



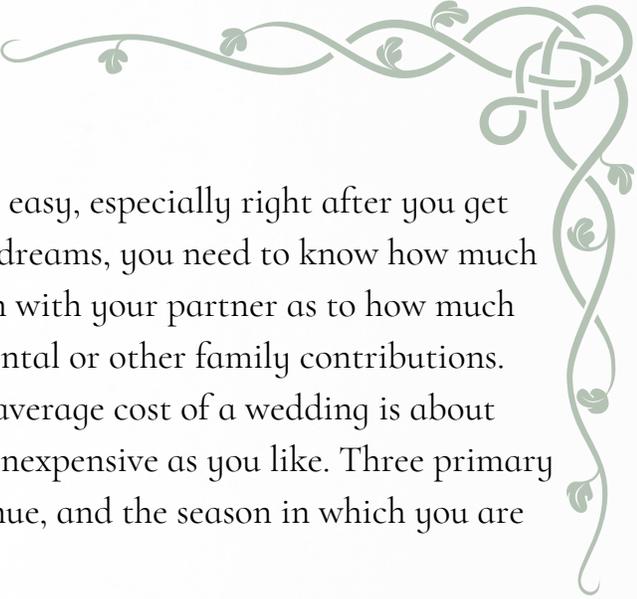
12 Steps  
to Planning

*The  
Perfect  
Wedding*

DetailsByDrArlonda.com

*Details*  
BY DR. ARLONDA

Where Wedding Planning and Wellness Meet



# 1 *Create a Budget*

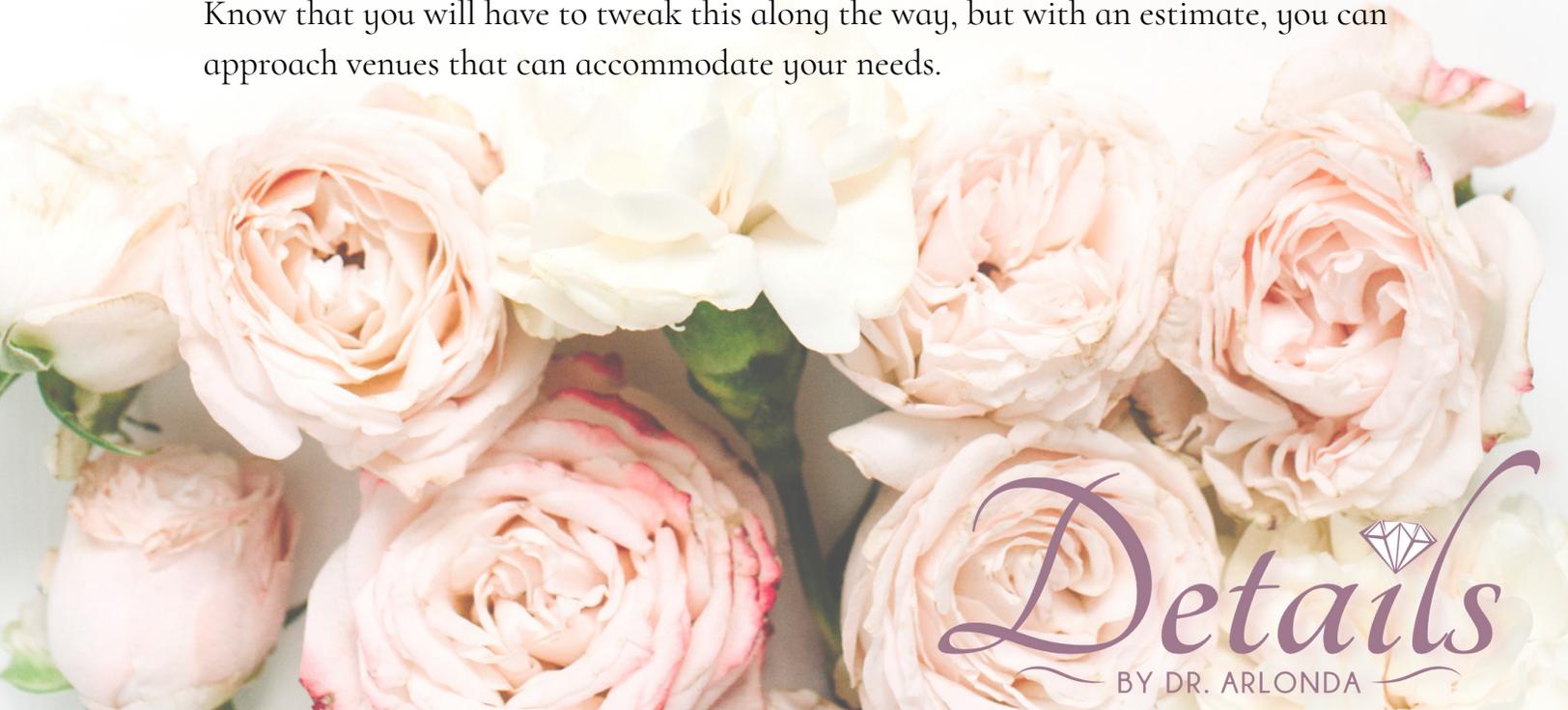
I get it—having money conversations is not always easy, especially right after you get engaged. But in order to plan the wedding of your dreams, you need to know how much you have to spend. Be sure to have the conversation with your partner as to how much you can afford, taking into consideration any parental or other family contributions. According to the 2020 Wedding Wire Report, the average cost of a wedding is about \$28,900. But your wedding can be as expensive or inexpensive as you like. Three primary drivers of the cost are the number of guests, the venue, and the season in which you are getting married.

# 2 *Set the Date*

You should set your date as soon as possible. Before setting your date, consult with each of your families to ensure that no other events conflict with your chosen day. Setting your date quickly helps to ensure that you can book the venue of your choice, especially for summer or early fall weddings, which are the most popular seasons.

# 3 *Estimate the Number of Guests*

You probably can think of a million people who you would like to be present to witness this most memorable occasion. But realistically, that's just not possible. Talk with your families about who they would like to invite and put together a preliminary guest count. Know that you will have to tweak this along the way, but with an estimate, you can approach venues that can accommodate your needs.



## 4 *Book Your Venue*

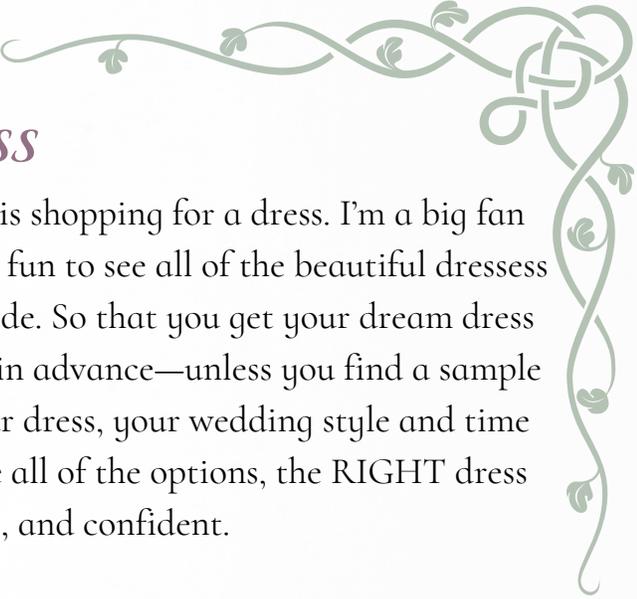
Now that you know your budget, the date, and the estimated number of people, you can start searching for a venue. You will want to get on this as soon as possible because popular venues are booked a year or more in advance. Wedding industry experts estimate that 2022 will have more than 2.6 million weddings—the most since 1985. Do not delay in booking your venue!

## 5 *Consider Hiring a Planner/Consultant*

Many brides have thought about the wedding of their dreams since they were little girls. For many, it will be the biggest event they ever planned. Although it looks easy, there are a lot of moving pieces to planning a wedding, right down to every detail. It can almost be a full-time job and overwhelming! To assist you along the way, it is definitely worth considering whether you need someone with expertise to help you manage the process. Your wedding consultant/planner can help you think about and ask the questions that you might not think to ask. Not to mention, referrals for tried and true vendor suppliers. As you enjoy your wedding day, stress free, you will look back and realize the value of your consultant/planner is priceless.

## 6 *Determine Your Wedding Style*

This is the fun part and probably what you've been thinking about for a long time. The colors, the style, the theme—all the things that make up your dream wedding. What's your style? Traditionalist, romantic, minimalist, boho, or modern? Once you've nailed down your event's style, you can think about the type of flowers, tablescapes, and cake. Don't forget about Pinterest for inspiration!



## 7 *Say “Yes” to the Dress*

Another fun part of the wedding planning process is shopping for a dress. I’m a big fan of the popular TV show, “Say Yes to the Dress.” It’s fun to see all of the beautiful dresses and how women are transformed to a beautiful bride. So that you get your dream dress in time, you might need to order it 9 to 12 months in advance—unless you find a sample or an off-the-rack gown. When thinking about your dress, your wedding style and time of year should be taken into consideration. Despite all of the options, the RIGHT dress is the one that makes you feel beautiful, glamorous, and confident.

## 8 *Ask the Bridal Party*

It’s a honor to be asked to be in someone’s wedding, but it is also a big commitment. Ask your bridal party as soon as possible. This allows them to plan financially, arrange for time off of work, and, if necessary, make travel arrangements. And when you ask, be prepared to provide an estimate of the cost and any other time commitments for which they need to prepare.

## 9 *Select a Caterer*

Before selecting your caterer, you should focus on the type of reception that you want—buffet, sit-down dinner, or passed hors d’oeuvres. Of course, each gives off a different vibe and has a different price point. You also want to understand what your venue will allow as it pertains to outside caterers or those not on the venue's preferred vendor list.



# 10

## *Book Your Photographer*

The photographer is probably one of the most important parts of the wedding. What they capture will last for years to come, and viewing the photos is how you will relive your wedding. Like popular venues, well-known photographers tend to get booked up to a year in advance. Pinterest, Instagram, and Wedding Wire are great places to research photographers and see their actual work.

# 11

## *Book Your Entertainment*

Just like the photographer, you want to book your musical entertainment as soon as possible. Not to sound like a broken record (pun intended!), but popular bands, DJs, and singers can be booked months in advance. The type of music should fit within the theme of the ceremony and reception. Don't be afraid to mix it up, either. I've seen a jazz band play music during dinner and then a DJ for dancing.

# 12

## *Take Time for Self-Care*

We all know that planning a wedding is fun but can be overwhelming. So while you are focused on wedding planning and all of the details, don't forget about your well-being. Be sure to incorporate wellness and self-care activities into your routine. Get enough sleep, stay hydrated, make healthy food choices, exercise, and, yes, relaxing—all of these are important to your mental and physical well-being. After all, you don't want to show up on the big day feeling worn and ragged. This is the day for you to shine bright like a diamond! 