

10K WEDDING PLAN

Yes, you can hold your big day in NYC at a midsize price **BY ELOISE PARKER**

As of 2009, the price of the average New York City wedding is \$50,000. But that's not what it has to cost.

"There are so many ways to overspend," notes Anja Winikka, editor at NewYorkCity.weddings.com, a wedding resource launched last month by TheKnot.com. "If you're not set on a Saturday night wedding with dinner, dancing and a band, you can save yourself a lot of money," she says. "And you might even have a more memorable event."

To help brides reduce costs, Winikka got creative with wedding planner Soraya Jollon to price out a city wedding with 100 guests for a modest \$10,000.



INVITATIONS

"Etsy.com is an amazing resource for vibrant but modestly priced invitations," suggests Winikka. The Web site allows shoppers to commission work directly from designers with minimal overheads.

"Choose a vendor on the site and opt for a simple invitation with a reply card and envelope in your wedding colors. You can chat over the details on the phone and pay via PayPal," she adds.

50-invitation sets from Etsy.com: \$188.50
Postage for invitations & reply cards: \$42

THE CEREMONY

Opt for the rustic amphitheater of Summit Rock in Central Park and the wedding couple and guests will be greeted with orange juice and doughnut holes prior to the 11 a.m. ceremony, with music by a solo trumpeter from the Juilliard School.

"You could do it anywhere from late April to early fall," says Winikka. "The Web site NYCParks.com contains all the info you need to apply for a permit." Handing out golf umbrellas as favors will accommodate unexpected weather.

"If you want to personalize them, tying a ribbon around each one in your wedding color is a much less expensive alternative to monogramming," suggests Winikka, who shopped at RockBottomGolf.com.

Save another \$500 by using a qualified friend instead of hiring an officiant. "Many couples are now being married by friends because it's special," notes Winikka. "Friends can qualify almost instantly online."

Officiant registration: \$15

Marriage license: \$35

Summit Rock permit: \$25

Pre-ceremony snack: \$75

50 golf umbrellas: \$400

Trumpeter for 1 1/2 hours: \$300 →

HAIR AND MAKEUP

"A lot of people have a friend who's good at makeup, but if you don't, hit the beauty counter," says Winikka. "Most now employ qualified makeup artists."

Asking a pro for tips may not be as good as hiring someone, but it's a lot cheaper. And if you've got time the morning of the big day, you can just go and get your makeup done at the counter. Then, Winikka suggests purchasing powder and lip color to use for touchups later that day.

Skipping an expensive updo could save you another \$100. "Get a blowout the night before at a salon like the V2 Salon on the lower East Side, which charges \$25, including tip, then loosely style it in the morning with a clip, a few twirls of the curling iron and spritzes of hair spray."

Blowout: \$25

Makeup purchases with free application: \$45

RINGS

"The couple can purchase simple gold or silver wedding bands for the ceremony," explains Winikka, who found two for \$120 on Helzberg.com.

"Wait until your one-year anniversary to upgrade to a stronger metal such as platinum or palladium."

His-and-her gold wedding bands: \$120

WEDDING ATTIRE

Allocating \$350 for a wedding gown is a fraction of the \$1,000-plus price generally charged for a custom-made dress, and there are plenty of places to look.

"Try Calypso-Celle.com, Nordstrom.com, J.Crew.com or even Target for flirty summer dresses, or try OnceWed.com or The Bridal Garden at 54 W. 21st St. for a nearly new designer gown," says Winikka.

For accessories, spend where it counts.

"Shoes are a great way to throw in some color, and a pretty hair clip will be a nice touch in the photos," she adds.

Luckily for any store-phobic grooms, there are minimal purchases required.

"The groom can wear a navy or tan suit that's already in his closet and then splurge on a new shirt," advises Winikka. "Skip the tie, though!"

Calvin Klein stretch mesh →

gown at Nordstrom stores: \$ 178

Bride's accessories (shoes & hair clip): \$100

Groom's shirt: \$75



FLOWERS/DECOR

"For pretty, DIY place settings, we found 100 small glass cube vases from FlowersandSupplies.com. These can double as place cards with the guests' names on imprintable stickers attached to the vases with ribbon. We also included 100 gladiolus for \$3 per stem at the Chelsea Flower Market, which could be purchased by a friend of the couple the day before the wedding and dropped off at the venue along with the vases," suggests Winikka.

"Personal flowers for the wedding party can be kept to a minimum with four boutonnières (for the groom, best man and two fathers) and two bouquets (for the

bride and maid of honor). In lieu of traditional bouquets, the bride and maid of honor can carry paper fans embellished with flowers from InBetweenGreens.com.

Reception materials

(incl. shipping): \$800

Personal flowers: \$134

Cab to restaurant to deliver flowers: \$20

THE RECEPTION

For a post-ceremony photo op, hit the Natural History Museum subway station, which features a decorative tiled platform.

"The couple can have their first dance on the platform as they wait for the C train to take them downtown," says Winikka.

Thalassa, near the Chambers St. station, can cater a three-course wedding lunch with wine, beer and soft drinks from 12:30 to 3 p.m. for \$65 per head. Save on a deejay by giving them your iPod with custom playlist when you arrive.



↑ **Thalassa Restaurant lunch: \$6,500**

Reception music: \$0

PHOTOS/ VIDEOGRAPHY

"Couples should purchase the Digital Flip Ultra video camera, which holds up to 60 minutes of video," says Winikka. "Then hand it to their most tech-savvy friend to record the ceremony and speeches."

Then book a professional photographer with an art or

photojournalist background for four hours instead of a pricier wedding photographer. Go to www.NewYorkCity.Weddings.com for recommendations.

"The fee should include a CD of high-resolution

images; these will be color-corrected but not retouched."

Flip Ultra Video Camera, \$149 at theflip.com

Photographer for 4 hours + CD of high-res unretouched images: \$750

Video: \$0

TOTAL: \$9,976.50