



## **I Do, Take Two**

With more than 40% of weddings today involving a bride or groom who's been previously married, weddings are running the gamut more than ever. Planning a wedding for the second time has its benefits. Most importantly, for many, the costs for the second time around wedding are more modest in most cases. Most brides or grooms remarrying consider the actual event in a less fairytale manner, without all the hoopla that comes with a hefty price tag. The event is also typically far more intimate with a shorter guest list, with only the nearest and dearest present for the nuptials.

The old rule about brides not wearing white for a second wedding has gone out the window. Brides now wear whatever color feels right for them. Most brides getting remarried have already worn their princess dress once and opt for a more mature look such as a brocade suit or a simple cocktail dress, but the possibilities for second wedding dresses are endless: a designer dress that you've been salivating over, but couldn't justify its expense, an off-white floor-length sheath dress or if you looked demure the first time, wow them with a sexy slip dress.

When children are involved, they can have special roles. Depending on their age, they may be a flower girl, ring bearer, junior bridesmaid or groomsman, or even the best man or maid of honor. Perhaps they would like to read something during the ceremony or make a special toast during the reception. In some ceremonies, a family vow is given after the bride and groom's vows. Couples can give a small medallion or piece of jewelry as a symbol of their family love. Blessings on the family with a declaration of unity are popular.

While the pomp and circumstance is more streamlined the second time around, Invitations can be a bit tricky. Sensitivity is key. For example, I would advise not inviting former in-laws and ex-spouses, even if everyone is on good terms. This can also apply for friends of your ex. These special people in your past life may become a bit melancholy and some guests may feel quite awkward.

The one thing that does change the second time around is who pays – perhaps explaining why things are simpler. While the parents of the bride traditionally pay for the first wedding, most often the couple split the costs evenly. Whether or not they contributed to the costs of your first wedding, you shouldn't expect parents or relatives to chip in unless they offer.

I'm a firm believer in doing what feels right when it comes to weddings, whether it's the first or last time. While I love traditional weddings, those second-timers out there are having the ceremony they want, wearing the dresses they want and hosting the receptions that suit them best. I would imagine that these second time arounders are more comfortable in their own skin, more developed and keenly aware of what they want whether it's the big bash or a small intimate dinner party. Every love story deserves an appropriate celebration, whatever that may be!

*Stoneleigh Event Consultant Meredith Thomas is available for additional planning services on a fee basis. Meredith has many years of experience planning special events and will work with you to create the wedding of your dreams. Contact Meredith at [mthomas@stoneleighgolf.com](mailto:mthomas@stoneleighgolf.com) to learn more.*