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ON THE COVER: The Inn at Burklyn hosts Natalie & Alex Montgomery, of Sutton, on their wedding day, Aug. 30, 2024. (Contributed Photo by K&E Photography)

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Lyndonville, VT

K & E Photography Captures Special Moments Locally

Pictures of area wedding scenes found in this publication are provided courtesy of K&E Photography, a business based in Lyndonville.

Owner and photographer Kelsey Gilman is a 2008 graduate of St. Johnsbury Academy. After high school she moved to Tampa, Fla. and attended an Art Institute for digital photography for 1½ years.

She said her path to a career in photography was found after moving back to Vermont in the fall of 2014.

“I assisted a very established photographer and it opened up a whole new world of photography to me as weddings were never on my radar,” she said. “I always thought that if I did anything with photography that I would have to live in a city and work for a studio or magazine.”

She said she was asked to photograph a friend’s wedding, and that’s where things started to take off.

“I focused on getting back into photography and learning as much as I could,” she said. “The gigs just started to snowball, I upgraded my gear when I could, invested in nice lenses and really focused on growing my business as a side hustle at first.”

In June 2021 she left her job as an insurance agent and committed to photography as her livelihood.

“It has been the best decision thus far,” she said. “It allows me to be a present mother and the freedom to be my own boss and make my own schedule while also succeeding in financial goals.”

With the start of a new year, Gilman already has



Kelsey Gilman is a local photographer and owner of her own photography business, K & E Photography. (Contributed Photo)

17 weddings scheduled.

“At this point I must have worked 100 weddings!” she said.

It’s a part of her business that she said she loves. “I love being able to witness so many amazing love stories and meeting so many wonderful people that I would otherwise have never met,” she said.

Kelsey Gilman lives in Lyndonville with her significant other, Devon Phillips, and two daughters. The name of her older daughter, 11-year-old Evelyn, is where she got the “E” in K&E Photography.

Gilman said her photography business also focuses on families, seniors and boudoir. Learn more about the photography business by going to her website: www.kephotographyvt.com

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How To Allocate Funds When Planning A Wedding

Whether it's a lavish, black-tie affair or a laid back gathering in the backyard, a couple's wedding day is a momentous, and often costly, occasion. According to the online wedding planning resource Zola, the average cost of a wedding in 2023 was \$33,000. That's a significant sum for couples to spend, and it's understandable if couples aren't sure how to allocate funds for their big day.

It's important that couples recognize what's most important to them when planning their weddings. Recognition of those priorities can help couples determine how to allocate their funds. Equally helpful can be how past couples have spent on their weddings. Utilizing data from its The Knot 2023 Real Weddings Study, the wedding experts at The Knot (theknot.com) have calculated general percentages of a wedding budget couples can devote to various components.

Couples with a keen eye might notice these percentages add up to significantly more than 100 percent. That's because the budgetary breakdown reflects personal preferences, individual couples' budgets and what couples can expect to spend on certain components. For example, The Knot data indicates a couple that prefers a band for their reception instead of a DJ may need to allocate roughly twice as much of their budget to accommodate that preference. In addition, couples who do not intend to pay for wedding party members' attire can find other ways to allocate those funds, which The Knot data indicates typically accounts for roughly 4 percent of a wedding budget.

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The average cost of a wedding in 2023 was

\$33,000

- Venue: 37 percent
- Catering: 28 percent
- Band: 12 percent
- Wedding rings: 9 percent
- Photography: 8 percent
- Flowers: 8 percent
- Alcohol: 8 percent
- Rehearsal dinner: 8 percent
- Videography: 7 percent
- Couples' attire: 7 percent
- Rentals: 6 percent
- DJ: 5 percent
- Wedding party attire: 4 percent
- Guest entertainment: 3 percent
- Transportation: 3 percent
- Ceremony music: 3 percent
- Cake and desserts: 2 percent
- Stationery: 2 percent
- Officiant: 1 percent
- Favors and gifts: 1 percent
- Additional jewelry: 1 percent



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Another variable to consider is family. According to The Knot data, couples allocated an average of 8 percent of their budgets to their rehearsal dinner. However, couples' parents may offer to pay for that meal, which can leave more room in the budget for other expenses.

In addition, The Knot reported that the percentage of couples asking a friend or family member to serve as their wedding officiant rose from 37 percent in 2015 to 51 percent in 2020. Wedding officiants do not often eat up a significant portion of a couple's wedding budget (1 percent), but this is another expense that modern couples may not need to account for.

Weddings can cost tens of thousands of dollars. Couples who determine how best to allocate their wedding budgets may find it far simpler to plan their big day.

The Notch House at Lake Willoughby provides the backdrop for scenes of wedded bliss for Sloane & Jonathan Pai from New York City. (Contributed Photo by K&E Photography)

Did You Know?

Weddings are well-known as costly affairs, even for couples who opt for more laid back ceremonies and receptions as opposed to lavish gatherings. Each year, The Knot Real Weddings Study uncovers the latest wedding trends, including those related to fashion, food and, of course, finances. The most recent study found that the average cost of a wedding in 2023 was \$35,000. That marks a considerable increase over just a year earlier, when couples spent an average of \$30,000 on their weddings. That significant spike in just a 12-month period un-

doubtedly reflects the effects of inflation, which has led to a notable increase in the costs of many products and services since 2022. If wedding costs are indeed surprising couples as they start to plan their big day, they can consider an approach that many before them have increasingly turned to: wedding planners. According to The Knot, 37 percent of couples hired a wedding planner in 2023, an increase of 7 percent over 2019, when the pandemic had yet to be declared and inflation had not led to such significant price increases. Wedding planners can help couples navigate some costly waters so they can avoid starting their life together with substantial wedding-related debt.



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Variables To Consider Before Picking A Wedding Date

After announcing their engagement, couples may need to get used to being asked if they have chosen a date to tie the knot. Friends and family members who are thrilled for the happy couple may want to know when the partnership will become official, but choosing a date is not always so simple.

A host of variables must be considered before couples pick a wedding date. Though the choice of date is ultimately a couple's decision to make, consideration of the following variables can help engaged individuals make the most informed choice.

• **Season:** Time of year is an important consideration when picking a wedding date. Summer was once the season-of-choice when tying the knot, but data from the online wedding resource The Knot indicates that has changed a little in recent years. The most popular day to get married in 2024 was Saturday, September 21, which the experts at The Knot note reflects a notable shift in couples' preferences that began in 2015. Since then, fall has been the most popular season to tie the knot. Moderate temperatures and less rainfall likely contribute to that popularity. Before picking a date, couples can consider which time of year they prefer to get married.

• **Convenience:** The convenience of a particular date won't be the same for everyone, but couples may want to consider a date or season that is amenable to as many bridal party members and guests as possible. Couples planning to invite children to the wedding may learn from parents that fall, winter and spring are tough times of year due to youngsters' hectic school and activities schedules. Summer may be more convenient, but it's also likely that some guests with preexisting vacation plans may not make it if the date chosen coincides with their trips. There's no way to accommodate everyone, and couples should make their own preferences their top priority. But those with no such preference may want to look for a time of year when traveling to and from the wedding is convenient for as many guests as possible.

• **Holidays:** Holidays are another variable to consider. Travel and accommodations tend to be more expensive on holiday weekends, and roadways also can be crowded during three-day weekends. In addition, many people look forward to their own traditions during the holiday season and other notable events, such as July Fourth and Labor Day. Before choosing a wedding date that coincides with a hol-

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Katie & Ryan Canole, a couple from Massachusetts, made Burke Mountain their wedding spot on Aug. 17, 2024. (Contributed Photo by K&E Photography)

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iday, it might be a good idea to get some feedback from bridal party members and other trusted confidantes.

• **Local event schedule:** It's common for couples to inquire about other events a wedding venue may be hosting when shopping for ceremony and reception sites. But it can be equally important to consider events in the area where you plan to get married on and around the days you're considering. For example, tying the knot on the same weekend

as the Super Bowl in the city where the event is taking place may not be wise, as hotel availability will likely be limited and room rates may be much higher than normal. Even more localized events like harvest festivals may affect the availability of accommodations, so this important variable merits consideration.

These are just a handful of variables couples should consider before choosing a date to tie the knot.



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A Wedding Day Timeline

Married couples often advise loved ones who are engaged that they should make time to enjoy their wedding days in the moment, noting that the day has a tendency to fly by. The pace of a couple's wedding day can seem so fast because the hours leading up to the ceremony and reception are typically filled with activities to ensure couples and bridal parties look their best.

Wedding ceremonies begin at different times depending on variables such as couples' preference, ceremony site and even the time of year the wedding is taking place. The following timeline, which is based on a summer wedding with a 5 p.m. ceremony, can serve as a guideline for couples as they map out their own big day.

10 a.m.-2 p.m.: Begin getting ready. Grooms and groomsmen typically do not require the same level of attention and amount of prep time as brides and their bridesmaids, so they likely won't need to start at 10 in the morning. But brides and their bridesmaids will need ample time to do their hair and makeup, and it may be necessary to begin by 10 a.m. Depending on the size of the bridal party, the hair and makeup session may last to 2 p.m. Grooms and groomsmen can decide when to start getting ready within this four-hour window. If a groom and

his groomsmen will get a hot shave at a local barbershop or hairstylist, schedule the shave so there's enough time to return to the hotel to get dressed, as it's not advisable to get a shave when already dressed in a tuxedo.

2 p.m.: Once everyone's hair and makeup is done, a bride can begin to get in her dress. Be sure the photographer is aware of this timeline, as many prefer to document the bride revealing how she looks in her dress.

3 p.m.: Couples who want to do what's called a "First Look" can do so at 3 p.m. for a 5 p.m. Couples choose to do a first look for a number of reasons, but it involves the happy couple seeing each other in their tuxedo and gown prior to the ceremony. One reason to do a first look is to take photographs with bridal party members prior to the start of the wedding. Doing so ensures the newlyweds will get to spend more time with their guests, particularly during cocktail hour. A pre-wedding photoshoot also can ensure couples have ample natural lighting for their photos should they choose to take some outdoors.

3:15 p.m.-4:30 p.m.: A first look won't take very long, which leaves ample time for photos of the hap-

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Katie & Ryan Canole, a couple from Massachusetts, made Burke Mountain their wedding spot on Aug. 17, 2024. (Contributed Photo by K&E Photography)

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How To Create A Backup Plan For An Outdoor Wedding

A wedding day is a magical and memorable day for a couple and their family members. Months or even years of planning may go into making a wedding day special.

For some, an outdoor wedding and celebration amid the beauty of nature is the ultimate setting in which to tie the knot. When Mother Nature is your decorator, the setting can be hard to match. Perhaps that's why 62 percent of couples opted for outdoor nuptials in 2023, according to The Knot 2023 Real Weddings Survey. However, there may be some extra work involved when exchanging vows outdoors, hosting a reception outside or both.

That work includes having a contingency plan in place if the weather does not cooperate. Here's what couples should know about having a backup plan for their outdoor weddings.

- Identify a second location. Couples who book outdoor receptions at catering halls can inquire how they handle inclement weather. Many will have a clause built into the agreement to move the party indoors in the event of bad weather. Others may enable the wedding to move to a different space for an added fee. Smaller, less formal weddings taking place at other locations may require a bit of ingenuity when looking for a backup space. Perhaps a friend has a large house where everyone can gather, or an employer may have a warehouse, loft or even a barn that can be transformed into unique venues at the last minute?
- Choose outdoor spaces with covered areas. The wish might be to have blue skies overhead, but it's impossible to control the weather. So it's safe to select outdoor spaces that offer a measure of weather protection, such as a pavillion in a park or a covered deck at a beachside locale. Such sites offer a little security without detracting from the ambience.
- Look into a tent rental. A tent is a great investment because it keeps everyone out of the elements rain or shine. Even on a lovely summer day, the blazing sun can make being outdoors uncomfortable. A tent is the solution. Couples should coordinate with a wedding planner or the venue itself to be sure that a tent is allowed on the grounds.
- Think about event insurance. Special event insurance may protect against financial loss in the event that severe weather throws a wrench into outdoor wedding plans. Poor weather may make moving around the venue treacherous and might force a postponement. Liability and cancellation protection in an insurance policy helps couples avoid financial hardship.
- Hire a wedding planner. The Knot suggests hiring a wedding planner or coordinator who can pivot to plan B in the event of bad weather. This helps take some of the stress off of the couple so they can enjoy the day.
- Plan wardrobe and hair/makeup accordingly. Brides and bridesmaids can choose fabrics for dresses that will be comfortable and not become blown around or see-through due to rain and wind. The wedding party can ask hair stylists to create a wedding hairstyle that is somewhat weatherproof. Experienced makeup artists likely know some tricks to keep makeup looking flawless even when the weather isn't. Outdoor weddings can be beautiful events, but it is important to have a backup plan in place in case weather doesn't cooperate.

Vasiliki Anemikos & Alex Menard, residents of Texas but originally from Vermont, made Lake Willoughby and the Little Farm at Willoughby the place for their wedding ceremony on June 8, 2024. (Contributed Photo by K&E Photography)



py couple and their bridal party. Sixty to 75 minutes should be plenty of time for a photographer to get all the shots couples requested. It helps to submit a list of desired photos (i.e., couple with full bridal party, couple with all four parents, etc.) prior to the wedding day, and some photographers even insist on doing so to ensure they don't miss anything.

4:30 p.m.: Rest and some last-minute preparation and sprucing up can take up the final 30 minutes before the ceremony begins.

5 p.m.: Ceremony begins.

5:30-6:30 p.m.: The hour right after the ceremony can be designated as cocktail hour. Couples also can use this time to take additional photos with family and others that might not have been taken during the initial photoshoot. This window also serves as a good time to sign the official documents confirming the couple's nuptials, particularly if a hired officiant will be taking that paperwork and filing it with the appropriate government office.

6:30-10 p.m.: The reception, featuring bridal party member and couple introductions, can commence at 6:30. The choice of when to perform father-daughter and mother-son dances is up to the couple and their parents, but such traditions are generally reserved for early in the reception so every guest is still around to witness these special moments.



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How To Manage The Menu At Your Wedding Reception

Wedding receptions are the culmination of a lot of planning. Though there may not be any insignificant decisions when planning the post-ceremony party, some choices will loom larger than others, including which foods will be served.

When planning a wedding reception, couples can choose a venue that provides the food, such as a traditional reception center; otherwise, the reception may take place at an outdoor location or a venue that is not equipped to prepare and serve food. In the latter instances, couples will contract with an outside caterer. In both situations certain factors can help determine who to use for reception food services.

Planning

A traditional reception center/catering hall is likely a wise choice for couples who prefer simplicity in wedding day meal planning. These facilities are experts at addressing all of the components that go into a reception. Such venues offer access to a cocktail area and banquet room, and the facility likely has a staff of chefs at the ready to dish up meals. While many reception centers offer restaurant-quality offerings, scouting venues and sampling dishes will provide an idea of how foods taste and help couples narrow down their choices.

Preferences

Some receptions are multi-course events starting from the moment guests arrive and snack on hors d'oeuvres to the dessert display served as a final course. Others are low-key and may not have full sit-down service. If you prefer a cocktail atmosphere only, certain venues may make more sense than others. Identifying how much food to have and the type of service desired can help pinpoint caterers to interview.

Chef access

Having a specific chef or cuisine in mind may require separating the food from a venue. Reception centers likely will not allow couples to bring in their own food. Therefore, you will have to find a venue where outside food is possible. Then you can work with a favorite chef for catering services.

Location

Some couples prefer to combine their ceremony and reception at one spot. This may be at a beachside location or in a converted country barn. If this seems like a scenario you are considering, then the venue will take priority and you'll have to find an outside caterer to service the wedding.

Allergies

Food allergies and intolerances are on the minds of many nowadays. It is important to be mindful of food restrictions when speaking with caterers. Take careful inventory of work-arounds so that every guest at the wedding can be enjoy a safe, delicious meal. The wedding reception menu is an important variable for engaged couples to consider. A host of factors may come into consideration as couples try to determine how to feed their guests come their wedding day.

Consider Your Wedding Flowers Carefully

Although many decorative elements help to create ambiance for a wedding celebration, perhaps none is more awe-inspiring than beautiful floral arrangements. Flowers offer visual appeal, captivating aromas and texture that can make a space more welcoming.

Engaged couples typically go to great lengths when planning their weddings, but flowers may not be as micromanaged as other elements. Some are content to let florists design their arrangements, but the average cost of wedding flowers in 2023 was \$2,800, according to The Knot Real Weddings Study. That price tag merits some input on the part of couples. Floral experts say couples should budget for floral arrangements coming in at 10 percent of the overall wedding budget, which is the industry standard. Therefore, for a \$60,000 wedding a couple should assume their florals will cost \$6,000. It's important to note that the cost of wedding flowers has been steadily increasing over the last few years due to inflation and climate change, says The Knot. So couples may need to be even more involved in floral decisions to maximize their dollars spent.

Here are some variables to consider when selecting wedding flowers.

- **Greenery:** Adding greenery to fill in spaces in floral arrangements can save some money. Centerpieces and bouquets that are floral-heavy will certainly cost more.
- **Symbolism:** Consider the meaning behind flowers to make choices even more personal. You also may want to select flowers that will complement the theme of the wedding. For example, traditional spring blooms like tulips and daffodils will coordinate with spring weddings.
- **Flower varieties:** Hardier varieties of flowers, such as daisies, mums, carnations, and protea, are less likely to wilt quickly in bouquets or centerpieces than some other blooms, even when they are cut. Such blooms can hold up in any weather and last the entire day so that arrangements will be picture-perfect no matter the hour.
- **Venue:** Couples may find that some venues already have faux flowers or other decor. That



may mean couples do not need to have as many flowers or any elaborate arrangements.

- **Size:** A particularly large floral centerpiece can overwhelm a table, and a bouquet that is overly cumbersome may detract from the bride or her bridesmaids. Choose the correct scale for comfort in bouquets. For table arrangements, select a size that will not discourage conversation or block guests' view, nor take up too much real estate on the table.
- **Allergies:** Although they are cut, flowers in arrangements can trigger allergic responses in some people. Others may be bothered by overly aromatic flowers. Work with the florist to find blooms that will be best.
- **Color scheme:** Although white flowers always coordinate, many couples like some color in their arrangements. Be sure the flowers pick up the hues used in bridesmaid dresses or even the season of the year. Couples should take an active role in deciding what to include in floral pieces for their weddings.

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Can’t-Miss Photos *For Your Wedding*

Couples who hire a professional photographer to capture their weddings may end up with anywhere from 400 to 600 images, with some photographers promising even more. Although it is likely that a wide array of shots will be taken, couples who do not want to leave things up to chance should sit down with their photo professionals and discuss the key shots they want to capture.

Once the big day has passed, there will be no opportunity to go back and arrange missed shots. This list of must-have photos can ensure that the wedding album has all the shots couples desire.

Before the ceremony

- Wedding day outfits hanging in the wardrobe or placed over a chair
- Wedding invitation surrounded by bouquets
- Wedding rings side by side
- Outfit accessories, such as shoes, jewelry, a veil, and cuff links
- Bride and bridesmaids getting hair and makeup done
- Groom and groomsmen laughing and having fun
- Bride getting zipped up into her dress

At the ceremony

- Guests entering the ceremony site
- Ushers escorting guests to their seats
- Close-ups of the couple separately waiting to see their soon-to-be spouse
- Cute kids participating in the ceremony coming down the aisle
- Parents of the couple coming down the aisle or seated prominently awaiting the start of the ceremony
- Shots of all members of the wedding party
- Guests of honor, such as grandparents
- Partner coming down the aisle and the partner’s reaction
- Exchange of rings
- First kiss
- A wide shot of the guests at the ceremony
- Signing the marriage certificate
- The processional with the newly hitched couple beaming
- Couple in the limo backseat

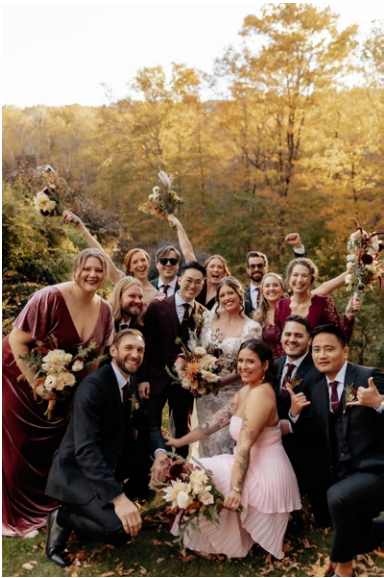
Portraits

- Couple with bridesmaids and groomsmen
- Bride and maid/matron of honor
- Groom and best man
- Couple with each set of parents and siblings
- Couple with close family members

At the reception

- Couple’s first entrance
- Special signage, decorations or photos of the scenery
- Wedding cake details
- Toasts and speeches from key people
- First dance as a couple
- Father/daughter, mother/son dances, if applicable
- Couple mingling with guests
- Guests dancing and having fun
- Shots of the musicians or any special entertainers
- The cake cutting
- The couple’s grand exit and wave goodbye

These are some of the customary images that couples will want to request. Photographers likely will cover most of them without prompting, but couples should be sure to point out any special photographs they’d like captured throughout the day.



The Notch House at Lake Willoughby provides the backdrop for scenes of wedded bliss for Sloane & Jonathan Pai from New York City. (Contributed Photo by K&E Photography)

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