

The Wedding Consult – Are we a good fit?

Congratulations you're getting married, which means you're planning for one of the most beautiful and exciting days of your life. Most couples have never planned such a large event, yet here you are trying to put it all together so that it resembles what you dream of for your special day. That's a daunting task, but as with all the vendors you choose we are here to help bring that vision to life as easily and painlessly as possible but are we the right fit?

Smart couples will do their due diligence and get quotes or estimates from a few different florists before making a final determination on who will create the florals for their wedding day, but everything on paper could look a lot alike and other than basing your decision on price alone (which you should never do because sometimes you get what you pay for) how do you know if the person you are hiring is a good fit for you?

We believe there are three things that you should take into consideration when looking for a florist.

- 1) Do they have a style that is pleasing to you? Check their website and their social media accounts, do you feel that the florist could create what you have in your mind?
- 2) Have an in person consult with them. They are real people, they have personalities and by meeting with them you will know if you click. Does communication flow naturally between you, do they seem knowledgeable - can they tell you if the flowers you want are available the month of your wedding or can they suggest an alternative? Are they providing you with suggestions or ideas and are they being honest with you about what they can do for you with the information you have provided to them? Ask them questions, look at their work and check their reviews.
- 3) Be open to possibilities especially when it comes to working with flowers and your budget. Be open to different options for flowers, styles of bouquets or centrepieces. Florists have a wealth of experience and they have seen all kinds of different variations of the same thing but if you give them a list of exact flowers and styles you want used, and they can't match that to your budget, you could loose out on some pretty amazing alternatives that could actually give you a bigger bang for your buck. Florists are a creative bunch and they like to step away from the same 4 Pinterest inspiration photos they get weekly and if you're willing to let them have a little freedom in creativity you're going to get the same exceptional result just via a different path.

So it's obvious that the consult is a very important meeting, as they say first impressions are everything, but when is the right time to visit a florist and what information do you need to know before you do?

Here at The Wheelbarrow Gardener/ Florist if you are planning a typical wedding not too big, not too small and with approx. 4 or more months to plan it, this is what's involved during **our** average wedding consultation process. We like to start the process with our couples anywhere from 4 - 6 months away from your wedding date for off season weddings and 6 -10 months for weddings between May and September. At this point our dates of availability are just beginning to fill up and we will be able to determine if we are available for your wedding date.

Once we determine if we are available for your date, then we begin collecting some general information from you. Contact info for you and your partner, location of venues and time of ceremony and reception. Colour palette or theme for the wedding, number of bridal party members, approx. number of wedding guests, and a rough budget for florals and decor items** if we are providing them as well. All of this information helps us to establish the feel and scope of what your wedding will be like. None of it has to be set in stone and at this point can change but this preliminary information will give us a good sense of what our contribution will look like for your day. This information is provided to us when we ask you to fill out our wedding consultation form and after we review this form we will contact you to book an in person consultation at our studio.

Our first in person consult is a get to know you and your vision consult. It's important to us that we get to know our couples, because we design with your personalities in mind, this consult gives us the opportunity to get to know you and learn a little bit about you and your love story. We will also spend some time talking about your vision for the day. What does your perfect day look like, how does it feel, what do you want your guests to experience? We are not focused on the flowers yet, just the wedding in general. During these discussions we are collecting as many clues as possible so we can design your vision to life, so the more information you can give us the better. We will discuss flowers, what are your favourites, which ones have special meaning for you, which ones are a definite no. We'll talk bouquet styles and what would compliment your physical stature and what you're wearing so please bring pictures of your dress or attire if possible, and if you can provide a sample colour or picture of your bridesmaid's dress and groomsmen suits you get extra bonus points. We'll discuss your needs and wants list for all the different elements to the wedding regarding bridal party florals, family florals, ceremony

and reception florals. For example you need a bridal bouquet but you want a floral crown or you need centrepieces and you want flowers for the cake. Finally we'll talk budget and this is usually the hardest part because you don't know the cost of flowers. Good news - we do, and we can determine if your vision with your flower choices matches your budget goals. Before you come to the consult you should establish how much of your overall budget for the wedding is set aside for your flowers and decor items**. The industry recommendation is that you budget 10 - 15% of your total budget to these items, so if your overall wedding budget is \$30,000 then you should budget to spend \$3000 - \$4500 on flowers and decor items**, BUT this is just a guideline and it all depends on what floral elements do you want us to provide. If you are looking for only bridal party flowers, on average our couples spend between \$550 and \$2000. For bridal party, family, ceremony and reception flowers spending will start at \$2000 and go from there. Keep in mind these are just a range and each wedding is unique and we can work together to match your vision to your budget goals.

Once we've completed the in person consult we will spend some time dreaming and designing for your day. We will pull flower choices together to match the look and feel that you have expressed and your budget. We'll determine how to give you the biggest bang for your buck and we are able to do this if you have given us permission to be flexible with our choices of flowers, styles of bouquets and detail pieces. We will come up with an estimate for all (both needs and wants) that we have discussed. This estimate is a working document and after you view it we can add or remove items or change prices based on different flower choices. Please note that we do put an expiry date on all our estimates, which is usually 2 weeks from the time we send you the initial proposal with flower choices and estimates. We will continue to work with you on those documents to get to a consensus, but at the end of those two weeks we will need from you a financial commitment if we are going to move forward. By now, you should know if we are the right fit for you and we'll know if you are the right fit for us. To move forward after the expiry date we will need a non-refundable, retainer deposit from you that will be put towards your final total and a signed contract from you stating you understand what our responsibilities are and what your responsibilities are. It is not until we receive the deposit and the contract that your date will be scheduled into our calendar. After the deposit is received we will still communicate either in person or via email to finalize all the specific details and we can always add to your proposal right up until we order the flowers and supplies for your wedding which usually happens approx. 6 weeks from your wedding date, however, once we receive

the deposit we can't reduce the proposal to less than 85% of the original invoice at the time of agreement and signing of the contract.

At about the 5-week mark from your wedding we will contact you to confirm all the numbers and details just to make sure nothing has changed before we order the flowers. We will adjust the invoice if needed and the final balance is due on or before 30 days prior to your wedding.

Lastly, we will contact you approx. 7-10 days prior to the wedding date to confirm numbers of items and delivery details because we know sometimes things change at the last minute and we will confirm pick up, who and when, or set up and delivery times for us.

It is important to us that you are comfortable with the flow of information and that communication between us is open and transparent. You should never be confused or left wondering what's next. We live each and every wedding that we do. Love, sweat and sometimes tears go into every bouquet, boutonniere and centerpiece that we design. We know this is a once in a lifetime event for you and our job is to ensure that on your day the flowers and decor are NOT something you have to worry about.