



The Ultimate Checklist For Planning a Gay Wedding

This list is the only checklist you'll need to use during your gay wedding planning. We have tried to include all the little details to the bigger, most important task. From the budget to hiring the band, we have compiled everything into one handy checklist so that you can have peace of mind during the entire process.

- Relish in the excitement - First things first, and that's to just enjoy your new engagement. Take at least two weeks to just be one with your partner and enjoy your private time, as soon as the word is out you will be bombarded with questions, opinions and ideas so it's best to just take some private time to enjoy your new status.

- Insure Jewellery - Something people often forget to do but is such an important task, is to insure their engagement jewellery. Whether it is a ring, bracelet, necklace or watch, you want to make sure that it is kept protected no matter what. Your partner (or you) has taken care to choose this token of their affection and the last thing you want is an awkward conversation about losing the ring down the toilet.

- Purchase a wedding planner, book or folder - You are going to want to keep all your ideas, notes and plans in one place so purchasing or downloading a wedding planner or blank book to have everything written down in will help keep you organised. There are plenty of books about wedding planning so it may be a good idea to invest in one for you and your partner to read.

- Brainstorm - This is one of the first really fun tasks that get you into the

buzz of wedding planning. Gather ideas by scouring the internet for inspiration, pop down any songs you want played, your favourite flowers that have to appear at the wedding and any other dream ideas you've had or found. It doesn't matter if it seems unfeasible right now, you can refine and condense later on, now is just a time to be inspired and excited.

- Budget - Before you become too carried away with ideas and fantasies about your wedding, it's best to discuss a minimum/maximum budget so that you can be realistic going forward and just have a rough idea about what you're willing to spend when looking at venues and suppliers. As much fun as it is dreaming of a wedding in St. Barths, it just may not be within your means and you don't want to be left disappointed so just exploring what things can cost and how that will fit in your budget is one of the most important tasks during the beginning stages of wedding planning.

- Health & Wellbeing Plan - This is not necessary whatsoever but we think it's a brilliant idea to sit and create either a self-care kit or just write down a wellbeing reminder page which you can refer back to whenever you feel stressed. We all know how stressful wedding planning can be so it's smart to have some things in place in case you get bogged down. Remember to prioritize your and your partner's mental health.

- Research and Prioritize - This will probably be your first time planning a wedding and so it's a good idea to research real weddings to see what sort of things people have included like the themes, food and entertainment. It will give you inspiration for your own wedding and help you decide what is important on the day and what isn't. You may not be too fussed about what



you wear but want to spend plenty on food, drink and entertainment or maybe the other way round! It's important to decide what you want to prioritize so that you don't end up feeling regret for not remembering to include something you wish you had.

- Establish events - There are many events during the wedding calendar but not all are necessary. Decide which events are going to be important to you and whether you want to throw them or not. Bearing in mind certain events can be hosted by the wedding party or family of the couple which takes pressure off you and your partner. The events included are:
 - Engagement Party
 - Wedding Shower
 - Stag/Hen/Fox Party (aka Bachelor/Bachelorette/Bach)
 - Welcome Party
 - Rehearsal Dinner

- Announcement and Engagement Party - Now that you have decided what events are a must in your wedding calendar, it's time to plan one of them! The engagement party is where you can announce your engagement (if you haven't already) to your close friends and family, it's a party where everyone can offer their congratulations.

- Hire a Planner - Now that you have a rough budget, planned and attended your gay engagement party it's time to really think about the wedding. Wedding planners are useful people who help make your dream a reality and are heavily involved in materialising your plans. You want to hire them pretty quickly as they can get started on contacting venues and vendors



and provide useful information going forward. They of course are not necessary and can be quite costly, so don't feel that you can't take on the challenge of wedding planning on your own as there are tons of resources and information to help ease the process!

- Draft Guest List - The people you share this day with are probably the most important part of the ceremony and reception (besides the actual elopement). Make sure you figure out exactly who you can't bear to celebrate without and those who you don't mind skipping out on. Drafting up the guest list will also give you a rough idea of how many people you need to cater for and whether it's feasible with your determined budget. If you're not sure how to go about planning your guest list, we have you covered!

- Invitation Addresses - Something people forget to do after they've had a think about the guest list is to gather all the addresses you need to send invitations to. A simple task that can help keep you organised when it comes to the actual invitation preparation and sending.

- Wedding Party - By this point you're going to want to recruit your closest family and friends to help support you on this wedding journey so it's better to decide who you're going to have in your wedding party (if you're going to have one) and arrange the way you're going to tell them! People from your wedding party can help you with things like going to clothing alterations and try-ons, venue viewing if your partner is unavailable to go with you and picking up decorations or props. Anything where you feel you might want support, your wedding party is who you should feel you can turn to. It will



also be a good idea to maybe host a wedding party get-together so that your attendants can meet each other if they haven't already.

- Venue Research and Touring - Where you host your gay wedding is going to be one of the biggest decisions of the entire wedding planning process. It's the blank canvas that sets the tone and atmosphere for your day so getting to researching and touring venues ASAP will make sure you don't leave yourself disappointed by not being able to reserve your dream venue in time. Another consideration is if they have a honeymoon suite and whether you need to book it or not.

- Save The Date - Hopefully by this point you have contacted your venue and discussed their availability. It's now time to figure out when you want to have your wedding, once you decide to send out those "Save The Date" cards at least one year out. These aren't the official invitations because they don't include an address, dress code or time, but they are necessary for guests so that they know to keep that day free and start saving for any gifts, travel or accommodation if need be.

- Registry Office Meeting - You'll need to meet with your local register office to give them notice that you are planning on being married in the near future, it's done no more than 12 months in advance and at least 28 days before the wedding day. They have to approve and give authority to the registrar in order for you to be able to hold a ceremony. This obviously works differently in different locations but this is a general rule when officially registering your marriage.



- Themes, Palettes and Style - It's time to get the creative juices flowing and decide on your overall theme. This will help when it comes to the decorations, colour palette and other little details that will help to create the dream wedding environment. Deciding on the theme will also influence the style of clothing, food & drink and entertainment you're going to begin looking at.
- Wedding Insurance - Given the current climate, it's common for couples to invest in wedding insurance to just help give you peace of mind for any unforeseen circumstances and situations. Research whether it would be smart to insure your wedding and if it can fit within your budget.
- Final Guest List - You want to now finalise your guest list so that you can start planning for the food & drink, seating and invitations. Vendors will want to know how many people they are catering/providing for so the sooner you know how many you're going to invite the better.
- Official Invitations - You have booked the venue, you have a time and date so now it's time to get the RSVP's in so that you can start figuring out all the small details such as ceremony seating, table arrangements and everything else that requires final numbers of guests attending.
- Ceremony Decisions - Sit down and plan out your ideal ceremony, from the wedding readings to the aisle set up and who you want to officiate the wedding! All the little things like confetti, music and flowers will need to be figured out so that when it comes around to hiring, purchasing or DIY's you will know what you are doing.



- Reception Decisions - Same as above. You want to have an idea of what style of music, entertainment, etc... so that you can compile a list of potential vendors who offer what you're looking for.

- Vendor Research - There are certain vendors that get booked up really quickly for weddings such as photographers, caterers and entertainment so you want to start figuring out those finer details. Research and contact multiple different vendors to get plenty of quotes and options ready.

- Wedding Outfits - You want to start visiting tailors and boutiques to try on as many different styles and options as possible! Your outfit is obviously what you're going to be wearing all day (unless you have an outfit change!) so you want to feel fabulous, confident but also as comfortable as possible. If you hate bow ties, veils or any typical wedding attire then don't worry about them as it is completely up to you what you wear just make sure you love it!

- Wedding Rings - The exchanging of the rings is where the marriage materialises, it's the token of affection you have chosen to show your commitment to each other and so you want to make sure you and your partner have discussed and purchased them in advance as they may need tailoring or resizing!

- Check Your Budget - It's a good idea to refer back to your budget at this point and see if there are any changes that can or should be made. We know it's tedious and can be painful but you'll thank yourself for reviewing it



as it's easy to get carried away when purchasing, hiring and putting down deposits.

- Wedding Cake - Start compiling a list of bakers that you want to go and sample flavours from, once you've decided on the style, flavour and baker you want to give them as much time as possible to draw up sketches and plans for your cake. Giving plenty of time for any changes or additions.
- Food & Drink - Same as above, you want to start menu tasting and decide what type of cuisine, style of service and whether you're going to have an open bar, drink tickets or "bring your own bottles".
- Photographer & Videographer - You want to start booking meetings with these types of vendors so that you can view their portfolio and references, the photos taken at your wedding are the long-lasting souvenirs that capture the entire day, so you want to make sure it's done in a style you like, no point hiring a black & white photographer when you love bright, colourful aesthetics!
- Honeymoon - In the midst of all the wedding planning and chaos, your honeymoon is truly a time where you escape, relax and revel in your new marriage! So it's a good time to take a break from wedding planning and start thinking about your dream honeymoon. It changes things up and shifts the focus a bit which can relieve some of the stress that comes from wedding planning. Just remember there is no urgency for the honeymoon itself, it can be the day or a year after the wedding!



- Entertainment - Book any entertainment you want to have at your wedding, whether that's a piano player during the ceremony, a live band at the reception or fire breathers as you make your leave. Whatever requires booking, hiring or reserving should be done quite early in advance so that you avoid any unavailability.

- Florists - Set up a meeting with a bunch of different florists so that you can see the different styles and decorations they can provide, then reserve accordingly.

- Transport, Travel & Accommodation - It's a good time to start planning how your guests are going to get to the venue and whether accommodation is required. If accommodation is required then book a block of rooms either at the venue or in a nearby hotel. It may be a good idea to suggest a list of nearby hotels so that your guests have the choice to choose themselves. Figure out whether it makes sense to hire a coach to pick up guests from local transport links and parking for guests travelling by car. Now is also a good time to set up a carpooling scheme, so if there are guests who may find it difficult to get to but there are guests near them who are driving you may be able to connect them! You also want to make sure you decide on your own transport if needed.

- Wedding Party Attire - It's a good time to gather your wedding party and begin shopping for their outfits. Similar to buying your own outfit, you want to give plenty of time in case alterations and adjustments need to be made.

- Ceremony Readings & Vows - You would have most likely received a form



from the registrar asking to fill in details of the ceremony. They expect these back at least six weeks before the wedding day as they need to approve a few things. You'll have to fill out the song you're using to walk down the aisle, any readings that you're going to include and your wedding VOWS.

- Wedding Registry & Website - If you are planning on having a gift list then it may be a good idea to create a wedding website. It's a go to destination for all the information your guests will need regarding your wedding.
- Hair & Makeup - If you are going to need makeup artists, hairstylists or a barber for your wedding then now is the time to decide and book.
- Outfit Accessories - Socks, cufflinks and all the little additions that are going to complete your wedding should be ordered, shoes as well as they may need wearing in so that they don't cause awful blisters!
- Contact Guests - It's a good time to touch base with any guests who may not have RSVP'd yet.
- Wedding Party Gifts - Your wedding party would have really helped you through this wedding planning process and so couples tend to buy their attendants gifts that they give to them either the night before the wedding or the day of.
- Stag/Hen/Fox Party - You're now getting closer to the wedding day and it's time to celebrate your last night of freedom! Gather your besties,



brainstorm then plan your ideal party and finally, let loose!

- Finer Details** - There are many components to a wedding and we want to make sure you remember to consider them all; whether they are necessary or not is up to you.
 - Table names, place settings and decorations
 - Signage: Welcome signs, directions, toilets and any signs that may need to be made to point out areas of your wedding.
 - Cake toppers, stand and decoration items
 - Menu cards and programmes
 - Ring pillows
 - Any extra decorations and details that need to be considered!

- Pay and Finalise Vendors** - You may be paying in instalments or have put down a deposit so it's now time to pay in full and finalise the running order. Your vendors will need to know what time to drop off their goods, entertainment will need to be set up and if you're having a DJ then tracklists need to be discussed.

- Final Fittings** - Make sure you have some final outfit fittings at least 2-4 weeks before the wedding day as you may need minor adjustments.

- Pack** - Not only the essentials needed for the wedding but also for your honeymoon if you are leaving straight after. Also exchange any foreign currency if you need it.

- Wedding Rehearsal** - One of the final huge steps before the official day is



to have a wedding rehearsal with all your wedding party, officiants and wedding planner if you have one. You want to run through where people will be walking, standing, sitting and go through the timings. Any questions about the ceremony and reception should be answered now.

- Rehearsal Dinner - The final event before the wedding day. This should be held after the rehearsal (obviously) and 1-2 days before the wedding because you want all the details and information fresh in everyone's minds before the big day!
- Skincare, Beauty Treatments, etc... - You may want to pamper yourself before the wedding, so take a day where you and your partner or wedding party have one final relaxing day where you have facials, nail treatments or massages to prepare yourself for the big day.
- Wedding Emergency Kit - Something a lot of people forget and regret not doing, is to create a wedding emergency kit. These usually include a travel sewing kit, plasters, painkillers and any other little tools that would be useful in the unlikely event something happens.
- Check The Weather! - Another important thing to do is to check the weather 1-7 days before the wedding as you may need to invest in buying umbrellas for everyone or even move part of the event inside if necessary.
- Run-through Checklist - Make sure you give a run-through/proceedings checklist to your chief wedding attendant so that they have a copy and can help answer any questions guests may have.



- Memorise Your Vows/Speech - It's not necessary to memorise them but if that's something you would like to do, then try to do it 1-3 days before the wedding.

- Check and Double Check! - 1 or 2 days and the night before the wedding is where you must check you have absolutely everything. Rings, clothing, accessories, etc... touch base with your wedding party and coordinator to ensure everything is ready and if any missing items come up you have at least the day to try and sort it out.

- Get an Early Night! - Make sure you get your beauty rest! It's going to be a huge day, the biggest in your life so far, so you want to make sure you are well-rested and ready.

- Get up Early! - It's the day of the big day, there isn't much left to do than to gather your wedding party, get ready and have some final chats with the venue and vendors to make sure they are getting your wedding day ready to perfection.

- Get Married! - Everything has led up to this point and it's time for you to get married! We hope this checklist has covered everything you need to pull off the perfect gay wedding and it's time for your happily ever after!
Congratulations!