4 Things 2021 Couples Can Expect to See at Their Wedding

WEDDING PLANNING // July 20, 2020

How many times have you said the word 'uncertain' in 2020 so far? For us, it's too many to count.

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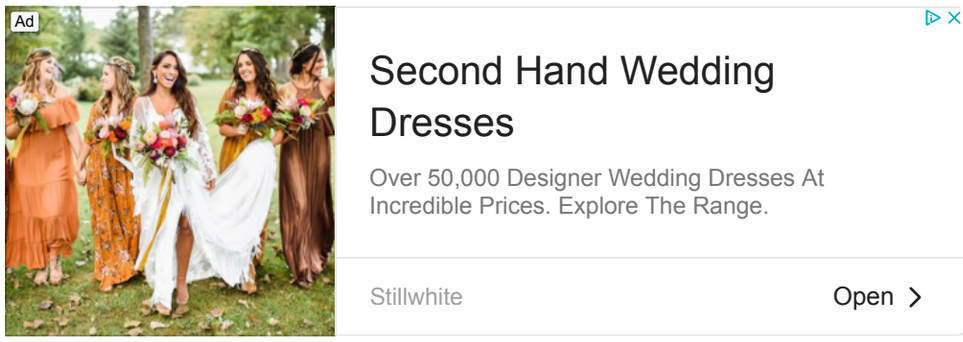
COVID-19 has, no doubt, given us a year to remember. Wedding planning has been particularly tumultuous for couples attempting to stay on top of their to dos. Good news is, we can offer those planning through these uncertain times some alleviation.



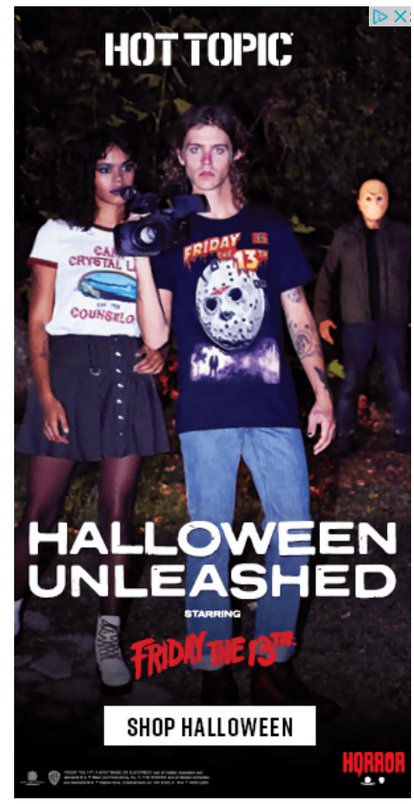
We connected with a handful of seasoned professionals in the wedding industry, and they offered some valuable advice that (finally) warms us up with a bit of long over-due *certainty*. Here are 4 things 2021 couples can expect to see at their wedding...starting with stylish face masks for the bride + groom (and guests!) like the ones above.

above: *photog: Sarahi Hadden Photography* | *design: Party Crush Studio* | *florals: Le Bloomerie*| *dress: Lulus* | *hmu:Jess Glam*

All About Intimate Events

photography: Alison Conklin // venue: Promise Ridge // event design + planning: confetti & co. // florals: Belovely Design

as seen on Trending Now: Micro Weddings + Why We Love Them!



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"We are finding couples are looking for more intimate celebrations for 2021 and 22, approximately 40-50 less guests to accommodate this trend. Couples are allocating dollars to the guest experience. This style of wedding includes more branded elements and customized areas than a traditional wedding. The ceremony has more decorative seating set in the round or crescent style setting. The dinner reception has elevated, stadium-like levels on the perimeter of the space for a 3-tiered seating experience so everyone Is looking over at the entertainment, to the dance floor, and most importantly the bride and groom as the event's focal point. Couples will embrace the gala bash experience and the heightened energy this wedding style brings." – AJ Williams, President + Creative Director of AJ Events

"As we look to weddings and other celebrations in 2021, we anticipate seeing a continuation of smaller, more intimate weddings (i.e. weddings under 150). The pandemic has obviously forced many couples to consider the size of their guest list and reevaluate if a larger, 300+ bash is in fact a priority, or if they could adjust their count to allow for a more intimate (and therefore, safer, easier to plan) gathering. With a smaller-than-anticipated guest count, couples are finding that fewer guests opens up the opportunity to "splurge" in some areas they otherwise weren't planning to, such as hiring a videographer, adding intentional details or an additional floral install, upgrading to handmade paper for the day-of stationery or premium cocktails, and other "upgrades" that before may have seemed like a luxury they couldn't afford." – Mallory + Kirstie, Elevate Events

photog: Sarahi Hadden Photography | design: Party Crush Studio | florals: Le Bloomerie | hmu: Jess Glam | rentals: Lux Event Rentals | calligraphy: Hand Lettered By Tiffany

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"Smaller more intimate gatherings will be what to expect in early 2021 but this doesn't mean your wedding can't look spectacular. I see dramatic ceremony designs being quite popular as this is one area we know won't be impacted by changing service rules." – Kate Goddard, Founder + Senior Event Designer, Wild Sky Events

"Not only are 2021 couples facing a slightly different look for their wedding, they now have to consider a new set of health and safety standards for guests and event partners. LSE expects the warm months to be packed to the guild with events. The most popular backdrop of the year goes to: *outdoor space*! Taking your wedding day completely outdoors is crucial for the safety and health of others. We predict smaller counts and more space between guests even while outside. The cute moments will now involve sanitizer, distance markers, custom masks, and even more creative escort chart displays. Of course, we have some creative concepts ready to be used involving these wedding must-haves. The shared experiences will now become very personal, and you can certainly expect the food service to look a little different!" – Lea, Lea Stafford Events

Thoughtful Food + Beverage

photography: Nicole Leever // venue name: The Cree Estate // event design: Setting the Scheme // planning: Courtney Tibbets from After the Engagement

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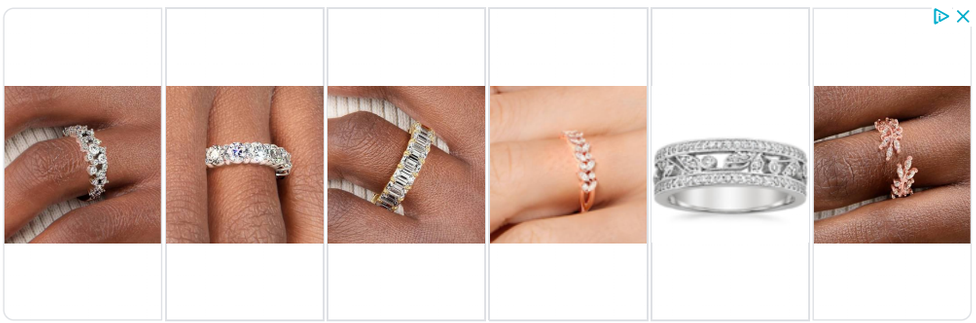
"We are really trying to navigate how weddings will take place once again, especially as a caterer. Staff training and procedures will be ultra-focused on everyone's health. Buffets will be different, more like small stations, to alleviate crowding. Each buffet station would most likely be operated by a chef or server, keeping safety in mind, with gloves, and face masks on during serving. Purchasing hand sanitizer to keep at all stations is definitely on our list too." – Sarah Kuhlberg, Creative Director, Colette's Catering

"Instead of promptly working through dinner and dancing for 3 or so hours (like traditional, larger weddings), dinner will be the emphasis! In 2021, the wedding reception meal will be drawn out, comprehensive, incredibly memorable and, of course, delicious! We'll be seeing tasting menus, coursed out meals and even wine pairings! Dinner will be where it's at. Caterers rejoice!" – Danielle Horvatin, Rosewood Weddings

"Upcoming brides can expect that their cake designers and dessert caterers will be taking particular care to follow safety procedures. They will be utilizing masks and gloves during set/up and whenever they are in close proximity to the desserts. I also anticipate that we will see couples veer away from dessert bars, since guests will have to share utensils and the dessert tables also put guests in close contact with food that they may not consume." – Randi Smith, Sugar Euphoria

Guest Experience + Authenticity

photog: Christine Quarte Photography



Unique Wedding Rings
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"Incorporating guests virtually will become a large part of the planning process. Planners will need to go through all the options with their couples to ensure they have the right streaming software setup. Better yet, rather than just propping up an iPhone somewhere work with the videography team to make sure high-quality video from the entire wedding is streamed for your guests." – Kate Goddard, Founder + Senior Event Designer, Wild Sky Events

"Shifts to electronic correspondence — as the pandemic threatens domestic mail and shipping, expect changes to the way we send invitations, too. At Orange Blossom Special Events, we're huge fans of paper goods. There's something special about receiving mail and something extra-special when that mail is a beautiful foil-printed invitation with an address written by a calligrapher. Looking ahead, expect a major shift towards totally electronic invitation and/or correspondence. Delays in mail processing and uncertainties surrounding the ability to host an event will steer most couples to opt for electronic save the dates and invitations. Electronic mail gives couples the flexibility to send out invitations closer to the date of the event should any changes or obstacles arise." – Brooke Avishay, Orange Blossom Special Events

"We had a few brides ask to provide a personalized gift to each guest during dinner as a thank you for being patient with their rescheduled wedding. We are now offering all couples these gift boxes as part of the dinner experience. Participants for our virtual events receive a *Party in a Box* and we have transformed that into a *Luxe Wedding Party in a Box*; beautifully wrapped in the theme of the wedding, tagged with the guest's name + placed on the chairs for each guest to enjoy! The *Party in the Box* will include some of the same items: skin toned masks, party favors, a mini percussion to play with, a mini tequila bottle, sanitizer, a parting gift + an item from the bride and groom that speaks to their signature style. The ladies' boxes will have a designer lip gloss, recovery eye masks; and the men's box could include a cigar or an emergency phone charger. Adding something fun and funny is a must to increase engagement at your wedding! These gifts will leave a memorable impression, and be remembered as a highlight for many evenings to come." – AJ Williams, President & Creative Director of AJ Events

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"This unforeseen pandemic has, without a doubt, added to each and every couple's love story. Instead of shying away from the obvious, we wonder, why not take that concept and infuse even more of "you" as a couple into the day!? Weave your story (COVID difficulties included) into the details, and don't be afraid to shirk a few traditions in favor of being truly YOU and telling your whole story! Now, more than ever, couples are realizing that slowing down and focusing on love, family and friends are of utmost importance, so we expect that we'll see brides making the absolute most of it, and opting out of "tradition" in favor of simply being themselves. (So if you want to wear that killer red dress or dusty blue jumpsuit that you were supposed to wear for your engagement photos to the reception instead of a traditional white get-up, we say go for it!)." – Mallory + Kirstie, Elevate Events

Nitty Gritty Health + Safety

photography: Carlie Statsky // event design + florals: Barefoot Floral as seen in Plan A Socially Distant Wedding in 4 (Gorgeously) East Steps!

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"Guests may expect to see health and safety information included on the details card in the invitation suite or on the couple's wedding website. This will include what things the couple has planned to keep their guests safe, like hand sanitizing stations located throughout the venue. An overall attempt to space guests out to maintain distance between them could have couples reconsidering seating arrangements for the safety of their attendees. You may expect to see fewer people sitting at each table. For example, a guest table that you could have easily sat 8 people before coronavirus may only have 4 – 5 guests. Couples could go even further by choosing to only sit guests at tables with members of their own household. Fewer guests per table could increase the cost of an event with more tables and linens being required but most couples feel the additional cost is worth the wellbeing of their loved ones." – Victoria Miller, LUXE Atlanta Events

"We definitely anticipate seeing a focus on hygiene and cleanliness in favor of making guests comfortable. Socially distanced table layouts may not be all the rage, but we definitely envision some cute sanitation stations styled into a few vignettes around the venue! Regardless, let's make 2021 the year of creativity, love, and really going for it!" – Mallory + Kirstie, Elevate Events

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