THE GARDENS at BULLIMAH

TWELVE MONTH WEDDING PLANNING CHECKLIST

Every detail covered

The Gardens at Bullimah: Albany's Premier Wedding Venue: Great Southern and South West Australia

The Gardens at Bullimah Wedding Planning Checklist

CONGRATULATIONS

A wedding is a unique and wonderful celebration of the love you and your partner have for each other. It is a chance to say your vows to each other, witnessed by the people you most love…and let's face it, it is probably going to be the best party you ever throw!

It does take some planning but if you start early and get as much done as possible before the last month – it will be a breeze! The last thing you want is to be stressed on your wedding day. This is a big one. You and your partner are the two who should MOST enjoy this day.

We have started a wedding planner at twelve months from your wedding day which is about average in terms of when people start to plan their weddings. Although, many venues are booked 18 - 24 months out - so there is the first tip that everyone will agree upon.

Decide on your venue first!

For more reasons than one!

Once you have decided on your venue, it is easier to see how your day may plan out. It can help to set the tone or even assist in your colour selections. The style and colours you choose for a beach wedding are going to be very different to the style and colours you choose for an industrial warehouse wedding!

Once the venue is chosen, you will have a clearer idea of what you need or don't need. Consider the venue inclusions. They will range from none to virtually everything you need.

This planner is designed mainly for couples who are starting their journey with us in The Gardens at Bullimah but it is a useful, applicable tool wherever you decide to get married – just transfer the information to your venue choice.

The time line is about average but if your timeline is much longer (or much shorter) just adapt but try to check off tasks pretty much in order.

Please note: We totally and absolutely, believe in marriage equality. If this is not written with-in the context of your circumstances, please contextualise for yourself.

So here it is…

The Gardens at Bullimah Wedding Planning Checklist

As soon as you know you're getting married/after your engagement

- Discuss your ideal wedding with your fiancé. Hopefully you have an aligned vision – if not set your compromises.
- Decide your budget range: Not only what you are prepared to spend but think about where it is coming from. Don't pick a figure – pick a range! Know that you COULD go to the top end if required but aim for the bottom end.
- Start planning the guest list. You can hone it later but knowing approximately how many you will invite will help you choose an appropriate venue. Also, you might need Wheel chair friendly? Kid friendly? Animal friendly? Well… some people send invites to their best canine friends!
- Research potential ceremony and reception venues.
- Pick potential wedding dates (*check with any significant guests to avoid clashes.)* Try to choose two or three possibilities of dates to avoid disappointment.
- Start a wedding file/folder to keep all your quotes/ samples/ decisions/ invoices etc.
- **BOOK YOUR VENUE!**

At least 12 months before, but earlier is better

- Decide who you wish to have in your bridal party and ask them.
- Start a Pinterest account or a scrapbook or another way to save ideas and looks that you like.
- Find your celebrant or officiant. If you are choosing a religious officiant, some will only officiate in their church – others will officiate at your chosen venue. If you are choosing a celebrant, you will find several very good options on our partners page on our website https://www.thegardensbullimah.com/our-partners
- **BOOK YOUR CELEBRANT/OFFICIANT**
- Choose your colour palette. Choose colours you like but also think about style of wedding, venue style and colours that will photograph well in your setting and suit your wedding party.
- Start researching wedding suppliers; photographers, florists, invitations, cake, decor, music, hair and make-up. Once again find many choices for around the Great Southern area of WA (all of whom we can recommend) on our partners page https://www.thegardensbullimah.com/our-partners. If you are in a different region, research locals to your area. You don't want to pay for travel and there are good vendors everywhere!
- Determine what style of wedding reception you would prefer – Cocktail or Sit- Down (or a combination of both) Find an article explaining the pros and cons of both on our blog on our website https://www.thegardensbullimah.com/blog
- Decide what type of entertainment you want for your ceremony, for the pre-reception drinks/cocktails and your dancing party! If you are

choosing live music find our resident musicians (who also provide a DJ service) on the partner's page on our website https://www.thegardensbullimah.com/our-partners These guys are great as they can play all styles of music to cover the different aspects of your ceremony. From beautiful, sentimental renditions for the ceremony to rocking your party with their upbeat music and personalities. Maybe though, you are happy to have recorded music for your ceremony and just want live music for the party or if your budget doesn't stretch to live music, consider the other options. This is the time to make that decision, particularly if you are choosing live musicians as the good ones are often booked well ahead. Tip: if choosing live musicians, check to see if they can cover the different styles you need and remember if they are there from ceremony through to end of evening, they will need to be fed.

- Check the portfolios of photographers on their websites and/or their Instagram/ other social media pages to find the style of photos that you like. Photographers are artists and their styles are not all the same.
- Start your wedding dress research. Try some on!
- Discuss whether you want a wedding planner to help with some or all the organisation. You don't need to do this if you are having your wedding at The Gardens at Bullimah as our wedding planning service is built in – part of the service!
- Ensure passports are up to date if you need them for honeymoon. Don't underestimate how long it can take to order new passports!

10 months before or earlier

- **BOOK YOUR MUSICIANS**
- **BOOK YOUR PHOTOGRAPHER**
- **BOOK YOUR CATERER**
- If you want a videographer, research and book.
- Contact hire companies if you need to hire chairs, tables, marquee, glasses, crockery, cutlery, linen, portable bathrooms, umbrellas, drink tubs, bars, sound system, dance-floor, lights etc. You don't need to hire any of these things at the Gardens at Bullimah as they are all included but you may like to hire some décor items and there may be something you wish to add to make it YOUR style.
- Research and **book your Honeymoon**, if you are having one.
- Research bridesmaids' dresses. So many options here. Identical dresses in identical colour; different dresses in identical colour; dresses in different shades of the same colour; individual styles and colours sometimes within a themed colour palette; (Mediterranean colours for e.g.) or different colours with a themed style (vintage for e.g.) Let your imagination and own style determine where you go with this one. Tip: regardless of what you like, be mindful of the shape and colouring of your bridal party and be kind to them!
- Finalise your wedding dress choice – off the rack/dressmaker/designer/ online – make your choice and don't be afraid to **ORDER YOUR DRESS**. You have done a couple of months of research and your taste won't change!

8 months before or earlier

- In case you haven't ordered your dress – do it now! (Presuming you have found one that you like) If you are not having it made, you have a little more time up your sleeve.
- Finalise your guest list and **SEND SAVE THE DATE CARDS.**
- Research and **order your wedding cake.**
- Meet with florist to discuss options **BOOK YOUR FLORIST.**
- Travel vaccinations? Do you need them for your honeymoon - check!
- Organise wedding transport; late nights, alcohol and driving don't mix. A bus is not necessary but is a great option if it works for you.
- Research and book accommodation for guests if required.
- **Choose and order wedding rings.**
- Start thinking about groom's attire.
- **BOOK YOUR HAIR AND MAKE-UP.** They will ask you how many people? Remember to include Mums and/or Grandmothers if they would like to be included.
- If you are choosing to use wedding cars and need to hire, then book these now. If you are having your wedding at The Gardens at Bullimah, you have a choice. You can either have a car drive you down our tree lined avenue to stop right in front of the Sunken ceremony garden OR you can just leave our dressing rooms through the beautiful French doors that will lead you directly to the entrance of the Ceremony Garden.

5-6 months before

- Choose and **order wedding invitations** and stationery and start a wedding website if you wish to have one.
- **Finalise/order/ purchase/ bridesmaid dresses**
- Have your first dress fitting if required and pick up some accessories whilst you are here – or start thinking about accessories and where you will source them.

3-4 months before

- Book/order or shop for **Groom and Groomsmen attire.**
- **Buy shoes and underwear.**
- Provide guest lists to (or at least have a conversation with) your attendants and/or whoever is hosting your hen's night, bridal shower or buck/stag nights).
- Book accommodation for your wedding night. If you are having your wedding at The Gardens at Bullimah, you don't need to do this as it is built into your package.
- Choose your ceremony and reception playlist. Start this now as you will find that you refine as you go.
- Pick- up/purchase your wedding bands.
- Update your wedding website (if you have one) so that you can direct your invited guests to information on this site.
- **SCHEDULE HAIR AND MAKE-UP TRIALS** if budget allows.
- Check that men's attire is all in order P.S. Other than in a very small minority (sorry fellas) DON'T leave it to the boys!
- Dress fitting if relevant.

2 months before

- **SEND OUT YOUR INVITATIONS** – usually at about the 2month point. Hint: Make your RSVP two weeks at the most. The tighter the time frame – the more likely people are to RSVP.
- Touch base with your photographer to discuss 'day of' plans and specific shots you would like. Provide your photographer with a list – it is so easy to miss shots that you wish you had, and it is too late once it is all over.
- Finalise as many payments as you can.
- Finalise dress accessories for bride and bridesmaids.
- **Organise your readings/ ceremony order and touch base with your celebrant/officiant.**
- Organise/order/make/purchase your wedding favours.
- Touch base with your caterer to finalise your menu.
- Touch base with all vendors to make sure everything is in order!
- Some couples like to have an engagement shoot at about 8 weeks from their wedding. This can be a great way to get used to your photographer and to get some relaxed shots prior to your wedding. This might be a 'if budget allows' scenario.

5- 6 weeks before

- Finalise the rest of your payments
- Review the play-list with your band/DJ
- **WRITE YOUR VOWS**. We promise this is not too early. You will want to re-write and practice and adjust to get them to the point where you are really, happy. Not many people can pull this off, two days before the wedding!!
- At 6 weeks out, chase any RSVP's that you have not received. Be prepared to have to do this.
- Put all your RSVP's into a guest list.
- Make or have your place cards printed (if you are having a sit- down meal).
- Purchase gifts for bridal party and any-one else on your list.
- **Create a 'run-sheet' for your big day**. Include hair and make- up, bump-in of vendors and general timings to assist those that are supporting you. If you are finding this difficult, we have a template on our blog on our website that might assist. Check out https://www.thegardensbullimah.com/blog
- **Make Spa appointments** for last week. Think tan/hair-cut and colour/manicure/waxing/facial – whatever it is that you want to treat yourself to in preparation for your day.
- **Enjoy your hens/bridal shower.** Let your hair down and just have some fun. Be reminded that your wedding is a celebration, that you have family and friends who care and that it won't matter if little things don't go according to plan. Regardless of whether you have a hens/ bridal shower, take stock at this point, and remind yourself about what is important.
- If you want one, decide on a hashtag so all photos can be shared to one place. Also make your decisions around social media and what you are comfortable in sharing or not sharing.

4 weeks before

- **Finalise your numbers**. Do a last RSVP check against your guest list and your invited list. RING if necessary. Your final numbers for caterers and venue must be exact.
- Purchase your alcohol and finalise wait- staff and bar-staff if required.
- **MEET WITH THE GARDENS AT BULLIMAH** Wedding coordinator to finalise plans, book your rehearsal, complete documentation and to ensure that all is in place for a smooth and wonderful day.
- If you are having a sit-down reception, create your seating plan. There has been a bit of swing away from seating plans but our advice is that they work! People like to know where they are sitting and it provides them with a place to leave bag, jacket etc. It also avoids the situation where 30-year-old Sam (who came on his own) ends up in the middle of your elderly Aunts. Poor Sam!
- **MEET WITH YOUR CELEBRANT/OFFICIANT**
- Review your vows.
- Have final dress fitting.
- Make any final adjustments with suppliers.

2 weeks before

- Review attire – all bits ready to go.
- Have your engagement ring cleaned.
- Try to keep fairly calm this week. Nearly everything is done. Next week there will be a few last-minute tasks so try to relax a little, this week.
- Practice your vows aloud.

1 week before

- Dance around in your shoes
- Hair: Cut and colour and any other Spa treatments
- Ensure everyone in your wedding party has your wedding day timeline. This is not meant to be rigid but will help with flow. You want to end up with enough party time!
- Outsource any 'day of' tasks that you can, to family and friends.
- If you are heading off on a honeymoon immediately after your wedding, pack this week or if you have a couple of days after the wedding before you leave, at least have everything washed and ready to put in the case.
- Relax.

2-3 days before

- Make last minute changes to seating plan if necessary.
- Nail your vows!
- Groom: **PICK UP FORMAL HIRE WEAR** if attire is hired. Ensure all parts of attire are together including shoes, socks, underwear, belt, tie. Believe me – we have had a pair of missing trousers, discovered one hour prior to the ceremony. Luckily, they were found and retrieved with minutes to spare. You don't need that stress! Preparation is the key.
- If it is possible, drop off and hang your dress and bridesmaid's dresses and accessories in The Gardens at Bullimah accommodation/dressing rooms. If it is not possible – this can be done very early on the morning of wedding.
- Pack an overnight bag for your wedding night – including Panadol and Bandaids
- Gather your bridal party, celebrant and necessary family members for a rehearsal at The Gardens of Bullimah.
- At your rehearsal introduce your MC or one of your attendants to The Gardens at Bullimah Wedding Coordinator. This person will be our contact throughout the night – so as not to worry you.
- Check that your cake/flowers/hire items are on track to be delivered at the designated time. Provide each supplier with an emergency number.
- Remember to hug each other a lot!

The day before

- Drop off place cards, table plan, favours, décor items to venue. If there is not a wedding the day prior to yours, you will be able to do your final settings for the reception centre, ceremony garden and cocktail garden the day prior. If it is necessary to do this on the morning of your wedding, staff will be designated to assist you.
- Make sure you spend some time during the day, with family and friends who will be with you.
- **GET AN EARLY NIGHT** Seriously, do not be tempted to party or to stay up late chatting to friends that you haven't seen for a long time. You have a BIG day tomorrow and you want to look and FEEL your best.

ENJOY your special, well organised celebration of the love you have for each other.

BEST TIP

Forget the organisation once you get to the day. You have done enough! Others will make sure it works from here and if it doesn't work in exactly the way you thought it would…roll with it!

It won't matter!

CONGRATULATIONS