Anne Arundel County



Catering

Plated or family-style? Buffet or self-serve stations? Learn the pros and cons of each option. **PAGE 6**

Venues

Anne Arundel County offers a variety of waterfront and rustic sites. PAGE 10





Photo courtesy of Alexandra Kent Photography

Choosing The Right Wedding Cake Cakes And Confections Owner Discusses Trends



Photo courtesy of Carly Fuller Photography

By Megan Ruge

he wedding landscape is constantly changing, and wedding cakes are following their lead. New cake trends come yearly, and this year is no exception.

Rustic cakes are on the rise. Michael Brown, owner of Cakes and Confections Bakery Café in Severna Park, said that cakes with a rustic appeal, often including horizontal lines and ridges or wavy patterns, are in high demand. Textured cakes are also in this year; bakers use a spatula to create a texture that looks like a stucco wall. Brown said. Cupcakes are also popular because they can be customized and shared easily with quests.

At Cakes and Confections, Brown works with brides to help them achieve their wedding cake vision. If a bride doesn't know what



Photo courtesy of Hamilton Photography



Photo courtesy of Christa Rae Photography

she wants, Brown looks at other visuals they have to help spur ideas. He starts by asking if the bride-tobe has gone online and looked at pictures. He then looks at the elements of the wedding — this includes the decorations, the colors and the bride's dress. Brown said he can get several ideas for cake design based on elements of the dress.

When clients come into Cakes and Confections, they engage in a 30-minute to one-hour consultation. During the consultation, the client is given many options from tier cakes to cupcakes and everything in between. She could want a series of small cakes, dessert trays, or something even more elaborate. Brown also talks about how delivery works and about pricing for different cake options.

When it comes to Brown's favorites, he is traditional. "To me, the ideal cake feeds 100 people and stands four tiers high," Brown said.

He enjoys simple designs and swirls, and flavor combinations of raspberry and lemon, raspberry and white chocolate, and almond. It is important to choose a flavor that will please the most people.

If there's one thing Brown hopes brides pay attention to, it's the taste of the cake. "The taste of the cake is equally as important as the look, if not more so," Brown said.



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Catering Options Galore

Photo courtesy of Alexandra Kent Photography

Plated, Sit-Down Dinner

With this traditional option, guests are seated and served a formal dinner at the same time, allowing everyone to pay attention to wedding toasts and speeches. Most plated dinners have three courses: an appetizer, entree and dessert. By having a head count, your caterer can determine how much food is needed. One downside to plated dinners is that guests have fewer options when compared to other meal styles.

Family-Style

This style allows guests to sample platters and eat multiple helpings. Guests are assigned to tables and waiters bring them food. This may be a pricier option than some of the others because the kitchen will need ample food to ensure nothing runs out.

Buffet

You can allow your family and friends to pick their favorite foods, which is especially helpful for people who have allergies or dietary restrictions. Make sure there is ample space in the venue, though, to avoid long lines. This can be a cost-effective choice because fewer staff members are needed to serve food. However, the bill could rise if people go back for second and third helpings.

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Affordable And Memorable Wedding Favors

By Haley Weisgerber

inding the perfect wedding favor can be stressful. You want to show your guests how much you appreciate them without breaking the bank or giving them something they won't use. Check out these affordable and memorable wedding favor ideas to help you make your decision.

Garden Seeds. As the bride and groom's new life together blooms, so will this wedding favor. Seeds or seed paper are a sustainable option that will remind your guests of your special day as they watch the flower grow. **Blankets.** You can never have enough blankets. While you can have your blankets embroidered and customized, you can save money and include a paper message with each blanket.

Mini Alcohol Bottles. Keep the party going after the reception. Add custom tags or labels to make it more personalized. Small juices or even coffee can be handed out to guests under 21. Check with your venue before you bring in outside food or drink. There may be fines within your contract.

Mints or Candy. Satisfy your guests' sweet tooth with bags of candy or mints. You can buy the candy and gift bags at any grocery store.

Baked Goods. Are you a baker? Homemade cookies or candies may not be the easiest favor option, but they will be memorable and cheap. Again, check with your venue before you bring in outside food or drink.

Glasses or Mugs. Whether it's a shot glass, a drinking glass or a coffee mug, everyone uses glasses. Personalize the gift by having your name and date etched onto the glass.

Koozies. Customized koozies will keep your guests' drinks cool and remind them of your special day every time they use them. Personalize them to match your wedding colors and include a message to your guests.

Lottery Scratch-Off. While they may not be a traditional favor, lottery scratch-offs can be purchased for as little as \$1, and your guests have the opportunity to win more.

Bottle Opener. Customize keychain bottle openers with your names and wedding date. Your guests will remember your wedding every time they open a bottle.

Charity Donation. In lieu of a traditional gift, donate money. Leave a notecard at each place setting or make an announcement at the reception.

Wedding Venues In Anne Arundel County



Photo courtesy of Hamilton Photography



Photo courtesy of Carly Fuller Photography

By Laura McElwain Colquhoun

ouples tying the knot right here in Anne Arundel County have no shortage of venues from which to choose for their ceremonies and receptions, ranging from stunning waterfront locations to charming historic buildings to pastoral settings. Packages that come with venues are just as varied, including all-inclusive or do-it-yourself, or a hybrid of the two.

Kurtz's Beach in Pasadena is a popular venue, hosting around 100 weddings each year. Located on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay, Kurtz's Beach features both indoor and outdoor settings, and its inclusive wedding packages include catering, setup and an onsite coordinator.

Ashley Mason, event planner at Kurtz's Beach, offered the following advice for couples choosing a location. "Be honest and open with a venue about your vision of the event," she said. "Not all venues can accommodate certain visions and make them happen."

Lastly, she recommends couples request a detailed proposal from venues.

"Have a very clear list of what's included and what is not so no one is surprised," she said.

Environmentally conscious couples can combine their love for the environment with an idyllic beachfront wedding on the Chesapeake Bay. The charity Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) offers space for weddings and receptions at its Phillip Merrill Environmental Center in Annapolis as well as on its secluded beach, and all profits from events benefit CBF. Jacqui Sands, manager of office operations at CBF, describes the space as a "blank slate venue" as couples have great leeway in designing their weddings and receptions. Because there are few restrictions, couples can bring in their own caterer, decorations, chairs, tables and linens, or they can choose to rent amenities from CBF.

Owing to its part in colonial American history, Anne Arundel County is home to a multitude of historic buildings, many of which have been beautifully preserved and are available to rent space for weddings and receptions. They include the William Paca House and Garden and the Hammond-Harwood House in Annapolis and Historic London Town and Gardens in Edgewater.

Southern Anne Arundel County boasts a popular rural venue, Harwood Hills Farm. Clients bring everything, including caterers, tables, chairs and restrooms. Couples can choose the rustic barn on the property, an open-air field, or a tent for their ceremony and/or reception. According to employees of the family-owned farm, one advantage of the countryside setting is that decorating can be kept to a minimum, and the barn is aesthetically pleasing on its own. Wedding coordinators are recommended for this type of location to help guide guests around the property.

Whichever type of setting or backdrop couples desire for their wedding and reception, Anne Arundel County of-

fers many attractive and sought-after venues.

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Welcoming Your Out-Of-Town Guests

By Haley Weisgerber

t is important that you are surrounded by friends and family on your special day, especially those who don't live close by. Making accommodations for your out-of-town quests may not be easy, but it's worth the effort to put them at ease. Check out these tips to make your out-of-town quests feel at home.



Help family and friends by booking hotel rooms and by compiling a list of local rental car places.

While you do not have to pay for quest accommodations, it is recommended that you book hotel rooms for your quests. Hotel room blocks allow you to book 10 or more rooms at a lower rate. These blocks will not only keep your outof-town quests together and close to the venue but will also guarantee rooms. Consider blocking rooms in two hotels to give your quests options.

Welcome bags are a great way to show your guests that you appreciate them. If your quests are traveling from another state, include



Guests can have fun on wedding day by dancing and playing games, but before that, make them feel welcome by helping them plan their trip.



Photo courtesy of Carly Fuller Photography

a container of Old Bay or a crab mallet. Other popular fillers are water and snacks. which will keep your guests from partaking in the pricey hotel room treats. Take vour venue and season into consideration as well. If you are getting married outside in the summer, pack sunscreen for your quests. If you are getting married in the winter, you may want to include gloves or

hand warmers.

Depending on how early they arrive, many out-oftown quests may have a lot of free time leading up to the wedding day. Provide a list of local restaurants or things to do, helping your quests fill that time. While Uber and Lyft are convenient, those options may not work for every quest. Consider putting together a list of local rental car places, bus times or cab companies. The Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce and Pasadena Business Association are great resources for encouraging guests to shop local during their visit.

The schedule leading up to the wedding can be tight, but you should take the time to meet with your out-of-town quests before the reception. Do not feel pressured to meet with each guest individually, especially if you have many coming in. Planning a group lunch or dinner will allow you to meet with everyone at one time. You can also invite your outof-town quests to your rehearsal dinner if the budget allows. This will give them a chance to mingle with other guests and give you the opportunity to catch up with them.

Popular Venues In Anne Arundel County

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Hair And Makeup Tips

Skin Care

Experts recommend implementing a skin care routine at least six weeks before the wedding.

Contrast

When it comes to makeup, contrast is your friend. If a bride wants a bold lip, she should keep the eyes lighter and vice versa.

Eyelashes

Using eyelash extensions instead of false eyelashes can lead to a full, natural look.

If It's Not Broke...

Soft waves and nude makeup has been the trend for the last few years and experts expect that to continue. When in doubt, keep makeup natural and subtle.

Tanning

A spray tan might help you glow on your wedding day, but make sure not to overdo it. Schedule a trial in advance to find the perfect color.

A Good Hair Day

The same goes for hair. Get a trial so you have the chance to try different styles. This will allow you to choose a style that makes you feel comfortable and confident on your big day.



Photo courtesy of Joy Michelle Photography



Photo courtesy of Carly Fuller Photography



Photo courtesy of Alexandra Kent Photography



Photo courtesy of Joy Michelle Photography

Simple Or Fancy: Catering Options Galore

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Photo courtesy of Carly Fuller Photography

Self-Serve Food Stations

Self-serve stations share some benefits with buffets, giving attendees a choice between a variety of options, from mac and cheese to sliders. They also allow people to roam more instead of moving through a line, which cuts down on wait times.



Photo courtesy of Carly Fuller Photography

Cocktail-Style

Invite your family and friends to munch on bite-sized appetizers and hors d'oeuvres while mingling with others. You can save some money with this option although some people will inevitably be disappointed that they did not get a full meal.

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