

3 Tips for finding the right reception site

By: RAD Event Production Co.
info@radeventproduction.com
www.radeventproduction.com
www.radeventproduction.com

The venue looks fabulous in pictures, but is it really the perfect facility for your wedding and or special event? Before choosing the venue, it's important that you complete the following:

- 1. Venue Research** – Research is the key to selecting the right venue. Before selecting a venue visit several venues, create a score sheet for each and take pictures. "DO NOT" book a venue before visiting and asking pertinent questions. Failure to do your homework may result in a bad experience among other things. Ask these questions to get a better feel for the venue:

- Check date availability, occupancy, and parking
- Ask how many events will be on the same day as yours
- Check services available (i.e., catering, the cake, floral arrangements, etc.)
- Review the menu if catering service is available
- Verify what is included in the rental fee
- What is the cost if the event goes over the time allotted
- Find out how many servers will be provided and how will they be dressed
- Discuss alcohol costs (i.e., open bar, cash or consumption bar, etc.)
- Will vendors have access to the facility to decorate etc. before the event
- Check for limitations on décor (i.e., no holes on the wall, nothing hanging, etc.)
- Go over prices per person and how much of a deposit is required
- Discuss cancellation policy
- Check references if it is a venue you are not familiar with
- Check the bathrooms – how many people do they accommodate?
- Confirm everything on this list before booking with the venue

The venue adds to the décor of your event. A venue with a beautiful garden, dishes, linens, chiavari chairs, chandeliers and spectacular views, will mean less time and money on decorating. If you are satisfied with your research and feel comfortable with the venue, let's move on to step #2.

- 2. Is this Venue right for me?** – Before you "Get It In Writing", confirm that you have asked yourself the following questions:

- Do I like the location?
- Is the site ornate?
- Will my guests feel comfortable?
- Are there any restrictions on decorating?
- Do I have a choice of table linens? If needed, can I make changes?
- Do I like the layout of the rooms? Can the layouts be changed?
- Is the venue bright and clean?
- Was the caterer and venue coordinator professional and knowledgeable?
- Is the venue coordinator allowing me to participate in the décor of my event? Or he or she saying "NO" to all of my ideas?

If you are satisfied with the looks of and services provided at the venue then move on to step #3.

- 3. Get-it-in-writing** – A word of mouth or handshake agreement is not valid. You need it in writing. As soon as you come to a decision, it is important that you meet with the venue coordinator and reserve your date. Some venues are booked one year in advance depending on how popular it is. Every venue has legal obligation to abide by a binding agreement. This is call the "Contract." The date is not yours until the contract is signed and the initial deposit is paid. Avoid paying with cash. Use a credit card when possible as this will create a paper trail. Keep contract and receipts in the safe place. The contract must include the following:

- Dates/Times (including set-up and clean-up time)
- Type of event and size of event
- Locations (full address of venue)
- Payment schedule
- Prices, plus taxes and gratuities
- Delivery schedule
- Refund and cancellation policies
- Any overtime and added fees (i.e., rental of tablecloths, centerpieces, etc.)
- Number of uniformed servers per table
- Who to contact in case of emergency
- Who from the venue will be onsite the day of the event

Later, you can add sheets to the contract as you add your menu selection, decorations, event schedule and any other details. By taking the time to do your research and reviewing your contract, you can ensure that all of your requests have been addressed.

