend of 2010). You can choose to be different, traditional or maybe a little of both. Wedding trends can be seen in many aspects of your big day: fashion, decor, food, invitation suites and wedding paper, entertainment and even in ways to get engaged.

Trends to make note of...

- Royal weddings are huge trend setters because of their larger-than-life designs that leave no detail untouched! These events make noticeable changes in the style of weddings worldwide. After Prince Harry and Meghan Markle's wedding, the rush to introduce large scale floral pieces at the ceremony was impossible to miss. This trend is still running strong, and I expect it to stick around for a while.
- Another recent trend involves using velvet, darker tones and furniture. Velvet is HUGE right now, all shades and styles. Velvet upholstered furniture, specifically blush velvet, has become a client favorite. Lounge areas and soft seating at the reception and cocktail location is a steady trend that's certainly not on its way out.
- While a soft pallet is beautiful, another rising trend is using darker tones in florals, linens and anywhere you can add a splash of color. Contrary to what you may have heard, even the use of black is no longer taboo for your wedding.
- Other fun trends include commissioning custom illustrations for invitations and printed pieces (this one is BIG!) as well as large-scale balloon decor and unique china and drinkware including custom frosted plastic cups to use during dancing.
- A small trend (pun intended) is the micro-wedding, a small and more intimate ceremony with just the closest friends and family, then having a larger reception celebration following.

The most important thing to remember when it comes to trends is to embrace what makes you unique and showcase your style — regardless of its current popularity — you may be a trendsetter!

JohnGandyEvents.com @johngandyevents

John Gandy is the reigning Best of Tallahassee winner for the Best Event/Wedding Planner category since 2010 and an Inductee into The Knot Hall of Fame. John Gandy Events is an internationally celebrated planning and design company based in Tallahassee, Florida.

PHOTOS BY WOODLAND FIELDS PHOTOGRAPHY (WEDDING ARCH, TABLE) AND MARY BETH TYSON PHOTOGRAPHY (INVITATION SUITE)



banquet facility DONALD L. TUCKER CIVIC CENTER

505 W. Pensacola St.
(850) 644-7469
tuckerciviccenter.com



caterer

TASTEBUDZ CATERING
2655-12 Capital Circle NE
(850) 309-7348
tastebudz.net



event/wedding planner

JOHN GANDY EVENTS
3463 Garber Drive
(850) 570-5999
johngandyevents.com



florist

BLOSSOMS FLOWERS
(850) 386-2087
541 N. Monroe St.
blossomsflowers.com



hair salon/studio

HAUTE HEADZ SALON
1950 Thomasville Road, Ste. P
(850) 224-0414
hauteheadzsalon.com



hotel

DOUBLETREE BY HILTON TALLAHASSEE
101 S. Adams St.
(850) 224-5000
tallahassee.doubletree.com



limo service

MIKE'S LIMOUSINE SERVICE, INC.
3109 W. Tennessee St.
(850) 251-6453
limomike.com



photographer

TRICKEY PHOTOGRAPHY
(850) 879-5367
trickeyphotos.com



wedding venue

GOODWOOD MUSEUM & GARDENS
1600 Miccosukee Road
(850) 877-8202
goodwoodmuseum.org





HOLIDAY INN TALLAHASSEE
EAST CAPITOL - UNIVERSITY

WHEN CHOOSING WHERE to stay in Tallahassee, you'll discover a variety of lodging options suited to your style, budget and purpose. From quaint boutiques to modern, chic hotels you're sure find the spot that speaks to you. **VT**



PARK AVENUE INN



FOUR POINTS BY SHERATON -
TALLAHASSEE DOWNTOWN



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HOTELS/MOTELS/INNS

Rates

\$ = \$0-\$50
\$\$ = \$51-\$100
\$\$\$ = \$101-\$125
\$\$\$\$ = \$126+

AAA Rating

Guest Rooms

Suites

Handicap Rooms

Pets Allowed

Airport Shuttle

Business Center

Complimentary Breakfast

Complimentary Evening Cocktail

Fitness Facility

Interior Corridors

Exterior Corridors

Meeting Facilities

Restaurant

Lounge

Swimming Pool

DOWNTOWN

ALOFT TALLAHASSEE DOWNTOWN

200 N. Monroe St. 32301 • (850) 513-0313
(866) 716-8143 • AloftTallahassee.com

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BUDGETEL TALLAHASSEE

745 N. Monroe St. 32301 • (850) 224-3108 • Budgetel.com

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COMFORT SUITES

1026 Apalachee Pkwy. 32301 • (850) 224-3200
(877) 424-6423 • ComfortSuitesTallahassee.com

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COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT CAPITAL

1018 Apalachee Pkwy. 32301 • (850) 222-8822
(888) 503-7667 • CourtyardTallahassee.com

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DOUBLETREE BY HILTON TALLAHASSEE

101 S. Adams St. 32301 • (850) 224-5000
Tallahassee.Doubletree.com

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FOUR POINTS BY SHERATON TALLAHASSEE DOWNTOWN

316 W. Tennessee St. 32301 • (850) 422-0071
(866) 716-8133 • FourPointsTallahasseeDowntown.com

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GOVERNORS INN

209 S. Adams St. 32301 • (850) 681-6855 • TheGovinn.org

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HAMPTON INN & SUITES TALLAHASSEE CAPITOL UNIVERSITIES

824 Railroad Ave 32310 • (850) 224-1766
TallahasseeCenter.net

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HOME2SUITES BY HILTON TALLAHASSEE STATE CAPITOL

210 S. Magnolia Dr. 32308 • (850) 402-8900 • (1-800-HILTONS)
Home2Suites.Hilton.com

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HOTEL DUVAL, AUTOGRAPH COLLECTION

415 N. Monroe St. 32301 • (850) 224-6000
(855) 213-0528 • HotelDuval.com

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PARK AVENUE INN, THE

323 E. Park Ave. 32301 • (855) 236-0262
TheParkAvenueInnReservations.com

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RESIDENCE INN UNIVERSITIES AT THE CAPITOL

600 W. Gaines St. 32304 • (850) 329-9080
(800) 922-3291 • Marriott.com/TLHDT

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TALLAHASSEE CENTER CONDOMINIUMS

215 W. College Ave. 32301 • (850) 224-1766
TallahasseeCenter.net

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COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT NORTH

1972 Raymond Diehl Rd. 32308 • (850) 422-0600
(800) 321-2211 • Marriott.com/TLHCY

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EXTENDED STAY AMERICA - TALLAHASSEE

1950 Raymond Diehl Rd. 32308 • (850) 383-1700
(800) 804-3724 • ExtendedStayAmerica.com/hotels/fl/
tallahassee/killlearn

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HAMPTON INN & SUITES I-10/THOMASVILLE RD.

3388 Lonnbladh Rd. 32308 • (850) 574-4900
(800) 445-8667 • TallahasseeI10ThomasvilleRdSuites.HamptonInn.com

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RATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

HOTELS/MOTELS/INNS

		Rates	AAA Rating	Guest Rooms	Suites	Handicap Rooms	Pets Allowed	Airport Shuttle	Business Center	Complimentary Breakfast	Complimentary Evening Cocktail	Fitness Facility	Interior Corridors	Exterior Corridors	Meeting Facilities	Restaurant	Lounge	Swimming Pool
NORTHWEST	BAYMONT INN & SUITES TALLAHASSEE 3210 N. Monroe St. 32303 • (850) 296-1316 WyndhamHotels.com/Baymont	\$-\$\$\$\$		90	●	5			●	●		●		●				●
	BEST WESTERN PLUS TALLAHASSEE NORTH 2727 Graves Rd. 32303 • (850) 562-7200 (800) 780-7234 • BestWestern.com	\$	◆◆◆	96	●	5			●	●		●	●		●			●
	CANDLEWOOD SUITES TALLAHASSEE 2815 Lakeshore Dr. W. 32312 • (850) 597-7000 CandlewoodSuites.com/TallahasseeFL	\$-\$\$\$\$		114	●	13	●		●			●	●		●			●
	COUNTRY INN & SUITES NORTHWEST TALLAHASSEE 3096 N. Monroe St. 32303 • (850) 701-2850 (800) 456-4000 • CISTallahassee.com	\$-\$\$\$\$	◆◆◆	65	●	4			●	●		●	●		●			●
	ECONO LODGE NORTH 2681 N. Monroe St. 32303 • (850) 385-6155 (877) 424-6423 • EconoLodge.com	\$-\$\$\$		79		2	●			●				●				
	FAIRFIELD INN TALLAHASSEE NORTH/I-10 3219 N. Monroe St. 32303 • (850) 562-8766 (888) 236-2427 • Fairfield.Marriott.com	\$-\$\$\$\$	◆◆◆	79	●	5			●	●		●	●					●
	HOLIDAY INN HOTEL & SUITES TALLAHASSEE NORTH 2725 Graves Rd. 32303 • (850) 536-2000 (888) Holiday • HolidayInn.com/TallahasseeI10	\$-\$\$\$\$	◆◆◆	132	●	7			●			●	●		●	●	●	●
	HOWARD JOHNSON EXPRESS INN - TALLAHASSEE 2726 N. Monroe St. 32303 • (850) 386-5000 (800) 221-5801 • WyndhamHotels.com/HoJo	\$-\$\$\$	◆◆	51		2				●				●				●
	LA QUINTA INN TALLAHASSEE NORTH 2905 N. Monroe St. 32303 • (850) 385-7172 (800) 753-3757 • WyndhamHotels.com/LaQuinta	\$	◆◆	154	●	8	●		●	●				●				●
	MICROTEL INN & SUITES 3216 N. Monroe St. 32303 • (850) 562-3800 (800) 337-0050 • WyndhamHotels.com/Microtel	\$		75	●	4	●		●	●		●						
	MOTEL 6 TALLAHASSEE WEST 2738 N. Monroe St. 32303 • (850) 386-7878 (800) 899-9841 • Motel6.com	\$		101		5	●							●				●
	QUALITY INN NORTH MONROE 3090 N. Monroe St. 32303 • (850) 562-2378 ChoiceHotels.com/QualityInn	\$		73		3	●			●				●				●
	RED ROOF INN 2930 Hospitality St. 32303 • (850) 385-7884 (937) 328-1490 • RedRoof.com	\$-\$\$\$\$		108		6	●							●				
	REGENCY INN 2735 N. Monroe St. 32303 • (850) 385-2038	\$-\$\$\$		80		2	●			●				●				
	SLEEP INN 1695 Capital Circle NW 32303 • (850) 575-5885 (877) 424-6423 • ChoiceHotels.com/Sleep-Inn	\$-\$\$\$\$		78		4	●		●	●			●		●			●
	SUBURBAN EXTENDED STAY HOTEL 522 Silver Slipper Ln. 32303 • (850) 386-2121 (877) 424-6423 • ChoiceHotels.com/Suburban	\$-\$\$\$		120	●	4	●		●					●	●			●
	LA CASA INN & SUITES 2801 N. Monroe St. 32303 • (850) 386-8286 (800) 525-4055 • LaCasaInn.Tallahassee.com	\$-\$\$\$\$		110	●	2	●		●	●				●	●			●
SOUTHEAST	BAYMONT INN & SUITES TALLAHASSEE CENTRAL 2850 Apalachee Pkwy. 32301 • (850) 878-5099 (800) 337-0550 • WyndhamHotels.com/Baymont	\$-\$\$\$\$	◆◆	134	●	7	●			●				●				●
	BEST WESTERN PRIDE INN & SUITES 2016 Apalachee Pkwy. 32301 • (850) 656-6312 (800) 528-1234 • BestWestern.com	\$-\$\$\$\$	◆◆	78	●	3	●		●	●				●				●
	DAYS INN TALLAHASSEE GOVERNMENT CENTER 3100 Apalachee Pkwy. 32301 • (850) 877-6121 (800) 877-6121 • WyndhamHotels.com/Days-Inn	\$-\$\$\$\$		80		2	●		●	●				●	●			●
	ECONO LODGE EAST 809 Apalachee Pkwy. 32301 • (850) 877-2755 (877) 424-6423 • EconoLodge.com/Hotel/FL905	\$-\$\$\$\$		40		2				●				●				
	FAIRFIELD INN & SUITES TALLAHASSEE CENTRAL 2997 Apalachee Pkwy. 32301 • (850) 210-1210 (800) 236-2427 • Fairfield.Marriott.com	\$-\$\$\$\$		97	●	8			●	●		●	●		●			●
	HAMPTON INN TALLAHASSEE CENTRAL 2979 Apalachee Pkwy. 32301 • (850) 309-1300 (800) 445-8667 • HamptonInn.com	\$-\$\$\$\$	◆◆◆	78		7			●	●		●	●		●			●
	HILTON GARDEN INN TALLAHASSEE CENTRAL 1330 S. Blairstone Rd. 32301 • (850) 893-8300 (800) 445-8667 • HiltonGardenInn.com	\$-\$\$\$\$	◆◆◆	85	●	5			●			●	●		●	●	●	●
	HOLIDAY INN TALLAHASSEE EAST CAPITOL-UNIVERSITIES 2003 Apalachee Pkwy. 32301 • (850) 792-8300 HolidayInn.com	\$-\$\$\$\$		103					●			●	●		●	●	●	●



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HOTELS/MOTELS/INNS

HOMewood SUITES BY HILTON
2987 Apalachee Pkwy. 32301 • (850) 402-9400
(800) CALL-HOME • HomewoodSuites.com

MOTEL 6 DOWNTOWN
1027 Apalachee Pkwy. 32301 • (850) 877-6171
(800) 899-9841 • Motel6.com

QUALITY INN & SUITES CAPITOL DISTRICT
2020 Apalachee Pkwy. 32301 • (850) 999-7348
(877) 424-6423 • WyndhamHotels.com/Wyndham-Garden

WYNDHAM GARDEN TALLAHASSEE CAPITOL
1355 Apalachee Pkwy. 32301 • (850) 877-3171
(877) 999-3223 • Wyndham.com/Wyndham-Garden

SPRINGHILL SUITES BY MARRIOTT
1300 Executive Center Dr. 32301 • (888) 325-1103
(850) 325-1103 • Marriott.com/tlhes

TRU BY HILTON TALLAHASSEE CENTRAL
2814 Apalachee Pkwy. 32301 • (850) 792-5423
Tru.Hilton.com

WOODSPRING SUITES TALLAHASSEE EAST
3530 Apalachee Pkwy. 32311 • (850) 325-6473
(800) VALUEPLACE • WoodSpring.com

BUDGET INN
1402 W. Tennessee St. 32304 • (850) 224-4174
(800) 570-7613 • BudgetInnTallahassee.com

CACTUS MOTEL
2633 W. Tennessee St. 32304 • (850) 576-2222

DAYS INN UNIVERSITY CENTER
1350 W. Tennessee St. 32304 • (850) 222-3219
(800) 482-5909 • DaysInn.com

EL CAMINO HOTEL
3705 Woodville Hwy. 32305 • (850) 877-7810

UNIVERSITY INN & SUITES
691 W. Tennessee St. 32304 • (850) 224-8161
UniversityInnTallahassee.com

WOODSPRING SUITES TALLAHASSEE WEST
5344 W. Tennessee St. 32304 • (850) 580-4024
(800) VALUEPLACE • WoodSpring.com

Rates	AAA Rating	Guest Rooms	Suites	Handicap Rooms	Pets Allowed	Airport Shuttle	Business Center	Complimentary Breakfast	Complimentary Evening Cocktail	Fitness Facility	Interior Corridors	Exterior Corridors	Meeting Facilities	Restaurant	Lounge	Swimming Pool
\$ = \$0-\$50 \$\$ = \$51-\$100 \$\$\$ = \$101-\$125 \$\$\$\$ = \$126+																
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\$\$\$\$ Weekly		121		6	●						●					

ALTERNATIVE ACCOMMODATIONS

➔ **AIRBNB**
Airbnb.com

➔ **VRBO**
vrbo.com

➔ **TRIP ADVISOR VACATION RENTALS**
tripadvisor.com/rentals



Group Dining

Many area restaurants can accommodate groups with advance notice. Listed below are restaurants offering private dining space. For a complete list of restaurants, go to VisitTallahassee.com/DINE.

Location	Capacity
2 Andrew's Downtown 228 S. Adams St. (850) 222-3444 AndrewsDowntown.com	Main Room: 120 Parlor Room: 35
3 Azu - A Lucy Ho Restaurant 3220 Apalachee Pkwy. (850) 893-4112 AzuLucyHos.com	13
4 Backwoods Bistro 401 E. Tennessee St. (850) 320-6345 TheBackwoodsBistro.com	40
5 Backwoods Crossing 6725 Mahan Dr. (850) 765-3753 BackwoodsCrossing.com	40
6 Bella Bella 123 E. Fifth Ave. (850) 412-1114 TheBellaBella.com	24
7 Blu Halo, The 3431 Bannerman Rd. #102 (850) 999-1696 TheBluHalo.com	24
8 Centrale 815 W. Madison St. (850) 765-6799 Centraleitalian.com	Inside: 26 Patio: 45
9 Edison, The 470 Suwannee St. (850) 765-9771 EdisonTally.com	Upstairs: 150 Downstairs: 12
10 Egg Cafe & Eatery, The 300 S. Duval St. (850) 907-3447 3740 Austin Davis Ave. (850) 765-0703	50 30
11 Food Glorious Food 1950-C Thomasville Rd. (850) 224-9974 FoodGloriousFood.com	35

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GROUP DINING

Location	Capacity
12 Il Lusso 201 E. Park Ave. (850) 865-8620 ILLusoth.com	24
13 Jacob's on the Plaza 101 S. Adams St. (850) 224-7200 TallahasseeDoubletree.com	15
14 Jeri's Midtown Cafe 1123 Thomasville Rd. (850) 385-7268 Jeri'sMidtownCafe.com	17
15 Kool Beanz Café 921 Thomasville Rd. (850) 224-2466 KoolBeanz-Cafe.com	30
16 Liberty Bar & Restaurant 1307 N. Monroe Unit #2 (850) 354-8277 Libertytlh.com	75
17 Lofty Pursuits 1355 Market St., Suite A11 (850) 521-0091 LoftyPursuits.com	50
18 Madison Social 705 S. Woodward Ave., #101 (850) 894-6276 MadisonSocial.com	44
19 Marie Livingston's Steakhouse 2705 Apalachee Pkwy. (850) 562-2525	50
20 Momo's Pizza 1410 Market St. (850) 412-0222 MomosPizza.com	30
21 Olive Garden 1103 Apalachee Pkwy. (850) 878-2949 OliveGarden.com	10
22 Other Seineyard, The 1660 N. Monroe St. (850) 386-9191 TheSeineyard.com	15
23 Savour 115 E. Park Ave. (850) 765-6966 SavourTallahassee.com	12
24 Shula's 347 Grill 415 N. Monroe St. (850) 224-6005 HotelDuval.com/Shulas-347-Grill	Legends: 30 Coach's Corner: 16
25 Table 23 1215 Thomasville Rd. (850) 329-2261 Table23Tally.com	Large Room: 70 Small Room: 20
26 Township 619 S. Woodward Ave. (850) 597-8075 TownshipTLH.com	The Garden: 65
27 Wahoo Seafood Grill 2714 Graves Rd. (850) 629-4059 WahooSeafoodGrill.com	94

BEST of TALLY



There's no shortage of restaurants in Tallahassee, and locals know where to go for the best in great dining. Below is a sampling of multiple-year winners of the Tallahassee Magazine Best of Tallahassee readers' poll. Dine and relax like the locals!



Asian MASA

1650 N. Monroe St.
(850) 727-4183
MasaTallahassee.com



Breakfast CANOPY ROAD CAFÉ

1779 Apalachee Parkway
(850) 727-0263
canopyroadcafe.com
*Various Locations



Casual Restaurant KOOL BEANZ CAFE

921 Thomasville Rd.
(850) 224-2466
KoolBeanz-Cafe.com



Hamburger VERTIGO

BURGERS & FRIES
1395 E. Lafayette St.
(850) 878-2020
VertigoBurgersAndFries.com



Italian

BELLA BELLA

123 E. 5th Ave.
(850) 412-1114
TheBellaBella.com



Lunch

HOPKINS' EATERY

1415 Market St.
Various Locations
(850) 668-0311
HopkinsEatery.com



Pizza

MOMO'S PIZZA

1416 W. Tennessee St.
(850) 224-9808
1410 Market St.
(850) 412-0222
MomosPizza.com



Special Occasion Restaurant

CYPRESS RESTAURANT

320 E. Tennessee St.
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CypressRestaurant.com

Tally's Top

10

CASCADES PARK

This 24-acre downtown park includes the Capital City Amphitheater, multi-use trails, an interactive water fountain and playscape, Florida's prime meridian marker and numerous historical landmarks.



MISSION SAN LUIS

Hands-on exhibits, archaeological excavations and recreated period settings bring history to life at the only reconstructed 17th-century Spanish mission in Florida.



TALLAHASSEE MUSEUM

Natural history museum situated on 52 acres featuring indigenous wildlife, historic pioneer buildings, an outdoor zip line adventure course and Jim Gary's 20th century dinosaurs made from reclaimed auto parts.

MUSEUM OF FLORIDA HISTORY

The state's official history museum housing more than 45,000 artifacts and permanent exhibits.



BASED ON TRAVEL REVIEWS POSTED ON TRIP ADVISOR – THE WORLD'S LARGEST TRAVEL WEBSITE – HERE ARE THE FAVORITE SITES IN THE CAPITAL CITY.



TALLAHASSEE AUTOMOBILE MUSEUM

Features more than 150 rare vehicles — including three Batmobiles and the horse-drawn funeral hearse that carried Abraham Lincoln — and other Americana collections.



GOODWOOD MUSEUM & GARDENS

On the National Register of Historic Places, this former cotton plantation includes 20 structures dating from 1835 to 1925 and features original family furniture and belongings.

ST. MARKS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE & LIGHTHOUSE

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ALFRED B. MACLAY GARDENS STATE PARK

One of the area's most photographed sites, these magnificent gardens offer more than 200 floral varieties, a secret garden, reflection pool, nature trails and fishing/boating on Lake Hall.



FLORIDA HISTORIC CAPITOL MUSEUM

Restored to its 1902 grandeur, this iconic building houses exhibits on Florida's political history, the former House and Senate Chambers, Supreme Court and Governor's suite.



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1851, FSU is one of the nation's elite research universities and is the oldest continuous site of higher education in Florida. Home of the Seminoles and the FSU Flying High Circus, one of two collegiate circuses in the U.S.



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special **section**

NORTHWEST FLORIDA
weddings
m a g a z i n e

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Florida Weddings
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NORTHWEST FLORIDA
weddings
magazine

It's All in the Details

I'm completing some mundane tasks when I realize I have a missed Facetime call from my best friend. I want to kick myself for missing the call by 26 minutes because I know exactly why she called. I call back, she tells me the story, we squeal like middle schoolers.

Months later, my boyfriend and I are entranced as our show of the moment reaches its apex of the season. My phone chimes and I almost ignore it, but I see it's a family group message, so I open the text. I grab the remote and hit pause, tears already beginning to fog my eyes as I dial my sister's number.

During the holidays, my other best friend is visiting her home country of South Africa. Because of the time difference and her lack of iMessage, I receive an Instagram message of her on a scenic cliff with the most gorgeous sparkler on her left hand. I cannot type back quickly enough, even the right words don't seem right enough for the perfection of her moment.

The year 2018 gave me the gift of knowing that the three women I admire, adore and am most grateful for will spend the remainder of their lives with respectable men that will care for

their hearts, cherish their minds and stay committed forever. Now, 2019 will further reward me with the privilege of witnessing their wedding journey begin, evolve and shape.

Each will maintain certain traditions, such as the ring as a representation of unity. Yet even more enjoyable — each wedding will be unique, a depiction of loves so specific, so cherished, so joyous that it couldn't be repeated or replicated.

This is my third year as editor of this publication, and I still never fail to tear up or get goose bumps (or both) when I see photos of forehead kisses, videos of a teary eyed groom or read love stories in your own words. Still, there are batches of trends that surprise and delight me — this industry is ever evolving. I am grateful for weddings because of the union, the commitment, the endurance and the unwavering love they are intended to symbolize.

If you're reading this publication as someone who is planning a wedding, remember this day is dedicated to your love and it should reflect two people as one. The wedding professionals within these pages are committed to your vision, your happiness and your forever. From the smallest, prettiest flower and your favorite foods to a venue that makes your breath catch, they will make sure each detail reflects a bit of yourself.

As a writer, a reader and an observer, I've always been keen on details. Details are often slight, intricate and descriptive. They could be overlooked. These details though are what amount to the full story. The details are the shy smiles shared when you first met, the joke from your second date that you still tell today, the knee on the ground as the rest of the world fades around you — because all you can see is your future.

All my love,

Rebecca

Rebecca Padgett, Editor



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Amy Riley Photography
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and p. 22-23



Rae Leytham Photography
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Sarah & Paul Photography
sarahlynpaul.com
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Shannon Griffin Photography
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Sunset Images
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featured on p. 28-29, 84



Casey Grennan Photography
[instagram.com/caseygrennanphoto](https://www.instagram.com/caseygrennanphoto/)
 featured on p. 65



Charlotte Fristoe Photography
[charlottefristoe.com](https://www.charlottefristoe.com)
 (850) 694-8910
 featured on p. 42-43, 59, 61, 76



Kristen Stone Photography
[kristenstonephotography.com](https://www.kristenstonephotography.com)
 (850) 326-2298
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Lily & Sparrow Photo Co.
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Trickey Photography
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 (850) 933-8154
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Woodland Fields Photography
[woodlandfieldsphotography.com](https://www.woodlandfieldsphotography.com)
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Visit us online and check out our exclusive Photographers Index. You'll have access to photographer bios and their work in past issues. It will also send you directly to their blogs and portfolios. Want to get in touch with a photographer? Their contact information can also be found online.

Also Contributing:

Chris Crouch, CMC Photography,
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the city





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Tallahassee

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"The FSU Alumni Center exceeded our expectations. From the beginning, we were greeted with nothing but 'can do' attitudes. The food was exquisite, catered by Andrew's Catering, yet another staple of Tallahassee we had the opportunity to showcase to our guests. I couldn't recommend this venue enough to any bride."

– Nicole Richards, Tallahassee, Florida

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PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HURSEY

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Tallahassee

"We met, fell in love and got engaged at Doak Campbell Stadium. For us it was a no-brainer to choose the University Center Club as our reception venue. The added benefit was the quality of service we knew came with the UCC name and the positive feedback we heard from other couples who chose the UCC as their venue. What sealed the deal was when we toured the facility and saw the view of both the football field and downtown Tallahassee from the Champions Club, which we ultimately used for our cocktail hour.

"The UCC gave us so many choices that we never felt like we were limited in terms of food, drinks, decor or other details. The sky was the limit, and we were able to bring our personal tastes to the venue. We were able to celebrate our marriage with our loved ones at the place where our relationship with one another began." – **Margaret Hart, Tallahassee, Florida**

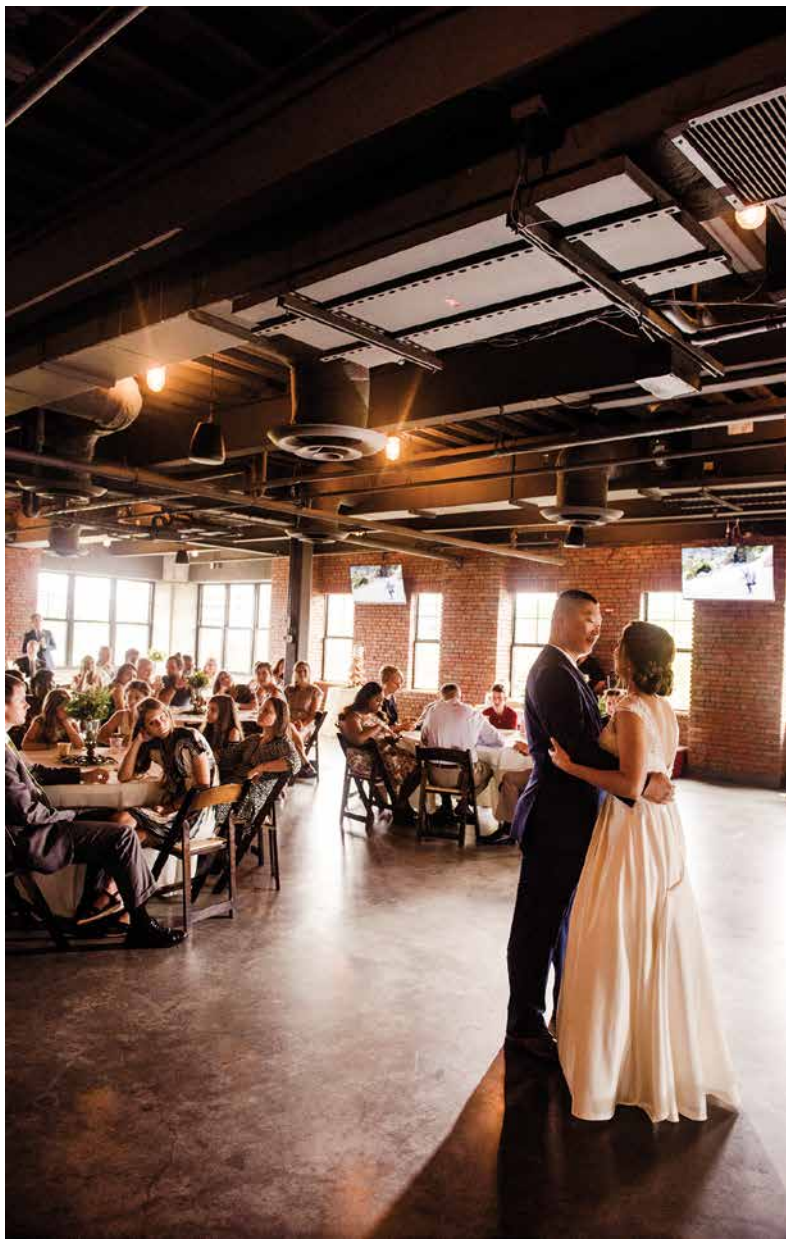
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At a Glance

- INDOOR VENUE
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- DECORATING SERVICES
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(850) 644-9071 // UniversityCenterClub.com
288 Champions Way Building B, Tallahassee, FL, 32306





THE GATHERING/SOCIAL CATERING

Tallahassee

"The women working at The Gathering and Social Catering were incredibly flexible and accommodating. They helped me feel comfortable with the decisions we were making and gave us so much confidence that the day would turn out spectacular. They helped us decorate and let us use vases and other decor that were available in-house. I felt good knowing that someone knew every detail of where things needed to be and when."

"My dad and I were dancing in front of these big glass walls in the Gathering, and I'll never forget seeing my 5-year-old sister sneaking up behind us to get in on the dance. The sun was filtering in through the windows, and everything just felt so perfect." – **Taylor Neverman, Tallahassee, Florida**

PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH DAVIS PHOTOGRAPHY

At a Glance

- INDOOR VENUE
- OUTDOOR VENUE
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(850) 800-7267 // GatheringTallahassee.com
705 S. Woodward Ave., Unit 201, Tallahassee, FL 32304



the **city**

Royally **Ever After**

Every woman wants to feel like a princess on her wedding day. Why not act the part? Here's how to get that royal look from across the pond.

By Janecia Britt



WOODLAND FIELDS PHOTOGRAPHY



PURE7 STUDIOS



PURE7 STUDIOS

It's no doubt that 2018 was a big year for the royal family. With the nuptials of American actress and humanitarian Meghan Markle to Prince Harry, Duke of Sussex, and the wedding of Princess Eugenie of York to Jack Brooksbank, it's understandable to feel bitten by the royal bug.

It's hard to think that any dress could top Kate Middleton's Sarah Burton for Alexander McQueen gown. The Duchess of Cambridge's dress, which combined tradition and modern details, is still talked about today. The style, a hallmark of McQueen, was inspired by the Victorian tradition of corsetry and the bodice, skirt and underskirt trim of the dress were created out of an English and French Chantilly lace.

All of these details are what made Middleton's dress a showstopper. "Kate Middleton's dress, in a way, epitomized the Southern look with all of the delicate details," said Maggie Matthews, the owner of Margaret Ellen Bridal in Inlet Beach.

However, Meghan Markle's Clare Waight Keller for Givenchy wedding dress has made an impact of its own. "I think Meghan Markle inspired more brides to go for that simple, clean and chic look. Meghan has allowed brides to embrace an understated beauty," says Alex Barnes of Tallahassee's White Wedding Bridal.

Eugenie, Princess of York, is a personal favorite as her wedding look was traditional yet effortless. The dress, designed by Peter Pilotto and Christopher de Vos for Peter Pilotto, was white satin with floral appliques, long sleeves, an open back, off-the-shoulder neckline and a statement train that seemed to go on for miles.

Her look was minimal yet breathtaking, showing off Eugenie's beauty while also including subtle nods to her heritage, such as embroidered York roses and Irish shamrocks.

Minimalism has been a rising trend in bridal fashion for a few seasons, and I predict that the simple wedding gown silhouette will see a resurgence. I've already started seeing three-quarter-length sleeves, clean lines, and bateau and off-the-shoulder necklines having a major moment in bridal fashion.

And the accessory that's become a must-have since Markle's nuptials? No, it's not a tiara but the coveted cathedral veil. While some brides may go sans veil, like Eugenie, or a standard veil, like Kate, there are plenty of brides who want that Markle sparkle.

Markle's 16.5-foot, cathedral-length veil was made from silk tulle and featured a trim of hand-embroidered flowers from each of the 53 countries in the British Commonwealth. Markle also added a few personal touches such as an embroidered California Poppy, which is the state flower of her home state of California.

The show-stopping veil was truly the cherry on top of an immaculate look, and it's a look you can have for yourself. "Girls really want that cathedral veil-look like Meghan Markle. Some brides even want to add length to the standard cathedral veil. We can accommodate that look as all our veils are handmade in the United States and can be totally customized to the bride's wishes," says Matthews.

While you probably won't have a royal team to prep you for your own big day, remember that your wedding day is your own. "Look for inspiration in their weddings, but don't be afraid to make it your own and your style. Don't be afraid to stray from that royal look if it doesn't fit your style," says Barnes.

There's no doubt our local boutiques can help you add a unique royal touch in your own bridal aesthetic — whether you want your look to be Kate, Meghan or Eugenie. ■

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Tallahassee

"There are wedding reception venues, and then there is Hotel Duval. In 2009, when Hotel Duval opened, I remember thinking, 'One day when I meet the right man to share my life with, I want our wedding reception to be in the Horizon Ballroom on the eighth floor of Hotel Duval.' Well, my dreams came true, meeting the perfect man and having the perfect wedding.

"The Catering and Sales team were amazing, we were blown away by how incredible everything and everyone was. The view is beautiful overlooking the city. The ballroom itself is spectacular and can be styled as a glamorous ballroom or as something a little cozier. If we listed out everything that we loved, this would quickly turn into a novel." –

Melissa Sheppard, Tallahassee, Florida

PHOTOS BY VIZULIZ PHOTOGRAPHY

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- OUTDOOR VENUE
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(850) 224-6000 // HotelDuval.com
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the city





THE EDISON RESTAURANT

Tallahassee

"My husband and I actually had our entire wedding planned, but when Hurricane Irma hit, we had to rearrange all of our plans and our venue. I frantically began making phone calls, and, just 30 minutes later, I received a call back from The Edison, ensuring me that they would gladly host our wedding. They even allowed us to have our ceremony on their property. Right then, I knew that was what was meant to be for our special day. The day after the hurricane, I met with the staff and began (re)planning our wedding.

"Since our wedding was 99 percent planned when we booked with The Edison, they did a phenomenal job of mimicking our prior plans. Rather than making us create a new menu, they simply took our original and said they would make those options, despite them not being on their menu. My husband and I texted our planner almost daily with details about anything from napkins to floor plans, and she made sure every detail was written out. Our wedding ended up being everything we could have dreamed of."

– Vlada Reinhardt, Moscow, Russia

PHOTOS BY CHRIS CROUCH

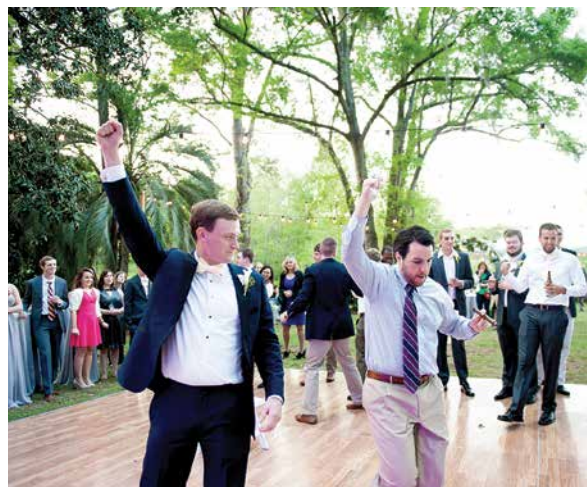
At a Glance

- INDOOR VENUE
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(850) 765-9771 // EdisonTally.com
470 Suwannee St., Tallahassee, FL 32301

the city





STAYBRIDGE SUITES

Tallahassee

"Staybridge was convenient for us because they allowed us to use our own vendors and helped us set up everything we needed. The staff went above and beyond to make sure the outdoor space we used was perfect."

"Our guests enjoyed the atmosphere and feel of our wedding. The live music and fireworks set the perfect stage for the night. There was a distinct moment while everyone was dancing when I looked around and saw smiles on everyone's faces. The music was perfect, the sun was setting over the lake and everything was gorgeous."

– Taylor Anne Short, Tallahassee, Florida

At a Glance

- INDOOR VENUE
- OUTDOOR VENUE
- CATERING
- PLANNING AND COORDINATION
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- SPA SERVICES
- THIRD PARTY VENDORS AVAILABLE
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- LIGHTING
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(850) 219-7010 // Staybridge.com/Tallahassee
1600 Summit Lake Drive, Tallahassee, FL 32317

PHOTOS BY J&J WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHY

the city





FOUR POINTS BY SHERATON TALLAHASSEE DOWNTOWN

Tallahassee

"I moved to Tallahassee in 2015 to attend graduate school, and Four Points stood out to me immediately. I mean, how could it not? It's structurally unique and beautiful. Living in Florida, the opportunity to have an outdoor wedding in the middle of winter was very appealing to my husband and I. Four Points offered us the opportunity to host our guests in multiple areas, showcasing the beautiful pool and the gorgeous Ornate Chorus Ballroom with an adjacent and intimate outdoor patio.

"Four Points' staff has a unique way of making you feel like family. They heard my hopes for the wedding and went out of their way to make it happen. From the hot chocolate bar to the table settings, creativity abounds at the Four Points." – **Amanda Wickham, Carriere, Mississippi**

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the country



Country (*noun*): 1. Ancient oaks, rolling hills, sparkling stars, swaying wildflowers. 2. Rustic barns, stately plantations and gorgeous gardens made to be ideal venues. 3. Natural beauty and idyllic scenery. 4. Love that blooms, blossoms and grows.

Rustic Refined

Envision a wine country wedding
in Northwest Florida

By Rebecca Padgett

The golden hour gleams off glasses of sipped wines as guests mingle and dance the evening away, everyone flush with the happiness brought forth by good food, good times and exceptional wines. If this sounds like pure wedding day bliss, a wine country wedding may be just your cup of tea — or glass of wine in this case.

The vineyards of California, Italy and France are world-renowned for scenic vistas and the finest wines. You can evoke the very same sensory experience in Northwest Florida through a curated menu, rustic decor and wine galore.

While outdoor ceremonies and receptions best fit this style, the same look and feel can be achieved indoors through decoration details. Wine barrels can be utilized as tables for food, gifts and dining, specifically if you don't plan on having a seated meal. Set food, desserts and the cake on top of wine crates. Wine crates also can be filled with flowers or greenery.

Wine bottles can be utilized in a variety of ways — use them as vases for flowers, candelabras or table number holders. An interactive idea is to place a bottle of wine on each table, and once the guests have finished it, they sign it with a permanent marker leaving it for the couple. Another guest book idea is to have each guest sign a cork. The couple can then make a piece of art to decorate their home with as a special keepsake.

For outdoor weddings, create a rustic romantic ambience.

"An al fresco dining setting under bistro string lights creates a glowingly stunning aesthetic for an unforgettable experience," said Katie Butler, sales manager of Social Catering & Events. "String quartet music flowing in the air sets the stage of the rolling hills of the countryside."

Wood, greenery and naturally occurring florals work best to emphasize the provincial beauty of wine country. Consider vines, olive branches, honeysuckle, garden roses



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Alicia Osborne Photography



Kristen Stone Photography

and wildflowers. Bunches of grapes look beautiful on tablescapes.

Color palettes should be inspired by the wines. Crimson, burgundy and garnet. Warm and light gold. Blush and subtle pinks. Neutral tones and metallics such as copper, silver and gold pair well with these base colors.

Fill your reclaimed-wood farm tables with the freshest in farm-to-table fare. Charcuterie boards piled high with a variety of cheeses, olives, meats, pickled vegetables and crackers are perfect for noshing and sampling with wines. The tables should always be stocked with warm bread and olive oils for dipping. As for the main menu, red wines pair best with beef, lamb, roast chicken or Italian dishes, and white wines welcome seafood, chicken and turkey. A rich chocolate cake adorned with berries seems like the perfect finish.

With the tables set and the food decided, it's on to the most important matter — the wines.

"Have your caterer help with pairing the right blends for your meal," said Butler. "For a smaller wedding, a wine and appetizer pairing would be a fun way incorporate the atmosphere of a winery."

Wine should flow freely throughout the wedding, but consider having a tasting station where guests can sample wines

and review a placard with tasting notes and additional information.

You can select your favorite wines from foreign locales or opt for local flavors. Farmer's Daughter Vineyards is a nationally recognized winery in nearby Pelham, Georgia.

"Our wines are a particularly great way to celebrate because they're approachable, welcoming, easy to love and unpretentious," said Renee Moss, co-owner of Farmer's Daughter Vineyards. "They're well made, highly awarded premium wines, but they're also everyday wines, ABVs that meet table wine criteria. They're fruit-forward and fun."

Moss suggested a white, red and rosé that would complement weddings well. First, there's the Bombshell, which is a dry, Chardonnay-style wine made from Blanc duBois. Then there's the Heartbreaker, a bold, dry but extremely smooth, supple even silky, deep red wine with bright berry notes. It won Best of Class from Sonoma. Finally, there is also Sand Angel, which has a Best of Class from the Los Angeles International Wine Competition and is a dry rosé with juicy strawberry notes on the finish.

Wine is a symbol of celebration. Wine is blended to create something unique and distinct, bold and sweet, much like love itself. ■



Charlotte Fristoe Photography

the country



PHOTOS BY ALICIA OSBORNE PHOTOGRAPHY

Going Natural

Eco-friendly and sustainable weddings

By Rebecca Padgett

Wedding trends come and go with the seasons, but one that has sustainable staying power is going green. No, we don't mean the color. While the popularity of eco-friendly weddings on a large scale has increased only within the past few years, we can credit this to eco-conscious couples that have influenced even more eco-friendly companies to cater to weddings. Society is becoming more sustainable than ever, making going natural evergreen.

With eco-friendly weddings becoming all the more relevant, and rightly so, it's beneficial to know what attributes make a product or service sustainable. Jim Davis is the director of Sustainable Tallahassee, a nonprofit dedicated to promoting and educating on environmental, economic and social sustainability, and he provides some insight.

"It may look pretty, but you have to question what it is doing to your environment," said Davis. "Can it be recycled? Is it from a recycled product? Could this be harmful to my environment?"

Davis pointed to products that are nontoxic, environmentally beneficial, sustainably sourced or grown and often composed from recycled or organic materials. That includes reusing products instead of continuously buying more.

When talking with vendors or shopping for products, remember these keywords: organic, recycled, reconditioned, nontoxic, upcycled, environmentally conscious and natural.

Each year, Sustainable Tallahassee hosts the Recycled Wedding Market, in which previously used decor, linens, dishware, dresses and more are sold to engaged couples to be recycled and reused in a new wedding, in a new way. It is likely your community does something similar, and there are many online resources that sell used wedding items.

The goal is to not add to landfills. You can rent or borrow linens, glasses, plates and silverware. There are many brands that carry compostable serving ware options

made of birch wood or bamboo, two fast-growing, adaptable trees.

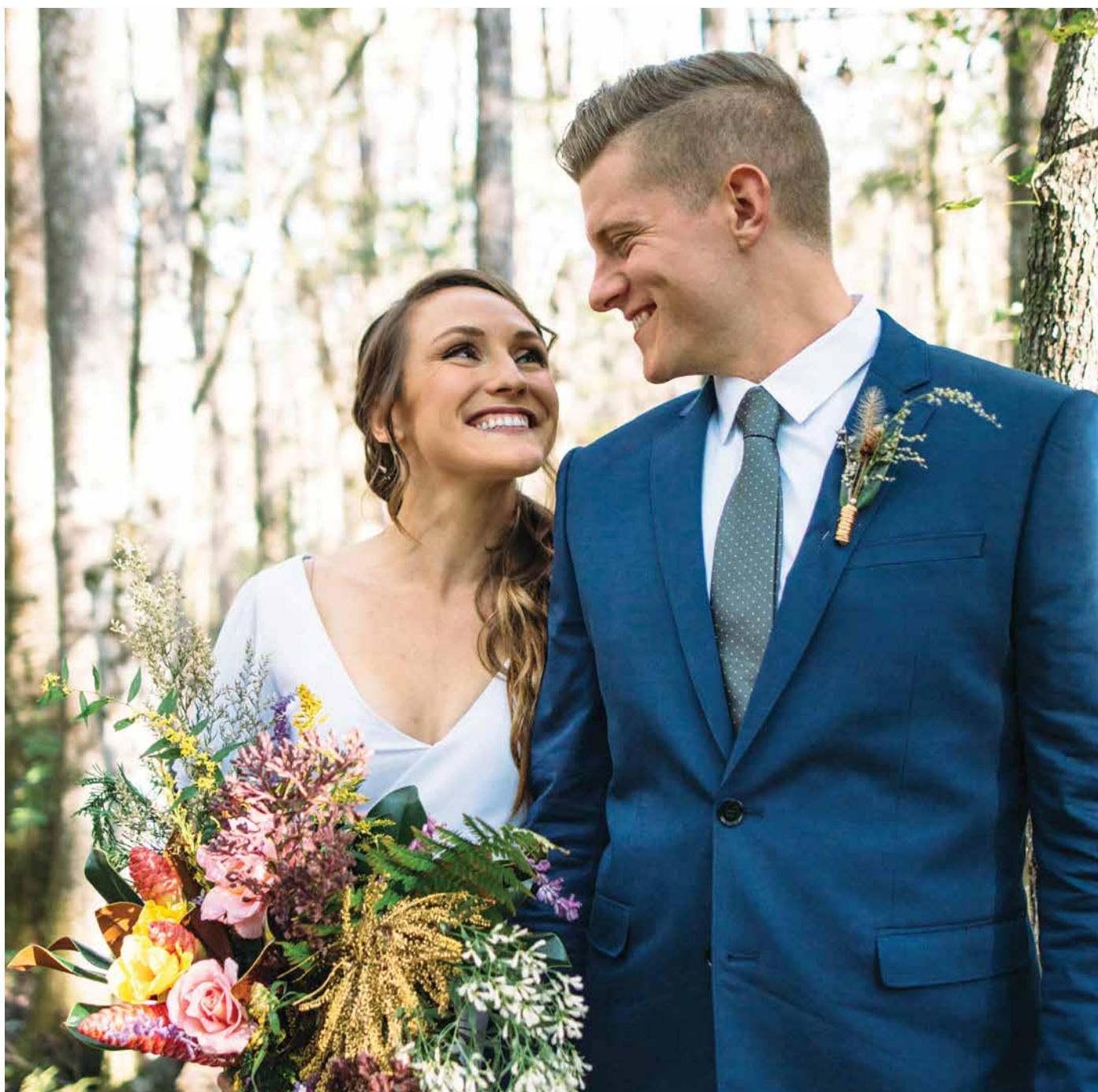
The best way to determine if your vendor is eco-friendly is to ask questions. For catering and bartending services, inquire if they will recycle any container, boxes or glass bottles that are used. Food is another resource that often goes to waste.

The caterer might already have a location they donate leftover food to, but if not, you can research local charitable locations that will accept leftovers. Have a plan in place of a family member or friend that will take the food to the location after the wedding.

Putting compost and recycling baskets near food and drink stations is a great and

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CASEY GREENMAN

easy way to ensure nothing goes to waste. Many counties loan recycling receptacles for free — all you have to do is pick them up.

You can also donate your remaining flowers to hospitals or hospice houses to ensure days are brightened twice. Ask your florist if locally sourced flowers are an option as nationally and internationally shipped flowers negatively impact the environment.

Tallahassee bride Katie Britt — soon-to-be Britt-Williams — is using native North Florida wildflowers from Azalea Hill Farm. Britt holds a master's degree in

natural resources and will be expanding her love of this earth into her wedding by using all local and sustainable vendors.

"Big events just create so much waste, and I knew I wanted a big wedding with a lot of people, which tend to have an even worse carbon footprint," said Britt. "I knew that I would not and could not be a part of having such a negative impact on the earth for such a joyous event."

Britt is not alone. Many millennials are adopting this thinking in their everyday life, and their wedding is no exception.

"Young people are in tune with the sustainable movement because

they've grown up with recycling and environmentally friendly lives that are carrying over into their weddings," said Jodi Wilkof, a representative with the Recycled Weddings Market. "It has been the perception that going green is more expensive, but with such an increased interest, it has become cheaper to do."

With increased awareness by couples and vendors, going green is accessible, approachable and achievable. Weddings are meant for creating not wasting. Consider ways to make your wedding go green — as a promise of sustaining love for each other and this planet. ■

A full-page photograph of a wedding couple running down a stone path outdoors. The bride is on the left, wearing a white lace-trimmed dress and glasses, holding a large bouquet of flowers. The groom is on the right, wearing a blue suit, holding her hand and raising it in the air. White confetti is falling all around them. In the background, other guests are visible, including a man in a grey suit clapping. The scene is set in a park-like area with trees and a stone path.

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Cultural Infusion

Seamlessly blend heritage and traditions on your special day

by Janecia Britt

Culture is the invisible bond that ties people together. It's only natural that our nuptials reflect that. When wedding planning commences, couples are often faced with the task of blending different backgrounds and traditions into one gorgeous wedding day.

It often starts with this critical question: What is important to us, and how can we incorporate that in a meaningful way on our wedding day?

From traditional outfits to your choice of food, there are plenty of ways to include you or your partner's culture into your ceremony and reception.

Lauren LaRocque of LV Photography shared these sentiments: "I was invited to capture a small, traditional Ghanaian wedding about a year or so back, and it was far from your traditional white dress/black tux event. Typically, there is a traditional wedding like the one I attended, and then a Westernized version a year or so later — also known as a 'white wedding' or a more traditional American wedding. The first thing to note at the event was the style of clothing. The bride and groom both wore traditional



cloth of Ghana, composed of a variety of colors and patterns, each with a different meaning.”

You and your groom don’t have to be the only ones who can celebrate your marriage and the blending of cultures.

“The families also wore traditional outfits to complement the bride and groom. Even the bridesmaids who were not Ghanaian wore traditional headpieces as they walked down the aisle,” says LaRocque. “My eyes were so pleased by all of the color my camera was capturing. The mother of the bride helped her daughter don a traditional Ghanaian headpiece before the ceremony began, and it was so incredibly precious. You could tell that they both were so in love with their heritage and excited to include it on that day.”

Food is arguably the most important choice when planning a wedding. Instead of chicken or steak, opt to bring in dishes that remind you and your spouse of your upbringing. Whether that’s your abuela’s tamales or traditional dim sum, there are

so many caterers that can help bring in the spirit of your families.

“This is the biggest meal of their lives. We always meet with the bride and groom first and love to hear more about their families, where they are from, how they met, favorite meals or traditions and really incorporate all that into the menu. We want the menu to tell a story. We’ve done some really cool weddings in the past — a Brazilian and Southern fusion, a Sri Lankan and Lebanese fusion menu and even a Boston meets Argentina menu,” says Briana Edmunds, event manager for Liberty Bar & Restaurant.

Thinking of that dish that only your grandmother or favorite uncle can make? Get them involved in the planning. Collect recipes and share them with your caterer or even use them as wedding favors for your guests.

“We’ve had family members share recipes with us, such as a bride’s grandmother’s caramelized pineapple curry or a family recipe for Pão de queijo, a Brazilian cheese bread. When you have guests flying

from all over the world, it’s like having a piece of their home here in Tallahassee,” says Edmunds.

And don’t forget the desert. “Uniqueness is what makes life so exciting. Your wedding day is about you and your boo, nothing else. I had an Italian bride and groom have a giant tower of cannoli instead of a cake — legendary,” says LaRocque.

Personalizing your wedding, celebrating your traditions and honoring your heritage are beautiful acts of love and respect, for both your spouse and your family. The jewel of information in regard to all this? Your parents. Your grandparents. Talk to them. Ask them what they would like to see you highlight from their cultures and what memories of their wedding they would feel excited about including in yours.

Regardless of how you choose to celebrate your big day, remember that there are so many ways to say “I do.” Just like your union, your wedding should reflect the best parts of you and your partner. ■

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– Alison Thiele, Tallahassee, Florida

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Your grandmother's brooch on your bouquet, your grandfather's watch, a piece of your mother's wedding dress sewn into yours — beautiful sentiments included in your most memorable day make for everlasting memories.



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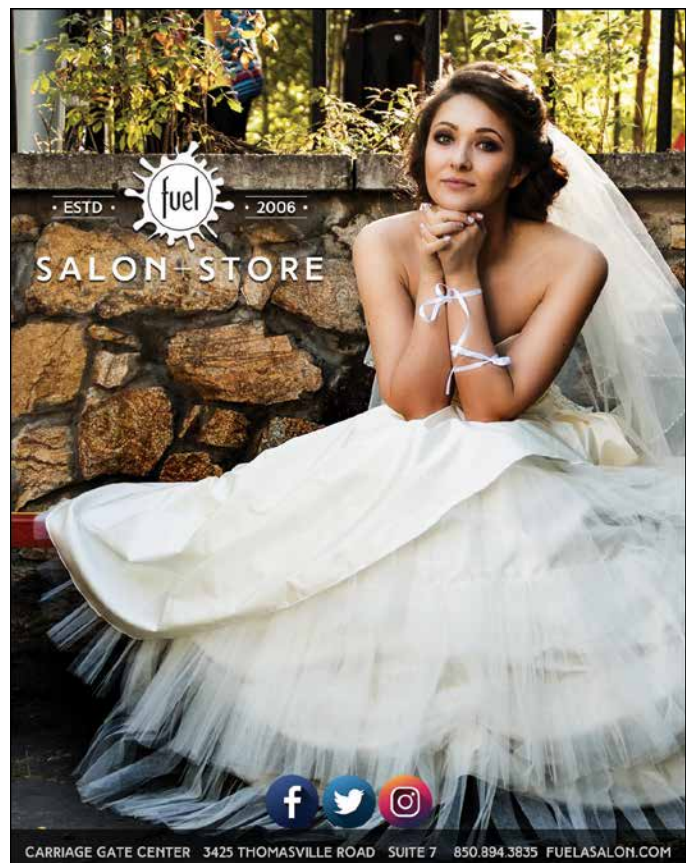



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Music Master

DJ, band or create your own playlists?

By Rebecca Padgett

There are few moments at a wedding more joyous than witnessing your family and friends smiling, laughing, singing and tearing up the dance floor. There are few moments more tear-jerking than the father of the bride and mother of the groom dance. There is no moment more defining than the walk down the aisle to the love of your life.

The vital factor that all of these moments have in common is music.

With music being such an influential aspect, it's important to know what option is best for you — DJ, band or being your own music master. Each has its positives and aspects you should be aware of before making a decision that could affect the overall tone of your wedding day.

DJs are a widely chosen option as they are all-inclusive. Most offer a package deal including ceremony and reception music, emcee services and all technical equipment and lighting. In essence they are professional party starters that keep the mood and music pumping throughout the night. Some completely entrust their DJ with selecting the right tunes, but others opt to meet with their DJ beforehand to ensure their favorite songs are played and to see if they mesh well with the master of ceremonies.

To some, there is nothing like the sound and the feel of live music. A live band is entertaining and enjoyable, encouraging you to revel in the talent of the musicians while taking to the dance floor. Much like a DJ, a band can be emcees, provide all equipment,

create a song list and create an interactive experience.

"A live band will present a more dramatic presentation that will leave a lasting impression on guests and make the bride and groom's big day even more memorable," said Jason Kellogg, vocalist of Top Shelf Band. "It can make the reception feel like an even larger event."

Kellogg notes that it's important to ensure the band meets your desired needs and atmosphere. He suggests watching the band perform live, if possible. This will help you assess how they interact with an audience.

"Live music is more emotional and passionate, and that is what the day is all about," said Kellogg.

With the availability of apps that let you create and download your own playlist, many couples are opting to be their own DJs. This option is ideal for the creative couple, the couple that has a unique taste in music or simply wants to listen to what they want, when they want it. The DIY DJ is also the most cost-effective option.

The beauty is the freedom and flexibility, but there are some key things to consider. For any announcements or anecdotes, find a lively family member or friend who would do the honors. You will also need to check if your venue has a PA system available; if not, there are companies you can rent them from.

"An AV company that can provide a DIY DJ package would provide the specific



BLACK AND HUE PHOTOGRAPHY

» Groove and move to beats by a live band, top tunes by a DJ or a specially selected playlist curated by you. Each option presents unique ways to get the party started.

speakers, stands, microphones, wiring and more," said Jesse Deese, audio visual consultant with Emerald Coast Audio Visual Solutions. "Critical in this service is the setup and strike of the gear. Make sure these services are included in any DIY DJ package. I cannot recommend that a couple settle for anything less than hiring a professional Audio Visual company to be responsible for these critical responsibilities."

Music is important, no matter who plays it and how it is played. It aids in creating moments and memories. It evokes feelings. It invites you to dance. Music is essential for not only creating wonderful wedding but also preserving one as well. Your first dance song will forever cause you to share a smile or shed a tear. ■

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