



## Wow Weddings on Wee Budgets

In a recession-era, planning a wedding with the wow factor in mind can be daunting. Every bride wants to impress her guests with the special touches she's chosen. Many brides believe in the fashion motto "It's all in the accessories," which rings true at weddings these days, but no one needs to break the bank. Even with budget constraints, brides can accomplish a lot for a little with these tips.

1. The number one tip is research, writing down prices and keeping good notes on quality and opinions. When the time comes to make a sound decision, you will have all the information you need without the stress.
2. The early bird gets the worm. Shop before the rush so that you not only get the item you want but can still find the deals to save. Fatigue is not your friend.
3. Check out the clearance aisles. Buy seasonal items at the end of that season in order to catch deals. If you have a year engagement you have a clearance season.
4. With today's tough economy, working harder than ever to be more conscientious pays off. With the average wedding today costing around \$20,000, and only a third of brides-to-be hiring wedding planners, many brides go online for help as well as shopping for accessories for the event. Surfing the net is your best friend for inspiration and ,with careful research, deals.
5. Creating keepsakes yourself helps save money. Most brides-to-be have at least one do-it-yourself element, usually the ceremony programs and some of the favors. The latest craze has been the custom hardcover guest books and even wedding fan programs. There are also a lot of orders for the graduated-style programs which offer a unique presentation. They contain lots of photos, which makes it more than just a wedding program and becomes a wedding keepsake. It's also fun for the bride and groom to put together as a couple, allowing for a wonderful opportunity to bond.

By keeping a few things in mind and an open mind, a bride can wow on a budget.

*Aisle Dish is written by Meredith Thomas, Stoneleigh's in-house Event Consultant. If you would like assistance planning your special day, Meredith offers a complimentary one-hour consultation to all brides hosting their wedding at the Club and is available for further planning services at an additional fee. Contact Meredith at [mthomas@stoneleighgolf.com](mailto:mthomas@stoneleighgolf.com) or 540.338.4653 ext. 303.*