

# 2025 Wedding Album

A man and a woman are sitting on a large, colorful butterfly-shaped bench outdoors. The woman is on the left, wearing a yellow cardigan over a black top and a yellow skirt, with a large floral tattoo on her right arm. The man is on the right, wearing a blue and white plaid shirt and blue jeans. They are both smiling. The background shows a grassy field and trees.

*Featuring...*

The Mendota Reporter  
Wednesday, May 21, 2025

Ethan Wade and Dasie Newkirk will be married on Saturday,  
Nov. 22, 2025, at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Compton.



# Clever ways to invite people to be in your wedding party

Plenty of love and effort goes into coordinating a dream wedding. Although the happy couple garners most of the spotlight on such momentous occasions, they're not the only ones who will feature prominently in the wedding.

The wedding party is made up of bridesmaids, groomsmen, a ring bearer, a flower girl, ushers, and other guests of honor, such as a couple's parents. The wedding resource The Knot reports that old school etiquette once indicated there should be one groomsman and one corresponding bridesmaid for every 50 guests, although four bridesmaids and four groomsmen tends to be the average nowadays.

Choosing who will be

included in the wedding party requires forethought and should not be rushed. The rule of thumb is to ask roughly a year to eight months before the wedding so those asked have time to prepare. When that time comes, these fun ideas can help couples invite loved ones to be in the wedding party with style.

- Say it with a treat. Remember those heart-shaped candies that come out at Valentine's Day that are printed with various sentiments, like "Be mine"? Replicate the idea by giving prospective wedding party members cookies iced to look like tuxedos and bridesmaid gowns with a phrase like "Will you?"

- Give personalized drinkware. Whether it's

wine glasses or flasks, have drinkware engraved with the names of who is being asked so that everyone can toast when they say yes. In the event that someone declines, that person will still have a thoughtful memento.

- Make custom scratch-off cards. This is one gamble that is likely to pay off when you present loved ones and friends with scratch-off tickets that reveal the question, "Will you be my bridesmaid/groomsman?"

- Put together swag bags. Take a page out of fashion shows or celebrity parties and package some luxury items into gift bags for those special people you want to stand by your side on your wedding day. High-end grooming products, jewelry, electronics accessories, and

more can be great gifts for those who are likely to be in your wedding party.

- Gift robes or T-shirts: Plan ahead for staged and coordinated photos by purchasing matching robes or T-shirts for all the besties in the wedding party. Those who are up for having a good time will have no problem wearing the matching outfits when out for wedding-related events.

- Fill balloons with confetti and messages. Ask friends and loved ones to pop balloons to reveal your request that they be in the wedding party.

Engaged couples may have many close friends and loved ones they want to stand by their side during the wedding. There are plenty of fun ways to ask them to be part of the celebration.



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## Let Sullivan's Foods Create the Wedding Cake of Your Dreams!

*What is a wedding reception without a cake? Dasie and Ethan look over some of the wedding cake choices that are offered at Sullivan's Foods.*



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## Tips to help couples plan a perfect honeymoon

Couples have much to look forward to when planning their weddings. In addition to the momentous occasion when they say “I do,” couples can look ahead with excitement as they anticipate spending time with family and friends in a fun setting.

Though the wedding day is the focal point of couples’ planning efforts, the post-wedding honeymoon also merits ample consideration. A honeymoon is the first trip many couples take together after tying the knot, and many will never forget this special excursion. As couples pore over the details of wedding planning, they may want to consider these tips to ensure their honeymoon is a trip to remember

for a lifetime.

- Identify your dream trip. There are no rules regarding honeymoons. Though couples’ budgets and professional obligations may factor into where they can go and how long their honeymoon can be, couples can discuss their dream trips and then determine if they can make those dreams come true on their honeymoon. Couples who have always aspired to backpack through Europe should consider that a possible honeymoon trip. If a food tour of Italy is on couples’ bucket list, then investigate how feasible that might be for your honeymoon.

- Stay up on current events. It can be easy for couples to get lost in the

weeds while planning their weddings and miss what’s going on across the globe. However, knowledge of current events can be vital when planning a honeymoon. Faraway and exotic locales may seem tailor-made for a honeymoon, but that’s only the case if such destinations are not plagued by civil unrest, conflict, natural disasters, or other events that can affect how safe it is to visit such places. The U.S. Department of State maintains a free, easily accessible list of travel advisories at [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov). The Government of Canada maintains a similar list at [travel.gc.ca](http://travel.gc.ca). Couples are urged to visit these sites before booking their honeymoon, particularly if they hope to

travel internationally.

- Consider amenities and all-inclusive packages. All-inclusive packages can be a great deal, particularly for couples who want their honeymoon to be all about relaxing at a single resort destination. All-inclusive packages cover the cost of food and most beverages, making these options both convenient and budget-friendly. When going this route, couples also should decide which amenities they want to access on their trip. Access to a gym and/or spa, activities like parasailing, and other perks are just some of the potential amenities couples can look for as they choose a honeymoon destination.

- Collaborate. A honeymoon



moon may be the first trip couples take after tying the knot, and it can lay the foundation for future collaborative efforts. Planning travel is not always so easy, so couples can work together and make any necessary

concessions so each person gets what they want out of the trip.

Some simple strategies can help couples plan and enjoy a honeymoon they are likely to remember for a lifetime.



*Dasie and Ethan enjoy the comfort of a love seat from Meyers Furniture, one of the many choices of furniture available to decorate the home of newlyweds.*



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# What to know when picking a wedding reception menu

Lots of details require a decision when planning a wedding. Engaged couples may or may not enjoy tending to much of the minutiae involved in wedding planning, but the reception menu is typically one popular point of interest.

When picking a wedding reception menu, couples typically get to sit down with their venue operator or caterer and take a taste test so they can decide what to include and exclude come the big night. That typically results in some happy hearts and full bellies. But there's more to picking a reception menu than taste, and the following are some pointers couples can consider as they aim to provide a tasty meal for

their wedding guests.

- Resist the urge to make the menu reflect your personal preference. Couples, particularly those footing the bill for their own weddings, may be tempted to pick exclusively foods they like for the reception. Though it's important that couples get to enjoy their first meal together after tying the knot, it's good to ensure that guests get to have an enjoyable meal as well. Resist any urge to let personal preferences dictate the menu, particularly if you have a restrictive diet. For example, vegans need not insist everyone eat a vegan meal at the reception nor should meat lovers insist that every plate end up with some red meat on it. Diversify the



**Picking a reception menu is a fun and filling component of wedding planning. Keeping some simple pointers in mind can help couples pick a menu everyone can enjoy.**

menu so people with various preferences can fill up and enjoy their dinner.

- Inquire about food allergies. When inviting guests, ask them to cite any

food allergies they may have when they RSVP. Many banquet halls and caterers are now accustomed to accommodating diners with food allergies,

but the earlier that information is communicated, the more time couples have to pick delicious foods that won't compromise the health of guests who must avoid certain dishes or ingredients.

- Align food with degree of formality. It's important that couples consider the ambiance of the wedding when picking a reception menu. A pig roast might be ideal for a backyard wedding, but something more formal is called for when dining in a lavishly decorated banquet hall. Couples can keep this in mind when choosing the menu. It's also notable that caterers tend to have a creative side, so they might be able to present certain foods

in ways that match the vibe of the wedding even if those dishes would not ordinarily align with the ambiance of the reception.

- Leave the experimentation to the cocktail hour. If couples have certain exotic foods in mind, they can still serve those items but do so during the cocktail hour. Guests can simply turn down the chance to try exotic foods during the cocktail hour without going hungry. But a sit-down dinner should ensure every guest has something to fill their belly.

Picking a reception menu is a fun and filling component of wedding planning. Keeping some simple pointers in mind can help couples pick a menu everyone can enjoy.



*Ethan and Dasie peruse the many fine dining selections offered at El Zarape, which is a perfect venue to hold a rehearsal dinner prior to the big day.*



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**Congratulations and best wishes to Dasie and Ethan on your upcoming wedding - November 22, 2025!**



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# Time management tips for your wedding day

As any married couple can attest, a wedding day has a tendency to fly by. Couples have much to do on the day they tie the knot, which can make the day feel like a whirlwind.

Certain skills can come in especially handy on a wedding day, and the ability to manage time is certainly one of them. As their big day draws closer, couples can employ these time management tips to slow the day down a little bit.

- Create and distribute a schedule. A schedule can ensure the happy couple and all members of the bridal party know when and where they need to be at certain times during the day. Include all pertinent information on the schedule, including

when and where hair and makeup appointments begin, when transportation to and from the ceremony and reception site will arrive and, of course, the start time for the ceremony. A printed copy can help, but a digital copy sent via text or email can guarantee the schedule is accessible via smartphone at all times during the day.

- Collaborate with your photographer in advance of your wedding day. Couples can streamline wedding day photography sessions by collaborating with their photographer in advance. During these sessions, identify the bridal party shots you want to take and then create a schedule of photos so all party members know where they need to be and

when. Some couples choose to schedule bridal party photoshoots before the ceremony, while others prefer theirs after the couple has made it official. Regardless of which option couples prefer, schedule these photos so no time is wasted finding bridal party members.

- Don't forget to set aside time to eat. Anything can derail a wedding day schedule if it's forgotten when couples devise their initial plan for how the day will unfold. Couples might be less inclined to forget hair and makeup appointments and photo sessions because such components are integral to wedding planning. But couples should not forget to leave time for themselves

and their bridal party to eat. Schedule a breakfast for all bridal party members (separate ones if couples insist on avoiding each other until the ceremony) to ensure no one sleeps in and throws off the day's timeline. Include time to eat lunch if the ceremony is in late afternoon or early evening. If you forget to schedule time to eat, the timeline will almost certainly be thrown off when everyone gets hungry and requires some sustenance.

- Go over schedules with your vendors. In the weeks prior to your wedding, reach out to your vendors to confirm the day's timeline. Do this prior to handing out a schedule to your bridal party so no one is confused if any last-minute changes



**Maintaining and distributing a schedule of the day's events, including hair appointments, can help engaged couples keep their wedding day timeline on track.**

are made.

Couples have much to manage on their wedding

days. Perhaps no component is more important to manage effectively than time.



*Kayla Adams of First State Bank goes over the different options Dasie and Ethan have when opening a new savings account after they become bride and groom.*



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## Helpful tips for writing wedding vows

The exchange of wedding vows is a key component of a wedding ceremony and sometimes helps to ensure the marriage is binding in accordance with the faith of the participants. Vows also may be exchanged in service of tradition. According to the wedding resource Zola, vows are not a legal necessity for marriage and some cultures do not use them. Still, many couples like to recite vows during their weddings.

Couples have various options pertaining to the vows they share. In religious ceremonies, vows may be predetermined as part of the requirements and rituals of that faith and religious texts. Individuals also may choose to read romantic verses from poetry. Another option is to

write one's own vows.

When drafting vows, here are some guidelines to follow.

- Utilize a template. Scour the internet for resources on writing vows. You'll likely find sample vows or even templates where you can fill in information if you do not know where to begin.

- Utilize memories of when you met. Your vows can include special anecdotes or stories of time spent in the early days when you first knew this was the person with whom you would spend your life.

- Explain who this person is to you. Tell the audience what it is about this person that has you smitten. Is he or she your partner in crime?

Confidante? Best friend? Or all of the above?

- Share what you are pledging. Write out exactly what you are vowing to your special someone. Be definitive and draw from your personal experiences. For example, "I vow to support you each time you adopt another shelter dog." "I promise to not hog the covers." "I vow to warm your toes on cold evenings." Make it personal, heartfelt and humorous.

- Say you'll be there. At the heart of vows is a promise that you'll be around no matter what life throws at you. This is a safe sentiment to include in your vows, and likely one your future spouse and other guests will come to expect.

- Keep things brief. There



is no need to write a novel for your vows, which may reassure you if you're nervous about the right wording and speaking in front of an audience. Outline the most important points you want

to share and build on those sentiments.

- Reflect on the future. Wrap up your vows by noting your excitement about what the future may bring, whether that is a family,

travel or another adventure.

Wedding vows are traditional components of many weddings. Couples easily can write their own vows to personalize the ceremony even further.



*Jackie Near of First State Insurance goes over all of the insurance options a couple like Dasie and Ethan will need once they begin their married life together.*



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# Fun ways to commemorate a wedding anniversary

Milestone moments are few and far between, which underscores the significance of celebrating such occasions. Wedding anniversaries certainly fit the bill of momentous occasions worth celebrating. Whether a couple has been married for half a century or 12 months, the following are some fun ways they can commemorate their time together.

- Take a second honeymoon. Second honeymoons are wildly popular ways to commemorate a wedding anniversary. Such trips present a direct connection to the time couples tied the knot. Book a stay in the same locale where you honeymooned years ago, even staying in the same

hotel, and possibly even the same room. Relive special moments you each recall but don't hesitate to create new memories as well. Couples also can consider a second honeymoon in an entirely different destination than the one they visited on their first trip as a married couple years ago.

- Tie the knot again. Many couples choose to renew their vows on particularly notable anniversaries, such as a silver anniversary (25 years). But there's no rule against couples renewing their vows whenever they think it fit to do so, whether that's one year, five years, 12 years, and so on. Incorporating certain components from the initial wedding ceremony can

make a renewal of vows even more special.

- Do your first date all over again. Married couples often remember their first date, and recreating that experience can be a fun way to celebrate a wedding anniversary. If a first date was dinner and a movie, find the movie on a streaming platform and then watch it after arriving home from dinner at the same restaurant where the date began. If the establishment has since closed, order in dishes you enjoyed that night or work together to cook them in the comforts of your own kitchen.

- Commemorate the era you tied the knot with a themed party. Preferences in relation to music, fashion

and design change with each generation, and couples may find it fun to recreate the era when they tied the knot, particularly if it's been decades since they said, "I do." For example, couples who walked down the aisle in the 1980s can host an 80s-themed party where guests are encouraged to don their favorite attire from that unique era. Spend the night dancing away to a playlist of popular songs from the year you tied the knot, ending the night with a recreation of your first official dance as a married couple.

- Go back to where it all began. Visiting the venue where you tied the knot can be a fun and moving way to stroll down Memory Lane. If possible, contact your



reception venue and, if it's been a while since you and your guests have gathered for a night of fun, book the space and host a laid-back reception for friends and loved ones who were there to

celebrate with you all those years ago.

Wedding anniversaries are milestone moments, and there are many fun and unique ways for couples to commemorate these special events.

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