

# Things to Consider

## BEFORE ORDERING YOUR

# Wedding Invitations

## Congratulations!

You've got the proposal and set the date ~ the vision of your dream wedding is starting to come into focus. It's time to think about letting people know about the big event and to save the date!

A wedding invitation sets the tone for the entire day. It is the first glimpse of the wedding, it signals the formality and style of the event, reflects your personality and excites your guests about all the fun that is to come. As you begin looking at wedding invitations, here are a few things you should consider.

## Things to consider:

### PICTURE THE "LOOK AND FEEL" OF YOUR WEDDING DAY

Is it ultra-traditional, ultra contemporary, somewhere in-between? Are you planning a formal black tie affair, a garden party, a beach wedding, a shabby chic soiree in a tent? Think of some words that describe your wedding day ~ elegant, fun, casual, sophisticated, romantic...

### DETERMINE THE COLOR PALETTE

What colors are the bridesmaids wearing? Are you bringing seasonal colors into your event? What's your favorite color? Will a splash of it add personality to the big day? Do you favor the formality of crisp black and white or are the hushed tones of blush, cream and taupe the look you are striving for? If you've made some of these decisions and would like to include them in your invitations in some way, think about bringing a sample or swatch with you to your wedding stationery appointment.

### IS THERE A THEME OR SYMBOL THAT IS IMPORTANT?

Are there any images that you want to incorporate into your wedding and possibly invitations and event –day accessories? Is your wedding by the sea or in your favorite city? Do you and your fiancé share a love of sailing, traveling or music? Do you want to showcase your initials or create a custom monogram? All these things can be carried through from the invitation to the event-day accessories (programs, place cards, favor tags, etc.) to give a seamless look and feel from start to finish.

### STYLE AND FEATURES

There are many styles of wedding invitations today. You will find everything from a more traditional flat card to layered looks which can add color, and pocket folders that keep all the elements organized in one package. (just to name a few!) Add a ribbon, a tag or a bit of baker's twine, and you can change the whole look of an invitation. Typefaces and color can also take you from formal to casual with a simple change. Your wedding stationer will show you a variety of choices and you will get the opportunity to touch and see the variety of features available today. Bring with you any sample invitations that you have seen and liked to your appointment.

## UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENT PRINTING METHODS

An experienced wedding stationer like RSVP can explain each of the methods of printing and the differences between them. These include letterpress, engraving, embossing, thermography and flat printing. At your wedding stationery appointment you should look at all these options and also consider different paper stocks, including papers made from cotton, bamboo and eco-friendly papers.

## ELEMENTS TO INCLUDE WITH YOUR INVITATION

Beyond the invitation itself, there are a number of cards and features to consider including. You will need a way for people to RSVP. This might be a reply card with an envelope or perhaps a postcard. Will you need a separate reception card? You may also need a directions card, a listing of available hotel accommodations, an itinerary for a wedding weekend of events.

## THINK ABOUT WHO WILL BE ISSUING THE INVITATIONS

Does your family situation favor the traditional model in which the bride's parents issue the invitation? Or does your family look like many these days in which varying circumstances dictate wording that is different from the traditional? For example are your parents divorced, remarried or deceased? Are the groom's parents equally involved in contributing to the wedding financially? Are you paying for the majority of the wedding expenses yourselves? Your stationery expert will help you navigate the wording of your invitations to suit any and all situations and help you through the etiquette complexities! Believe it or not, there are guidelines for just about any situation.

## HOW MANY INVITATIONS WILL YOU NEED?

Keep in mind that this is not the number of guests! If you are inviting 200 people, many of them will be couples or families, requiring only one invitation. We recommend creating a master guest list that can be your go-to tool for planning, recording RSVP's, menu choices and even used for thank you notes! Make a column on this list for number of people attending, and another for number of invitations. Totaling these columns will help you determine these two important numbers. And always plan for a few extras, people you may have missed initially or a "plus one" that has become necessary at the last minute.

## KNOW YOUR DATES AND DEADLINES

You will want to create a timeline or schedule for your invitations. Save the Dates should go out 6-9 months prior to the wedding. Invitations should be mailed eight weeks in advance, perhaps earlier if many people need to make out-of-town travel arrangements. What is the deadline for your hotel room reservation block? When will your caterer or reception venue need a final count? Based on that, when is a reasonable reply date for your guests? All this will play a role in the ordering and scheduling of your invitations.

## DECIDE HOW THE ENVELOPES WILL BE ADDRESSED

Will you or your family be hand-addressing the envelopes? Will you hire a calligrapher? Would you prefer to have the addresses printed on the envelopes. All these options are available! and should be factored into your timetable. Always order extra envelopes for any errors in addressing.

## BEYOND THE WEDDING INVITATIONS, WHAT OTHER STATIONERY WILL I NEED?

Once you've made all the decisions and designed that perfect wedding invitation, discuss with your stationery expert some of the other elements you may want, to bring this unique look into the event itself. Welcome gift bags, tags and itineraries for your out-of-town guests, programs for the ceremony, place cards, escort cards, seating charts, menus and table numbers for the reception....and so much more! You'll also want to order thank you notes, so you don't have to worry about it after the wedding. All these stationery items can carry the look and feel you've created into your event.

## FOR BEST SERVICE, MAKE AN APPOINTMENT

You'll want the personal attention of a stationery expert dedicated to you when you choose your wedding invitations. To assure that the stationery boutique delivers this experience, call ahead and make an appointment. That way you will have the focus and attention that this special purchase requires, apart from the everyday traffic in the store.

## One final thought...

Choosing your wedding stationery should be stress-free and enjoyable. Be sure to give yourself a chance to be informed, and trust your instincts. There will likely be one invitation style that you continue to come back to over and over ~ that is generally "the one!"

Ask yourself these important questions:

1. Which invitation reflects the tone and spirit of our wedding day?
2. Which most fits our personality and style?
3. Which invitation do I see my guests getting really excited by when they find it in their mailbox?

Your wedding stationer will be a valuable part of your wedding planning team. You should expect them to be knowledgeable, professional and friendly. An expert stationer will present you with a variety of options and price points to fit your style, personality and budget. With these tips in mind, the creation of your perfect wedding invitation and stationery should be an exciting, creative and wonderful experience. Have fun!

R. S. V. P.  
*for the perfect party*

