

Weathering a Winter Wedding

With the recent East Coast snowstorm, winter weddings have been on my mind. Brides planning a wedding when there's a risk of snow must be a lover of all things winter. Some have made snow the centerpiece of the event, sticking with the original plan and embracing Mother Nature wholeheartedly. Others have gone to Plan B or planned on the fly as guests' travel plans adjusted and vendors pulled out the stops to make the event a success.

One of the best last minute weddings I've witnessed happened during a snowstorm. The treacherous travel conditions made the entire wedding party (plus guests willing to brave the blizzard) hunker down in the hotel where out-of-town guests had been planning to stay. Although the hotel wasn't the original site of the ceremony or reception, the couple made the best of the situation. The wedding was held in the hotel's event space the next day with modified but beautiful décor and the couple was surrounded by family and friends. Despite the change of venue and reduced number of guests, it was a joyous celebration. My friend later commented, "I'll always remember the truly white wedding where our friends and family showered us with so much love. What a great way to start our life together... if what they say about rain on one's wedding day brings good luck, we're the luckiest couple in the galaxy!"

Brides with their hearts set on a winter wedding can keep these perks in mind:

Winter Weddings Are Not Common. Most people get married during the other seasons; winter brides don't usually need to worry about planning their wedding date around the wedding dates of friends. In fact, a winter wedding is more likely to be memorable for both the couple and guests, as many people do not get the opportunity to attend a winter wedding.

Costs May Be Much Lower. Winter is the off-season for weddings, so brides may be able to choose from a wider selection of vendors or even secure discounts. After all, most vendors would rather be paid a little less for their talents than not work at all! Note the cost of flowers may be expensive, as certain buds are not as readily available during the winter. If you don't have your heart set on a floral look, lower-cost options include evergreens, gold and silver baubles, strands of small white lights or candlelight to give your wedding color and warmth. Overall, winter weddings have the potential to cost less than in-season weddings.

Favors Can Be Unique. One detail couples often struggle with is wedding favors. There are many unique winter wedding favors that guests will enjoy. Candy canes, hot cocoa, flavored teas, holiday cookies, scented candles and personalized ornaments are just some of the various wedding favors winter couples can choose.

Winter Can Add a Lovely Touch of Snow. As long as it doesn't derail guests from attending the wedding, snow is a plus. It can enhance the overall beauty of a wedding and create a lasting impression. However, it is important that winter brides don't depend on Mother Nature and are willing to go with the flow.

There's always the potential for bad weather any season and the perks of a winter wedding can be quite fabulous. Embrace it and remember weddings don't have to go as planned to be perfect!

Stoneleigh Event Consultant Meredith Thomas has many years of experience planning special events. Visit <http://www.stoneleighqolf.com/aisledish> for more Aisle Dish posts.