



Where Do I Stay? How Do I Get There?

Hotel and Transportation Details for Your **Guests**

As the bride and groom, you want your out-of-town guests to have a wonderful time throughout your wedding weekend, but chances are good that you will not have the time to entertain them yourselves. By keeping your guests' hotel accommodation as centrally located as possible, they can entertain one another, and you and your fiancé can relax and look forward to the big day. The ideal situation would be having your ceremony and reception at a hotel that can also accommodate your guests, but this is not always feasible, as prices can be high, and your choice location may not be a hotel. In this case, it's best to provide your guests with three different choices of accommodations, varying in cost from low to high. This allows lodging within their price range that they know is conveniently located to all the action.

In addition to being close to your wedding, choose hotels that are within walking or short driving distance from fun activities. Being near to malls, parks, the beach, or other local sights give out-of-town guests a chance to have fun together and get to know the area while you're otherwise occupied. You will not have to "baby-sit" to make sure your guests have a great time. When your guests are in the same centrally located place, they can easily carpool to and from outings, airports and, of course, your wedding, cutting down on the cost and the fuss of organizing rides.

Many hotels offer group room blocks, sometimes at a discounted rate, that are specifically reserved for your wedding guests. Once the rooms are blocked, all they need to do is call in and book a room held under your last names. This feature is also helpful if you wish to distribute gift baskets to your guests, because having a group room block makes it easier to know where to have them delivered (as well as how many per hotel). Usually, you or your wedding coordinator can secure a room block at the hotel of your choice without a deposit or financial commitment on your part. You can also call the hotel and get rooming lists, or the room numbers of your guests, instead of calling all over town to figure out where everyone is staying.

Another important detail that is often overlooked: transportation. While out-of-town guests can certainly rent cars, if your budget allows, you should consider arranging transportation for them as a thank you for their travel efforts to attend your special weekend. Some couples choose to have the ceremony and reception in the same location. This is the easiest to plan, as you need only to consider how guests will get to and from your wedding. If you plan to have your ceremony at a different location than your reception, however, you will need to consider transportation to the ceremony, then to the reception, and then back to the hotels after the celebration. This can be achieved with careful planning.

Consider your budget and the number of people who will need transportation. How much money can you spend? Will you need a large bus or a small van? Do your guests skew old or young? These aspects all play a part in choosing the right form of transportation. For example, if you only need to accommodate a small number of guests, renting a van for the weekend from a national chain may be your best bet. If there are many out-of-town visitors, a bus may be the answer; however, charter companies often charge an hourly rate. If you are not working with a wedding coordinator, you can call transportation companies yourself and ask for rates, just be sure to have details such as an approximate number of people, length of time you will need the bus or van, and the locations where each vehicle will be going in order for the representative to give you a solid quote.

You want your guests to remember your wedding as fun and stress-free; no one wants guests to feel as if they spent too much money, or that they were stranded without rides or appropriate housing. Finalizing the lodging and transportation details well in advance of your wedding will ensure that you have set up your guests with the right lodging and yourself with a fun and enjoyable time.

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