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## Vendor Checklist & Questions to Ask *Florist*

Once you've selected your venue, selecting the florist one of the most important vendors you'll hire. The flowers are one of the major ways that your vision and feel will be communicated to your guests. Flowers are expensive and you want to be sure you get your money's worth. Below is a checklist of flowers to consider, what you need to do before you meet with a florist, questions to ask them and things to look for when you get the proposal.

### Before the Meeting

#### **Interview Many:**

You should interview at least 2-3 florists before making your decision. Make sure the florists have worked at your ceremony and reception venues. If they haven't, see if they'll do the initial meeting at your location so you can walk through the site together.

#### **Come Prepared:**

Bring MANY pictures of bouquets, arrangements, and flowers that you like. This will greatly help your florist capture your vision. When you are looking at their photos, does their style match yours? If not, move on to someone else. While they may be able to do flowers in your style, if it is not reflected in any of their photos there is no proof they can.

#### **Do Your Homework:**

Check the wedding review sites and make sure there isn't anything glaring to be concerned about. Ask friends and family for recommendations. See if your other vendors or the venue has a preferred vendor list (a list of prescreened vendors that have worked at the property before and come recommended).

### Checklist

Below is a list of flowers that you may want for your wedding. We've tried to list everything you could want, but the list likely includes far more than you'll need. Make a note of which flowers are definitely needed and which would be nice to have.

#### **Personal Flowers**

- Bride Bouquet
- Flowers for your Hair
- Tossing Bouquet
- Bridesmaids Bouquets
- Flower Girl – Basket with Tossing Petals, Headpiece, Wand, etc.
- Ring Bearer
- Moms - Small Bouquet, Wrist Corsage or Pin Corsage
- Grandmothers - Small Bouquet, Wrist Corsage or Pin Corsage
- Groom Boutonniere
- Groomsmen Boutonnieres
- Fathers Boutonnieres
- Grandfathers Boutonnieres
- Other people you want to recognize such as ushers, ceremony readers, four-legged wedding guests, etc.

### **Ceremony Flowers**

- Structure / Arch / Chuppa / Mundap
- Main Altar Flowers
- Ceremony Seating/Church Pews
- Aisle Décor – petals, garland, potted plants

### **Cocktail Hour**

- Cocktail Tables
- Escort Card Display
- Bar Arrangement

### **Reception**

- Guest Table Centerpieces
- Head Table Centerpieces
- Bride & Groom Chairs
- Buffet Table and/or Dessert Table
- Cake Table
- Bar Arrangement(s)
- Restrooms
- Candles and/or Lanterns
- Room / Area Décor – fireplace mantle, dance floor area, lounge area, smoking area

## **Questions to Ask Prospective Florists**

### **Business & Experience**

- How many years of professional experience do you have as a florist?

- How much experience do you have preparing wedding arrangements?
- Do you have photographs of your recent wedding related work?
- Have you worked at my ceremony and reception venues before?
- What is your cancellation policy?
- Do you offer a money back guarantee?
- Do you have liability insurance?

### **Service**

- If hired, will you personally set up my wedding or will your staff do it?
- Do you have access to out of season flowers?
- Are my flowers in season?
- If my flowers are unavailable before my wedding, what will they be substituted for?
- Do you offer any other services other than providing the flowers?
- Will you do a walk-through with me at my venue?
- Can you visit my ceremony and reception site to make floral recommendations?
- When will you deliver and set up my flowers?
- Do you rent vases and candle holders?
- Do you provide a sample of my bouquet or centerpiece before my event? Is there a cost for this?
- Can my guests take the arrangements home at the end of the event?
- Are there any items I need to rent? (If yes) Are the rental fees refundable upon their return?
- When do I need to return these rental items or do you pick them up from the venue?
- Do you breakdown at the end of the evening?
- How long will it take you to get me a proposal?
- Will your proposal include images so I can get an idea of style and colors of flowers?

### **Cost & Payment**

- Are there any alternatives to the flowers I am interested in which will work better for our season?
- Are there any alternative to the flowers I am interested in which will lower my cost?
- What is your delivery fee? What is your set up fee?
- What is the deposit required? Is the deposit non-refundable?
- What is your payment policy? Do you accept credit cards?

## **Reviewing the Proposals**

It is very exciting to review the proposals. Here are a few things to consider:

- How responsive is the florist? Did the proposal arrive when he/she said it would or did you have to call/email several times? If you did have to bug them, this is not a good sign. They could just be very busy or they could be unorganized, something you don't want for your wedding.
- How detailed is the proposal? The proposal should have a very detailed description of what's included and an itemized cost for each item. Make sure the names of the flowers are correct and make note of how many stems are included in key items like your bouquet and the centerpieces.
- Do they get your vision? Did they listen to what you said and is that reflected in your proposal?

- Are there any fees that are NOT included in the proposal? Make note of any TBD costs, delivery, vendor meal requirements, etc.
- Call all the references provided. Talk to other brides and find out what their experience was. Talk to your other vendors to get their feedback.

## Booked!

- Enter in all the vendor information in the Vendor Contact Book
- Note the vendor on your Budget Spreadsheet - vendor name, total, deposit paid and date remaining payments are due (in notes section of budget).
- Make sure your florist has your link to your Pinterest page!