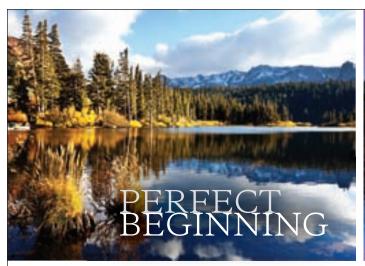
## Eastern Sierra's Wedding & Event Guide















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EDITOR Mike Gervais

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS Stacey Powells-Lyster Green Fox Events and Guest Services COMPOSING Phillip Chacanaca

PHOTOGRAPHERS COURTESY
Green Fox Events & Guest Services

ADVERTISING Veronica Lee vlee@mammothtimes.com Steve Sebastian ssebastian@mammothtimes.com

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## Congratulations you're engaged

### By Green Fox Events & Guest Services

What a magical time for you – being a fiancé! Whether you want to get married right away or have a long engagement, you want to have a stress free planning experience. You don't plan a wedding every day – but we do! All the talk of BEO's, body flowers, first looks, food & beverages minimums, shot lists, free sell agreements, room blocks - can make anyone's head spin.

The team at Green Fox **Events & Guest Services** has planned hundreds of weddings and events. Here are our recommended first steps to start planning your wedding:

1. Envision your wedding. Find a quiet moment where you won't be distracted - grab a cup of coffee, glass of wine or take a walk - and talk with your fiancé about dreams and visions for the wedding. Make sure to discuss any "must have" religious and/

or family traditions or expectations. Also decide if you would like to have your wedding in a special destination (California's Eastern Sierra offers so many beautiful venues) or keep it local, formal or informal, outdoor or indoor, big or small, overall style and determine the time of year you want it to take place.

2. Draw up your budget. Agree on who is paying for the wedding and set a realistic budget. You don't need to slice it contracts are inclusive of all costs and you won't end up with surprise charges after you have signed your contracts.

Don't underestimate the value of your time. Planners are the local experts and work frequently with the other area wedding vendors - which creates efficiencies. Any good planner will listen to what you need and tailor their recommendations accordingly (i.e. budget, style) so you don't spend countless hours researching a vendor that won't be the best fit for you! Often your planner can take you on a tour of different venues based on your wedding vision and budget.

This is the time to identify if there is a specific venue or vendor that you must have.

4. Identify your wedding date, time and location.

Select several options

up yet - but just know about how much you want to spend overall.

3. Assemble your planning team. Consider hiring a wedding consultant! (Of course you knew this one was coming - right?) Not only can planners help recommend venues and vendors, but often they can negotiate discounts or added amenities on your behalf. At the very least, a good planner speaks the lingo and will make sure that your venue and vendor if possible. If you have any "must have" venue or vendor preferences make sure to check their availability before finalizing your date. Also check with family and other important guests to make sure that date works for

5. Start thinking about your guest list.

We know, we know guest lists can be the hardest part! Decide if you want a big gala event or small intimate family gathering - or something in the middle. Many ceremony and reception venues can only accommodate a certain number, so having a good idea about your general numbers is important to know before you finalize your venues.

6. Lock in your ceremony and reception

These will be two of the most important check marks on your list. We







## Your wedding and public lands

### By Stacey Powells-Lyster

Once a couple has decided to make it legal in the Eastern Sierra, there are approximately seven thousand square miles of public lands to choose from between various government agencies. In order to have a wedding ceremony on any of the public lands here on the east side, you will most likely need permission. If your dream ceremony is getting married in a field surrounded on all sides by mountains, chances are that the field you picked is owned by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), or the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), one of the two aforementioned counties, or the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. If you're lucky, the land you picked is privately owned by a friend of yours, but not likely.

Dione Perkins has been with the BLM for six years and stated that if a couple wants to hold a wedding ceremony on their land, the couple should apply for the permit at least six months ahead of time. "Depending on the area, the BLM will need to do an environmental assessment because of the number of sensitive species on our lands," Perkins said. "We need to know if there will be any impacts on the wildlife." A perfect example is Hilltop Hot Tub. During certain times of the year, the sage grouse is out there. If it is mating season or if they are laying their eggs then the BLM will deny any request for a wedding. "There are different rules and stipulations for holding events on our land depending on the area and how many people will be at the event."

The BLM will not allow any events on an area that is a Wilderness Study Area. Perkins did say that if a couple wants to get married in an area that is already 'disturbed', then they will work with the couple. "If the wedding is going to have 300 people we may ask that parking is staged

Photo by Minaret Photography/Courtesy Green Fox Events & Guest Services at another location and the guests are driven to the site by a van or bus."

The BLM permit fees can run anywhere from \$100.00 - \$300.00 depending on the amount of people, the type of activities on the land, and if there are any special needs. For more information, Dione Perkins can be reached at (760) 872-5056.

Another big land holder in the Eastern Sierra is the USFS. Many weddings have been performed on land controlled by the Forest Service in and around the Eastern Sierra. Rainbow Falls, Kerry Meadow, and June Lake Beach are just a few of the areas where a couple will need to get a permit if they want to tie the knot on USFS land. The Forest Service considers weddings a non-commercial group use. Under their regulation, a group use is an activity that involves a group of 75 or more people, either as participants or spectators, where no fee is charged, and the primary purpose is not the sale of a goods or service.

Lawson Reif, Assistant Recreation Office for the USFS, Inyo National Forest, stated that the Forest Service has a duty to minimize resource impacts on National Forest System lands. "Large group gatherings in the National Forests can have significant adverse impacts on forest resources, public health and safety, and the agency's ability to allocate space in the face of increasing constraints on the use of National Forest System Land." Reif went on to say that a permit system allows the agency to address these problems more expeditiously, effectively and more equitably.

Reif said the USFS appreciates when a couple contacts him about obtaining a permit for a wedding as soon as possible. "In general, it's always a good idea to get in touch with

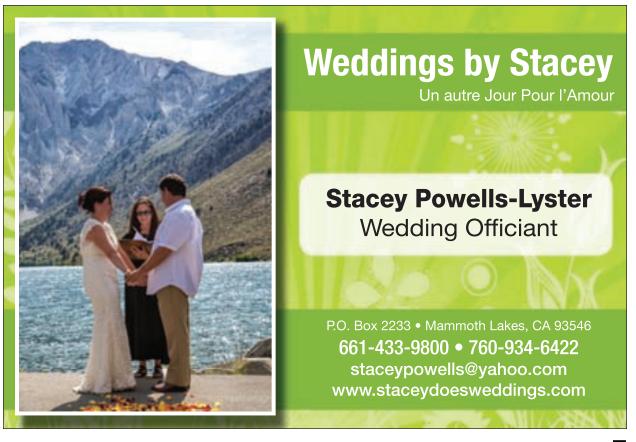


Photo by Joel St. Marie Photography/ Courtesy Green Fox Events & Guest Services

us when a couple is even thinking about having a wedding on Inyo National Forest land," said Reif. "That way the sooner we approve the use, the sooner they can send out their wedding invitations, and start planning for their big day."

The permits granted by the USFS are free of charge. For more information on using Inyo National Forest land for your wedding, you can email Lawson Reif at lreif@fs.fed.us.

Inyo and Mono counties both have land that may be used for weddings and each has their own rules and regulations for such use. For Mono County contact Alicia Vennos at (760) 924-1743. For Inyo County, Contact 760-873-5577. For the LADWP, contact Don McGee, Supervisor in Real Estate, at 760-872-1104.



## Loving your look

## By Stacey Powells-Lyster

"Yes" the wedding dress has to fit. "Yes" the groom has to show up on time. And "Yes" the wedding officiant needs to show up on time. But the single most important aspect of the wedding day, which will ensure that Bridezilla doesn't rear her ugly head, is finding the right Bridal Makeup Artist (AKA the MUA) because if the bride looks beautiful, then everything else will fall into place on the big day.

Every bride dreams of looking spectacular at her wedding, and the only person who can help make that dream come true is her MUA! "The wedding is one of the most important days in a bride's life," said professional Bridal Make-Up Artist Erik Torppe. "It's a day filled with love, friends and family. I love being a part of the day when two families unite as one. It's very special to me."

One of the most important wedding vendors a bride will hire is her Make-Up Artist. Torppe noted that a trial session should be set up between the bride and an experienced MUA who is familiar with the tones and shades of bridal makeup. In a relaxed atmosphere, they can try out different looks and pick the one that best suits the bride. "I ask the bride about her colors, theme, the dress, and then I apply a couple of different looks and textures until she feels comfortable."

Torppe emphasized that the relationship between the MUA and the bride is important. Sometimes a bride will need to do a trial session with a few makeup artists to make sure she is comfortable with the person who will be doing her make-up. Then there are the brides who wait until the last minute to hire their make-up artist. Either way, the MUA needs to be flexible because brides may change

their mind several times before they settle on what they think works for them.

Every bride differs in how they choose their MUA. Some brides will see how sanitary the MUA is with his/her brushes, while others will pick the MUA based on how well they do their work. "Brides look for different things," said Torppe, who has been making brides beautiful since 2009. "It comes down to what the bride wants, not what I want. It's her day. An experienced MUA knows that the bride deserves to be treated like a princess. I want my brides to be relaxed and I want them to have fun!"

If the bride wants to look her best for pictures, then she should be prepared to pay the MUA for staying as long as she needs her make-up artist by her side. "Brides get what they pay for. The photos will show if she's hired an experienced bridal makeup artist or not," explained Torppe. "Five years down the line no one is going to remember how the flowers were arranged or what the main course was at the wedding, but by looking at their wedding book, the bride will remember how fabulous she looked on her special day."

Brides also need to realize that good makeup is not cheap, and that different MUA services have different rates. Trial sessions can start at \$75.00, and if they want the MUA to do the makeup for their bridesmaids, their mother, and their mother-inlaw, then the budget for an excellent MUA goes up.

"Bottom line is trust is the key," said Torppe. "If you can't trust your makeup artist to make you look your best on your wedding day, then you've hired the wrong makeup artist."

Erik Torppe can be contacted at (818) 593-9009 or go to www.eriktorppe.com.

## Here to help

## HAIR, MAKEUP, SPA TREATMENTS

Allure Salon Alluremammoth.com 760-709-2082

American Beauty Salon www.lisapetersonhair.com 760-914-2257

Belladonna www.belladonnamammoth. com 760-934-3344 760-920-5158

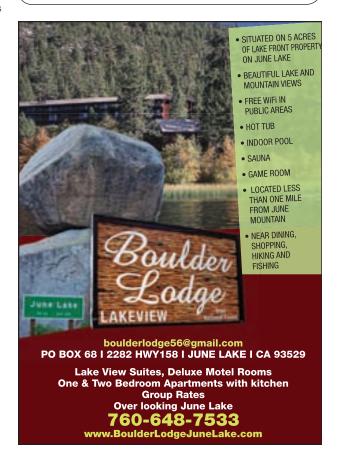
Daylight's Healing Touch 760-709-1556

Double Eagle Resort and Spa www.doubleeagle.com 760-648-7004 Erik Torppe Makeup www.etartistry.com 818-593-9009

Hair by Carrie www.hairbycarrieg.com 760-392-0092

Intouch Aveda Microspa www.intouchmicrospa.com 760-934-2836 Mammoth Massage Therapy www. mammothmassagetherapy. com 760-914-2575

Snowcreek Athletic Club & Spa www.snowcreekathleticclub. com 760-934-8511



## Congratulations you're engaged Part II

### By Green Fox Events & Guest Services

Trained in Special Event Management at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Cara Richards has been planning weddings at Green Fox Events & Guest Services for 4 years. She started here as a junior planner and is now one of our primary wedding planners. We love her creativity, attention to detail and her appreciation for every wedding client. Here she dishes some of her best advice.

Don't be afraid to ask your vendors—"Tell me what I don't know."

You don't plan weddings every day – but your vendors do. Your photographer will

know when and where the light will be best for those amazing photos and your DJ will know which songs kill the mood on the dance floor. Ask them what you need to consider and ask about their favorite moments in a wedding. This is a good time for us to remind you that a good coordinator will walk you through all of these conversations (shameless plug!)

Unique experiences are in!

If you do not feel like you are a "traditional kinda guy or gal" that is great — don't feel pressured towards traditions that don't mean anything to you. On the other hand, if you LOVE tradition — have at it. Traditions can be very fun and meaningful — but we encourage you to put your own unique touch on your event. One of the sweetest ceremonies I have ever seen consisted of all guests

sitting in a circle and sharing words of encouragement, advice and stories about the bride and groom. It was beautiful, touching and so unique to the couple.

Decide your top 3 (or so) must-haves early on.

Decide what is important to each of you individually and as a couple. Identify your top priorities for your wedding (i.e. delicious food, beautiful ambiance, venue, amazing flowers, guest experience, etc.) Remember that you are just starting out on your a shared life and compromising will be a key element of planning.

Overall design and décor should stay true to who you are.

Now that there is widespead access to all these amazing blogs, magazines and social media sites (love Pinterest!) there are so many ideas out there to help in your overall design - but don't get lost in all of that! Remember to stay true to what you naturally gravitate towards. Hone in on a couple of ideas that you like in each category (i.e. flowers, table designs, favors, attire, etc.) Pin your top 3 ideas – not your top 20! I always suggest that clients create one design board of their very favorite ideas – then let your coordinator (wink, wink) help you implement this look into all of the details.

5. If you don't have it in your budget to hire a full service coordinator, consider hiring someone at least for the week of the wedding.

It should be no surprise that it is always our recommendation that a bride and

groom hire a wedding/event coordinator for their event. There are so many details that go into planning a wedding and couples should understand that it can easily turn in to a full time job. A wedding planner will help reduce the stress during the planning process and ensure that the bride and groom (and family and friends) enjoy themselves and each other's company the week and day of the wedding

If your budget is tight or if you simply want to do most of the work yourself, we advise clients to at least hire someone for the final week of their wedding to ensure that all the details are taken care of (i.e. make sure that the caterer is starting on time, the photographer knows where to meet the bridal party, the seating arrangement is set-up per your request, your favors are set out and displayed the way you had envisioned, and the list goes on.)

If you decide to get some assistance from the beginning, make sure to ask your planner about all the ways he or she can save you money. Some planners can pass on their industry discounts to their clients. Whatever you chose – enjoy this magical time! For more planning tips, please see our blog at GreenFox-Events.com.

(Green Fox Events & Guest Services offers clever, resourceful and eco-conscious planning, management and consulting in California's stunning Eastern Sierra Mountains, Mammoth Lakes and beyond. No stress allowed! GreenFoxEvents.com.)



## The efficient officiant

### By Stacey Powells-Lyster

The more weddings I've officiated, the more I've come to realize that there is more to conducting a ceremony than just reading words on a piece of paper. Of course, it's important to choose the right words for all the couples I marry, but I have also found that a little reassurance, and a lot of love, go a long way when making their ceremony fun and legal.

When the fiancés first contact me to conduct their wedding, I immediately make them feel like they've known me all their lives. I remind them that this is their day and that the ceremony is all about them and no one else.

Most couples have already hired

a wedding planner by the time I'm contacted to perform the ceremony, but then there are the couples who have no clue what they are doing and are trying to put together their wedding with a wing and a prayer.

I met with one couple who decided to get married at Laws Railroad Museum, and they were figuring out all the other details as they went along. When they explained that their budget couldn't afford a professional wedding planner, I told them what they had to think about organizing for their wedding day so that the only thing they had to worry about when they day came, was to make sure they were standing in front of me at 3:00 P.M. They took my advice and delegated the specifics to friends and family members.

It didn't occur to them that they may want someone to usher in the guests, or tell the musicians when to start playing, or to have someone tell the bride when it would be time for her to walk down the tracks to meet her soon-to-be husband. A wedding planner like Sandra Di Domizio and her company Green Fox Events would have had all those details in order, but for the bride and groom who are doing it alone, the officiant should at least have a basic knowledge of how a wedding proceeds just in case the couple needs a little more help with the day.

As an officiant, it's important to be flexible. Many times I've been called to perform a wedding at the last minute. A lovely couple from Papua New Guinea was in town

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Photo by The Cookes Fine Photography/Courtesy Green Fox Events & Guest Services

## Entertaining in the Eastern Sierra

### By Stacey Powells-Lyster

There is a reason couples choose our mountains as the backdrop for their nuptials, and because they love our area so much, they want their family and friends to see what all the fuss is about. The last thing a bride and groom need to worry about is how to entertain their out-of-town guests. The couple is already stressing about their wedding, so trying to find the best fishing hole for Uncle Buck will not be their top priority.

To ensure that wedding guests get the most out of attending your wedding in the Eastern Sierra, you may want to include information in the wedding invitation listing a few extracurricular activities for them to do while they are here.

First and foremost, get your guests outside! Day tripping is popular among guests who want to see as much of the area as possible during their short stay. Wherever their base may be, a little education and eye-candy about the area will go a long way in the memory bank.

Visiting Mono Lake near Lee Vining is always a hit. Afterwards, they can drive another 20 minutes up the highway to Bodie Ghost Town, and learn why mining was and is so popular in Mono County. Tell your guests to find the local Visitor Centers or Chamber of Commerce so they can see how close they are too easy hiking trails for the entire family, or the steeper climbs for the athletes in your group.

If your guests want to see some beautiful parts of the back country where cars are forbidden, supply them with a list of the pack stations in the area. Day rides are a favorite among city-dwellers who love breathing air they can't see while on the back of a horse.

We are known for our incredible lake and river fishing, but getting out on the water via boat, kayak or canoe will also delight the wedding guest whose usual mode of transportation includes tires and gasoline.

If your wedding is during the summer months, daytripping down to Devil's Postpile National Monument and Rainbow Falls is a favorite. If your guests have an entire day to spend outside, point them in the direction of Yosemite National Park. Tuolumne Meadows is about an hour's drive from Mammoth Lakes via Tioga Pass. For a winter wedding, couples can hold a snowman building contest. The winner gets 'first dance' with the bride at the reception!

For the wedding guest who has a credit card burning in their wallet, let them know about the Mammoth Luxury Mall as well as the many other gift stores and restaurants up and down Highway 395. Don't forget that there is bowling, movie-theaters, hot tubs, plenty of parks, skiing and mountain biking if it's the right time of year. The Mammoth Lakes Repertory Theatre may also be staging one of their fine plays at Edison Theater! Keough Hot Springs just outside of Bishop is a great soak spot for everyone!

Your guests will figure out where they want to spend their downtime. Wherever they go, make sure they bring plenty of water, sunscreen, and a hat. Remind them to slow down on the alcohol while in high altitude. The point of coming up here is to attend your wedding and to celebrate the occasion. Spending time in their hotel room with high altitude sickness from too much alcohol will not be cause for any type of celebration.

## Here to help

## CAKES & DESSERTS

CJ's Grill www.cjsgrillmammoth.com 760-934-3077

Mimi's Cookie Bar www.mimiscookiebar.com 760-924-0877

Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory www.rmcf.com 760-934-6269

Schats Bakery www.erickschatsbakery.com 760-873-7156

Stellar Brew www.stellarbrewnaturalcafe.com 760-924-3559

> Sue Ebersold 760-934-6944

## **CATERERS**

Anything Goes Fine Catering www.anythinggoesfinecatering.com 760-934-2424

> Bleu Handcrafted Foods www.bleufoods.com 760-914-2538



CJ's Grill www.cjsgrillmammoth.com 760-934-3077

Designs by Michelle Denault www.denaultcatering.com 760-873-4435

Giovanni's www.giovannismammoth.com 760-934-7563

Linda Dore Food Service www.lindadorefoodservice.com 760-647-1055

Petra's Bistro and Wine Bar www.petrasbistro.com 760-934-3500

Sierra Nevada Resort www.thesierranevadaresort.com 760-934-2515 ext. 312

Toomey's Catering www.toomeyscatering.com 760-924-4408

Whitebark Restaurant www.westinmammoth.com/whitebark 760-934-0460

## **PHOTOGRAPHERS** & VIDEOGRAPHERS

Amanda McKinnon Photography www.amandamckinnon.com hello@amandamckinnon.com 909-636-2169

> Minaret Photography www.minaretphoto.com 760-709-1095

Vernon Wiley Photography www. wileyphoto.com info@wileyphoto.com 775-309-3094 805-295-8660

Steve Dutcher Photography www.stevedutcher.com 760-843-8183

Joel St. Marie Photography www.joelstmarie.com 760-812-1001

## **PHOTOGRAPHERS** & VIDEOGRAPHERS CONTINUED

Bluebird Imaging www.bluebirdimaging.com 760-924-0316

The Cookes Fine Photography www.cookesphotography.com 760-872-2345

High Sierra Photography www.highsierraphotography.com 760-709-6104

Josh Premako Photography www.joshpremako.com 661-904-0431

## MARRIAGE LICENSES

Mono County www.monocounty.ca.gov 760-932-5530

## **MUSIC & DJs**

DJ Science (Spencer Myers) spencermyers.com

Advantage DJ www.advantagedj.com 661-674-7151

The Littlest Birds www.littlestbirds.net 760-914-1737

Sierra Sounds info@sierrasounds.net

Solo Classical/Folk Cello www.folkncello.com 760-914-1737

## COORDINATORS

**AV Special Events** www.avspecialevents.com 661-674-7151

Designs by Michelle Denault www.denaultcatering.com 760-873-4435

**Green Fox Events** www.areenfoxevents.com 760-709-6744





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