

American Wedding Practices

January 27, 2006 - Living in the US makes one feel free - free to do anything, free to live, free to love, free from traditions. While this is true, there are still many practices done during wedding that renders this memorable event with a distinct American touch. Here are some:

Starting from the engagement, Americans can think of unique ways to personalize their wedding. As there really isn't any engagement tradition, the more unique the marriage proposal is done, the better.

For most wedding preparations, the engaged couple visits their parents to inform them of their recent engagement.

At times, the engaged couple hosts an engagement party. The engagement party costs less than a wedding reception since most of the time, the menu will only include cocktails and hors d'oeuvres. Therefore, if the couple is on a tight budget, they can just invite more guests to the engagement party if they plan to limit the number of guests during the wedding.

Most wedding preparations have a bridal shower given by the maid of honor and the bridesmaids. The groom may also have a bachelor party the night before the wedding but he has to be careful not to drink too much.

Wedding invitations should include response cards to quickly inform the couple whether the person has accepted or declined the invitation. The wedding invitations should also be sent within four to six weeks before the event.

Usually, there is a rehearsal dinner in which the wedding party and guests came from far places to be present at the wedding attend. It was practiced that the groom's parents pay for this dinner.

A bridal luncheon may be hosted for the bride's attendants during the wedding day. However, time constraints may not permit this to be part of the schedule for the wedding day. Likewise, the groom may also host a groom's dinner for his groomsmen.

Interestingly, even if the couple is not very religious, they still prefer a religious ceremony. However, this may pose a problem since in America people of different faiths and religious backgrounds get married.

Even if there are few people who believe in bad luck, some couples still make sure that the groom does not see his bride until she starts waking on the aisle.

It is still practiced that the groom and his groomsmen enter the church through a side door. The bride will then walk down the aisle with her father. In some cases when both her father and stepfather brought up the bride, she may ask them both to escort her.

During a formal reception, there is usually a bridal table where the couple and the attendants sit. Also, food and drinks should be served as the guests appear at the reception.

Before, gift giving used to depend on what the guest will feel useful for the couple. Now, it is better to register for gifts so the guests will know what to bring that the couple will need.

Upon receiving an engagement or wedding gift, it is better to send a thank you note apart from saying "thank you" to the giver. This should be sent within two weeks upon receipt of the gift. Make a personalized thank you note, instead of using an impersonal generic thank you note.

These are just some American practices during weddings. Whether one chooses to this or prefers to have a very different wedding, what's more important is that American's still believe in the wedding vow, "For better or worse, 'til death do us part."

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About the Author

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