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Modern Bride

FEB/MARCH

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DRESS YOU
FOR YOUR
BIG DAY
(see p.100)

Ali Landry

GET READY

WE HELP YOU

- * Pick a date
- * Create a web site
- * Manage your budget
- * Select your invites
- * Find a photographer

DISPLAY UNTIL MARCH 10, 2008

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Lock up the Logistics

Ensure a picture-perfect wedding day by tackling the practical matters—parking, permits and more—of a backyard soiree

Do a "sound check." Before booking entertainment, look into the noise ordinances for the area so you can be sure your band or DJ will comply. It's also a good idea to let the neighbors know the date and hours of your wedding; they'll appreciate the advance notice, and hopefully this will prevent any unpleasant confrontations on the big day.

Plan for parking. If you'd like to have guests park on the street, first contact the town to find out whether this is allowed and if you need a permit. Many couples who have backyard weddings hire a valet service; you may need a permit for this as well.

Prepare for multiple scenarios. An outdoor reception requires a backup plan for inclement weather; if you don't have the space to bring the party indoors, you will need to rent at least one tent, and possibly flooring, to provide coverage. Regardless of the weather, you will most likely need portable bathrooms to accommodate all of your guests. (We advise ordering three or four stalls for 100 to 250 guests.) And to ensure that your guests are comfortable at all times, have pashminas on hand in case the air becomes chilly, and insect repellent should mosquitoes strike.



Unique Outdoor Offerings

1. Sweet Gestures

Rent an old-fashioned ice-cream cart or snow-cone stand to scoop and serve to order. Or hire a vendor to whip up funnel cakes or other summery favorites on the spot.

2. Water Play

Arrange for guests to take paddleboat or rowboat rides if your backyard is on a pond or near a lake. Be sure to have your photographer snap some pictures.

3. Range of Motion

Hang a tree swing or porch swing on the lawn; your crowd can mingle while waiting in line to take turns.

4. Simply Celestial

Set up a high-powered telescope and offer star charts so that guests can stargaze after the sun goes down.

5. Game Time

Set out croquet and bocce ball equipment alongside colorfully painted signs inviting friendly competition.



For more reception ideas, go to Brides.com/reception