
VANTAGE STAYS

The Ultimate Smoky Mountain Wedding Planner

Your Complete Guide to Planning a Dream Wedding
in Gatlinburg, Pigeon Forge, Sevierville & Wears Valley

60+ Pages · Checklists · Budget Tracker · Vendor Directory
Timeline · Seating Charts · Day-Of Coordinator Sheets

Partner 1:

Partner 2:

Wedding Date:

Venue:

Cabin:

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1. Your Wedding Vision & Style

Before diving into logistics, take a moment to dream. This section helps you and your partner align on the look, feel, and spirit of your wedding day. The Smoky Mountains offer a stunning canvas — from rustic barn ceremonies to elegant mountaintop celebrations.

Our Wedding Style

Overall vibe (rustic, elegant, bohemian, modern, classic, mountain chic):

Color palette (primary, secondary, accent):

Season & time of day preference:

Indoor, outdoor, or combination:

Ceremony style (religious, spiritual, secular, elopement, vow renewal):

Reception style (sit-down dinner, buffet, cocktail, BBQ, family-style):

Must-have elements:

Absolutely NOT (things to avoid):

Inspiration sources (Pinterest boards, magazines, movies):

Overall guest count target:

VANTAGE TIP: *The Smoky Mountains are perfect for 'mountain chic' — think natural wood, wildflowers, string lights, and breathtaking views as your backdrop. Many of our cabins have expansive decks that serve as stunning ceremony sites.*

Our Non-Negotiables

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Our Nice-to-Haves

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

2. The 12-Month Planning Timeline

This comprehensive timeline ensures nothing falls through the cracks. Check off each task as you complete it. Adjust the timeline based on your engagement length — if you have less than 12 months, prioritize the bolded items first.

12 Months Out

- Announce your engagement & celebrate
- Set your overall budget (see Section 3)
- Decide on wedding style & vision (Section 1)
- Start your guest list draft
- Research & book your ceremony venue
- Research & book your reception venue
- Book your Vantage Stays cabin for the wedding party
- Hire a wedding planner or coordinator (if desired)
- Start researching photographers & videographers
- Set up a wedding website

10–11 Months Out

- Book photographer & videographer
- Book officiant
- Research & book caterer / private chef
- Start shopping for wedding dress / attire
- Book florist
- Book DJ or live music
- Reserve hotel blocks or additional cabins for guests
- Research Smoky Mountain marriage license requirements
- Plan engagement photos (Smoky Mountain locations are stunning)

8–9 Months Out

- Order wedding dress / begin alterations timeline
- Book hair & makeup artists
- Choose & order bridesmaid dresses
- Plan groomsmen attire
- Book transportation (shuttles between cabins & venue)
- Order save-the-dates

- Register for gifts
- Book rehearsal dinner venue
- Plan honeymoon & book travel

6–7 Months Out

- Mail save-the-dates
- Book wedding cake / dessert
- Finalize ceremony details with officiant
- Plan ceremony music & readings
- Order wedding invitations & stationery
- Book any rental items (chairs, arch, linens, lighting)
- Plan welcome bags for cabin guests
- Arrange cabin grocery delivery through Vantage concierge

4–5 Months Out

- Mail wedding invitations (aim for 8 weeks before)
- Finalize menu with caterer
- Order wedding favors
- Plan rehearsal dinner menu & program
- Schedule dress fittings
- Book spa services for wedding party
- Finalize floral arrangements & décor details
- Create seating chart draft
- Write vows (if writing your own)

2–3 Months Out

- Track RSVPs & follow up with non-responders
- Finalize guest count with all vendors
- Finalize seating chart
- Apply for marriage license (Sevier County)
- Confirm all vendor contracts & timelines
- Plan wedding party gifts
- Schedule final dress fitting
- Create day-of timeline (Section 17)
- Confirm cabin check-in details with Vantage Stays
- Arrange Xplorie free attraction tickets for guests

1 Month Out

- Confirm EVERYTHING with every vendor
- Final dress fitting complete
- Break in wedding shoes
- Prepare toasts & speeches
- Create emergency kit (Section 21)
- Finalize day-of timeline & distribute to wedding party
- Confirm transportation schedule
- Prepare vendor tip envelopes
- Prepare marriage license paperwork

1 Week Out

- Confirm cabin is ready & stocked
- Pack for the wedding weekend
- Deliver welcome bags to cabins
- Rehearsal & rehearsal dinner
- Get a good night's sleep in your Vantage cabin
- Enjoy the hot tub — you've earned it

Wedding Day

- Eat breakfast — seriously, eat
- Hair & makeup per schedule
- Photos: getting ready, first look, bridal party
- Ceremony
- Cocktail hour & family photos
- Reception: dinner, toasts, first dance, cake cutting
- Bouquet & garter toss
- Last dance & sparkler exit
- Return to your cabin & breathe — you're married!

After the Wedding

- Return rentals
- File signed marriage license
- Send thank-you notes (Section 22)
- Preserve dress & bouquet
- Order prints & albums

- Leave a review for Vantage Stays
- Change name (if applicable)
- Update insurance, bank accounts, etc.
- Enjoy your honeymoon!

3. Master Budget Tracker

Track every dollar. The average Smoky Mountain wedding costs \$15,000–\$35,000, but cabin weddings can be significantly more affordable than traditional venue weddings. Use this tracker to stay on top of estimates, actuals, and payments.

TOTAL BUDGET:	\$ _____	WHO IS CONTRIBUTING:	
AMOUNT SPENT:	\$ _____	Partner 1 Family:	\$ _____
REMAINING:	\$ _____	Partner 2 Family:	\$ _____
		Couple:	\$ _____

Category	Estimated	Actual	Paid	Balance	Notes
Venue / Ceremony	\$	\$	\$	\$	
Reception / Catering	\$	\$	\$	\$	
Photography	\$	\$	\$	\$	
Videography	\$	\$	\$	\$	
Florist / Décor	\$	\$	\$	\$	
DJ / Music	\$	\$	\$	\$	
Wedding Cake	\$	\$	\$	\$	
Officiant	\$	\$	\$	\$	
Wedding Dress	\$	\$	\$	\$	
Groom Attire	\$	\$	\$	\$	
Bridesmaid Dresses	\$	\$	\$	\$	
Groomsmen Attire	\$	\$	\$	\$	
Hair & Makeup	\$	\$	\$	\$	
Invitations / Paper	\$	\$	\$	\$	
Transportation	\$	\$	\$	\$	
Cabin Rental	\$	\$	\$	\$	
Rehearsal Dinner	\$	\$	\$	\$	
Wedding Planner	\$	\$	\$	\$	
Favors & Gifts	\$	\$	\$	\$	
Marriage License	\$	\$	\$	\$	
Rings	\$	\$	\$	\$	
Honeymoon	\$	\$	\$	\$	

Tips & Gratuities	\$	\$	\$	\$	
Emergency Fund (5-10%)	\$	\$	\$	\$	
Other:	\$	\$	\$	\$	
Other:	\$	\$	\$	\$	
	\$	\$	\$	\$	
TOTAL	\$	\$	\$	\$	

VANTAGE TIP: Booking a Vantage cabin as your wedding venue can save thousands compared to traditional venues. Many couples use the cabin deck for the ceremony and the great room for the reception — all included in your nightly rate.

Guest Count Summary

Category	Count
Total Invited	
Accepted	
Declined	
Awaiting Response	
Staying in Vantage Cabins	
Need Transportation	
Dietary Restrictions	
Children (under 12)	

5. Venue & Ceremony Planning

The Smoky Mountains offer some of the most breathtaking wedding venues in the country — from historic chapels in Gatlinburg to mountaintop overlooks and elegant cabin decks with panoramic views. This section helps you compare options and plan every ceremony detail.

Venue Comparison

Venue Name	Location	Capacity	Cost	Indoor/Out	Rating

Popular Smoky Mountain Ceremony Locations

Cabin Deck Ceremonies — Your Vantage cabin's deck becomes a stunning altar with mountain views. No venue fee — it's included in your stay.

Gatlinburg Wedding Chapels — Over 20 chapels within walking distance of downtown. Many offer all-inclusive packages.

Cades Cove — A breathtaking valley in Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Permits required but unforgettable.

Anakeesta — Mountaintop venue with panoramic views, accessible by gondola. Magical for sunset ceremonies.

The Venue at Lenoir City — Elegant barn venue about 45 minutes from Gatlinburg. Rustic-chic perfection.

Laurel Falls Trailhead — For adventurous couples — hike to a waterfall for an intimate elopement.

Ceremony Details

Ceremony start time:

Processional order:

Who walks whom down the aisle:

Readings (who & what):

Vow style (traditional / personal):

Ring bearer / flower girl:

Unity ceremony (candle, sand, wine box, tree planting):

Recessional song:

Post-ceremony plan (receiving line, cocktail hour, photos):

6. Smoky Mountain Vendor Directory

We've curated a list of the best lodging-agnostic wedding vendors in the Gatlinburg, Pigeon Forge, Sevierville, and Wears Valley area. These professionals work with couples at any venue — they won't push you toward their own property.

Wedding Planners & Coordinators

Vendor Name	Phone	Email	Cost	Booked?

Photographers

Vendor Name	Phone	Email	Cost	Booked?

Videographers

Vendor Name	Phone	Email	Cost	Booked?

Florists & Décor

Vendor Name	Phone	Email	Cost	Booked?

Caterers & Private Chefs

Vendor Name	Phone	Email	Cost	Booked?

Wedding Cakes & Desserts

Vendor Name	Phone	Email	Cost	Booked?

DJs & Live Music

Vendor Name	Phone	Email	Cost	Booked?

Officiants

Vendor Name	Phone	Email	Cost	Booked?

Hair & Makeup Artists

Vendor Name	Phone	Email	Cost	Booked?

Rental Companies (chairs, arches, lighting)

Vendor Name	Phone	Email	Cost	Booked?

Transportation (shuttles, limos)

Vendor Name	Phone	Email	Cost	Booked?

VANTAGE TIP: Ask Vantage Stays concierge for our current preferred vendor list — we work with the best local professionals and can often arrange special rates for our guests.

7. Cabin & Lodging Coordination

One of the biggest advantages of a Smoky Mountain wedding is having your entire wedding party under one roof — or in cabins right next to each other. This section helps you coordinate lodging assignments, check-in times, and cabin amenities.

Cabin Assignments

Cabin Name	Guests Assigned	Bedrooms	Check-In	Check-Out	Cost

Cabin Amenities Checklist

- Private pool
- Hot tub
- Game room
- Theater room
- Full kitchen
- Multiple living areas
- Mountain views
- Fireplace
- Grill / outdoor kitchen
- Parking for all guests
- Pet-friendly (if needed)
- Wheelchair accessible (if needed)

Pre-Arrival Coordination

- Grocery delivery arranged through Smoky Mountain Grocery

- Welcome bags prepared and delivered to each cabin
- Cabin stocked with wedding weekend essentials
- Check-in instructions sent to all guests
- Parking plan communicated
- Cabin rules & quiet hours shared with guests
- Emergency contact info distributed
- Xplorie free attraction tickets activated for all guests

8. Catering & Menu Planning

From elegant plated dinners to casual mountain BBQ, the Smokies offer incredible catering options. Many couples choose to have their private chef cook right in the cabin's full kitchen — a unique and intimate experience.

Reception Menu

Appetizers / Cocktail Hour:

Salad / Soup Course:

Main Entrée Options:

Sides:

Dessert / Wedding Cake:

Late Night Snack:

Signature Cocktail:

Bar Setup (open bar / beer & wine / cash bar):

Non-Alcoholic Options:

Kids' Menu:

Dietary Restrictions Tracker

Guest Name	Restriction	Meal Choice	Notes

9. Floral & Décor Planner

The natural beauty of the Smoky Mountains means you can keep floral arrangements simple and let nature do the heavy lifting. Wildflower bouquets, greenery garlands, and rustic wood accents are perennial favorites.

Bridal bouquet style & flowers:

Bridesmaid bouquets (qty: ____):

Boutonnieres (qty: ____):

Corsages (qty: ____):

Ceremony arch / altar flowers:

Aisle décor:

Reception centerpieces:

Head table arrangement:

Cake flowers:

Welcome sign flowers:

Cabin décor (if ceremony at cabin):

Petals for flower girl:

VANTAGE TIP: Local Smoky Mountain wildflowers (black-eyed Susans, mountain laurel, rhododendron) make gorgeous, affordable bouquets that perfectly complement the mountain setting.

10. Photography & Videography

The Smoky Mountains provide some of the most photogenic backdrops in the country. From misty morning portraits to golden hour shots on your cabin deck, every frame tells a story.

Must-Have Photo List

- Getting ready (both partners)
- First look
- Bridal party portraits
- Family formals (list specific groupings below)
- Ceremony wide shots
- Ring exchange close-up
- First kiss
- Recessional
- Cocktail hour candid
- Reception details (cake, centerpieces, place settings)
- First dance
- Parent dances
- Toasts
- Bouquet & garter toss
- Sparkler exit / send-off
- Cabin group photo on the deck

Best Smoky Mountain Photo Locations

- Clingmans Dome overlook (highest point in Tennessee)
- Roaring Fork Motor Nature Trail
- Cades Cove (early morning for best light & no crowds)
- Newfound Gap Road overlooks
- Gatlinburg SkyBridge
- Your Vantage cabin deck at golden hour
- Laurel Falls trail
- The Sinks on Little River Road

11. Music & Entertainment

Ceremony Music

Prelude (as guests arrive):

Processional (wedding party):

Bride's entrance:

During ceremony (readings, unity):

Recessional:

Reception Music

First dance song:

Parent dances:

Cake cutting song:

Bouquet toss song:

Last dance:

Do-not-play list:

Must-play list:

Entertainment Ideas for the Cabin

- Game room tournament

- Hot tub party
- Movie night in the theater room
- Bonfire & s'mores
- Karaoke night
- Stargazing from the deck
- Morning-after brunch in the great room

12. Wedding Party Coordination

Role	Name	Phone	Email	Attire Size	Gift

Roles to Assign

- Maid / Matron of Honor: _____
- Best Man: _____
- Bridesmaids: _____
- Groomsmen: _____
- Flower Girl(s): _____
- Ring Bearer(s): _____
- Ushers: _____
- Readers: _____
- Guest Book Attendant: _____
- Gift Table Attendant: _____
- Day-Of Point Person: _____

■ Social Media Manager / Hashtag Coordinator: _____

13. Attire & Beauty

Wedding Dress Details

Designer / Brand:

Style / Silhouette:

Store purchased from:

Order date:

Fitting dates:

Alterations needed:

Accessories (veil, jewelry, shoes):

Something old / new / borrowed / blue:

Beauty Schedule

Person	Hair Time	Makeup Time	Artist	Notes

14. Invitations & Stationery

Stationery Checklist

- Save-the-dates (qty: ___ sent by: ___/___/___)
- Wedding invitations (qty: ___ sent by: ___/___/___)
- RSVP cards & envelopes
- Ceremony programs
- Menu cards
- Place cards / escort cards
- Table numbers
- Welcome sign
- Seating chart display
- Thank-you cards (qty: ___)
- Wedding hashtag sign

15. Transportation & Logistics

Mountain roads require planning. Many Vantage cabins are in resort communities with winding roads — make sure your transportation plan accounts for this, especially for evening events.

Vehicle / Service	For Whom	Pickup Time	Pickup Location	Cost

Key Distances from Pigeon Forge

From Pigeon Forge To:	Distance / Drive Time
Gatlinburg downtown	12 miles / 25 min
Sevierville	8 miles / 15 min
Wears Valley	15 miles / 25 min
McGhee Tyson Airport (TYS)	45 miles / 55 min
Knoxville	35 miles / 45 min
Great Smoky Mountains NP entrance	10 miles / 20 min

16. Rehearsal Dinner Planner

Date & time:

Location:

Host(s):

Guest list (typically wedding party + immediate family):

Menu / catering:

Toasts & speeches:

Gifts to wedding party:

Rehearsal schedule:

Transportation to/from:

VANTAGE TIP: Many couples host the rehearsal dinner right in their Vantage cabin — the full kitchen and great room are perfect for a catered dinner or even a casual BBQ on the deck. It's intimate, convenient, and saves on venue costs.

17. Day-Of Timeline & Coordinator Sheet

This is the most important document you'll create. Print copies for your wedding planner, maid of honor, best man, and any day-of helpers. Fill in exact times once all vendors are confirmed.

Time	Event / Task	Who	Location	Notes
7:00 AM				
7:30 AM				
8:00 AM				
8:30 AM				
9:00 AM				
9:30 AM				
10:00 AM				
10:30 AM				
11:00 AM				
11:30 AM				
12:00 PM				
12:30 PM				
1:00 PM				
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4:00 PM				
4:30 PM				
5:00 PM				
5:30 PM				
6:00 PM				
6:30 PM				
7:00 PM				
7:30 PM				
8:00 PM				
8:30 PM				

9:00 PM				
9:30 PM				
10:00 PM				
10:30 PM				
11:00 PM				

18. Seating Chart & Floor Plan

Use this grid to plan your reception seating. For cabin receptions, you may have guests spread across the great room, dining area, and deck — plan accordingly.

Table 1

Seat	Guest Name	Meal Choice	Special Notes

Table 2

Seat	Guest Name	Meal Choice	Special Notes

Table 3

Seat	Guest Name	Meal Choice	Special Notes
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Table 4

Seat	Guest Name	Meal Choice	Special Notes

Table 5

Seat	Guest Name	Meal Choice	Special Notes

Table 6

Seat	Guest Name	Meal Choice	Special Notes

Table 7

Seat	Guest Name	Meal Choice	Special Notes

Table 8

Seat	Guest Name	Meal Choice	Special Notes

Table 9

Seat	Guest Name	Meal Choice	Special Notes

Table 10

Seat	Guest Name	Meal Choice	Special Notes

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19. Honeymoon Planning

Many couples extend their Smoky Mountain stay for a honeymoon — upgrade to a romantic cabin with a private pool, or jet off to a tropical destination. Either way, plan it here.

Destination:

Travel dates:

Flight info:

Hotel / accommodation:

Activities planned:

Restaurants to try:

Packing list:

Documents needed (passport, visa):

Budget:

Travel insurance:

VANTAGE TIP: Ask about our honeymoon cabin upgrade — stay an extra night or two in a romantic 1-2 bedroom cabin with a private hot tub and mountain views. The perfect way to decompress after the big day.

20. Tennessee Marriage License Guide

Getting married in Tennessee is straightforward. Here's everything you need to know about obtaining your marriage license in Sevier County (which covers Gatlinburg, Pigeon Forge, Sevierville, and Wears Valley).

- **Where to Apply:** Sevier County Clerk's Office, 125 Court Avenue, Suite 202, Sevierville, TN 37862
- **Phone:** (865) 453-5502
- **Hours:** Monday–Friday, 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM; Saturday 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM
- **Cost:** \$100.50 (subject to change — verify before your trip)
- **Waiting Period:** No waiting period in Tennessee — you can marry the same day
- **Expiration:** License is valid for 30 days from date of issue
- **Both Partners Must Be Present** to apply
- **Valid ID Required:** Driver's license, passport, or state-issued ID
- **No Blood Test Required** in Tennessee
- **Out-of-State Couples:** Tennessee welcomes destination weddings — no residency requirement
- **After the Ceremony:** Your officiant signs the license and returns it to the county clerk within 3 business days

Marriage License Checklist

- Both partners have valid photo ID
- Know Social Security numbers
- Know parents' full names (including mother's maiden name)
- Have divorce decree if previously married
- Cash or card for license fee
- Scheduled appointment (if required)
- Officiant confirmed and ordained in Tennessee
- Witnesses arranged (if desired — not legally required in TN)

21. Wedding Day Emergency Kit

Pack this kit and give it to your maid of honor or day-of coordinator. You'll be glad you did.

Beauty & Appearance

- Extra bobby pins & hair ties
- Hairspray
- Makeup for touch-ups
- Blotting papers
- Deodorant
- Perfume
- Breath mints
- Stain remover pen
- Static guard spray
- Lint roller
- Nail file & clear nail polish

Health & Comfort

- Pain reliever (Advil/Tylenol)
- Antacid
- Allergy medicine
- Band-aids & moleskin
- Eye drops
- Tissues
- Sunscreen (for outdoor ceremonies)
- Bug spray
- Granola bars / snacks
- Water bottles

Wardrobe Fixes

- Safety pins (various sizes)
- Sewing kit (needle & thread)
- Fashion tape / double-sided tape
- Extra buttons
- Shoe insoles / heel protectors
- Backup pair of flats

- Steamer or wrinkle release spray

Tools & Supplies

- Scissors
- Super glue
- Clear tape
- Sharpie & pens
- Phone chargers (multiple)
- Portable battery pack
- Umbrella (mountain weather changes fast!)
- Flashlight
- Cash for tips
- Copy of all vendor contracts & contact info
- Copy of day-of timeline
- Marriage license

23. Smoky Mountain Wedding Ideas & Inspiration

Seasonal Wedding Ideas

Spring (March–May)

Wildflowers in bloom, mild temperatures (50–75°F), dogwood and redbud trees create a natural floral backdrop. Watch for afternoon rain showers — have a backup plan.

Summer (June–August)

Lush green mountains, warm temperatures (70–85°F), long daylight hours for golden hour photos. Book early — peak tourist season means higher demand.

Fall (September–November)

The most popular season for Smoky Mountain weddings. Spectacular fall foliage in October creates an unmatched backdrop. Temperatures 50–70°F. Book 12+ months ahead.

Winter (December–February)

Intimate, cozy cabin weddings with potential for snow-dusted mountain views. Lower prices and fewer crowds. Temperatures 30–50°F. Fireplace ceremonies are magical.

Unique Smoky Mountain Wedding Ideas

- Ceremony on your cabin deck with mountain views as the backdrop
- Moonshine tasting bar (Ole Smoky, Sugarlands) as a signature cocktail station
- Bluegrass band for ceremony and cocktail hour
- S'mores station by the cabin fire pit
- Wildflower bouquets foraged from local farms
- Hot cocoa bar for fall/winter weddings
- Sunrise ceremony at Clingmans Dome
- Bear-themed wedding favors (honey jars, bear cookies)
- Mountain-themed table names (Clingmans Dome, Chimney Tops, etc.)
- Sparkler exit on the cabin driveway
- Morning-after brunch in the cabin's great room
- Waterfall first-look photos at Laurel Falls or Grotto Falls

24. The Vantage Advantage

Why Vantage Stays is the perfect home base for your Smoky Mountain wedding.

Cabins That Sleep 5–42 Guests

Keep your entire wedding party under one roof in a luxury cabin with private pools, hot tubs, game rooms, theater rooms, and full kitchens.

Resort Community Options

Need more space? Book multiple cabins in the same resort community so everyone is steps away from each other.

Full Resort Buyout

For the ultimate private wedding weekend, buy out an entire resort community exclusively for your group.

Concierge Services

Our team can arrange grocery delivery, private chefs, spa services, and celebration décor — so you can focus on getting married.

Free Attraction Tickets

Every Vantage stay includes complimentary Xplorie tickets to 18+ Smoky Mountain attractions — perfect for keeping guests entertained.

Book Direct & Save

No middleman fees. Best rates guaranteed when you book directly with Vantage Stays.

21+ Years of Experience

With a 4.85 average rating and 37,600+ guests hosted, we know how to make group stays exceptional.

Trip Planning Tools

Use our online trip planner, cost splitter, and meal planner to coordinate every detail with your wedding party.

Ready to start planning your Smoky Mountain wedding?

Visit vantagestays.com or call (865) 408-1817 to speak with our group stays team.

Email us at hello@vantagestays.com for a personalized wedding weekend quote.

