

BODASYEVENTOS

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Technology at Weddings: Here to Stay

The official Magazine of the IADWP



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Adrián Pavía

"An industry that evolves, honors and celebrates"

Welcome to a new edition of our magazine, a space created with passion and dedication for you, the professionals and dreamers who day by day give life to the romance and events industry. Thank you for joining us once again, for being inspired by our pages and for being part of this ever-growing global community.

In this issue, we pause to look at the present of our industry globally: weddings are undergoing an exciting transformation. We see brides and grooms increasingly committed to authentic, conscious, intimate yet emotionally charged experiences. Technology, design, sustainability and a return to cultural roots are ushering in a new era in the way we celebrate love. The industry is reinventing itself, and we, as protagonists, have the mission to accompany that evolution with sensitivity, professionalism and creativity.

But it is also a time to honor. It is with deep sorrow that we bid farewell to an invaluable colleague, a warm and passionate human being: JC Castillo, from Mexico. His recent departure leaves a huge void in the heart of the Latin American bridal universe. JC was a reference, a mentor, a friend. His legacy is tattooed on every event he masterfully produced, and on every professional who touched everyone's heart with his generosity. This issue is also a tribute to his memory. Thank you for so much, dear JC.

We continue to move forward, grateful for all that is to come. ÉPICA continues to grow and conquer hearts around the world. Today we celebrate with enthusiasm the new collaborations from the United States and Canada, with the contribution of our dear colleagues Faride Sanchez Delgado and Bobbi Jo Roback, committed leaders who strongly join the international chapters of our network.

And as a closing, we look forward to what lies ahead: a series of unforgettable events organized by IADWP that will connect us even more as a community. We will be present in the Dominican Republic, Mexico and Costa Rica, bringing knowledge, experiences, culture and, of course, magic.

Thank you for being part of this story. Thank you for believing in what we do. And thank you for continuing to bet on an industry in which every detail.



ÉPICA Magazine Editor Latin America and Spanish-Speaking Caribbean Islands Chapter Director IADWP



Edition N°16 of Épica. Made with much love in honor of J.C. Castillo.



1. Why are you a Wedding Planner?

I am a Wedding Planner because of the passion I feel when planning a wedding. Being involved with couples from the very beginning makes it possible for me to achieve successful events. Living the process gives me peace, and knowing that everything will be in control is my motivation.

2. What is your favorite place in the Dominican Republic?

My favorite place to relax is Las Terrenas, Samana. There I find peace and I reconnect and renew my energy. Las Terrenas is my safe place where I can rest.

3. In which destination in the Dominican Republic would you celebrate your own wedding?

In Punta Cana.

4. Where would you like to celebrate a destination wedding outside the Dominican Republic?

In Antigua Guatemala.





5. What advice would you give to a planner who is starting his or her career and is reading this Ping-Pong?

Advice: never take absolutely nothing for granted, education is the key to success, and we must constantly renew our knowledge, no matter how many years we have been in the business, we never know everything.

6. What has been the most difficult journey you have faced for your work?

The most difficult journey was going through a pandemic where we were all uncertain if we would be able to continue working.

I faced a lot of doubts, a lot of challenges, having to make painful decisions and start from scratch again.

Love and passion for this work helped to overcome this hard time.

7. If you had a super power, which one would you like? How could you make use of it in the middle of a wedding?

I would like to have the super power to see beyond, to know how to foresee setbacks, and I would definitely use it to avoid unforeseen events.

8. What kind of hobbies or activities do you like to do besides weddings and events?

Traveling, eating, hosting my friends and being a good hostess.

I also like to do sports and sometimes just do nothing.

9. Professionally speaking, what is your daily motivation?

The daily motivation is the passion that makes me get out of bed every day, put on a good face, and be ready for new challenges.



10. Describe the romance industry in 3 words.

Dream, passion, planning.

11. What makes you different from other Wedding Planners?

I am dedicated to my clients, and above all I am very clear.

12. What would you like your company to be like in the future?

A company where my team can grow, where the teams can function independently, but with great synergy.

13. What skill would you like to improve that you do not master today and would benefit your company?

Work more on design and increase my knowledge in the administrative area.

14. What kind of music can't be missing in one of your weddings?

Music from the 70's and 80's.

15. What are you afraid of during the organization of a wedding?

Not having perfect timing. It is the basis for successful weddings.

Marypily López

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In a world where weddings are constantly reinventing themselves, guests no longer expect to attend a celebration; they want to live a memorable, sensory and highly personalized experience. Today more than technology ever, has become indispensable ally for Wedding Planners who seek to enhance every detail and create unrepeatable moments. And we are not just talking about drones or photo booths, but about a new era where artificial intelligence, augmented reality and interactive platforms are completely redesigning how guests experience a wedding.

From spectator to protagonist: technology to engage.

Modern weddings are leaving behind the traditional format. Now, thanks to tools such as personalized apps, augmented reality and interactive QR codes, guests can be an active part of the event before it starts with just their cell phone.

Imagine a wedding app that not only shows the itinerary and location of each activity, but also allows guests to leave voice messages in real time, receive exclusive behind-the-scenes content or even vote for party songs.





Some couples are incorporating instant polls to decide between cocktail or dessert options, making each guest feel that their opinion matters.

Augmented reality: the new trend in weddings

AR is being used to transform spaces and create immersive experiences. From centerpieces that, when scanned with a cell phone, show the couple's love story in 3D, to seating charts projected holographically on walls or gardens. This technology allows stories to be told in a visual, emotional and highly personalized way.

Even guest gifts are taking an innovative turn. Instead of a physical gift, some brides and grooms are opting for digital experiences: commemorative NFTs (Non-Fungible Token), virtual photo albums that update in real time or personalized messages sent via augmented reality directly to each attendee's cell phone.

Artificial intelligence at the service of hospitality

One of the biggest challenges in high-level events is to offer personalized service without losing efficiency. Today, thanks to AI-powered virtual assistants, it is possible for each guest to have access to a digital concierge to answer questions about transportation, schedules, dress code or food restrictions, all from their cell phone.

In addition, AI is also being used to generate personalized playlists during the reception, analyzing in real time the attendees' reactions to each song and adjusting the musical environment to keep the energy high.

Nobody misses out: Experiences that connect

Technology not only transforms the present of a wedding, it also extends its impact. Some couples are using private streaming platforms with virtual reality to allow guests in other countries to "attend" the wedding as if they were there, with 360° cameras that allow them to move around virtually.





Others are implementing digital time capsules where guests can leave messages, videos or wishes to be sent to the couple on their first anniversary.

In short, we are living a silent revolution in the bridal industry.

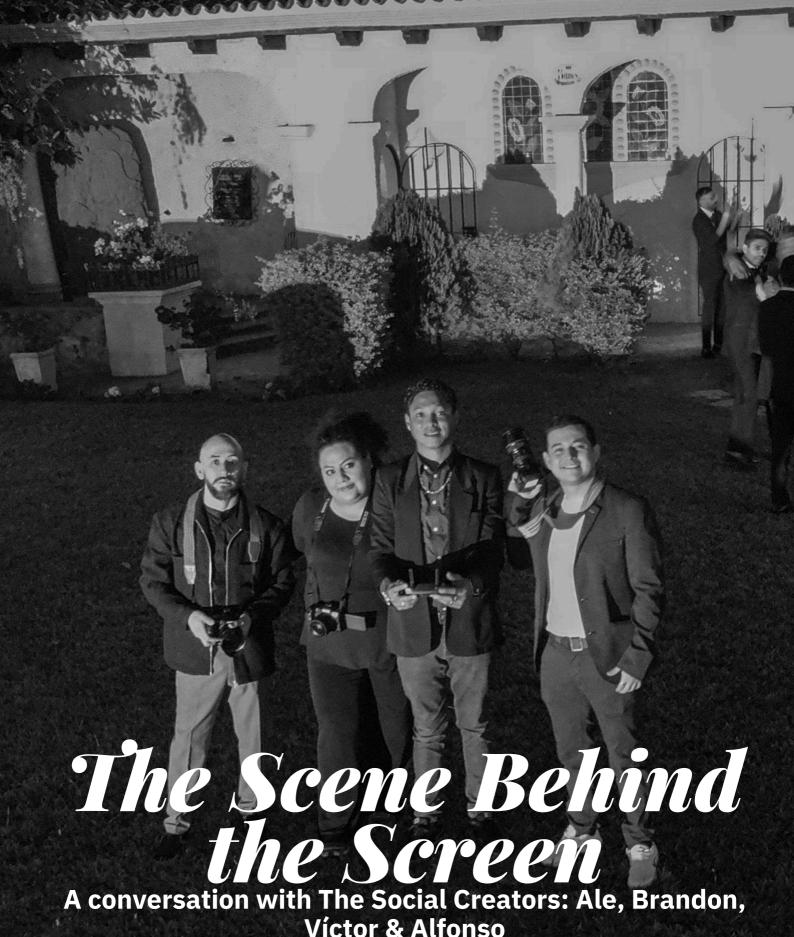
It is no longer just about organizing a beautiful wedding, but about designing a multi-sensory, interactive and deeply emotional experience for each person who attends. Technology, used well, does not replace human warmth: it enhances it. It allows us to connect, excite and personalize like never before. And that, without a doubt, is the new key to unforgettable weddings.

Photos by Mauricio Ureña, @PhotoByMaug

With love from Costa Rica,

Jeffrey Cervantes Calderón

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Víctor & Alfonso

There's a certain beauty in the unseen— the silent rhythm behind a celebration, the breath between two beats, the moment no one notices but everyone remembers when they see it again. In today's wedding world, where elegance meets immediacy, content creators are the eyes inside the moment, quietly curating what will become tomorrow's memories.

But not all creators are made equal. The Social Creators is not just a team— it's a finely tuned collective. With backgrounds in audiovisual production, advertising, and large-scale content development, they bring cinematic instinct to a digital age. Ale, Brandon, Victor, and Alfonso don't just attend weddings. They narrate them. And their storytelling—fleeting as it may seem—is layered, intentional, and deeply human.

I sat down with the team behind The Social Creators to discover the heart of their process, the art of collaboration, and the real difference between a content creator and a wedding videographer.





A Creative Collective With Purpose

Each member brings a unique skillset, not only during production but throughout preand post-production. The Social Creators is one of three divisions within The Project Guatemala, a production house launched in 2018 focused on audiovisual and advertising content. This third division emerged organically when they identified a growing need within the wedding industry: timely, high-quality content with emotional and visual integrity.

Already seasoned in producing documentaries, television segments, and managing branded content for social media, the transition into wedding storytelling felt natural—but also strategic. Weddings, they discovered, deserved their own division. One built not on performance, but on presence.

In the Shadows, at the Center

Their presence is subtle. Their impact, instant. "We're professionals in the audiovisual world," they share, "so we understand our role is to evoke emotion through visual memory.

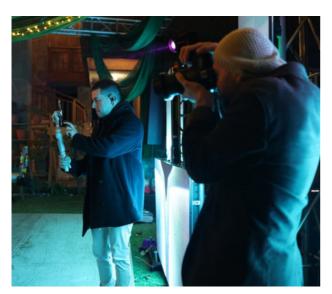


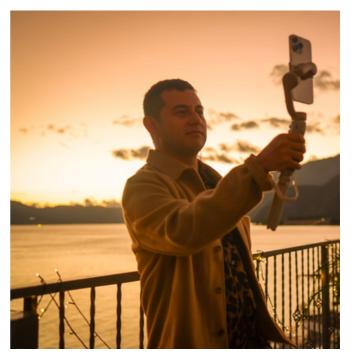
Being behind the scenes gives us access to incredible, spontaneous, dramatic moments. Tension, tenderness, laughter, chaos— it's all there. And it's all unrepeatable."

The team blends seamlessly into the fabric of the day, always collaborating with planners, photographers, and videographers. "We constantly ask ourselves: If this were my wedding, what would I want captured?"

Real-Time Requires Real Precision

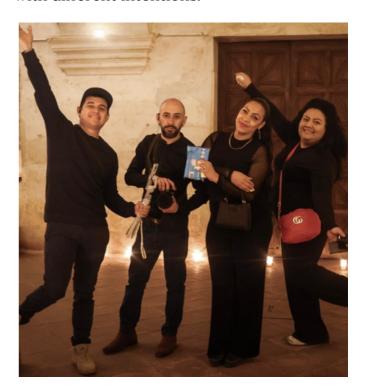
Capturing the now requires more than just quick reflexes—it demands intention. Their secret? Clear timelines, advance meetings with the couple or vendors, strategic coverage zones, and constant communication with the official photo/video team. "You'll never catch us leaving the couple alone," they smile, "something beautiful always happens when no one's watching."





Instinct Meets Structure

Their instinct is sharp, but never without structure. A director leads each activation, guiding the team through emotional peaks. "Sometimes, we redirect ourselves when we notice something important unfolding that no one else has seen. That's where intuition lives." Despite being four creators at once, the vision never clashes. "We each focus on a different subject or angle. It avoids duplication and gives the couple a fuller narrative. You might see two of us in one shot—but always from different lenses and with different intentions."



The Difference Is in the Lens

"We are not the official photographers or videographers—and we don't pretend to be," they say with grace. "There's less pressure for us to get the 'official' shots. We capture the in-between. The behind-the-scenes. The emotion, not just the moment. Our footage is lighter, more playful, more real. We deliver raw content and a few polished edits—sometimes within 24 hours, or even by the end of the event."

They acknowledge a shared creative vision with traditional videographers— especially when it comes to key moments—but their goals differ. "We think about narrative, strategy, and immediacy. They focus on technical perfection and legacy. Both roles matter. Both can co-exist."

Emotions Are Contagious

Have they ever been moved while filming? "Often," they admit. "Tears, goosebumps, knots in our throats. Sometimes it's the music, sometimes it's the energy. And we lean into that. Because those are the takes that resonate the most. We want our viewers to feel what we felt in that exact moment."

Fast Doesn't Mean Forgettable

Can content be both immediate and meaningful? "Absolutely," their director replies. "As a former bride, I just wanted something the day after—one image, one video, anything to relive what I had barely processed. To see myself from someone else's eyes. That's what we create: visual echoes that keep the day alive."





It's About Collaboration, Not Competition

Their relationship with other vendors is rooted in maturity and mutual respect. "We're not competition. We're colleagues. We always introduce ourselves to photographers and videographers and offer support. 80% of the time, it works beautifully. And the other 20%? That's where patience and professionalism come in."

Moments That Spark, Always

Some scenes never lose their magic. "The processional. The first dance. And when the bride gets ready with her bridesmaids. Every time, they give us something new."

A Role Worth Understanding

Above all, they want the industry—and couples—to know one thing: content creators aren't there to replace anyone. "We don't come to compete or interfere. We're here to serve a different need. We create modern narratives for social media. We offer the couple a glimpse of their day from a more relaxed, more human point of view. And yes, we're here to ease their impatience too."

Diana Sciarrillo

National Chapter Leader Guatemala @idoguatemala @t.socialcreator



Choosing the right colors for a wedding is one of the most important decisions when planning this special day. The color palette will be the basis for the décor, the linens, the flowers and the overall ambiance of the event. In 2025, trends go beyond classic white, exploring combinations that evoke elegance, modernity and personalization.

Wedding Color Trends 2025

1. Earth Tones and Neutrals: Warmth and Sophistication

Chocolate brown (Mocha Mousse), champagne beige and light browns dominate weddings with a rustic and sophisticated aesthetic. These tones bring warmth and harmony, perfect for outdoor settings or minimalist decorations.



2. Sophisticated Greens: Natural Elegance

Moss green will be one of the star shades of 2025. Ideal for events in gardens and natural locations, it combines perfectly with gold and copper details, adding a touch of luxury and freshness.



3. Reds and Wines: Character and Passion

Scarlet red and burgundy will be bold choices for couples who want a wedding with character. They match beautifully with gold or silver accents, creating a sophisticated ambiance.



4. Vibrant Yellows and Oranges: Energy and Joy

Butter yellow and tangerine orange will bring vitality to weddings. They are ideal for those who are looking for a celebration full of dynamism and originality.



5. Romantic Pinks: Modern Sweetness

From flamingo pink to pastel shades, this range will continue to be a favorite at weddings in 2025. It can be paired with neutrals or contrasted with deep blacks for a refined effect.



6. Deep Black: Contemporary Sophistication

For couples looking for a modern and bold style, deep black becomes an unexpected yet elegant choice. When combined with gold or vibrant colors, it can create a unique atmosphere.



Beyond White: Customize Your Palette

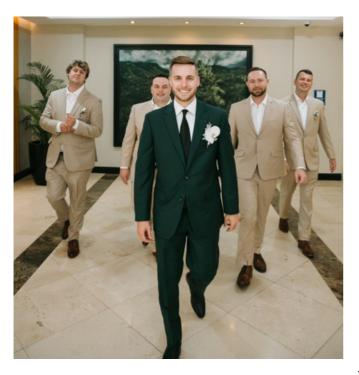
Customizing your wedding color palette is a great way to reflect your style and create an unforgettable atmosphere. Follow these steps to do just that:

- **1. Define your style and theme:** Are you looking for a classic, bohemian, modern or rustic wedding? Your style will define the ideal color palette.
- **2. Consider the time of year:** warm tones are ideal for cool months, while vibrant colors work best in sunny climates.





- **3. Think about the venue:** garden weddings can take advantage of greens and earth tones, while an elegant ballroom is enhanced with blacks, golds and burgundies.
- **4. Create contrasts and unique combinations:** Play with mixtures of soft colors with vibrant or metallic accents to give dynamism to the decoration.
- 5. Include the colors in every detail: From invitations to table linens to flowers, make sure to keep it consistent throughout the wedding. In addition, you can use colors in custom menus, luminous projections with LED lights or animations on interactive screens to add a modern and memorable touch to the visual experience of the event.





Are you ready to break new ground and leave the color white behind?

Dare to explore these trends.

White has long been the prevailing color at weddings, but current trends are breaking with this tradition. Here are some ideas to innovate in the choice of color:

- Explore creative and unconventional options: Dare with vibrant colors, metallics or unexpected blends.
- **Break with tradition:** Replace white as the main color with earth tones, greens, blues or blacks to reflect your story.
- Find inspiration in trends and in your essence: There are no strict rules; the important thing is that the colors chosen convey emotions and create the ideal atmosphere.

Colors not only transform spaces, they also tell stories. Find your perfect palette and create unique memories that will last a lifetime.

Rebeca Jerez

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There is a delicate kind of magic in destination weddings. They carry the promise of beauty and adventure, of memories born far from the ordinary. Whether it's under Tuscan skies, beside a volcanic lake in Guatemala, or in the courtyard of a colonial ruin in your hometown, destination weddings offer something profoundly emotional—a wedding, but also a journey.

But behind the beauty of that journey, hidden beneath the dress fittings, music choices and travel plans, there are quiet complexities emotional, cultural, and logistical—that every couple and every planner must navigate with care, sensitivity, and creativity.

Because planning a wedding far from where you live—or far from where you come from—isn't just about logistics. It's about heart.

When the Wedding Is at Home... But You're Not There

It begins with longing. The couple lives abroad but wants to marry in their country of origin. Their hearts are in two places at once: building a future in a new city, while honoring the past in a place that still feels like home.

They picture a celebration surrounded by familiar flavors and childhood memories—the church they grew up in, the warmth of their grandparents' presence, the sound of laughter echoing in a courtyard where they once played.





But they are continents away. Tastings happen without them. Venue visits are virtual. They rely on videos and WhatsApp messages to make emotional decisions that should be felt in person.

And this is especially dedicated to one of our most recent couples—Debbie and Tomás.

She is from Guatemala and hadn't been back in over 20 years. Together, they planned their wedding from the United States with very little time to dedicate to the process. They trusted us deeply to carry their vision forward—step by step, moment by moment. And when they finally arrived and saw it all come to life, it was as if no detail had been missed. Because none had.

This part of the journey is personal for us as planners. We don't just manage timelines—we become your eyes, your hands, your gut instinct. We choose as you would, feel as you would, and fiercely protect what matters most to you. Because planning from afar requires not just trust—it requires deep emotional partnership.

The Planner as Translator of Emotion

We attend your tastings with your preferences in mind. We walk through the venue at the exact hour of your ceremony to feel the light. We listen to music imagining you hearing it for the first time.

We become the bridge between what you can't do from afar and what you shouldn't have to worry about.

And yes, we explain why it matters to your family that the toast is held at the entrance of the church, or why your father wants the candles on the altar to remain lit the entire ceremony.

When You Choose a Place That Belongs to Neither of You

Then comes the other kind of destination wedding—the one where the couple chooses a place that belongs to neither of them. It's not about going home—it's about creating something new. Something bold.





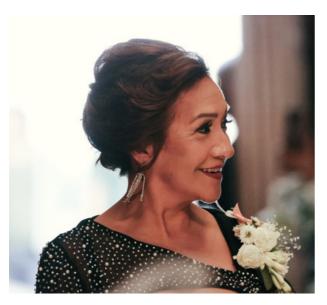
Perhaps it's a hacienda in Mexico, a vineyard in Portugal, a historic town in Guatemala. You fall in love with the energy, the light, the history.

But then you meet reality: language barriers, foreign contracts, legal complexities, cultural misunderstandings. What seems charming at first becomes overwhelming without the right guidance.

A Guatemalan couple recently chose to marry in Oaxaca. Just days before their event, they changed their plans—replacing their calenda with live mariachi. What seemed like a spontaneous artistic choice required permits, police coordination, and neighborhood approvals. Making it happen wasn't luck. It was knowing who to call, what to file, and how to work with the city—not against it.

That's where we come in—not just as planners, but as problem solvers, cultural liaisons, and calm navigators when timing is tight and the stakes are high.





Family, Feelings, and the Distance Between

The emotional challenge of destination weddings is often unspoken: families feeling left out, cultural traditions that feel hard to carry across borders, guilt for not following "the way it's always been done."

I once worked with a couple—she was from Russia, he from the U.S.—who chose Guatemala as the setting for their wedding. It wasn't "home" for either of them, but it felt symbolic. It was a place where their cultures could meet halfway, where new traditions could bloom. Initially, their families were unsure—why Guatemala? But by the end of the weekend, after witnessing the beauty, the intention, the warmth of the celebration, their doubts faded. The place had become theirs too.





Tradition, Reimagined

We are not here to erase tradition. We are here to reinterpret it.

We help your mother understand why you won't arrive in a *tuc tuc*, even though it's charming and local. We help your grandmother understand why the ceremony isn't in a church but under a ceiba tree at dusk. We ensure every guest—whether they've flown in from Tokyo or São Paulo—feels welcomed, seen, and woven into the day.

A Wedding Is a Journey

Whether you're planning in your hometown from across the ocean, or creating something new in a place you've never lived, destination weddings are acts of trust.

You entrust us with your vision, your heart, and your hopes.

And we, in turn, walk with you between two worlds—past and future, familiar and unknown—ensuring that no matter where you marry, it will feel like home.

Diana Sciarrillo

National Chapter Leader Guatemala @idoguatemala @augurowedings



As a destination wedding travel specialist who has visited more than 150 resorts and organized weddings throughout Latin America, I have learned one thing: if you don't offer something different to couples, someone else will. Here are some of the most unique locations that I have personally visited over the years, that have stuck in my memory and that, I am sure, will leave an unforgettable impression on your future couples.

Casa Chameleon: a true gem in Costa Rica. This boutique hotel is everything an intimate wedding should be: romantic, secluded and spectacularly beautiful. It is the perfect setting for a couple's getaway as well as for renting the entire resort. If the couple books all 21 villas, they will have total privacy, each with its own private pool and dreamy sunset views. There's something special about how the light merges with the Pacific Ocean here; it's like a movie at its best. Do you like it? Be sure to sign up for the FAM after this year's WRTC in November.





A little further north, Villas Caletas is another Costa Rican wonder that deserves its moment in the spotlight. Perched high above, with panoramic ocean views and a Greek-style amphitheater perfect ceremonies, it's the kind of place that looks like something out of a movie. It is majestic, and extremely photogenic, romantic especially at sunset. The architecture conveys a timeless elegance, ideal for couples seeking a balance of drama and sophistication.

Next to it is **Zephyr Palace**, eccentric in all the right ways. Perched on a cliff overlooking the sea with ornate, eclectic decor, this place is like stepping into a dream... maybe a fever dream, and I love it! Each suite is inspired by a different culture: think a cross between Versailles, Morocco... and an African safari. The event room exudes opulence and the photo opportunities are endless. Google it and then thank me!

Let's move on to my second home: Mexico. Most people think of big resorts when they think of the Riviera Maya, but **El Dorado Casitas** has created something different that has won me over time and time again. Many think they only offer the typical resort spaces, but if you look deeper, you will discover something truly special. ceremony site next to the cenote is one of the most sacred spaces I have ever seen: surrounded by stone, vegetation and an impressive silence. And the space in the jungle rock is rustic, natural and makes you feel in the heart of the Yucatan. It's the opposite of conventional, and your couples will notice.

We've all heard of **Hotel Xcaret**, and its reputation is well earned. Many consultants already know about its famous pyramidal chapel and candlelit caves, but there's a lesser-known spot inside the park called Las Pozas, and it's pure magic. Imagine it: just the couple and the officiant on a stone platform surrounded by water, with the waves crashing all around, while guests watch them from a cliff. It's dramatic, emotional and absolutely stunning. The first time I saw this place, even I wanted to get married there!





And to close, I want to highlight a true Jamaican gem: **Couples Tower Isle**. This property combines old-school Hollywood charm with Caribbean hospitality. Its history is real - it was once a haven for the elite. Beyond the stars who passed through here, what really makes it unique is its private island. Yes, a real island. And yes, your couples can rent it. With the ocean all around you and the golden glow of the sunset... trust me there's nothing like it.

If your destination wedding portfolio isn't eliciting amazing reactions, try including some of these options to spice things up. This year I will continue to travel, explore and return with more spectacular locations to thrill our couples.

Dana Braun

Owner & Lead Advisor Aisle + Away Travel Co. web. aisleaway.com o ce. 248.886.6068

Quetzaltenango

The Perfect Destination for an Unforgettable Wedding





If you are looking for the ideal place to celebrate the most important day of your lives, **Quetzaltenango** is an option that has it all. With its colonial charm, breathtaking landscapes and rich cultural tradition, this Guatemalan city offers a romantic and magical setting for a dream wedding.

A Dream Setting

Quetzaltenango, also known as Xela, is a city surrounded by majestic mountains and volcanoes that create a spectacular backdrop for any celebration. Its temperate climate allows for carefree outdoor events, and its impressive colonial churches, such as the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, add a touch of history and solemnity to the ceremony.





In addition, the beautiful gardens and halls in the surrounding area allow weddings to be held in exclusive spaces with unique views.

Variety of Locations for Every Style

Whether you dream of an elegant wedding in a luxurious ballroom, an intimate ceremony in a historic chapel or an outdoor event surrounded by nature, Quetzaltenango offers a wide range of options. Boutique hotels, colonial houses and top-notch event centers are available to suit any preference and budget.

Exquisite Cuisine to Delight your Guests

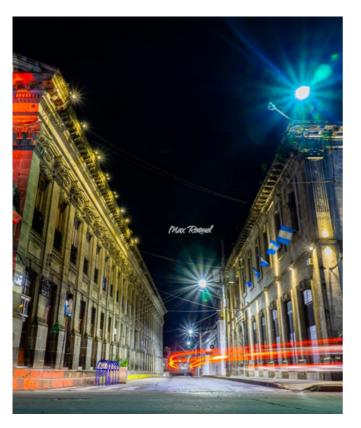
Food is an essential aspect of any wedding, and in Quetzaltenango you will find a varied and delicious gastronomic offer.

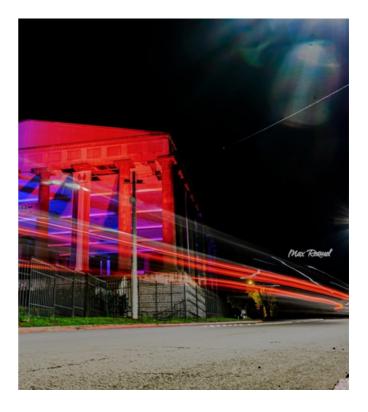


From traditional Guatemalan menus with dishes such as pepián and tamales, to international options prepared by expert chefs, your guests will enjoy a unique culinary experience. In addition, the local bakery, with its exquisite handcrafted cakes and desserts, will make your wedding cake as special as the rest of the event.

Professional Services for a Perfect Event

Organizing a wedding can be a challenge, but in Quetzaltenango you will find professional wedding planners, florists, photographers and musicians that will make your day unforgettable. The city has expert vendors for every aspect of the event, ensuring that every detail is just as you dreamed it would be. In addition, there are customized wedding packages that include everything from decorations to guest transportation, making planning easy and ensuring a flawless celebration.





A Destination with a Special Meaning

Quetzaltenango is not only a beautiful place, but also a destination with a special energy. Its warm and hospitable people, along with its vibrant history and culture, make every wedding held here unique. In addition, after the big day, newlyweds can enjoy their honeymoon exploring the region's tourist attractions, such as the hot springs of Fuentes Georginas, the Chicabal Lagoon, the handicraft markets or the hiking trails in the volcanoes.

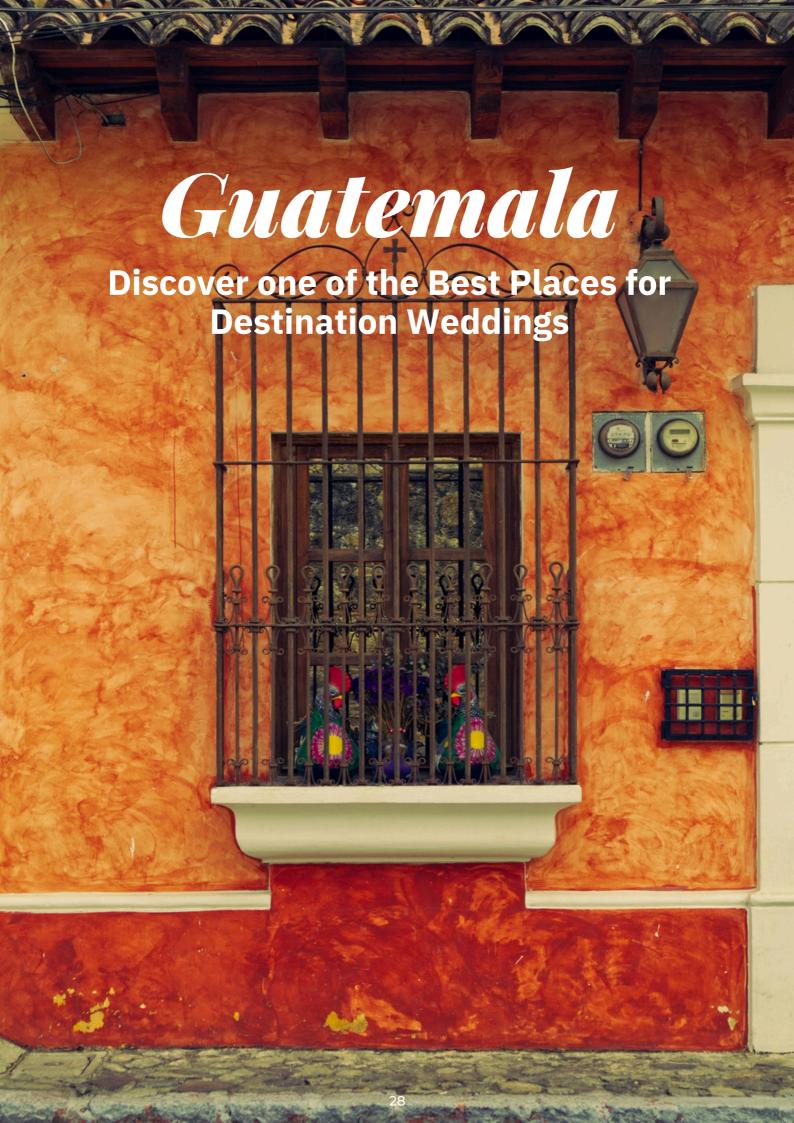
Say "I do" in Quetzaltenango

If you are looking for a magical place, full of history, natural beauty and quality services, Quetzaltenango is the perfect destination for your wedding. Here you will find the ideal setting to begin your love story with an unforgettable celebration.

Don't wait any longer and discover all that this city has to offer for the most special day of your lives.

Gaby Maldonado

Junior Chapter Guatemala @gabymaldonadoplanner

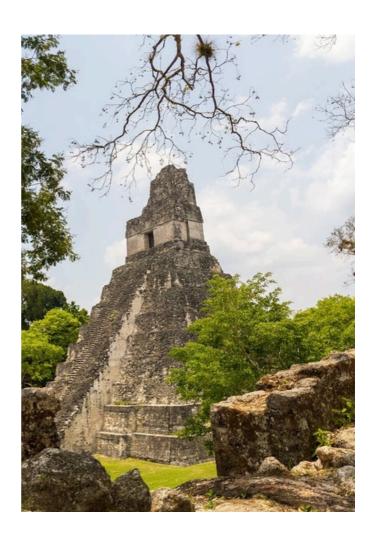


When we talk about the best places for destination weddings, Italy, Hawaii, France and even Mexico are usually the first that come to mind. Naturally, there is nothing wrong with these fabulous destinations, but if you are a couple that loves the unconventional, you are probably looking for something more adventurous and unexpected. Allow me to introduce you to Guatemala: a place that will make your special day even more magical!

I have been to Guatemala twice and this gem of a country has never failed to impress me! With countless natural treasures, cobblestone streets, the best rum and coffee in the world, and a culture like no other, I was not surprised to discover that it is one of the best places for destination weddings.

What did surprise me was that almost no one considers it. When you think of destination weddings in Central America, Guatemala is rarely mentioned, and I'm here to change that. As one of the best places to celebrate weddings, Guatemala is a country that deserves to be recognized. That's why I'll share with you some of the top reasons why you should consider celebrating your big day here.





A natural paradise - Its diverse natural landscape is more than enough to convince you to have your destination wedding in Guatemala. And if you are hearing about it for the first time, prepare to be pleasantly surprised!

From sandy beaches, lush forests, towering volcanoes and mountains, Guatemala has virtually everything you could look for in a destination. However, there is one treasure that gets all the attention: the magnificent Lake Atitlán.

Lake Atitlán is, without a doubt, Guatemala's most iconic jewel. This lake offers some of the most beautiful scenery, making it a dream for nature-loving couples. So it's no surprise that there are so many wedding venues around it - but we'll talk more about that later.

If the idea of getting married at Lake Atitlán fails to convince you, you can always turn your eyes to the charming Guatemalan towns, especially Antigua. There you can feel the true spirit of the country and delight in its colorful Spanish colonial buildings. Antigua is also full of photogenic spots, including the famous Santa Catalina Arch. If you want to take advantage of the emblematic locations for your photos, it is best to arrive early to avoid the crowds of tourists.

Did you know that Guatemala has almost perfect weather all year round?

Guatemala is also known as "The land of eternal spring", which gives you a lot of flexibility in choosing your wedding date. The dry season runs from November to May, with temperatures ranging between 21 and 27 °C.

On the other hand, the rainy season runs from May to October, but there's no reason to get discouraged! The rains rarely last more than two hours, and afterwards they usually delight you with a dreamy sunset - ideal for planning your most romantic photo shoot!





We know that destination weddings are often expensive, but this is not the case in Guatemala! As few have yet discovered the beauty of the country, the wedding industry here is booming. In other words, you can expect to pay much less for key aspects such as transportation, venues, catering and more, leaving you with more budget for an unforgettable honeymoon!

Guatemala is also an Ideal Honeymoon Destination

Speaking of honeymoons, here's another reason to consider a destination wedding in Guatemala. As mentioned, the country is full of incredible natural locations where you can enjoy all kinds of environments. Whether you want to hike through the jungle or climb volcanoes, there are plenty of options to make your honeymoon a true adventure.

In addition, Guatemala is home to many Mayan ruins where you can connect with the history of this fascinating country. And let's not forget its beautiful beaches: relaxation and serenity guaranteed!

Besides its dreamy landscapes, the wedding venues will take your breath away.

Whether you dream of a modern mansion facing Lake Atitlán or a historic colonial building in Antigua, there are options for all tastes.

Finding the ideal place can be stressful, especially when it's one of the most enchanting destinations. That's why I'm sharing with you some of my favorites to inspire you:

In Antiqua:

Hotel Casa Santo Domingo Porta Hotel Antigua El Convento Boutique Hotel Pensativo House Hotel Camino Real Antigua

In Lake Atitlán:

Hotel Atitlán Hotel Posada de Don Rodrigo Porta Hotel

If you decide to celebrate your wedding in Guatemala, you should consider hiring local talent. As you know, the wedding industry here is thriving and there are many amazing vendors that can help you create a unique celebration.





From caterers to florists, Guatemalan vendors bring a personal and cultural touch, making your day even more authentic.

Hiring local vendors also reduces costs.

Although weddings in Guatemala are more affordable than in other popular destinations, if you bring vendors from your country, you will need to cover their transportation as well. With that in mind, start researching early to choose the ideal professionals. And don't hesitate to ask for recommendations: many vendors already have alliances with each other, which means better value for money because they know the terrain.

Guatemala is quickly positioning itself as one of the top destinations for weddings. If you want your special day to be an unforgettable adventure, Guatemala will not dissapoint you!

Need help planning your destination wedding in Guatemala? Don't hesitate to contact me! Let's create an event that no one will forget.

Gail Johnson www.gailjohnsonweddings.com gail@gailjohnsonweddings.com @wedgail

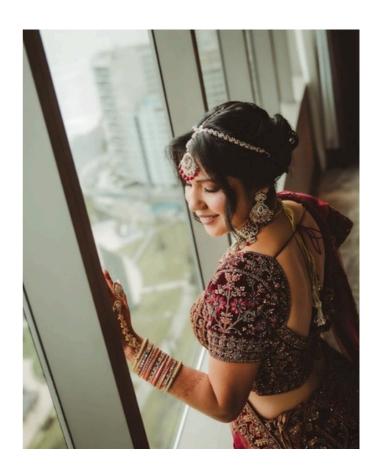


All stories deserve to be told, but especially love stories, which cross borders to celebrate happiness and give us the possibility to share a bit of our cultural identity.

Creating experiences is a great challenge, and even more so if they are multicultural weddings. Multicultural weddings are an ideal opportunity to celebrate diversity, unity and love in community. In addition, it is a unique and enriching experience for guests, who will have the opportunity to learn about different cultures and customs.

On this occasion I had the great responsibility of celebrating an Hindu wedding in Lima, Peru. They were intense months of long distance planning and working together with local suppliers who accompanied me in this project.





The most striking thing about Hindu weddings is their great color, however, it involves a series of events full of history and tradition. The celebration goes far beyond the wedding day, it lasts several days and involves different rituals.

All these celebrations are lived with great emotion, and are full of colors, joy, unity and lots of fun. Both the bride and groom and the guests can experience a vibrant cultural immersion in which every detail is taken care of, from the attire to the ceremonies, everything has a deep and cultural meaning. And this wedding was no exception, as the Peruvian bride decided to let all her guests enjoy the whole experience in her home country.

One of the rituals prior to the marriage is the Mehndi or henna ceremony, one of the most traditional and significant. It involves the application of henna paintings and decorative drawings on the hands and feet of the bride. In this ceremony both the bride and her bridesmaids and friends share a day full of union, celebration and complicity.

The next event was the Grah Shanti and we celebrated it as a private gathering for family and close friends where Hindu cuisine was served and symbolic rituals were shared. It is a ceremony that arouses a lot of emotion in both families and where there are many tokens of affection. A memorable ritual is the Pithi, which is a paste made of turmeric that the families rub on the bride and groom and is usually a very fun ritual for everyone.

The wedding day was truly magical. Without a doubt, witnessing all the majesty of the bride's arrangement, the details taken care of to the maximum, the excitement of all the guests who were eagerly awaiting the big day and the rituals of the ceremony was unbelievable. All this made the event charged with symbolism and emotion. Each step of the Hindu ceremony symbolizes a promise or vow that the couple makes to each other,



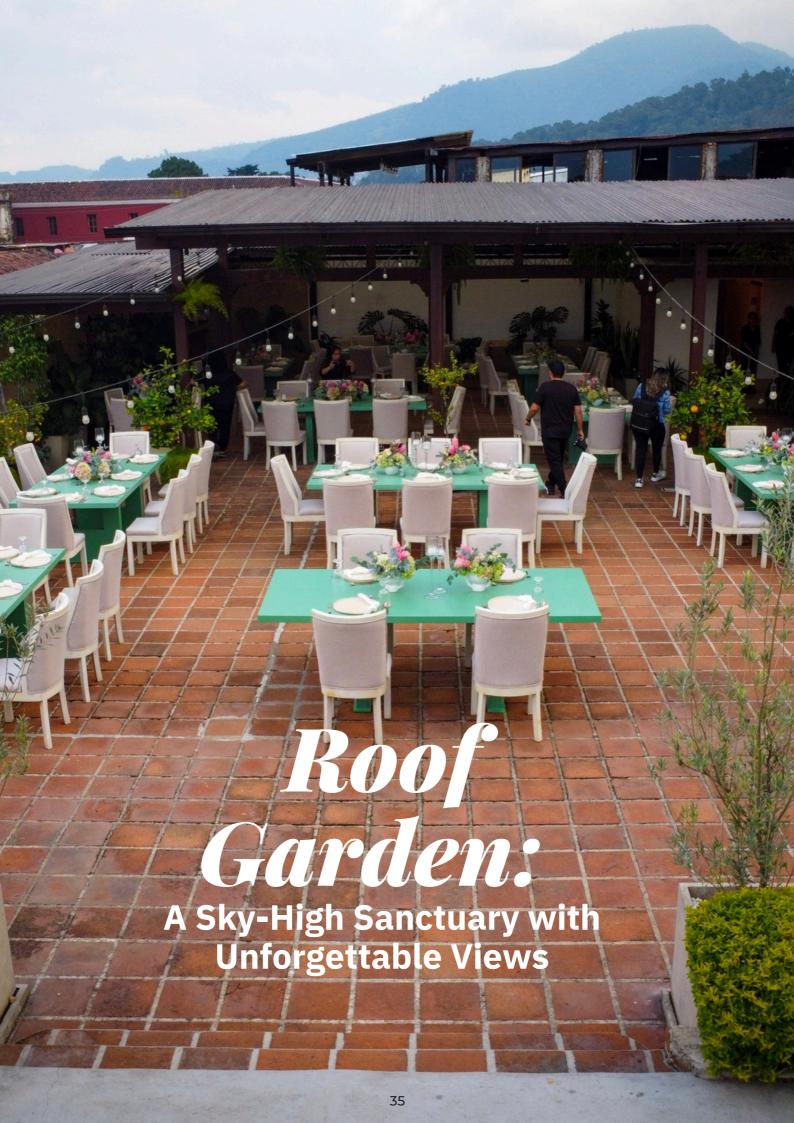


such as taking care of each other, sharing responsibilities, and being faithful to each other.

Living the experience of an Hindu wedding in my country was totally enriching and challenging. Not only because of the complexity of all the logistics in the events, but also because of the great responsibility of being a real hostess for so many foreigners who came to Peru for the first time, all of them with a lot of curiosity and interest to be part of this adventure. It is wonderful to know that any place in the world can be the perfect setting to celebrate love and that destination weddings are the perfect reason.

Jossy Quezada

National Chapter Leader Peru IADWP @jossyquezadawp Créditos fotografías: @rolandoporciento @salimbasti_photography @ohsweetfotografia



Some places in Antigua transport us with their history etched into every stone. Others, however, lift us higher, offering a different perspective of the city, of life, of the moment. ROOF GARDEN is one of those places. Suspended above the colonial rooftops, with a view that blends into the sky and an atmosphere that envelops you, this space has become the perfect setting for truly unique events.

It's not the typical wedding venue one would expect to find in Antigua. There are no convent ruins or centuries-old facades. Instead, it offers a fresh, modern, and sophisticated approach—an unexpected refuge that surprises those who discover it.

The first time I visited, I understood its essence: ROOF GARDEN is not just a venue; it's an experience. It's the feeling of finding yourself in a hidden corner where the city glows beneath your feet, and celebrations take on a whole new meaning. But how was this place born? What lies behind each event held here? To uncover its story, I sat down with María Claudia, better known as Maca, one of the minds behind this project.





A Space Born from a Dream

It all started with a vision. Lester, Maca's husband, first saw the space when it was still an empty, undefined, and purposeless area. But in his mind, the potential to transform it into something extraordinary was already clear. He couldn't let it go to waste.

And so, the idea of ROOF GARDEN was born—a blank canvas that could be shaped into whatever each host envisioned while maintaining a deep connection with nature and a distinct ambiance. A space that, upon crossing its doors, would make people forget the outside world and transport them into a setting like no other.

And they undoubtedly succeeded.

The Magic of a Transformative Space

The views are breathtaking, yes, but at ROOF GARDEN, the magic goes beyond that. Maca understands this well: what truly matters isn't just what the eyes can see, but what the guests feel while they are there.

"Service is everything," she tells me with conviction. Their priority has always been ensuring that every person who chooses this space for their celebration leaves knowing they made the right choice. That they can enjoy themselves without worries, that the team makes them feel cared for every moment, and that when the night is over, they walk away happy and already wanting to return.

At ROOF GARDEN, no two events are the same. There are no set formulas or rigid frameworks. Each celebration comes to life in a completely unique way. From marriage proposals to welcome parties, from rehearsal dinners to intimate weddings, the space adapts to each host's personality. "No event is like another," says Maca. And in a world where originality is increasingly sought after, that is a luxury.

Moments That Leave a Lasting Impression

If there's one thing that becomes clear when talking to Maca, it's that every event at ROOF GARDEN is a new chapter in its story. And while choosing just one would be impossible, there is something that always moves her: that first moment when guests arrive, step through the door, and their faces immediately light up with wonder.





"The 'Wow!' when they first see the space is something that never stops amazing us," she tells me with a smile. "They never imagine that behind a small door and a flight of stairs, they'll find a place like this."

That moment, that fleeting instant when guests are overcome by surprise, is what makes everything worthwhile.

The Perfect Welcome Cocktail

If there's something that can elevate an event at ROOF GARDEN even further, it's the details. For Maca, every welcome cocktail or rehearsal dinner becomes something truly special when the hosts manage to infuse their essence into every corner.

From a *signature drink* crafted specifically for the occasion to an exclusive photo area with an unforgettable view, or a setting designed down to the finest detail. But for her, one thing surpasses all others: the people.

"In the end, the most important thing is the guest list," she tells me without hesitation. Because in a celebration, what truly leaves a mark is *who* you choose to share it with.

When the Weather Has Other Plans

Being an open-air venue, the weather is always a factor. But at ROOF GARDEN, they're always prepared.

They have a covered area within the terrace that has saved more than a few events from unexpected rain. In minutes, the team can move tables under the pergolas, ensuring that everything continues smoothly.

And surprisingly, many times, no adjustments are even necessary. "We've had events where, despite the rain, people keep dancing, keep celebrating. They're so happy that the weather becomes secondary," Maca says.

And that, perhaps, is the best proof that an event was a success.

Gastronomy and Cocktails: The Final Touch

One of the most interesting aspects of ROOF GARDEN is its focus on customization. Unlike other venues, there is no set menu or pre-defined options.





Clients have the freedom to choose what they love most, and the team makes it happen. They've partnered with external vendors to offer a fully tailored gastronomic experience.

When it comes to cocktails, creativity is never lacking. "Our team is always innovating," Maca shares. She recalls an event where they decided to experiment with hibiscus flower (rosa de Jamaica), and without realizing it, they created a series of cocktails that ended up being the favorites of the night.

Because at ROOF GARDEN, even the unexpected turns into a triumph.

Unforgettable Transformations

Every event is a new opportunity to surprise. On one occasion, Maca tells me, a planner decided to install wicker lamps on the pergolas. "It was such an innovative detail, something we had never thought of, and the result was spectacular," she recalls.

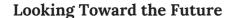
And that's the magic of the place: each client, each wedding planner and each decorator brings something new, leaving their mark and transforming the space in ways that no one ever imagined.

A Hidden Secret in Antiqua

When I ask her what makes ROOF GARDEN so special in a destination like Antigua, Maca's answer is clear:

"It is a little piece of heaven on earth. An unexpected, cozy and unique place. Although it is in the heart of the city, once inside, everything else disappears".

A refuge where sunsets are magical, where nature blends with architecture, where every event is a story worth telling.



ROOF GARDEN's growth never stops. There is always something new to discover, an improvement to make, a detail to perfect. The one thing that remains the same is the team harmony between the three partners: Lester, Manuel and Maca, and what makes it even more special, having the support of Aura. They are all key players in the day to day and in the realization of each event.

One of the most innovative changes has been its sound system: speakers in the shape of flower pots with sown flowers, blended in with the decoration. A detail that few people notice, but that makes a difference.

And so, what started as an empty space—a blank canvas—has transformed into a destination where celebrations transcend the fleeting and become unforgettable memories.



ROOF GARDEN is not just a venue with spectacular views; it is a sanctuary where laughter, toasts, and moments are suspended in time. It is the whisper of the wind through the pergolas, the glow of the illuminated city in the distance, the magic of a moment that can never be repeated in exactly the same way.

Because in the end, the most extraordinary events are not just those that are perfectly planned but those that are truly felt. And at ROOF GARDEN, every celebration is a testament that the beauty of a place is not found in its walls but in the emotions that are lived within them.

Diana Sciarrillo

Diana National Chapter Leader Guatemala @idoguatemala @roofgarden_antigua @t.socialcreators

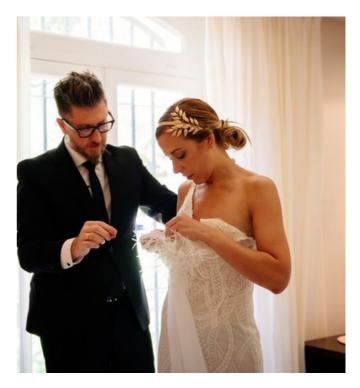




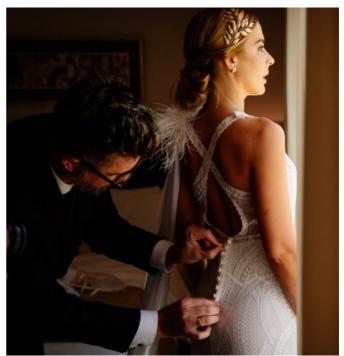
In bridal fashion, there is an eternal game between what was and what is to come. Between the charm of vintage and the clean aesthetics of modern. Two worlds that, far from clashing, interact on catwalks, ateliers and altars, bringing identity, beauty and emotion to the big day.

Vintage dresses bring with them a poetic charge: they evoke past eras, timeless glamour and details that are almost no longer Hand-embroidered manufactured. puffed sleeves, cathedral veils, fabrics with history. These are pieces that evoke romanticism and nostalgia, old movies and family albums. On the other hand, modern looks bet on the purity of lines, flawless architectural structure. necklines. absence of ornamentation. Minimalism with soul, elegance that needs no introduction.





Is it okay to be inspired by vintage? Of course it is. Inspiration is part of the creative process. To honor what it was in the past, to reinterpret it with a current look, to turn it into something new, unique and personal. The important thing is to avoid falling into the literal copy, to disguise oneself in an era without context. Balance is the key. A dress from the 30's can come to life if it is combined with a current hairstyle, and a contemporary look can acquire depth if it is accompanied by an inherited headdress or antique gloves.

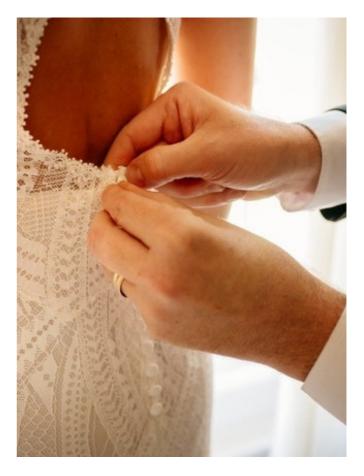




Is vintage a "must"? It is not a must, but an opportunity. A chance to stand out with a style that doesn't follow fads, but stands the test of time. Vintage becomes a powerful choice when it reflects a true connection with the bride's identity.

And speaking of identity... the bride who chooses a vintage look is usually a woman with personality. Someone who doesn't need to follow the rules, who appreciates history, art, objects with soul. She is sensitive, creative, unique. She finds beauty where others don't look. Meanwhile, the modern bride tends to convey strength, simplicity and reserved elegance. Both have something in common: they know who they are and are not afraid to express it.





From my experience, if you are going for vintage, there are certain details that you cannot lose sight of. Coherence is vital. Don't mix too many eras or styles. If the dress has a lot of visual weight, go for a cleaner makeup or a contemporary hairstyle. If you choose antique accessories, make sure they match the silhouette. And, above all, work with professionals who know how to adapt vintage to your body, your essence and your celebration.

Bridal fashion is a sacred ground for personal expression. And in this scenario, vintage and modern are not opposed: they embrace each other.

Adrián Pavía

Prof. Etiqueta y Comportamiento Social Latin America and Spanish–Speaking Caribbean Islands Chapter Director IADWP



Celebrity weddings have always been a source of inspiration for brides looking for a unique and sophisticated style. From minimalist designs to voluminous gowns with floral appliqués, bridal fashion trends have evolved thanks to the looks these stars have worn on their big day.

Here's a selection of the most striking looks that have set trends in recent years and continue to influence bridal fashion in 2025.



Millie Bobby Brown and Jake Bongiovi – October 2024 (Italy)

British actress Millie Bobby Brown chose romantic Tuscany for her wedding to Jake Bongiovi. For the occasion, she wore a spectacular Louis Vuitton gown, with a fitted bodice, French lace and a baroque-inspired overskirt that added a dramatic touch.

The long lace veil completed the design in a classic and elegant way. According to Maggie Sottero, this look represents the return of sophisticated minimalism, ideal for brides looking for luxury without excess.



Barbara Palvin and Dylan Sprouse – July 2023 (Hungary)

Model Barbara Palvin opted for a timeless, romantic style for her wedding to Dylan Sprouse. Her Vivienne Westwood gown featured a structured bodice and strapless neckline, along with a voluminous skirt for a modern royal look.

This look remains a popular choice for brides looking for a classic silhouette with a contemporary twist (Brides.com).



Chloë Sevigny and SinišaMačković – May 2022 (Connecticut, USA.)

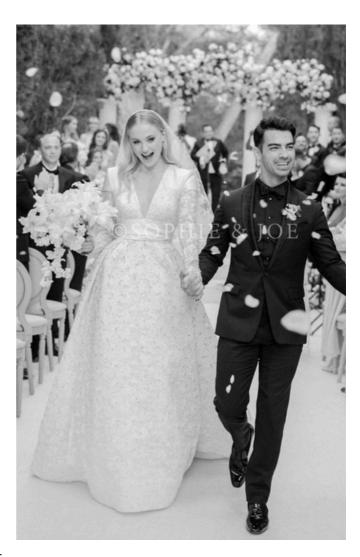
Known for her eclectic style, Chloë Sevigny did not disappoint with her choice of bridal attire. For the ceremony in a quaint wooden chapel, she wore a flowing design with puffed sleeves and vintage details.

However, her most striking look was a Jean Paul Gaultier couture-inspired gown designed by Glenn Martens. The design played with transparencies, lace and beading, achieving a romantic yet bold aesthetic.

Sophie Turner and Joe Jonas – June 2019 (France)

Sophie Turner and Joe Jonas' wedding at the Château de Tourreau continues to be a benchmark in bridal fashion. The Game of Thrones actress wore a Louis Vuitton dress, created by Nicolas Ghesquière.

The design included long sleeves, delicate lace and a long, flowing veil, achieving a perfect balance between classic and modern. Despite the years, this style is still relevant for brides looking for a timeless and sophisticated look.





Zendaya, Gigi Hadid and Sydney Sweeney: Inspiration from the Met Gala 2024

It's not just weddings that set trends in bridal fashion, but also events such as the Met Gala 2024. At this edition, several celebrities wore dresses that could well inspire future brides.

Highlights included Zendaya, Gigi Hadid and Sydney Sweeney, who wore designs with 3D floral appliqués, voluminous skirts and dramatic tails. According to Brides.com experts, these elements have been integrated into this year's new bridal collections.

Elegance with a Personal Touch

From dreamy settings in Europe to the red carpet, celebrities continue to set trends in bridal fashion.

For 2025, brides can take inspiration from these looks and adapt them to their style, choosing from minimalist dresses, voluminous skirts or three-dimensional floral details. Beyond following a trend, the important thing is to find a design that reflects the personality of each bride on her big day.

Ready to find your dream dress?



Rebeca Jerez

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The Bridal Veil

Among Tradition, Trend and Transformation



The bridal veil is a symbol that has survived and cultures, from centuries ancient Mesopotamia to contemporary bridal catwalks. Although some brides have decided to leave it aside, many others still consider it an essential accessory for their bridal look. To delve deeper into this topic, we spoke with Giselle Moscoso, CEO of The Bridal Shop in Quito, Ecuador, a bridal boutique with more than 10 years of experience in the industry.

A Glimpse into the History of the Bridal Veil

The veil has been part of bridal attire since time immemorial. In ancient Mesopotamia and Persia, the groom would place the veil over the bride as a symbol of union. In classical Rome and Greece, the veil was believed to protect the bride from evil spirits and the envy of others.





In the 19th century, Queen Victoria of England made the white veil popular as a synonym of purity and romanticism, consolidating it in the Western tradition.

Traditions and Beliefs Surrounding the Veil

Giselle Moscoso shares her vision on the traditions that still prevail in the use of the veil:

"The veil remains a meaningful piece for many brides. In some cultures, it represents modesty and commitment, while in others it is just another accessory within bridal styling. In our store, we see brides looking to rescue tradition, but with a touch of modernity."

Today, many brides continue to choose it for its symbolic meaning, while others consider it an aesthetic accessory that complements their dress.

The Return of the Veil and its Evolution in 2025

The bridal trends of 2025 show an interesting return of the veil, but with a renewed vision. Gissenos explains:

"We are seeing veils with personalized details, embroidered with initials or special phrases. Veils with metallic appliqués, pearls and modernized lace are also gaining popularity. Today's bride is looking to express her personality through every detail of her attire, and the veil is no exception."





In addition, layered veils, 3D floral appliqués and innovative sheer fabrics are setting the standard in the bridal fashion world.

How to Choose the Perfect Veil

For those brides who wish to wear a veil on their big day, Giselle Moscoso recommends taking into account these key aspects:

- **1.** The Design of the Dress: "If the dress has a worked back or flashy lace, a sheer, light veil that doesn't obscure the details is ideal."
- **2. Veil Length:** "Mantilla or cathedral veils are ideal for long, voluminous gowns, while shorter veils favor more modern styles."

- **3. Color and Details:** "Although white is still the most chosen, some brides today choose soft tones like champagne or even veils with touches of color for a bolder look."
- **4.** Hairstyle Balance: "The veil should complement the hairstyle and not compete with it. For high updos, light cascading veils work well, while for loose hair, long veils add a romantic air."

Modern Alternatives to the Traditional Veil

Giselle also points out that not all brides identify with the veil and that there are many elegant alternatives:

"Many brides are replacing the veil with pearl headpieces, floral crowns or even hats with sophisticated details. The key is to find the accessory that best represents the bride's personality and makes her feel unique."





Giselle Moscoso

Conclusion

The bridal veil continues to evolve and adapt to the tastes of each generation. Whether for tradition, aesthetics or innovation, this accessory continues to be a key piece in bridal fashion. As Giselle Moscoso tells us, "there are no strict rules, the important thing is that the bride feels beautiful and confident with her choice". In 2025, the bridal veil will continue to tell stories and enhance the beauty of each woman on her way to the altar.

Remember that it is your day and you should feel beautiful and happy, it is not superfluous to be advised by professionals so that you have an adequate guide that will allow you to stand out on your wedding day.

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Giselle Moscoso

CEO TheBridal Shop @thebridalshopnovias

Renting vs. Budgeting **Conscious Decisions for a More** ustainable 'Yes, I do

As a wedding planner, I guide many couples through the beautiful process of planning their big day. One of the most frequently asked questions nowadays is not about flowers or menus, but about environmental awareness: is it better to rent or buy the key elements of the wedding?

This dilemma goes beyond taste or budget. It is a conversation about coherence, values and the desire to celebrate without leaving an unnecessary footprint on the planet. In this article, I approach this topic from two key angles: the wedding dress and the decor.

The Wedding Dress: a Jewel to be Treasured or a Story to be Shared?

The wedding dress is much more than a garment: it is emotion, dream, history. Many brides imagine it hanging in a closet as an indelible memory. But there is also the other side: a dress that is worn only once and then kept for years, perhaps never to be seen again.

Today, renting a wedding dress does not mean giving up the charm. There are





specialized boutiques and digital platforms that offer beautiful options, in perfect condition. allowing brides to look spectacular with a sustainable choice. In addition, renting represents a significant savings that can be destined to other aspects with more emotional meaning, such as a conscious honeymoon or an intimate ceremony in nature.

I have accompanied many brides who choose to rent, and they all agree: the magic is not in keeping the dress, but in living the moment with authenticity and responsibility.

Decoration: beauty that can be circular

Decoration is the visual soul of the wedding. But it can also become one of the biggest sources of waste if not managed conscientiously.

Buying new items that will only be used once means consuming materials, energy and logistics. That's why renting presents itself as an elegant and eco-friendly solution. From structures, candelabras, table linens, tableware, to artificial flowers and furniture, renting allows access to high quality pieces without the need to purchase them.

Another attractive option is to reuse personal or family objects, bringing history and warmth. In fact, many decoration companies already work with recycled materials and sustainable proposals that preserve the aesthetics without harming the environment.

Balance between dreams and consciousness

Every couple has their own dream, and every dream deserves to be honored. Some brides feel a deep connection to the idea of keeping their dress; others fall in love with the act of sharing it. Some couples prefer to purchase certain decorative elements for later use in their home; others choose to rent everything and avoid hoarding.

My role as a wedding planner is to guide with empathy, showing alternatives that align with the values, style and budget of each couple. And if those values include caring for the planet, renting becomes a powerful tool that unites beauty, practicality and commitment.

Some facts that call for reflection

According to a report by Green Bride Guide, an average wedding in the United States generates about 180 kilos of garbage and emits about 63 tons of CO2. In Latin America, although exact figures vary, it is estimated that more than 40% of the decor and materials used in a wedding are not reused.

In turn, data from The Knot reveals that 7% of couples already consider eco-friendly



options when planning their wedding, a figure that is on the rise, especially among millennials and centennials who are looking for meaningful celebrations.

An invitation from the heart

Every decision within a wedding builds the story of that great day. Choosing to rent, reuse or share is not only an environmentally conscious gesture: it is a declaration of love to the world around us.

My recommendation as a wedding planner is clear: before buying, ask if there are options to rent that fulfill your dreams. Many times, the most sustainable way is also the most beautiful and meaningful.

Because celebrating love can also be an act of caring. And that, without a doubt, is something worth remembering.

Adriana Ballestero Álvarez

Regional Chapter Leader Costa Rica Royal Eventos CR Instagram :@royaleventoscr Facebook: @royaleventoscr



From Dream to Reality at Your Celebration

Events, and especially destination weddings, are symbol of magic, joy and unforgettable memories. We create dreamy atmospheres paradisiacal locations to celebrate important milestones. However, behind the sparkle and excitement, a less glamorous often hidden: the massive reality is generation of waste. Let's think for a moment: paper invitations that end up forgotten, single-use plastic cutlery and glasses, ephemeral decorations that go straight to the trash, food leftovers that could feed many, souvenir wrappings and flowers that, after a few hours of splendor, become waste.

Catering, decoration, stationery and details for guests; every element of a traditional event can contribute to a considerable ecological footprint. Against this backdrop, the inevitable question arises: Is it possible to celebrate with the same intensity and elegance, but without leaving behind a mountain of garbage? Is the "zero waste event" a utopia or an achievable goal?





The good news is that an event with zero or minimal waste is not only possible, but also within reach with conscious planning and a smart choice of vendors. The key lies in adopting the "5Rs" philosophy:

- Reject the unnecessary
- Reduce what we consume
- Reuse as much as possible
- Recycle the unavoidable properly
- Reintegrate (compost) organics.

Let's see how to apply it in specific areas:

A) Conscious Stationery: Goodbye to paper waste.

Minimize: Choose minimalist designs, use recycled or seeded (plant-able) paper. Combine information in fewer pieces (example: invitation + map + RSVP in one).

Eliminate: The most sustainable option is digitization. Sleek electronic invitations,

event web pages to centralize information and online confirmations are effective and eco-friendly alternatives. If you need menus or signage, reusable whiteboards or frames with easy-to-change prints are ideal.

B) Sustainable Catering and Bar: The heart of reduction.

Minimize: Calculate portions accurately to avoid massive food waste. Prioritize local and seasonal ingredients (less transportation and packaging). Work with caterers that have surplus management policies (donation to charity).

Eliminate: This is the crucial point. Forget about single-use plastics altogether. Demand reusable tableware, glassware, cutlery and linens. For beverages, use dispensers for infused water, soft drinks and cocktails instead of individual bottles and cans. If renting is not possible, look for certified compostable options; but always as a last resort after reuse.





C) Decoration with Purpose: Beauty that lasts.

Minimize: Rent rather than buy. Items such as centerpieces, furniture, and decorative structures can have multiple uses. Use natural elements from the environment (dried leaves, stones, responsibly harvested wood) or live plants in pots that guests can take with them.

Eliminate: Say no to balloons, plastic confetti, glitter and low-quality decorative items that will break or be discarded. Invest in reusable LED lighting, quality fabrics for backdrops or table linens, and durable or natural decorative elements.

D) Eco-conscious Flowers: Waste-free greenery.

Minimize: Choose local and seasonal flowers. Consider smaller arrangements or using potted plants as a centerpiece. Potted plants can be a nice gift for your guests, they can take it home with them for the purpose of

taking care of it as a memento of that meeting with you.

Dispose (the waste): Coordinate the donation of flowers to hospitals or churches after the event. Ensure that organic waste (stems, leaves) are properly composted. Explore alternatives such as dried or preserved flowers if they fit your style.

E) Meaningful, Non-Disposable Souvenirs:

Minimize: If you offer physical souvenirs, choose useful, consumable options (local jams, seeds, small bottles of regional liquor) or that come in reusable or minimal packaging.

Eliminate: Consider alternatives without a physical object: a donation to a charitable cause on behalf of guests, an experience (access to online photo gallery, a playlist of the event), or small local products without excessive packaging.





F) On-site Waste Management: The Final Key

Establish clearly marked waste sorting stations (organic, compostable, recyclable).

Train event staff (catering, cleaning) on the correct separation of waste.

Coordinate with the venue or hire a specialized service to ensure that compostable and recyclable materials reach their proper destination.

So, is a waste-free event possible? The answer is yes. It's not about sacrificing beauty, fun or customization, but about planning with intention and awareness. It requires upfront commitment, effective communication between the organizers, the couple (in the case of weddings) and all vendors involved.



It involves asking questions, researching and choosing options that align with sustainability.

Far from being a limitation, adopting a zero waste approach can add unique and meaningful value to any celebration. It reflects a concern for the environment, especially relevant at destination weddings where the natural beauty of the venue is often the main attraction. In addition, many of these practices (such as renting or reducing food waste) can even be economically advantageous.





Celebrating our most precious moments doesn't have to be a burden on our planet. By making conscious choices, we can transform the event industry, creating memorable experiences that not only fill our photo albums, but also leave a positive and lighter legacy in the world. A zero-waste event is not just a trend, it's a statement of principle and an investment in a more sustainable future for everyone. Let's make it happen, one event at a time!

Did you like this article? Tell me what you would like me to write about in a future edition. At the bottom of the note you have my contact, write me and let's keep building an informed wedding and event community.

Juan Salvador

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The Magic of Emotions: How Neuroscience Transforms Weddings into Memorable Experiences

To understand how neuroscience can make a wedding truly unforgettable, we interviewed María Elena Torres, an expert in neuromarketing and sensory events. Throughout our conversation, Maria Elena revealed how to apply the latest findings in neuroscience to design multisensory experiences at destination weddings.

The Power of Emotional Memory in Weddings

"Why are there weddings that are forgotten the next day and others that remain forever in our memory? The key lies in how our brain experiences and remembers emotions," explains Maria Elena. "Neuroscience has shown that experiences charged with intense emotions activate the brain's limbic system, which is responsible for processing and storing memories."

A Harvard University study revealed that emotional memories activate 23% more





neural connections than those generated from neutral experiences. "This means that if we design an emotionally charged wedding, it will be more meaningful and memorable for the bride and groom and their guests," emphasizes the expert.

This is where sensory neuromarketing comes into play, a discipline that uses neuroscience to stimulate the senses and elicit deep emotional responses. "When planning a destination wedding, we have the unique opportunity to incorporate the natural elements of the environment to reinforce the emotional connection with guests," suggests Maria Elena.

Sensory Marketing: Designing Unforgettable Weddings through the Senses

1. Sight: the impact of aesthetics and illumination

"Sight is the predominant sense in most experiences, and at a wedding, the choice

of colors, lighting and décor determine the emotional tone of the event," explains Maria Elena. "Soft tones and warm lights create an intimate and cozy atmosphere, while vibrant colors and dynamic lights generate energy and excitement."

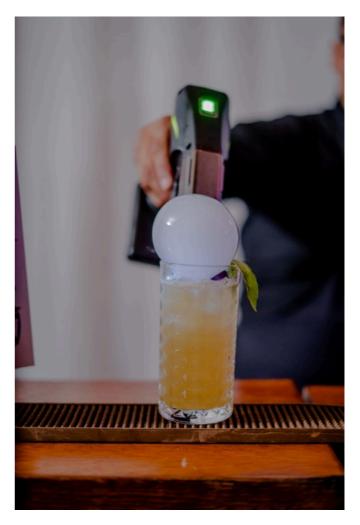
Expert tip: "For destination weddings, I recommend taking full advantage of natural lighting and complementing it with mapping projections that transform the space with immersive effects".

2. Hearing: The Soundtrack of Memories.

"Music not only sets the mood, it directly influences the mood," Torres points out. A Max Planck Institute study showed that melodies with personal meaning activate brain regions associated with pleasure and nostalgia. "That's why it's key to carefully choose the soundtrack for the wedding, from the ceremony to the party."

Expert tip: "Creating a collaborative playlist with guests can strengthen the emotional connection with the couple."





3. Smell: The Evocative Power of Aromas

"Smell is the sense most closely linked to memory," comments Maria Elena. "Incorporating specific fragrances at the wedding can produce long-lasting associations. For example, a floral scent at the ceremony will always remain in the memory of the attendees every time they smell a similar fragrance in the future."

Expert suggestion: "Design a personalized olfactory signature for the wedding and give small bottles of this scent to guests as a souvenir."

4. Taste: Gastronomic Experiences with Meaning

"The menu should not only be delicious, but also tell a story," says the expert. "Dishes inspired by the couple's origins or with surprising combinations can enhance the sensory experience."

Expert tip: "Including a multi-sensory tasting where guests taste flavors blindfolded intensifies the experience."

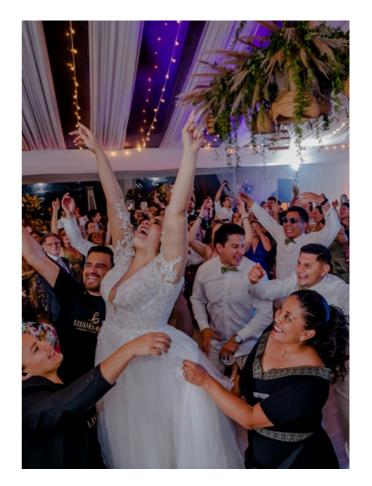
5. Touch: Luxury in the Details

"Textures also influence the sensory experience," explains Maria Elena.

"From the softness of the invitations to the quality of the table linens, every tactile element communicates feelings of luxury and exclusivity."

Expert tip: "Invitations with embossed textures and thermal elements that change color with the heat of the hands can add an interactive experience."





Strategies for creating immersive and memorable experiences

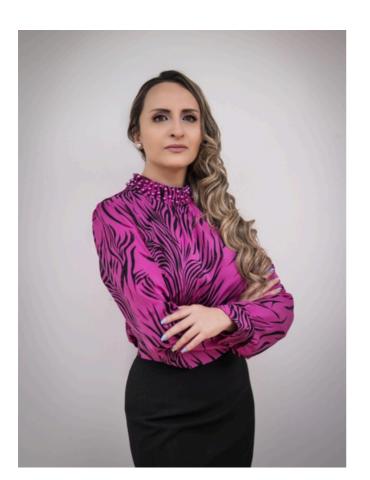
During the interview, Maria Elena Torres shared some practical strategies to transform a wedding into an unforgettable multi-sensory experience:

- **1. Multi-sensory invitations**: "Adding scents, textures or digital elements (such as personalized videos or voice messages) creates a powerful first impression.
- **2.** Interactive experiences at the reception: "From mixology stations to live art, incorporating participatory experiences makes the wedding unique."
- **3. Dynamic lighting and ambiance**: "Adjusting the colors and intensity of light according to the time of the event can modulate the energy of the attendees."

- **4. Strategic scenting:** "Different fragrances can reinforce key emotions of the event, such as relaxation at dinner or euphoria on the dance floor."
- **5. Use of immersive technology**: "Augmented reality and interactive projections can take the sensory experience to another level."

The Science Behind Shared Emotions

Maria Elena also spoke to us about the importance of the emotional connection between guests: "Mirror neurons allow us to empathize and share emotional states with others. This means that a wedding with a carefully designed atmosphere will not only influence the couple, but the collective energy of all the guests."





On the other hand, neurocardiology has revealed that intense emotions can have a physical impact on well-being. "An environment that fosters love, happiness and connection will not only be remembered, but will also have a positive effect on those who experience it," concludes the expert.

Conclusion: Beyond a Wedding, there is an Unforgettable Experience.

At the end of our interview, María Elena Torres left us with a powerful reflection: "At the heart of every unforgettable wedding are not only well-chosen details, but carefully designed emotions. Because in the end, what really lasts are not the centerpieces or the dress, but the emotions that will be remembered by each guest. And that, more than a trend, is a science."

Lissner Ortiz García

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Dana Braun is an award-winning travel agent, destination wedding specialist and owner of Aisle + Away Travel Co. She visits dozens of resorts each year and is recognized as an expert in creating, planning and executing unique travel itineraries in Mexico and the Caribbean.

How did you hear about Wedding TourismSpecialist and what motivated you to get it?

I first heard about WTS recognition during an IADWP webinar with Kitzia Morales. What struck me most was how she described it as different from the usual industry certifications. This one was not so much focused on wedding knowledge, but on systems and logistics, something I consider absolutely essential for this niche.





Today, anyone can call themselves a destination wedding broker. But weddings are complex, much more than a standard social group. Sure, I know resorts and wedding teams, but how do I prove that I've actually built the infrastructure necessary to provide quality service? This was the first program I saw that required proof that an agent understands about contracts, vendor management, logistics and the whole big picture. That's what convinced me.

What were the biggest challenges you faced during the process and how did you overcome them?

To be honest, I didn't find the process difficult. I already had all the materials and documentation ready. I've spent years perfecting my systems, so gathering the requirements was fairly straightforward. If anything, it was just a matter of organizing the evidence: my website, vendor portfolio, understanding vendor contracts, and general customer flow. It was gratifying to see that what I had already built met the standards.

What was the process like for you, was there anything that surprised you or that you didn't expect?

The process was very clear and well organized. I appreciated how thorough it was; it wasn't just about checking boxes on a list. They wanted real proof that you run your business in a professional manner. I wouldn't say I was surprised by anything in particular, but I did appreciate the intent behind it all. You can tell it was created by people who really know our industry.

How has this label impacted the growth and positioning of your business?

I'm not sure if clients have directly noticed the recognition yet, but it has definitely





elevated the way I present myself. When I send my credentials to interested couples, I am proud of what this badge represents.

The biggest impact I've noticed is within the industry. I love seeing other professionals showing their badge; to me, it's a sign that they also take their business seriously, which gives me more confidence when referring them to my clients.

Did you notice an increase in demand for your services after earning the badge?

Not directly, but I think it sets me apart from agents who may not have the same level of experience or operational infrastructure. It's a badge of credibility.

Has the badge allowed you to access customers with larger budgets or to improve your rates?

Todavía no. No creo que haya influido en mis tarifas, pero ese no era mi propósito al obtenerla. Para mí, el objetivo era fortalecer mi posicionamiento y diferenciarme en un mercado cada vez más competitivo.

Have you succeeded in expanding your market or attracting international customers?

My niche is still Mexico, Costa Rica and the Caribbean. And that is intentional. I have developed a great deal of expertise in these regions and have no plans to dilute that knowledge by expanding into destinations I don't know well. I'd rather be the best in one specific area than just good in many.

What advice would you give to other wedding tourism professionals looking to improve their business with this recognition?

Just do it. If you find it difficult, that's a sign that you need to strengthen your systems, and that's a good thing. This recognition not only validates your business, but also helps strengthen it.





What was the greatest benefit you gained from this experience?

For me, the badge is of great value, not only as recognition, but also for what it represents within the wider community. Being a Chapter Head in IADWP and being among the first to earn the WTS is a great source of pride. IADWP has been instrumental in my professional growth.

Would you recommend this distinction to other professionals? Why?

No doubt about it. Anything that helps you grow, improve your systems or discover areas of improvement in your business is worthwhile. Awards like this are not just a matter of image, but of responsibility, professionalism and building something that lasts.

Dana Braun

Owner & Lead Advisor Aisle + Away Travel Co. aisleaway.com dana@aisleaway.com Haz la diferencia hoy

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Lissner Ortiz is an empowered entrepreneur, passionate about creativity and education. Founder of The Sweetliss Details and The Sweetliss Eventos, she has more than a decade of experience in weddings and events. The first Wedding Planner in Ecuador with WTS certification, she is the creator of Romance Tourism Training and an international speaker at key events in the sector.



Amanda Beaver

GLOW Travel Inc

Ontario & East Regional Chapter Leader

@ @glowtravelinc

GLOW is a group of experienced Travel Designers and Event Planners. Our team is equipped with the most up to date resources, contacts and knowledge, on trends and developments, in Destination Weddings, Honeymoons, Luxury Travel, Family Travel and Event Planning. Want to elevate your travel experience? Our Travel Designers are committed to providing authentic, Inspired and Experiential travel options. Let us help you design your once in a lifetime journey.



Anita Craine A. Marie Events & Design LLC

@amarieeventsanddesignllc

Anita Craine is a bold, out-of-the-box wedding planner who encourages clients to set their own trends. She specializes in creating unique, creative, and fabulous events that truly reflect their personalities-whether it's a luxury jet wedding, a private island reception, or a superhero-themed party with a celebrity DJ. Her mission is to craft unforgettable, meaningful moments.



Tracy French

The French Connection Events and Travel

@ @tracyfrenchweddings

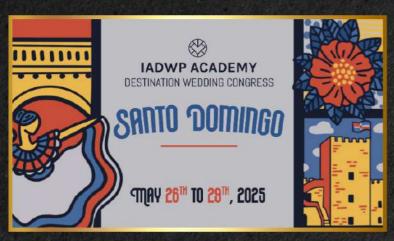
Tracy French, owner of The French Connection, is a renowned wedding planner with 20+ years of experience. A featured planner on Style Network's Whose Wedding Is It Anyway? and Married Away, she's also an A-List Planner for Destination Weddings & Honeymoons Magazine and a wedding expert on WOAI 1200 Radio. Winner of the 2022 Ed Cotton Award, she specializes in destination weddings across Mexico, Jamaica, Punta Cana, Grand Cayman, and beyond.

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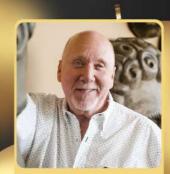
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