

Rochester, MN Wedding Planning: Pre-Consultation Question Checklist

(By French-Touch-Photography)

Planning your dream wedding involves asking the right questions! Use this checklist to prepare for your consultations with potential vendors in Rochester, MN. Remember to take notes during your meetings!

General Questions for ALL Vendors:

- **Availability:** Are you available on my wedding date ([Insert Date Here])?
 - **Pricing & Packages:**
 - What are your standard packages, and what do they include?
 - Can packages be customized?
 - What is your pricing structure (hourly, package, à la carte)?
 - Are there any hidden fees or additional costs I should be aware of (e.g., travel fees, setup/teardown, taxes, gratuities)?
 - What is the payment schedule? Is a deposit required?
 - **Experience & Style:**
 - How long have you been working in the wedding industry?
 - Do you specialize in a particular style or type of wedding (e.g., rustic, elegant, modern, intimate)?
 - Can you provide references from previous clients?
 - Can I see examples of your previous work (portfolio, gallery, videos)?
 - **Communication:**
 - What is your preferred method of communication (email, phone, text)?
 - How quickly can I expect a response to inquiries?
 - **Contract & Cancellations:**
 - Can I review a sample contract?
 - What is your cancellation or rescheduling policy?
 - What happens if you are unable to fulfill your services (e.g., illness, emergency)? Do you have backup plans?
 - **Insurance:** Are you insured? (Very important for venues and high-liability vendors)
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I. Venues

(Mayowood Stone Barn, Kahler Grand Hotel, Plummer House, Rochester Art Center, J.Powers at the Hilton, Pond View Barn, The Garten MarketPlatz, The Four Daughters, Villa Bellezza, Blue Moon Ballroom, Hilltop House)

- **Availability:** Is my wedding date available? What are your peak and off-peak seasons/rates?
 - **Capacity:** What is the maximum capacity for ceremony and reception?
 - **Included Amenities:** What is included in the venue rental (tables, chairs, linens, basic decor, sound system, bridal suite, groom's room, setup/teardown)?
 - **Catering:**
 - Do you have in-house catering, or do I need to use a preferred caterer list?
 - If preferred caterers, can I see the list?
 - Is there a food and beverage minimum?
 - What are your bar service options (open bar, cash bar, corkage fees)?
 - **Restrictions:**
 - Are there any decor restrictions (e.g., no open flames, glitter)?
 - Are there noise restrictions or a hard end time for music/event?
 - Is outside alcohol allowed?
 - Are candles allowed?
 - **Logistics:**
 - Is there adequate parking for guests? Valet service available?
 - Is the venue wheelchair accessible?
 - What is the timeline for setup and teardown?
 - Do you have a dedicated event coordinator on staff to assist on the day of?
 - **Rain Plan/Backup:** If parts of my event are outdoors, what is the plan for inclement weather?
 - **Dog-Friendly:** If applicable, what are your policies for dogs (as mentioned in the article)?
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II. Photographers & Videographers

(French Touch Photography, Penny McCoy, Becca Dilley Photography, Bradley Hanson Photography, Hard Copy Film Co, Bobby Redmond, The Peterson Brothers Production)

- **Style:** Describe your photographic/videographic style. (e.g., photojournalistic, traditional, artistic, light & airy, dark & moody, candid).
- **Packages:** What's included in your wedding packages? (e.g., hours of coverage, number of photographers/videographers, engagement session, print rights, albums, digital files, drone footage).
- **Delivery:**
 - What is the estimated delivery time for photos/videos?

- How will the final products be delivered (online gallery, USB, prints, film)?
 - **Equipment:** What kind of equipment do you use? Do you have backup equipment?
 - **Insurance:** Do you carry liability insurance?
 - **Travel Fees:** Are there any travel fees for Rochester or surrounding areas? (Especially relevant for photographers based further away like Penny McCoy in Duluth).
 - **Copyright/Usage:** What are your policies regarding image/video usage rights?
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III. Floral Artistry

(Flowers by Jerry, Rennings Flowers, Fox and Fern Floral, Sargents, Hy-Vee Floral, Carousel Flowers, Young Love Floral and Finds)

- **Style:** What is your design aesthetic? Can you work with my specific vision (e.g., rustic, elegant, modern, minimalist)?
 - **Consultation:** Do you offer a free consultation to discuss my floral needs and budget?
 - **Flower Availability:** Which flowers will be in season during my wedding month?
 - **Services:** Do you handle the delivery, setup, and teardown of floral arrangements?
 - **Rentals:** Do you offer rental items like vases, arches, or stands?
 - **Budget:** How can we maximize my floral budget?
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IV. Caterers & Food Trucks

(Pinnacle Catering, Victoria's, John Hardy's, Smoak BBQ, The Blue Duck Kitchen, The Gifted Gourmet, Key Catering Barbecue and More, Charlie's Eatery, Taco Lab, Gladys Taco Jed)

- **Menu Options:** Can I see sample menus? Do you offer custom menus?
 - **Dietary Restrictions:** How do you handle dietary restrictions and allergies (vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, nut allergies, etc.)?
 - **Tastings:** Do you offer tastings, and what is the cost associated with them?
 - **Staffing:** Is service staff included? What is your staff-to-guest ratio?
 - **Bar Service:** Do you provide bar service or require a separate vendor?
 - **Rentals:** Do you provide plates, cutlery, glassware, and linens, or are those additional rentals?
 - **Cleanup:** What is your policy for cleanup after the event?
 - **Food Truck Specific:**
 - What are the power requirements for the truck?
 - Is there a minimum number of guests or spending?
 - How long does it take to serve guests?
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V. Cake Bakers

(Sweet Assurance by Jeffrey J. Hoppe, Short and Sweet Cake, Nothing Bundt Cakes, Hy-Vee Bakery, Darlin' Bakery & Cafe, Frosted by CC, Don Panchos Bakery, Cakes & Bakes, Creatively Kat's Gluten Free Treats)

- **Style & Design:** Can you create a custom design based on my vision/inspiration photos?
 - **Flavors:** What cake flavors, fillings, and frosting options do you offer?
 - **Tasting:** Do you offer cake tastings?
 - **Delivery & Setup:** Do you deliver and set up the cake at the venue? What is the delivery fee?
 - **Serving Size:** How many servings does a cake of a certain size provide?
 - **Alternative Desserts:** Do you offer other desserts like cupcakes, pies, or dessert bars? (as mentioned in the article).
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VI. DJs & Live Music

(Ever After Entertainment, Wedding Day DJs, Matt Maas, Loud Mouth Brass, The Band Amateur, Sharon Planer, Courtney Burton, Paul Berger, The Ensemble, Amy Lindstrom, The Covers, The Riverside Entertainment mn, Blue Water Kings Band, The Barn Boys Entertainment)

- **Experience:** Have you performed at this venue before? What kind of weddings do you typically do?
 - **Music Selection:**
 - How do you help us select music for different parts of the day (ceremony, cocktail hour, reception)?
 - Do you have a "do not play" list?
 - Can we provide a custom playlist?
 - **MC Services:** Do you act as an MC for introductions, announcements, and managing the timeline?
 - **Equipment:** Do you provide all necessary sound equipment and lighting? Do you have backup equipment?
 - **Breaks (Live Music):** For live bands, what is your plan for breaks, and will there be background music during those times?
 - **Setlist (Live Music):** Can we see your song list? Do you learn new songs upon request?
 - **Ceremony Music:** Do you provide music for the ceremony if it's in a separate location or requires different equipment?
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VII. Wedding Planners

(Happily Ever Laughter Events, Brianna Schwartz at Luna Soul Events, Kastina & Co, James Peterson at RSVPeterson)

- **Services Offered:** Do you offer full-service planning, partial planning, or day-of coordination?
 - **Process:** Can you walk me through your planning process from start to finish?
 - **Communication:** How often will we meet or communicate?
 - **Vendor Relationships:** Do you have established relationships with local Rochester vendors?
 - **Budget Management:** How do you assist with budget creation and tracking?
 - **Problem Solving:** How do you handle unexpected challenges or emergencies on the wedding day?
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VIII. Wedding Officiants

(Kathy Diedrich, James Risser, Kristine Stensland, Rev. Dr. Frank Nelson, Susan Lee Wright, Alpha Prpic)

- **Style:** What is your officiating style (religious, secular, interfaith, traditional, personalized)?
 - **Customization:** Do you offer custom ceremonies tailored to our story?
 - **Meetings:** How many meetings do we have before the wedding?
 - **Legalities:** Do you handle the legal aspects of marriage licensing and filing?
 - **Premarital Counseling:** Do you offer premarital counseling (as mentioned for Guide Your Heart)?
 - **Rehearsal:** Are you available to attend the wedding rehearsal?
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IX. Hair Stylists & Makeup Artists

(Jamie Copping, Hair & Makeup by Kara Kloss, Katrina Moyer Studio, A Berry Hair by Amber Berry, Kristin Soyring, Lady Vamp Artistry, Serenity Couture)

- **Experience:** Do you specialize in bridal hair and makeup?
- **Trials:** Do you offer trials, and when should they be scheduled? What is the cost?
- **On-site Services:** Do you travel to the venue/getting-ready location? Are there travel fees?
- **Packages:** Do you offer packages for bridesmaids, mothers, etc.?
- **Portfolio:** Can I see your portfolio of bridal work?
- **Timing:** How much time do you need for each person's hair/makeup?

X. Rentals

(Majestic Events, Collected & Co., Rentex Rentals)

- **Inventory:** What kind of items do you offer (linens, decor, specialty furniture, lighting, tents)?
- **Delivery & Setup:** Do you deliver, set up, and pick up the rental items? What are the associated fees?
- **Damage Policy:** What is your policy for damaged or lost items?
- **Minimum Order:** Is there a minimum rental order?

XI. Transportation

(Rochester City Lines, Star Transportation, Rochester Party Bus, Rochester Trolley & Tour Co.)

- **Vehicle Types:** What types of vehicles do you offer (shuttles, limousines, party buses, trolleys)?
- **Capacity:** What is the capacity of each vehicle?
- **Hours:** What are your hourly rates or package deals?
- **Logistics:** How do you handle multiple pickups/drop-offs or a complicated schedule?
- **Driver Qualifications:** Are your drivers fully licensed and insured?

XII. Invitations & Stationery

(Minuteman Press, Allegra Print & Mail)

- **Design Process:** Can you walk me through the design and printing process?
- **Customization:** Do you offer custom designs or pre-set templates?
- **Proofing:** How many rounds of proofs are included?
- **Turnaround Time:** What is the typical turnaround time from design approval to delivery?
- **Budget:** What are options for different budget ranges?

XIII. Photo Booth Rentals

(Ever After Entertainment)

- **Packages:** What's included in your photo booth packages (hours, props, backdrops, prints, digital copies, attendant)?

- **Setup:** What are the space and power requirements for the booth?
 - **Customization:** Can we customize the printouts with our names/date/logo?
 - **Guest Book:** Do you offer a guest book option where guests can leave messages with their photos?
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XIV. Wedding Attire & Alterations

(The White Rose Bridal, Finery Bridal Chic, Knight's Chamber, Men's Wearhouse, Wendy Lou Sew, Susanna Bordelon, Trester Tailor, TM Alterations, Mary's Custom Sewing)

- **Consultation:** Do I need an appointment?
 - **Pricing:** What is the estimated price range for your dresses/suits?
 - **Alterations:** Do you offer in-house alterations, or do you recommend outside tailors? (If outside: when should I schedule with them?)
 - **Timeline:** What is the typical ordering and delivery timeline for attire? When should alterations begin?
 - **Cleaning/Preservation:** Do you offer cleaning or preservation services after the wedding?
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XV. Jewelers

(Lasker Jewelers, Riddle's Jewelry)

- **Selection:** What types of engagement rings and wedding bands do you carry (e.g., specific designers, custom options)?
 - **Custom Design:** Do you offer custom design services for unique pieces?
 - **Consultation:** Do you offer consultations to discuss our preferences and budget?
 - **Maintenance:** Do you offer cleaning, resizing, or repair services?
 - **Certifications:** What kind of certifications or appraisals do you provide for diamonds/gemstones?
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XVI. Wedding Favors

(Thesis Beer Project, LTS Brewing Company, worldofscentscandle, Chocolaterie Stam, Rochester Farmers Markets)

- **Customization:** Can you customize items with our wedding date or names?
- **Bulk Pricing:** Do you offer special pricing for bulk orders?
- **Packaging:** Do you offer packaging or labeling services?

- **Local Sourcing:** Can you provide information on the sourcing of your ingredients/materials?
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XVII. Accommodations & Hotel Blocks

(Hilton Rochester Mayo Clinic Area, The Kahler Grand Hotel, Fairfield Inn & Suites Rochester Mayo Clinic Area/Saint Marys, Hyatt House Rochester / Mayo Clinic Area)

- **Hotel Block Minimums:** Is there a minimum number of rooms required for a block?
 - **Discount Rates:** What kind of discount can we offer our guests for a hotel block?
 - **Booking Process:** How do guests book within our block?
 - **Cut-off Date:** What is the cut-off date for guests to book at the special rate?
 - **Amenities:** What amenities are included for guests (breakfast, Wi-Fi, pool, fitness center, shuttle services)?
 - **Welcome Bags:** Do you allow welcome bags to be delivered to guests' rooms?
 - **Proximity:** How close are you to our wedding venue?
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Notes & Reminders:

- **Bring your calendar!**
 - **Take photos/videos** (with permission) if it helps you remember.
 - **Be honest about your budget.**
 - **Trust your gut!** Choose vendors you feel a good connection with.
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Need help planning your timeline?

Check our timeline builder

:<https://www.french-touch-photography.com/wedding-timeline-calculator/>

Need a photographer?

Check our portfolio: <https://www.french-touch-photography.com/portfolio/>

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