

# Is On!

RING, CHECK. FIANCÉ, CHECK. NOW, GEAR UP FOR YOUR BIG DAY AWAY WITH THIS MONTH-BY-MONTH CHECKLIST. *by KATIE MORELL.*



## FOUR TO SIX MONTHS OUT

- Order invitations (see p. 22).
- Finalize florals, decor, rentals and cake (see p. 23).
- Create a wedding or honeymoon registry.

*HoneymoonWishes.com lets users create registries centered on honeymoon gifts and experiences.*

*Bonus! The site partners with travel brands such as Sandals, Royal Caribbean, Fairmont and Starwood.*

- Renew your passports, apply for visas, and look into destination-specific marriage laws and other entry requirements, like vaccinations.

## TWO TO FOUR MONTHS OUT

- Send invitations and a schedule of group events.
- Plan the welcome party and rehearsal dinner.
- Finalize menus.
- Confirm the hair-and-makeup trial and day-of appointments.
- Schedule dress fittings.

*"NEVER LET YOUR DRESS OUT OF YOUR SIGHT EN ROUTE TO YOUR WEDDING LOCATION; PAY EXTRA TO TAKE IT AS A CARRY-ON. DON'T CHANCE IT BY CHECKING IT."*

*— UCHIMA-CARNEY*



## ONE MONTH OUT

- Write vows.
- Choose welcome-bag goodies, guest favors and gifts for the wedding party.

*AVOID SHIPPING COSTS BY BUYING LOCAL ITEMS ON ARRIVAL. "WE GOT MARRIED ON A COFFEE PLANTATION, SO WE PURCHASED COFFEE AS OUR FAVOR."*

*— UCHIMA-CARNEY*

- Create a timeline with your planner.
- Finalize ceremony programs and other stationery and signs.
- Nail down the playlist with the DJ.
- Confirm honeymoon plans and travel itineraries.
- Ship items in advance to avoid holdups at customs.

## ON ARRIVAL

- Meet with your planner and officiant to review the timeline, event spaces and ceremony.
- Apply for the marriage license.
- Arrange for your gown to be steamed.
- Distribute welcome bags to your guests' rooms.
- All done — start your happily ever after in paradise!

**GET GUESTS INVOLVED FROM THE GET-GO.** "Send guests URLs and hashtags well in advance," and offer ideas, says Christina Canale-Dow, meetings and events sales manager at Thistle Aberdeen Altens hotel in Scotland. "Suggest that they Instagram their bridesmaid dress or check in on Facebook when they arrive at the airport."

**KEEP THEM POSTING.** "Leave information cards on all the ceremony chairs reminding guests about the Wi-Fi login, URLs for social-media streams and any hashtags that have been set up," says Canale-Dow. Couples should delegate social-

media duty to a friend or wedding attendant on the day of.

**POST WITH A PURPOSE.** It seems like a no-brainer, but it's just too easy to overshare. "You're so excited and have so many great photos that you'll want to share them all," says Alyssa Kiefer, global social-media strategist for W Hotels. Resist!

**THINK USER-FRIENDLY.** "Try to keep hashtags and URLs as short as possible," says Kiefer. "The shorter the Twitter handle or hashtag, the more characters you have for your own comments." — Holly V. Kapher



## TREND ALERT!

*More couples are asking guests to put off posting and be fully present at the I do's instead of viewing them through the small screen. Sound like you? Cover your bases. Add a program note, put a sign at the entrance to your ceremony and ask your officiant to make a PSA before your 'maids make their entrance.*