



WEDDING

Trends Guide 2018

From Venue to Menu
and Everything in Between
Plan Your Big Day in 2018

ONE THAT'S MAGICAL
AND MEMORABLE...

@ SNUPIT

Editorial Note

Few days in our life are as memorable as our wedding day. As perfect and magical your big day may be, there's a lot of planning and hard work involved. If you're engaged and/or thinking about getting married, you really need to read this guide. The Wedding Trends Guide 2018 is an incredibly useful collection of the most wonderful wedding trends South Africa is experiencing.

As we near the end of the 1st quarter in 2018, you will need to stay on top of the hottest wedding trends so your big day is simply superb, for everyone, including of course you and your partner. A wedding is a beautiful beginning of a new life, a new journey. And the road leading up to that big day is filled with countless tasks, big and small.

To help you in your "journey before the journey" we have put together this guide on the hottest wedding trends in South Africa. We have collected information from numerous sources, covering different aspects of the wedding from overall themes and venues to catering and bridal makeup. While you will certainly need the advice and services of wedding professionals, you will certainly have to do some reading and research on your own.

In fact, this in itself is an important wedding trend—learning about wedding planning online, getting an overall vision for your perfect day, and then hiring the best people to turn that vision into a magical, memorable reality. Let one of your first steps towards your wedding be reading this guide.

We wish you a very happy married life, and before that, a smooth, hassle-free and unforgettable wedding!



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Alright, let's kick off this guide with some of the hottest wedding trends of 2018. These trends cover multiple categories so we've put them together here. This will give you a sense of the overall trends and get a big picture regarding what to expect in 2018 and beyond.

Personalisation

Personalisation is on the rise. And that includes venues. For instance, more couples are showing their unique style by selecting unexpected places for their wedding. Another example is how couples are spending more money on detail-driven items such as luxury silk ribbons, paper goods and personalised gifts.

This is a good trend to observe as it helps you make your big day more intimate and unique. It's much better than having one of the many other cookie-cutter style parties. Personalisation goes a long way in making your wedding day truly memorable. So it makes sense why a growing number of couples are happier with a personalised approach to the whole event.

"First Look"

This is one of the most creative wedding trends in 2018. The "First Look" means the groom will get the first look of the bride before anyone else. This allows both bride and groom to have some quality time before they're sucked into the ceremony and ensuing wedding event.

Photographers love this trend too, as they get to capture the "first look" with their camera. They can spend some time alone with the couple before the frenzy, knowing they're not keeping the couple from the guests. And when they turn out amazing shots of the first look, you will love it too, as do most couples.

Lighting Installations

This used to be a relatively overlooked aspect of many weddings. 2018 has been different as more couples are realizing the importance of impressive lighting installations. Doing it right can make all the difference in the world on how your wedding day looks. The right contractor can add a theatrical element in a way that will create a lovely atmosphere.

Lighting can be used to emphasize a moment, amplify beauty and just turn even the simplest elements to be more striking. Lighting can also define spaces with soft glows. It can also highlight architectural elements to make them grander. The net effect of properly-done lighting will be one that you will simply love. Bottom line—lighting will play a prominent role in 2018 weddings, making them more spectacular and memorable.

Crystal Everything!

2018 has seen a growing appreciation for everything crystal. From crystal chandeliers to décor motives, crystal has increased in importance at weddings this year. Having said that, you need to remember that less is still more. So don't go overboard as you add crystal to your wedding; make sure it suits the theme and the bride's persona.

Flowers

This has been a big trend internationally for many years. Now, brides in South Africa are also warming up to the idea of big floral budgets. Like many brides in the country, you can easily understand how flowers add a spectacular ambiance on the whole.

Non-Traditional Table Setting

Brides are now accepting the "long, last supper table" setting mixed with individual, smaller tables. The main table and church setting backdrops are also trending. Floral designs in tables are also on the rise.

Reclining Quarters

This is another growing trend—to create reclining quarters by using couch clusters, ottomans and Ibiza-style daybeds. You can create different atmospheres by combining music and lighting/colours.

Movie Screening

Projecting a movie near the dance floor will add to the ambiance to the evening. This is becoming an increasingly popular choice, with couples choosing their favourite movie for screening.

Poetry

Weddings are an expression of love. And poetry is one of the most touching ways to express one's feelings. So you can see why poetry is becoming a bigger trend in weddings. You can put some verses on your invitations and even recite a favourite poem in the ceremony. Wherever you think it's suitable, you can add the lovely elegance of timeless poetry to your big day.

Spending More on Reception, Less on Ceremony

Couples are spending more on reception elements like catering and musicians than on the ceremony. This trend shows how people are emphasising modern weddings over traditional ones.



Winter Weddings

Having a winter wedding is a smart way to utilise “down time” in the industry. An increasing number of couples are realising this as they get to enjoy amazing deals for their wedding. Let's look at some popular trends for a winter wedding. One is using pinstriped fabric and damask table linen, which communicates quality and luxury.

Muted colours combined with charcoal, grey and off-white continue to be a timeless option. So is the combination of romantic candlelight, silverware, crackling fireplaces which create an old-world feel. It feels as if time is standing still—something to consider for a winter wedding if you're open to having one.

For the love of pink...

Speaking of accenting colours, pink/blush continues to be a must-have in 2018 and beyond for the simple reason that it's fresh, elegant and timeless. Think pink proteas, but you can also go a bit darker with peonies or Blushing Brides.

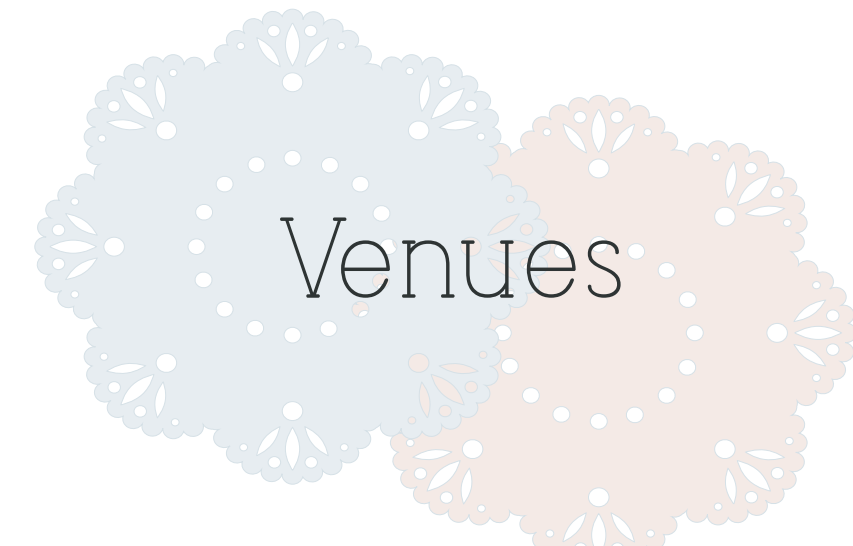
The blush rose pink is a staple wedding colour for 2018 and is expected to be the same in 2019. When combined with the traditional wedding white, it creates a delicate romantic touch. It also works beautifully with metallic silver and gold.

Vintage/Lace

The vintage/lace wedding trend continues to grow strong through 2018 and is expected to do the same in 2019. It's not surprising to see this trend continue as it creates a romantic feeling, adding old-world accessories, classic touches and expensive lace to the entire scheme. A lot of couples include a family heirloom to the wedding décor. This adds a really personal and intimate touch.

White is Still the New Black

"White-on-White" continues tops the palette charts so to speak. You can accentuate the white with brushed metallic accents to create a modern yet classic look. The simplicity of white is not just romantic, but symbolic of the start of a new life.



The place where you have your wedding is quite literally the "biggest" element of your big day. The venue will be ingrained in your memory and will be captured in your photos and video. The right venue can create an altogether magical look & feel, if all else goes well too. It's hard to create a nice setting in a not so nice venue. So, let's look at some top trends with regards to wedding venues.

Backyard Weddings

The backyard wedding is quite fashionable at the moment. Couples are returning to simplicity; they've come to more appreciate the homely feeling. You can easily achieve the "shabby-chic" style wedding by using different kinds of glassware and cases that you can recall from your childhood as you saw them on your grandparents' home. This is a very powerful and trendy venue option

Seaside Surprise!

Modern couples are showing their love for creating a surprise element for their guests. Many couples choose to have their wedding ceremony at a romantic stone chapel, while having the reception at a seaside venue. It has also become a trend for the venue to be kept a secret until after the ceremony.

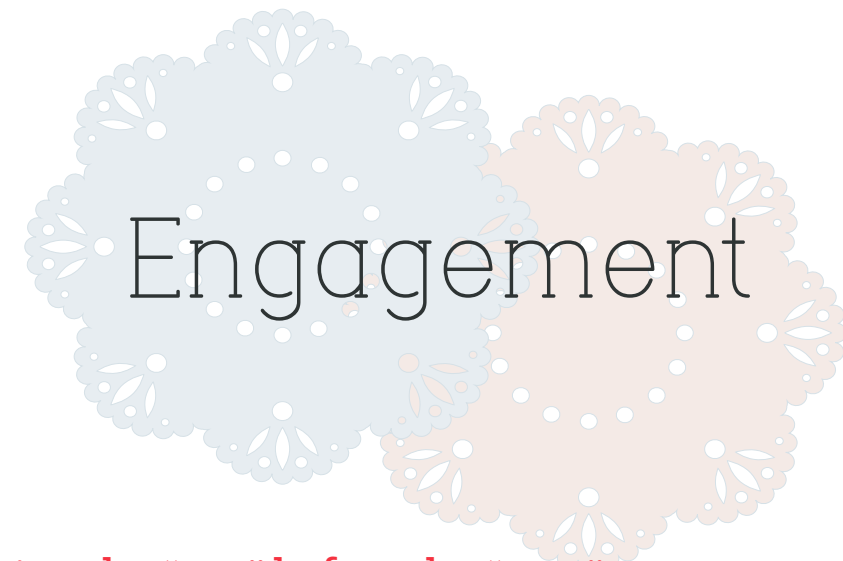
Unique Settings and Locations

An increasing number of couples are actively seeking a setting that allows them to tell their personal love story. It's part of their quest for creating a memorable day that's unique to them. And many of them are discovering that they can achieve that by selecting unique settings and locations. Whether it's a forest wedding setting, a plot of land in the middle of nowhere, or a unique building that can be personalised, there's a growing trend in unique settings and locations for weddings.

Top 5 Venues by Wedding Collection Magazine

Of course, you can always pick one of the top venues that have been officially ranked. Here are the top 5 wedding venues as chosen by South Africa's leading wedding magazine Wedding Collection:

1. **The Plantation**—The Eastern Cape's most exclusive venue and country retreat
2. **Bushfellows Private Game Lodge and Conference Centre**—Located in the Limpopo Province
3. **Cathedral Peak Wine Estate** —Drakensberg, Kwa Zulu Natal
4. **Bosjes**—Western Cape
5. **Shepstone Gardens**—Arguably South Africa's most alluring venue, the heart of Mountain View, Johannesburg



Celebrating the “Yes” before the “I Do”

Having an engagement party is a great way to celebrate your new commitment with your future spouse. Plus, it gives your future wedding guests an opportunity to get to know each other. Here are some engagement party trends that you should check out.

Take it Outside

If you love your backyard/rooftop or money is a bit tight (or both) you can by all means have your engagement party at home. Having said that, a hot trend right now is choosing a non-home location for your engagement party. It doesn't have to be an expensive affair. Your favourite restaurant or a local club will do fine. Just make sure you have some privacy in your area as you don't want strangers walking through your special occasion.

Mood Lighting

Mood lighting is all about changing your atmosphere. You can make your engagement party light and festive with the right lighting. Smart use of lighting is a modern trend that we're seeing in engagement parties and wedding.

“Cocktail” Menu

Sit-down dinners are no longer trendy. Instead, choose a simple and elegant cocktail menu buffet. You can have many food bars with appetizers, finger food and bite-size

dessert. This is a trendy way to let guests try different things without you having to spend a lot on a formal meal.

Champagne Bar

When in doubt, go with a champagne bar. When it comes to bars and parties, champagne doesn't seem to go out of style. While you might think it will be too pricey, you can add some fruit skewers, juices etc. to the bar. This will keep people from filling up glass after glass just with champagne.

Engagement Cake

We've all heard about wedding cakes. But you may be surprised to know that engagement cakes are big as well. Many couples are spending more time in picking out the right cake for their engagement party. Something to think about! While you may have more restrictions on your wedding cake, this is a great opportunity to get any kind of cake. Get creative and enjoy!

Limited Activities

As many couples are realising, an engagement party is less about entertaining your guests, and more about allowing everyone come together and spend some quality time together. So don't worry about coming up with different kinds of games and activities for your guests. With good food and music and perhaps a nice place for dancing, you're good to go.

Social Media Hashtags

You will see similar trends mentioned in the eBook for weddings. Technology, social media specifically, connects us so well to distant loved ones that it continues to be a hot trend on our special occasions. Whether we mentioned it here or not, you would still probably have taken pictures on your engagement and shared them on social media, perhaps even with hashtags!



Wedding Planning

There's a lot to do before your big day. If you're the bride-to-be, you've probably imagined this day since you were a kid. If you're the groom, well, your future wife has imagined this day since she was a kid. So it makes sense to be on top of the wedding planning trends. Failing to plan is planning to fail—something you absolutely don't want on your wedding day. So check out the top trends on planning a wedding.

Smartphones for Smart Planning

Overall, the way weddings are planned has evolved, incorporating technology and smart use of time, money and skills. One trend that keeps growing is the use of smartphones for planning. From researching gowns to vendors, couples are doing a lot of their wedding planning on their small screens.

Portals like Snupit fit right into this modern wedding plan scene. Whether a wedding is a DIY affair, totally outsourced, or as most common—a combination of the two—you can be sure to find the right help on your phone. If you know where to look.

Social Media

Social media avenues such as Instagram and Pinterest provide countless pictures and ideas for your wedding themes and décor. Couples often start their planning with a vision of how they picture the perfect wedding. This can cover table décor, centrepieces, draped or hanging elements, and colour scheme. After they have got an overall idea of the ideal design elements, the couple proceeds to locate the suppliers for all the items in their "big picture".



Day of Coordination

This is basically the day of the wedding, from the point of view of the coordinator. Having said that, you also need to know what your day-of coordinator will be doing this day. While you don't have to get bogged down in the details, it helps to be aware of the important things happening on such an important day.

More Trust in the Pros

Another important trend in wedding planning is that couples are putting more trust in the professionals they hire. While they use sites like Pinterest to brainstorm their ideas, couples are giving vendors more freedom to create a unique event based on their original vision. It takes creativity, experience and hard work to turn your vision for the wedding day into a beautiful reality. And an increasing number of couples are making it happen by hiring the right people and trusting them.

“Day of” Coordinator

One of the popular professionals that couples are hiring is a Day-Of Coordinator a.k.a. Month-Of Coordinator to oversee the wedding. Many coordinators prefer the word “Month of” since their work spans about a month, culminating in the “Day of” the wedding.

Whatever you call it, it's a popular service and with good reason. It really helps to have an experienced and committed professional whose sole job is to ensure your dream wedding comes to life. That all big and small things are handled professionally and you have a smooth transition from the ceremony to the reception to the after party or the time you take off for your honeymoon.

What the Day-of Planning Entails

As mentioned earlier, not everything happens on the “day of” the wedding. This is why coordinators would often point out to you it would be better to refer to it as the “coordination for the day of the wedding.” The process starts with a detailed consultation with the bride/couple. This is done 3 to 4 weeks before the big day.

A detailed timeline for the wedding day is created for ensuring that the couple's vision is on track for being turned into a reality. In fact, some wedding venues have a requirement for the couple hiring a planner or coordinator for the wedding day. This goes to show the importance of having at least a day-of coordinator.

Key Benefits of Having a Day-of Coordinator

The biggest benefit is that of getting peace of mind. With the right coordinator handling things, you can rest assured that the details of your big day will come together just like you imagined it. It's easier said than done, which is all the more reason for you to hire a pro for the job.

Weddings are an expensive affair. Only 5% to 10% of the total cost is usually allotted to the coordinator, for which you get to save countless hours of planning and hassle. This makes it worth it to hire a day-of coordinator.

Think about it—you're the centre of attention on your wedding day; you can't practically manage the event. Gone are the days when parents took hold of the wedding day festivities. Now, if something goes wrong, a coordinator will be there to take care of it while you continue to be at your most charming as your special day goes on. You need to truly enjoy your big day and a day-off coordinator makes it possible.

Key Day-of Coordination Activities

Creating wedding-day timeline and allocating tasks to the vendors.

Coordinating wedding professionals hired by the couple.

Conducting wedding rehearsal, the day before the wedding.

Coordinating all activities. These include:

- ✧ **Helping** the bride with the dress, photo schedules etc.
- ✧ **Guiding** the bridal party through the processional and recessional.
- ✧ **Checking** big and small details. These can range from giving a final head count to the caterer to ensuring the correct placement of the favours.
- ✧ **Checking** floor plans and lighting.
- ✧ **Cueing** wedding professionals.
- ✧ **Collecting, inventorying and safely transporting gifts** and personal items.

Remember that a day-of coordinator is often the last person to leave the wedding.



If there ever was a day where the way you wore your hair mattered, it's your wedding day. Picking out the wedding dress can be tough. Choosing a hairstyle can be even more difficult. You have to find the balance of being trendy while also ensuring you have a timeless look. Wouldn't it be great if you could look at your wedding pictures years later without having to cringe at your hairstyle?

From chic updos to tousled waves, there's a lot of trendy styles you can choose. Let's look at some of the latest wedding hairstyle trends:

- ✧ A simple tied-back style, with a little texture that adds an edge.
- ✧ One of the dreamiest bridal hairstyles is a plaited bun. Consider adding a simple ribbon and bow to complete the look.
- ✧ Jazz up your basic "down-do" by adding small, cute plaits.
- ✧ A simple way to accentuate your casual hairdo is to add a thin plait. You need to braid your hair's front from both sides and then make them meet in the middle in the back.
- ✧ You can don a pretty headband. Pull out bits of hair on the front to give it just the right level of "undone" look.
- ✧ Add beautiful tropical flowers in your hair, ideal for a sunny wedding.



The way you look on your wedding day will forever be impressed upon your mind. Every bride wants to look her best, in a unique and special way on her big day. With the right makeup, you can pull off the look you've visualised. So let's look at some top bridal makeup trends. We've split them across four categories; lips, brows, colour palettes, and the look.

Lips

Nude lip colours are a hot trend right now. You have a wide variety of nude tones for you to choose from. You want to keep the lips minimal. A natural rosy lip stain is enough for that soft romantic look. You can also choose a stronger colour. For instance, you can go with a matte/semi-matt red lipstick to create a fresh version of the classic red lip.

Brows

More brides are asking for thicker and fuller brows. While you don't have to recreate the Cara Delevingne look, you should definitely consider fuller brows. Bridal makeup is about balancing facial features. As such you should avoid overly strong eyebrows as they divert attention away from your eyes. What you want are well-defined and well-shaped brows that add a polished, flawless look.

Colour Palettes

Neutral shades and natural colours are the hot thing right now. Most brides are leaning towards natural tones, for both soft and bold looks. It's hard to go wrong with brown and bronze shades! Natural brown hues were also used on 2017 bridal runways for creating subtle eye definition. Pink blusher is also trending, which is often complemented by gently pink eyeshadow for creating a monochrome effect.

The Look

Regarding your overall bridal look, you should know that brides are loving the soft, glowing look. You can achieve this dewy look with the right highlighting and dewy setting sprays. Make sure you don't overdo bridal dewiness as it will not photograph well. You can achieve this trend of natural radiance by using highlighters and sculpting products. Make sure to use products that add a seamless luminescence to your cheeks as well as to the temples and brow bone.



Even years after you tie the knot, wedding photos will continue to help you relive that magical day. Wedding photos are the biggest thing that you have to show for your big day once it's over. So photography will always be an important part of your wedding. Here's a look at the latest trends in wedding photography that you should remember for 2018 and going into 2019.

Snap and Chat

Couples are loving new takes on the traditional photo booth. From slo-mo booths to flip-book booth to animated GIF booths, there are many options at your disposal. They're all great at entertaining guests. You want people to remember your wedding day has a fun day right? Many booths will send the pictures directly to the guests' smartphones. This makes it easy for them to share the photos right away on social media. You also get copies of the photos once the night is over!

Filmic Look

This is one of the newest trends in wedding photography. There's something about the timeless quality of filmic images, whether they're black & white or in colour. They have a "soul" if you will. When you look back at these photos years after your wedding, you will still love the look.

Bigger Budgets

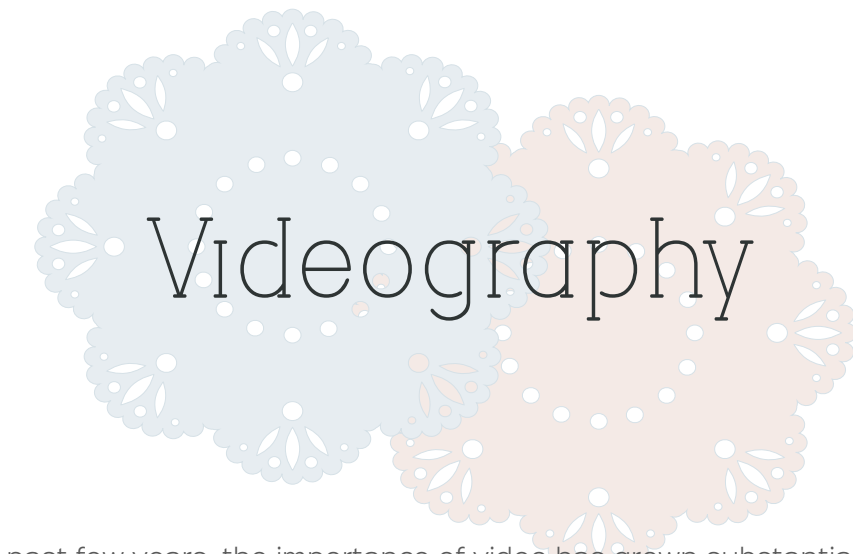
Couples are setting aside more money for film and hybrid photographers. This shows how more people are realising the importance of quality photography. After all, your wedding photos are the biggest things you have to show for the big day once it's over.

Original, Dramatic Imagery

Innovative and dramatic images are winning couples' hearts. A lot of them are asking their wedding photographer to show them a list of original concepts. Although few people ever liked cookie-cutter shots, they're certainly on the way out.

Photojournalistic Coverage

People are becoming less and less charmed by posed shots. Photojournalistic coverage is getting bigger every year. And you can see why. Nothing captures the moment more beautifully like a candid shot. Like when you're smiling at your better half, hugging your best friend, or just making your way across the room. The right click at the right moment produces more perfect images than posed shots ever will.



In the past few years, the importance of video has grown substantially across different industries. Weddings are no exception. Thanks to technology making it super simple to make, edit and share videos, wedding videography has seen some new trends as well. And not just simple video, but awesome videos that tell the amazing story of your wedding. Let's see what's new in wedding videography.

Reaching New Heights with Drones!

Couples can't seem to get enough of the unique perspective that drones offer. The best professional videographers have caught on to this trend and offering drone videos as part of their package. With the right handling, you can get some great drone footage, which can also be edited for spectacular results. You can also get some amazing stills from the drone.

Instagram Video Edits

Just like with drone video, videographers are also offering Instagram video edits as an option in their packages. This is yet another trend that shows how technology and social media are playing a bigger and better role in weddings. You can get 1 to 1.5-minute films that look like a cinematic trailer for your big day. You can't help but love this kind of video; it'll be one of your favourite reminders of your beautiful day.



Facebook Live & Stories and Snapchat Stories

Like we said above, social media is playing a bigger role in weddings. After all, social media is the biggest platform where the story of your wedding will play out. So it makes sense why this is a growing trend. Things like Facebook Live and Stories and Snapchat Stories even let you connect with friends and family who couldn't make it to the wedding. They can follow the day's events. Wouldn't you want them to be part of your big day like this?

Priest / Pundit / Officiant / Registrar

More Officiants, Less Religious Officers

There is really one noteworthy trend here. And that is people in South Africa are moving away from religious wedding ceremonies. Most marriages are performed by an official at the Department of Home Affairs.

2018 also sees an increased demand for non-traditional wedding ceremonies. Couples are choosing officiants and even independent celebrant to handle the legal details and have the paperwork ceremony in a very simple and basic way. They are saving this symbolic ceremony for only the closest people in their lives.

Couples are also liking the idea of spending some time with a professional celebrant who has the skills and resources to write a heart-warming, meaningful and sometimes even amusing ceremony. This trend cuts cross all religions as the newer generation is becoming more practical in every aspect of their lives, including the way they plan their wedding ceremony.



Nothing communicates freshness, innocence and new beginnings like flowers do. Flowers and weddings will go together forever. Probably. Having said that, different trends may come and go regarding wedding flora. That makes the work and knowledge of a modern wedding florist very important to your wedding. Here are some hot florist trends you should keep in mind.

Greenery and Metallics

More couples are choosing greenery-only décor. This is the perfect complement to another big trend—metallic. Yet another trend is the industrial style, which creates a lovely contrast between the wedding beauty and functional items. The result is surprising and delightful. In fact, this trend supports the metallic trend. Within that trend, there's a shift from bright shine & glitter to softer, brushed metallic look.

Dramatic Floral Statements

Think oversized bouquets, hanging centrepieces and floral walls. While international trends have influenced this trend, people in South Africa will lean towards succulents and water-wise décor.

Hygge is Huge

Hygge is a Danish word meaning enjoying your life's simple pleasures. Friends, family, graciousness. For your wedding this essentially means a "cosy nature". This impacts your floral selection with greenery and warm colours as nature plays a bigger role in Hygge. It's especially perfect for winter weddings.



The sweetest thing on the sweetest day of your life—cake! The size, shape, style and ingredients of wedding cakes continue to change from time to time. Here are two of the biggest wedding cake trends that were hot in 2018 and will continue to be so in 2019.

Naked Cakes

The biggest trend for wedding cakes in 2018 was the Naked Cake. While they continue to walk down the aisle in beautiful white, brides everywhere are choosing cakes that go un-frosted. Naked cakes are the hot new thing. The deconstructed cake shows off the inside, allowing everyone to feast not just their taste-buds but with their eyes.

Sugar High!

Tall cakes are also getting more popular. In recent years we saw the popularity of pies, cupcakes, doughnuts and cake pops. Now, tall, tiered wedding cakes are making a strong comeback. The height of the cake sparks a visual interest, drawing attention to the dessert table. It also allows for some creative artistry, adding another beautiful and interesting element to your wedding.

Music and Entertainment

Your guests all wish you the best for your married life. But they also wish to have a nice time at the wedding! With the right music and entertainment arrangement, you can make your wedding a night to remember for your guests as well. Wedding entertainment used to be limited to a singer or DJ. Not anymore. There are many options that can fit just about any style and budget. Check out the top trends for music and entertainment for weddings.

Magical and Exotic

From impressing your guests with a magician to choosing more exotic options like trapeze artist and belly dancers, there's a lot you can choose for wedding entertainment. It depends on your taste; just remember that exotic entertainment is trending.

Less DJs, More Bands

Bands at weddings are making a comeback as the days of just having a DJ are coming to an end. There's nothing like live music to get the dance floor going. Wedding singers and live bands are a hot choice this year and will continue to be in 2019.

Boule/Petanque

The game of boule a.k.a. petanque originated in southern France. Boule sets are easily available across South Africa and an increasing number of couples are including this in their wedding entertainment plans.

Caricaturists/Cartoonists

These are especially popular at overseas wedding receptions. So if your "South African wedding" has a reception at an overseas destination, this is a good option to consider. It takes 2-5 minutes for one sketch. Your guests will be thrilled to take their portrait home, and they'll have your big day to be thankful for!

Kid Stuff

Modern weddings also make kids' entertainment a priority. You can keep the little ones at your big day entertained with magicians, face painters, balloon artists etc.



Catering

For your guests, food at your wedding is one of the most remembered elements, by your guests anyways. While you and your partner will remember different things about this special day, food will be among the top 3 things your guests will recall about the wedding. So it's important you're on top of the hottest catering trends.

Food Stations: Best of Both Worlds in 2018

Exotic food stations are a huge trend. For instance, if you're having trouble deciding between tender lamb filler and honey-glazed salmon, food stations help you offer the best of both worlds. The stations allow you to offer a wide variety of cuisine, making more people happy with the food.

Seasonal, Organic Produce

For couples conscious about their carbon footprint, this is a popular choice. These couples are planning their wedding around seasonal products and organic produce. Overall, healthy foods are entering the fold of wedding food. Bistro-style cuisine and buffet-to-the-table menus are being preferred over the traditional 3-course meals.

Alternating Starters

This is a novel trend. For instance, the ladies can be served fin tuna with miso mayonnaise, while kudu tartare can be prepared for the men. You can of course, choose the items as suggested by your caterer who will have a better idea of specific items that are trending.



Lunch Weddings

This is yet another catchy trend. In addition to being cost effective, lunch weddings offer a funky alternative to the traditional wedding. Of course this will not be practical for everyone, but for those it is, this is an increasingly popular practice. So think about it!

Buffet to the Table

This trend has taken wedding catering by storm. Large bowls of tantalizing cuisine are available on the tables for the guests to help themselves. It creates more relaxed atmosphere, with people sharing and passing around dishes. Speaking of the menu items, there's an increased interest in items like slow-roasted organic lamb and whole wheat bread. Unprocessed grains are also being matched with local produce, showing the popularity of organic food as mentioned earlier.

Bartending

Bartending is an art in itself. As such it deserves special attention from you. Don't just consider it "a catering item". With a little smart planning you can set up a bar for your wedding that will be simply unforgettable. Something to help everyone unwind while maintaining the gracefulness of the occasion. Here are some popular trends you should keep in mind.

Return to Classics

We are seeing more bartenders and mixologists stepping away from colourful and too sweet drinks. Instead, they're returning to old-time classics. Good examples included the Moscow mule, Classic Pimm's Cup and Lemongrass Ginger Martini.

Craft Beers on Tap

These are ideal for hop fans! You can add an educational touch to your wedding day by showcasing local craft breweries which are popping up across South Africa and beyond. You can get local breweries on board. Many of them will love to show off their brewing skills by serving your wedding guests their libations and brews! Handcrafted beer on tap is an amazing trend that will continue in 2019. It's not all that surprising since most men love to hang around a barrel of beer!

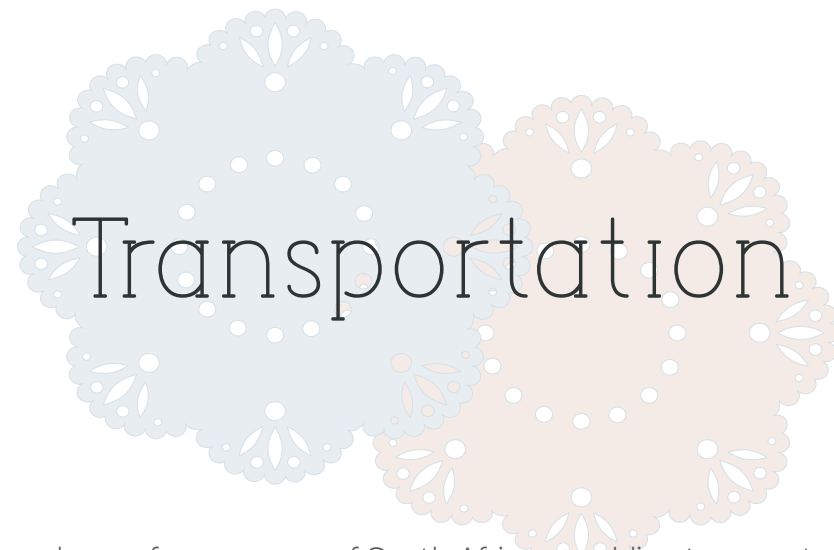
Gin Bars

This is another very hot trend. Gin bars have become increasingly popular recently. It has been called a hot attraction and is making its way into more weddings than ever before. Served by experienced spirit enthusiasts, gin bars have proved to be a must have for weddings this year.

Pairing Up

Originally, the pairing of food and drinks were basically wine-and-cheese pairings. Recently the trend has expanded to other beverages and appetizers. Some hit duets include: wine & pasta, margaritas & guacamole, cake & craft beer and if it's going to be a lunch wedding—mimosas & pastries.





You can choose from a range of South African wedding transport services. They offer a variety of bridal vehicles from vintage cars to modern sports cars. Here are some trendy rides for your big day.

Stretch/SUV Limousines

Stretch/SUV limousines gives you the celebrity style entrance that anyone would love on any day. So it makes sense why this is still a nice trend at weddings.

Sports Cars

Arriving at your wedding in a sports car can really add a WOW factor to the moment. This is in line with the overall trends of wedding being non-traditional events. So look up some exotic car rentals for your wedding day.

Two-Wheelers

For those not a big fan of being chauffeured into the sunset, there's the option of riding away on a bike! You can choose a bike or scooter whichever you like. This will also give you some frame-worthy photos!

Party Bus

You can keep the party going by having a party bus transport your and your inner circle to the after-party. The party bus has been a hot trend for some time and will continue to be in 2019 as well. It's a nice way for a group of your best friends to enjoy the night without driving under the influence of alcohol.



The latest trends in ceremony music are also presenting some novel ideas. The ceremony is relatively the most formal element of the event, and its music should reflect that, even if there's a new angle or twist to it. So let's look at the top trends in ceremony music.

Non-traditional Music

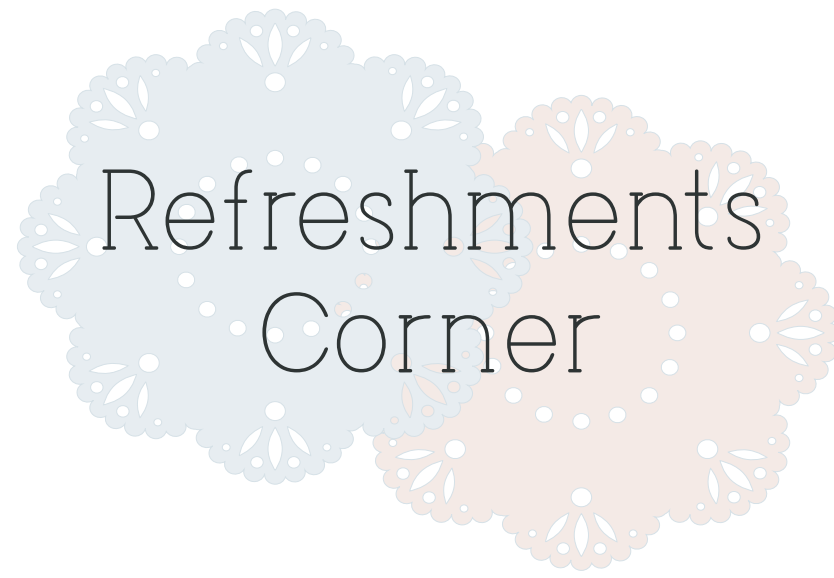
On the whole, couples are moving away from traditional ceremony music. Many are also choosing folk-type music. "The Piano Guys" kind of music is also trending. Basically, popular wedding songs are being played in a beautiful instrumental way as opposed classical music.

Children's Choir

This is a wonderful way to enhance your wedding ceremony. It will add a sense of innocence and freshness to the ceremony.

Upgrading the Audio Service

Another important trend is that couples are asking for first-rate professional audio services. So even for the ceremony, you can have a better sound with a nice audio amplification system.



In addition to the catering and bartending, the perfect wedding also has a well-thought-out refreshments corner. Here's the most important information at this end you need to know for 2018.

Coffee Bars

The coffee culture has ballooned recently in South Africa. So it makes sense why so many couples are choosing to have Coffee Bars on their big day. This is a especially great idea for winter weddings where the hot drink will be better appreciated. But it can still be used in other seasons unless it's too hot.

Top 10 Champagnes for Weddings

We've separated the champagnes selection from the bartending as it deserves special attention. Here's a rundown of 10 popular sparkling wines in South Africa that you can choose for your wedding:

1. Boplaas Brut Pinot Noir

Dry and vibrant, this lovely sparkling wine has hints of delectable fruit flavours like cherries and strawberries. It works well both on its on and with food.

2. Bottega Gold

This light brut sparkling wine is easy on the palate, with scents of Golden apple and acacia flowers. It's a big hit with the luxury bride!

3. De Wets of Pinot Noir Brut

In addition to its soft pink hue which is ideal for weddings, it has a nice fizz. This brut has a flavour of citrus as well as a slight touch of baked biscuits.

4. Calvet Ice Demi Sec Chardonnay

This lovely golden sparkling wine is defined by the hints of hazelnut aromas and almond. People love this because of its fine bubbles as well as rich texture.

5. Four Cousins Blush

You will like this if you appreciate hints of tropical fruit flavours, peaches and raisins. With its smooth, silky finish, this budget champagne does a decent job with its wonderful floral aroma.

6. JC Le Roux La Vallee Rose

This is big hit for elegant brides who enjoy a well-crafted Cap Classique that has a sweet finish. This pink, off-dry sparkling wine is made from the wonderful combination of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay.

7. La Motte Brut

A natural brut, this fresh sparkling wine comprises a combination of fresh apple, roasted nut and baked bread aromas.

8. PongraczDesidarius

This one is ideal for the unique bride since it speaks elegance, character and grace. The lively bubbles and fine green tint enhance the complexity of this champagne. You will be left with a buttery taste on your tongue as you also enjoy fresh fruits and almonds aroma.

9. SimonsigKaapseVonkel

Hints of red berries and white peach make up the elegant bubbles of this sparkling wine. You'll also find a flavour of freshly baked bread. Moreover, it strikes a balance between acidity and fruit, making this champagne more elegant.

10. Moët & Chandon Rosé Imperial

This one combines mature elegance with three grapes varietals. The diversity and elegance gives this champagne a sense of luxury and old-world charm.



Desserts

Desserts keep your party alive, complementing the drinks. The latest trends always make it easy for the guests to enjoy desserts in the simplest way. Here are two sweet trends you should remember.

Canapé-style Service

The traditional, perfectly plated dessert is going out of style. The new trend in wedding desserts is the canapé-style service. You can also serve a dessert extravaganza with a variety of innovative combos. Your guests will also enjoy compilations such as Turkish delight, chocolate truffles and macaroons that are available throughout the evening.

Roaming Dessert Stations

This is another noteworthy trend in the desserts area. Instead of candy and dessert stations, people are having waiters circulate dessert trays across the venue. So instead of having to go to the dessert station, your guests can enjoy the variety of desserts as they socialize and talk to each other. This also keeps your wedding party more alive!



Honeymoon

Where do you plan on going on your honeymoon? Here's a compilation of the top 5 honeymoon destinations for South African couples.

Mauritius

This is only a 4-hour flight from Johannesburg. Mauritius is home to some of the best beaches in the world and you can choose from thousands of resorts. There are also 5-star hotels and self-catering apartments, making this lovely destination ideal for a range of budgets. From strolling on the beach to shopping, Mauritius has it all. Plus, there's no requirement for a visa or inoculations so you can smoothly slide into your honeymoon right after the wedding!

Thailand

Thailand offers South African couples a range of options for diverse budgets. It is the ideal destination for relaxing while enjoying a different culture. You can have your honeymoon in beautiful places such as Phuket, KohSamui and Phi Phi islands. You can also head over to lively Bangkok during your tour if you want. The weather is great all year around. Again, no requirements for visa or inoculations in Thailand.

Seychelles

For couples looking for an upmarket tropical honeymoon, Seychelles is the perfect destination. This amazing archipelago comprises 115 islands and is one of the most unspoiled natural destination on the planet. Many islands just have one hotel. So this is the closest you can get to being alone with your partner! No visa or inoculations required.



Real Costs of Weddings in 2017

Alright, let's talk money. Great things cost money and the wedding of your dreams is no exception. But if you spend it right, the "return on investment" on your wedding will be priceless.

To help you budget your wedding accurately, we ran the numbers through couples who recently tied the knot. The latest statistics reveal that South Africans are spending more than ever on their wedding. Overall, a wedding in South Africa can cost you anywhere between R 70,000 to R 300,000.

Let's take a closer look at the cost breakdown—how much the different aspects of your wedding will cost.

Venue: R 4,000 to R 60,000

Expect to be quoted a flat fee as well as per head by different venues. If the price per head includes catering and décor, the rate will be much higher.

Décor: R5,000 to R 100,000

Yes, that's quite a range. You can expect the lower end if the venue comes with standard décor including guest tables and seating. But if you choose a marquee and go for a brilliant, personalized venue, the cost can inflate to R 100,000. The result will be spectacular, but it won't be cheap.

Croatia

Known as the Jewel of Eastern Europe, Croatia is one of the closest European destinations for South African couples. From the magical sunsets to majestic walls of Dubrovnik, Croatia offers a lot of breath-taking experiences. Best times to visit are from April to September. You'll need a visa before you leave South Africa.

South Africa

How much of your own country have you already seen? Yes, most of us always look forward to traveling to a foreign country, especially on a honeymoon in a magical foreign land. But sometimes we have not yet seen all of the amazing places in our own country. Couples are also realising this and planning their honeymoon within South Africa. It's also a great option if you're on a budget. From the Garden Route to Kruger National Park there are a lot of different places you can visit for a truly memorable honeymoon without leaving the country. Think about that!

Catering: R 18,000 (100 people)

Usually charged on a per head basis, the average catering rate is R 180 per head. Considering an average wedding size of 100 people, that brings you catering total to R 18,000. Catering is among the biggest and most variable costs at your wedding.

The Bridal Outfit: R 10,000 to R 50,000

The focus of the event—the beautiful bride and her lovely dress. Top South African designers charge tens of thousands of Rand for a bridal dress.

Flowers: R 500 to R 20,000

Floral costs can vary a great deal depending on the arrangement and the seasonable availability of the flowers used. With a little creativity you can make a stellar arrangement without spending a fortune.

Hair & Make-Up: R 2,500 to R 5,000

Every girl dreams to look like a princess on a wedding day. And a big part of making that happen is with excellent hair & makeup services. So the few thousand Rand on bridal hairstyles and make-up are totally justified.

DJ/Band: R 4,000 to R 20,000

The right music and songs can make or break an event. If you're lucky you can find some relatively new DJs who're really good and don't charge too much.

Wedding Cake: R 1,500 to R 6,000

The price varies not just with size, but with the flavour, design and décor. The price range quoted above is for a cake good enough for 80 to 100 people.

Officiant/Priest: R 3,000 to R 15,000

Depending on the religious beliefs of the couple, hiring an officiant/priest requires some time and attention.

Photography: R 750 per hour

For all the money you spend on your wedding, photographs are probably the only tangible things you have to show for it. Photographers listed on Snupit usually charge by the hour or in some cases a flat fee.

Invitations: R 20 to R 200 per invite

The invitations your guests receive are their first impression of your wedding. With simple invites starting at R 20, you can get an extravagant invite for R 200.

The Wedding Planner: R 7,000 to R 30,000



















This “hidden cost” applies to couples who hired a wedding planner to make their life easier. Most wedding planners charge 10% of the wedding budget, which comes out to be in the range shown above. Considering they allow you to relax during the otherwise hectic days leading up to your big day, their price is justified.


Honeymoon: R 15,000

Don't forget the honeymoon! As the overseas destinations trend continues, you should be ready to spend tens of thousands of Rand on this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

So there you go. You're in a much better position to plan your wedding. You can always earn more money and replenish your savings. But you owe it to yourself to invest in your wedding smartly, getting the most out of your money in the form of a truly spectacular wedding day.

Weddings - 2018 National Average Spend

 Wedding Venue R 10,000	 Bridal Outfit R 12,000	 Officiant/ Priest R 3,500
 Decor R 18,000	 Flowers R 2,500	 Invitations R 2,000
 Catering (price per person) R 180	 Groom's Attire R 6,000	 Gifts R 1,000
 Pre-Wedding Celebrations R 10,000	 DJ/ Band - Reception Ceremony music R 5,000	 Wedding Planner R 12,000
 Photography R 8,000	 Wedding Cake R 2,500	 Honeymoon R 15,000
 Videography R 5,000	 Transportation R 1,500	 Jewellery R 10,000

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Testimonials from Snupit Pros

In addition to using the information we've shared till now, you should also hear some expert advice from the top pros in the industry. We talked to some professionals who use Snupit and asked some questions about the latest wedding trends. Let's see what the pros said...



Photography/Videography—C-Jei Digital Labs

Charlie Le Roux has over 15 years' experience in the field, with a background experience in IT. People always came to him for videography and photography services. He then decided to start his own business as he developed a passion for the work.

What are your most memorable wedding experiences?

A wedding that took place at St. George Hotel in Pretoria. I loved everything about the wedding, the way everything was set up and how the venue complimented the set up. I would describe it as a royal wedding and the overall experience was one that I will never forget!

What wedding trends are you seeing right now?

I am noticing that there are more traditional weddings taking place as opposed to just the white weddings.

What tips can you offer couples for finding a great wedding photographer/videographer?

I would advise people to hire someone who makes everything about the couple special. Make sure the photographer is professional and you are aware of the different packages available. You should also look at previous work that the professional has done. Another important factor is to have adequate communication with the photographer with regards to the lighting, for example.

DJ Services—Simply Soundz

Wayne van Jaarsveld has 20 years of experience in the industry and knows exactly what people are looking for and makes sure the clients' requirements are met!

What are your most memorable wedding experiences?

The most memorable weddings are definitely with couples who take big packages which includes lighting, snow machines etc. It helps us provide a rich experience on their big day, one that everyone remembers for the better.

What wedding trends are you seeing right now?

People tend to go for price when making a decision regarding which DJ to use. I have noticed in recent times people don't have a lot of money left over for a DJ after all other expenses regarding their wedding!

What tips can you offer couples for finding a great wedding DJ?

It's very important to make sure you get someone experienced. There are many DJs who lack proper experience and don't actually know what they are doing. A good quality sound system is also an important factor. It is also important to review the work they have previously done!

Florist—Brindhaven Florist

NirmalaUlassi initially started working as a florist due to financial difficulties. She saw an opportunity and combined that with her passion and love for flowers. She began to take classes which helped her in designing arrangements and that's how Brindhaven Florist was established.

What are your most memorable wedding experiences?

One of the highlights was my son's wedding as it was near and dear to my heart. There was however, another wedding that took place at Tongaat Town Hall. It was very stressful as the client needed lots of flowers. The wedding was at 3:00 pm but we had been setting up four hours earlier. Although it was quite stressful, everything turned out great! I was proud and most importantly the couple loved it.

What wedding trends are you seeing right now?

There are more centrepieces nowadays which basically consist of a ball oasis that sits on the crystal centrepiece, incorporating roses. Another trend I have noticed are stage borders.

What tips can you offer couples for finding a great wedding florist?

It is important for customers to work on a budget and look for quality. The colour scheme needs to fall in place, for example some clients indicate they want coral however there are different variations of coral. The client should also ensure they select the right type of flowers.

Catering—A-Z Entertainment

Zelda Naude has been in the industry for over 20 years and is passionate about her work. She makes sure she reinvents herself which includes getting new menus and keeping up with the latest catering trends!

What are your most memorable wedding experiences?

We did a wedding in Africa, the couple were a traditional Boer couple from Krugersdorp and it was spectacular! There was also another wedding that took place on a Caribbean island where the menu included a wide range of seafood dishes from langoustines to prawns!

What wedding trends are you seeing right now?

People are not looking for the traditional buffets anymore. They require things to be done in a stylish manner. They require more casual foods such as burgers and corn-dogs. Clients also tend to incorporate foods of the world into their menus.

What tips can you offer couples for finding a great caterer?

Face to face interaction is important, it is not advisable to discuss all matters over the phone. Information regarding the placement of items need to be discussed, and the caterer needs to visit the venue beforehand. The couple also needs to taste/sample the food before deciding on a menu.

Wedding Dresses—Dresses by Roxanne

Roxanne Pengilly started the business in 2012 after graduating with a degree in fashion design at the University of Johannesburg. After she graduated she worked from home for a year before opening up her own store.

What are your most memorable wedding experiences?

The first wedding dress I did was for my best friend. The project was close to home and holds a special place in my heart!

What wedding trends are you seeing right now?

One big trend right now would be the beaded lace Bordeaux and the mermaid style dress.

What tips can you offer couples for finding a great wedding dress?

I would advise the brides to have lots of fittings and not to order from abroad.

Bridal Make Up—Younique You

Mona Govin started the business about six years ago as she found it difficult to find employment in today's tough economic times in South Africa. She saw an opportunity and grabbed it with open arms to ensure that she was earning good money. She took her passion for makeup and turned it into a living!

What are your most memorable wedding experiences?

The most memorable wedding experience for me would be the client I did make up for, four days after my mum passed away. It was done in memory of my mum as she did bridal make up. The client was a recommendation by another client.

What wedding trends are you seeing right now?

The world of makeup is always evolving. Brides nowadays are looking for highlighting and contouring to replicate the “Kardashian look”. I have also noticed a trend called strobing which involves more highlighting and no contouring.

What tips can you offer couples for finding a great makeup artist?

Make sure you find an affordable makeup artist who offers great value for money.



Then End. Or the Beginning...?

Alright, we've come to the end of this guide. But you're only getting started. It's the beginning of a memorable phase of your life as you plan your wedding. We've covered a lot of wedding trends. You now know what's happening in the wedding industry and what to expect in 2018 and beyond as you plan your big day.

Feel free to read more about the trends online. Talk to the professionals you hire and get their feedback on your ideas. To reiterate, more couples are trusting the advice of the wedding pros they hire. Since it's getting easier to find the right people for the job, thanks to platforms like Snupit, this trend is here to stay, at least for the foreseeable future.

As we talked about earlier, a beautiful wedding day is a joint effort of some very talented, experienced and committed people. With the right professionals working for you, you can rest assured that your big day will turn out just way you imagined it.

You don't have to do everything yourself. That isn't the best way to plan your wedding anyways. But there are some things you have to do. An as you've read this guide, you've done one of the most important things—learning about the latest wedding trends. You're now in a much better position to oversee the wedding of your dreams...

Once again, we wish you a very happy married life, and before that, a hassle-free, magical and memorable wedding!