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13 Suggestions for Your Wedding Planning

- 1. Have an Engagement Session:** You've probably heard this from me before, but I can't stress enough how important this is for you. Your photographer can do a good job at your wedding without an engagement session, but imagine if you do the engagement session and you, your fiancé, and your photographer get to know each other pretty well. You'll be more relaxed and have a better time at your wedding. The photographer learns how you move, how you interact with each other, what your hobbies are, and how you like your photographs edited (straight, vintage, colorful, black and white, etc). Now you're going to have amazing wedding images. Also, you can use those engagement images for save the date cards and in a guest signing album that will wow your guests and you will proudly display it on your coffee table with all those well wishes from friends and family.
- 2. Don't buy a dress that is too small:** I know, I know, you're going to diet and exercise and get into great shape to fit into that dress. It may or it may not happen. Life (and wedding planning) get in the way. If you do drop a few pounds, you can always have the dress tailored. If you don't, well, your dress isn't going to fit very well. Even when you buy a dress off the rack that fits, you will probably have to have some tailoring done just to tweak it to fit your body better. Don't buy a dress on line. I've heard all the horror stories.
- 3. Schedule your ceremony for late in the afternoon:** Bright sunshine coming directly down on your face is not very flattering (think raccoon eyes). A professional photographer can use a flash to offset that to some degree, but your images still won't be as beautiful as we want them to be. Late in the afternoon, when the sun is lower in the sky makes the lighting much better. And we like better light.
- 4. Schedule more time for getting ready:** Whatever amount of time you think it's going to take to get your makeup and hair done and get into your dress, add another hour. Most weddings run late because it took longer to get ready than you thought.
- 5. Allow more time for your photography:** I don't mean that you need hours, but if you want some of the photographs taken before the ceremony, see above #4. A First Look is a wonderful idea so we can have more time for the two of you. This is where the groom will be standing at the bottom of a stairway, at the end of a hall, or outside somewhere. The bride will come up behind him and turn him around to have a look at his future bride and you get to enjoy the view in private and he can tell you how beautiful you look. This adds a whole new set of images to your wedding album. The amount of time spent between the ceremony and reception for family portraits and bridal party portraits is very dependent on the size of the family/bridal party.
- 6. Include your Personality:** When couples include their hobbies and/or their jobs into their wedding, the images are so much better. They become very personal and make the wedding special to them. I love to photograph couples who have fun hobbies that we can include. Tell your photographer everything you like to do - you may be surprised at some of the ideas we can come up with.
- 7. Make a back-up plan for bad weather:** Yes, it does happen. I've been to outdoor weddings where it rained, got very cold, and even snowed (in June). Anything can happen here in Colorado. Make sure your venue has a tent they can set up if they don't already have one. You may need large space heaters as well. Bring something to wear in between photos, like a shawl, jacket, or a cape.
- 8. Include your future hubby:** He may not think he has opinions on many parts of the wedding planning, but if you start showing him specific items (like two different types of flowers, two different djs or bands), he might just want to help.



9. Hire Professional Vendors: I know everyone has a budget, but believe me, your wedding will run so much smoother when you have a seasoned professional helping you out. I've already talked about a professional hair and makeup artist, but it does make a huge difference in the way you look in your photographs. A professional DJ or band will help coordinate your reception. A wedding planner, even just a "day of" planner will make sure everything is in place and running smoothly. A florist will make sure your flowers are delivered on time and in beautiful shape. And, of course, a professional photographer will capture all those memories for your kids and grandkids to ooh and aah over. Let your friends and family enjoy the wedding without worrying about getting the images you want of your wedding.

10. Designate a Family Finder: This is the person who helps round up the family and bridal party who have wandered off during the formal portraits. The photographer doesn't know everyone you want in your photographs and we don't want to miss anyone.

11. Plan the Day with your Photographer: A detailed timeline that you have prepared either yourself or with your wedding planner/dj/band, etc will help the photographer be ready for big events during the day. During the getting ready stage of your day, have the flowers, rings, dress, veil, shoes, jewelry, and anything else you want to include in your images available for the photographer.

12. Posing for Beauty: The photographer will show you poses that will help you look slimmer, taller, and more relaxed. Here are some things to practice: Put one foot forward (the one closest to the camera), bend the knee of your front foot, and put all your weight on your back leg. Lean forward just slightly, roll your shoulders back just a little. Lowering your chin just slightly will open up your eyes and hide any double chins. Breathe through your mouth with your lips slightly parted. You can also have your ladies practice these poses also. Practice in front of a mirror. Being silly and dancing around make great photographs. Relax and have fun!

13. Don't Procrastinate: Putting things off in your planning is only going to make things more stressful. Make a list, make decisions, and you can cross it off. "Just Do It".

You can use this space for notes and questions you may have.