

## **The Secrets To Keeping Costs Down With Wedding Planning**

Congratulations if you are newly engaged. Maybe you know someone who is and needs some help with where to start or what they can do to have an amazing wedding day without going overboard in cost.

It is known that the average wedding cost in Australia is somewhere around the \$35,000. For some it is a lot more. Do you have a budget in mind with your wedding?

With guests on more than 60 x guests, I was able to keep my overall wedding cost to around \$15,000. This is certainly achievable, but lots of factors need to be considered first.

### **Keeping the costs down:**

Getting married is a celebration of life for two people amongst our closest family and friends. How this day is celebrated will determine the overall cost. To keep costs down the bride and groom need to make a list of which areas they want to prioritize as the most expensive cost for the overall wedding. This may be the reception and honeymoon or the dress. Maybe it's all three.

*Always consider the **time of the year** you are getting married and **how many guests** you are looking to attend your big day. Are you going to have a **large wedding or something intimate**? Will you opt for a **church or garden ceremony**? *What can you do or get help with to assist with keeping your costs down.**

### **Choosing the wedding date and time:**

- Firstly, try not to rush into organising your big day. If you give yourself good time to plan, you won't have the last minute panic. I see this all the time with flowers when couples come to me a few weeks prior their wedding. It would make me a nervous wreck so I can imagine how the couple feel if lots of organising is left too late. By not rushing also means more time to shop around for the best prices.

"A recent trend I've seen is that couples are saving money by planning a more last-minute wedding, rather than the traditional 11-month runup," says Alan Fields, co author of *Bridal Bargains: Secrets to Throwing a Fantastic Wedding on a Realistic Budget*. "The shorter time horizon will force you to streamline and keep you, by necessity, from getting sucked into the vortex of elaborate weddings."

Getting married during winter will save you money with venues and often other service professionals have exclusive deals for weddings as it is not the popular time to get married. I know this from years of experience that most wedding suppliers from cars to reception have available dates in the winter months. It also makes sense to choose a date where you know it is available and less chance of being told "I'm sorry but we are booked out." Planning your wedding would then be quicker and not as stressful.

Have you also thought about getting married mid week in the evening or having a morning wedding?

Through the week with many guests having to work the next morning, there is less chance of heavy drinkers. It may also limit the number of children attending. If you can cut down the alcohol

consumption, this will put more money in your pocket. If you want to ensure alcohol isn't restricted, another idea is to have guests pay for alcoholic beverages which aren't added to your list.

For example allow set house wines, beer and soft drink with guests paying for anything different.

With a morning wedding on the weekend the same can be achieved by having more of a breakfast reception. Perhaps a heavily popular high tea set up or caterers for the smaller wedding parties are worth considering.

**Your honeymoon:** Are you going to have your honeymoon directly after your wedding day or will you opt to go the following year? I'm finding more and more couples just don't have the time or want to save up further for their big honeymoon and decide on going away for just a few nights directly after their wedding for a "mini moon"

If you can save money in one or more areas, the savings can then be put towards what you consider to be your priority with spending for your wedding, such as reception or the wedding dress.

Here is a list put together by *I-do.com.au*. It is designed around different budget levels and what can be achievable in different spend areas. Obviously these can be tweaked to suit individual needs in the areas for spending, but it is a great guide. Some of these areas can easily be avoided or you may be having a wedding theme which is a little different and won't need all the fuss.

Total Budgets	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
Attendants Gifts	\$ 308.35	\$ 205.56	\$ 102.78
Bomboniere	\$ 616.69	\$ 411.13	\$ 205.56
Bridal Gown	\$ 3,488.93	\$ 2,325.96	\$ 1,162.98
Bridesmaids Gowns	\$ 1,233.38	\$ 822.26	\$ 411.13
Civil Celebrant or Chaplain	\$ 716.69	\$ 511.13	\$ 305.56
Ceremony Venue	\$ 770.86	\$ 513.91	\$ 256.95
Entertainment	\$ 1,125.46	\$ 750.31	\$ 375.15
Wedding Night Accommodation	\$ 300.64	\$ 200.42	\$ 100.21
Flower girls and Pageboys	\$ 277.51	\$ 185.01	\$ 92.50
Flowers	\$ 1,233.38	\$ 822.26	\$ 411.13
Reception	\$ 13,991.20	\$ 9,327.46	\$ 4,663.73
Hair and Make-Up	\$ 608.98	\$ 405.99	\$ 202.99
Honeymoon	\$ 9,250.38	\$ 6,166.92	\$ 3,083.46
Invitations and other Stationery	\$ 847.95	\$ 565.30	\$ 282.65
Shoes & Accessories	\$ 786.49	\$ 491.00	\$ 195.50

Men's Attire	\$ 925.04	\$ 616.69	\$ 308.35
Photography / Video	\$ 4,625.19	\$ 3,083.46	\$ 1,541.73
Pre-Wedding Beauty Treatments etc	\$ 385.43	\$ 256.95	\$ 128.48
Wedding Bands	\$ 1,541.73	\$ 1,027.82	\$ 513.91
Wedding Cake	\$ 925.04	\$ 616.69	\$ 308.35
Wedding Transport	\$ 1,040.67	\$ 693.78	\$ 346.89

### Saving money tips and ideas:

By thinking smartly we can cut our costs down dramatically, including the areas we may think we need to spend the most money. Here are some examples to consider.

**The venue:** By shopping around you will be amazed at the variance of pricing. Large function centres can often be pricier, so why not consider a restaurant, cafe or somewhere totally different to the norm like the Zoo, in the gardens with a marquee (winter may not be the best choice for a marquee).

**Gift Registry.** These days the wishing well is the preferred method for a gift and this includes both the wedding day and engagement party. Consider also a honeymoon registry. By having the money added into a building fund through your preferred travel agent, it is one sure way of ensuring you don't spend money from a wishing well (or losing it). My husband and I opted for this and it was a nice bonus waiting for us at the time of organising our honeymoon.

**The Wedding Cake:** Consider having a layered cake with the top layers as artificial (often they are available to hire or buy at a much cheaper price). The bottom cake could then be for cutting. You could even have another cake layer of a different design out in the kitchen without guests knowing. It could then also be cut up for guests to eat. Remember that they only get to see the cut slice for desert or placed in a bag to take home.

**Flowers or something different to carry.** Are you thinking of having a brooch wedding bouquet to carry instead of flowers? Now you may know that I can arrange brooch bouquets but as a tip I give to my clients, if you hold a Kitchen tea or perhaps your engagement party, think about having your guests bring along a broach in your chosen colour with it's purpose to be included in your bridal brooch bouquet. Let them know in your invitation that you want them to always be remembered in another special way, and what better way to do that. Trust me, they will love the idea. Consider that this will also cut your overall design to around half with a saving of anywhere up to \$250. Brooch bouquets can cost up to \$500.

On the topic of flowers, I can also save you money with giving you tips on fresh and silk flowers from the complete bridal party needs to ceremony and reception. Choosing flowers in season is a must and the size of your design does make a difference. If it is for a bouquet, I will give advice on which size will best suits your dress and theme. Working too large with flowers can lose the overall effect of your stunning gown. Where a dress is very full, there are also a selection of flowers and roses which will be more cost effective.

1. Small bud roses will mean more are needed.
2. Asiatic lilies may come across cheaper, but more are usually needed if you want to have them as your focal flower. Oriental lilies are the best to use and don't mark as easily.
3. Gerberas and lilies are amongst some of the larger flower varieties. By working with larger size blooms will give a fuller size posy. Lots of smaller flowers like orchids, roses, tulips and lily of the valley will require more flowers and a bigger to go with it.
4. Are you contemplating a wedding close to or on Valentine's Day? It is one of the most romantic days to get married but also the most expensive for fresh flowers (especially roses). You can avoid this with going silk or artificial flowers as more commonly known. Using a real touch bloom will also give a more realistic effect over standard silk flowers.

If you are having a wedding which falls around the Valentine's Day period or when flowers are not readily available like at Christmas time, maybe silk flowers are the way to go for you. The quality is amazing and often hard to tell apart from fresh. Price can also mean a cheaper alternative.

<http://www.blushbloomsandevents.com.au/fresh-and-silk-flowers-mixed-together-are-hard-to-notice/>

***Experience in the job creates quality and a happy customer:***

A bit about me:

I started out as a florist with a specialty in weddings in 1996 and built my passion through flowers, makeup artist and event designer and spray tanning over the years to come. At first I didn't know if I would like the industry, so I held on to my original job at the Casino until I developed confidence and 100% trust in my work. It didn't take me long to find that I was at home and loved what I was doing. Over time and years of experience I taught myself how to overcome little mistakes from my early days and through learning it made me more confident and better at what I do today.

I work very closely with a number of businesses in the wedding industry and only with those who have had the years of experience. I have also seen the works of each business and met the staff or owners personally. This is my reassurance that I can safely refer professionals to my clients.

I want to make sure that couples really enjoy their wedding day and see it run as smooth as possible.

I like to supply this advice because I have found many couples are lost to know where to start and want to work with referred specialists. It is also very time consuming to do all the research for anyone getting married.

**My past clients have contributed:** My list also evolved with thanks to my past wedding clients. The list includes specialists with a range of packages suitable to meet with your budget.

Meet some of the wedding specialists I work with who are also about passing on savings to their clients.

*Divine Bridal:* Meet Michelle who operates a lovely, quaint boutique shop in Adelaide.  
[www.missdivinebridalboutique.com.au](http://www.missdivinebridalboutique.com.au) Michelle offers a \$50 saving off rack dresses in store.

*Alpha Brides:* Hair dresser. Anna and I have been working together for many years now and our packages combined reflect bonus hair bling for the bride.  
<http://www.blushblossomsandevents.com.au/wedding/>

*Fotocall Photography:* Barry is my husband and only one of the photographers that I work closely with. Since our partnership of 5 years, we have set packages separately or together for up and coming bride and grooms. <http://www.fotocall.com.au> The day I met Barry, he walked into my shop to buy flowers. It didn't take long for me to find out how amazing his work as a part time photographer is and what is involved behind the scenes with making sure every photo is perfect with editing. Many hours go into this skill and now that I understand what is involved I appreciate the skills of top photographers. I always advise clients to choose very good photographer and don't work on the "cheap will do" philosophy. Anyone can take a photo, but remember that you want top photos to remember your big day by in years to come. I've come across lots of clients over time that have voiced their disappointment in their photos or another service because they haven't done their research properly or gone with cheap. Remember that "cheap" can cost more in the long run with damaging the overall effect for your wedding.

Working with recommendations is the key and it doesn't have to be expensive to have an amazing wedding.

### **Who is getting married?**

Here is another good tip to remember. Although we want our guests to have a great time, and yes that is something to be considered, remember that what you choose to do and have on the day is your choice and not theirs. You may decide on a wedding ceremony and reception at home or have finger food for your catering. Guests have complained about the style of cake through to the colour of the dresses. They forget that it is the bride and grooms special day and as long as they are over the moon with the outcome, everyone is happy for them. This link shares what is known to be some of the top complaints guests have from a wedding.

<http://www.projectwedding.com/ideas/22213/the-5-most-common-wedding-guest-complaints>

### **Getting it right and saving you time**

If you have already picked your list of preferred suppliers, do some research before you make the final decision and always remember that the cheapest and most expensive isn't necessarily the best.  
<http://www.blushblossomsandevents.com.au/dont-make-your-wedding-day-look-cheap/>

There are lots of questions you can ask these people and I am only too happy to assist with what you should ask and why.

Researching a supplier list is very time consuming. Many of us don't have the time and above all are not sure where to start with organising. Blush Blooms and Events are here to make life easier. I have done the hard yards with all the research and also as a past bride, I want to share lots of combined secrets including what to avoid.

If you are getting married or know someone who is I offer no obligation quotes and this can be done from anywhere globally.

At the end of the day, it is a great success when I realise I have delivered as promised. Let me share those experiences with you.



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