

# Wedding insideout



## Choosing Venues

Stay Organized

*Take the Cake*

Edible Extravagance

## Your Photos, Your Way

Affordable  
Honeymoons

2008

# Bigger Is Not Necessarily Better

by SARA McHATTON

"Budget." It's the word that you really don't want to hear when you are planning your wedding—unless, of course, you have an endless supply of money to spend, which is not the case for most brides and grooms.

The limit to how many dollars a bride and groom have available to spend on their wedding might be a combination of funds from the bride, the groom, parents and even grandparents. Many times "sticking to the budget" can be a concept that creates a lot of stress, worry and tough decision-making, as the dollar amount never seems to be quite enough to produce the style of wedding you really want.

You might think that, without more money, you cannot have the wedding of your dreams. However, in most cases, a limited budget *can* be enough to achieve your wedding goals, just by keeping one thing in mind: If you control your number of guests, you can control your budget. By incorporating this one simple concept into your wedding planning, your dreams *can* become reality.

I see it all too often as a wedding planner and coordinator: The bride's eyes are larger than the amount of money in her checkbook. This situation can lead to very poor planning, which can then lead to a not-so-enjoyable wedding day! For example, an enthusiastic bride books an expensive venue that she just "has to have" in order to fit her proposed guest count of 300. From there, she secures "the best" caterer and a menu that costs more than her car! With her budget blown to pieces, she is left with only a few thousand dollars to split between the florist, DJ, bar, invitations, wedding coordinator, etc. The bride must then settle for low-cost, low-quality vendors for the remainder of her wedding needs in order to not overspend on the overall budget amount. Had she lowered her guest list, she could have used a smaller, less expensive venue and spent a lot less money with the caterer, leaving more funds for the other services.

What can you learn from this example? You don't necessarily have to have a bigger budget to have the wedding you desire. Rather, by keeping your guest count down, a limited budget will actually go "up," helping you create your dream wedding. Simply do the math. Each time you add another person to your guest list (i.e. Great Aunt Christie's best friend from New York that you have never met) you have to be sure to calculate the cost that goes along with inviting "just one more person." Here's a quick list of items you will have to order *one* more of for each "just one more" person you choose to invite:

- Wedding ceremony program
- Wedding invitation
- Wedding invitation RSVP card
- Wedding invitation map and information insert
- Save-the-date card
- Thank you card
- Stamp/postage for all of these items to be mailed
- Ceremony guest chair
- Floral/décor for a longer ceremony aisle: Adding "just one more" guest ultimately increases the number of chairs, the number of rows and therefore the aisle length as well.

**If you control your number of guests, you can control your budget.**

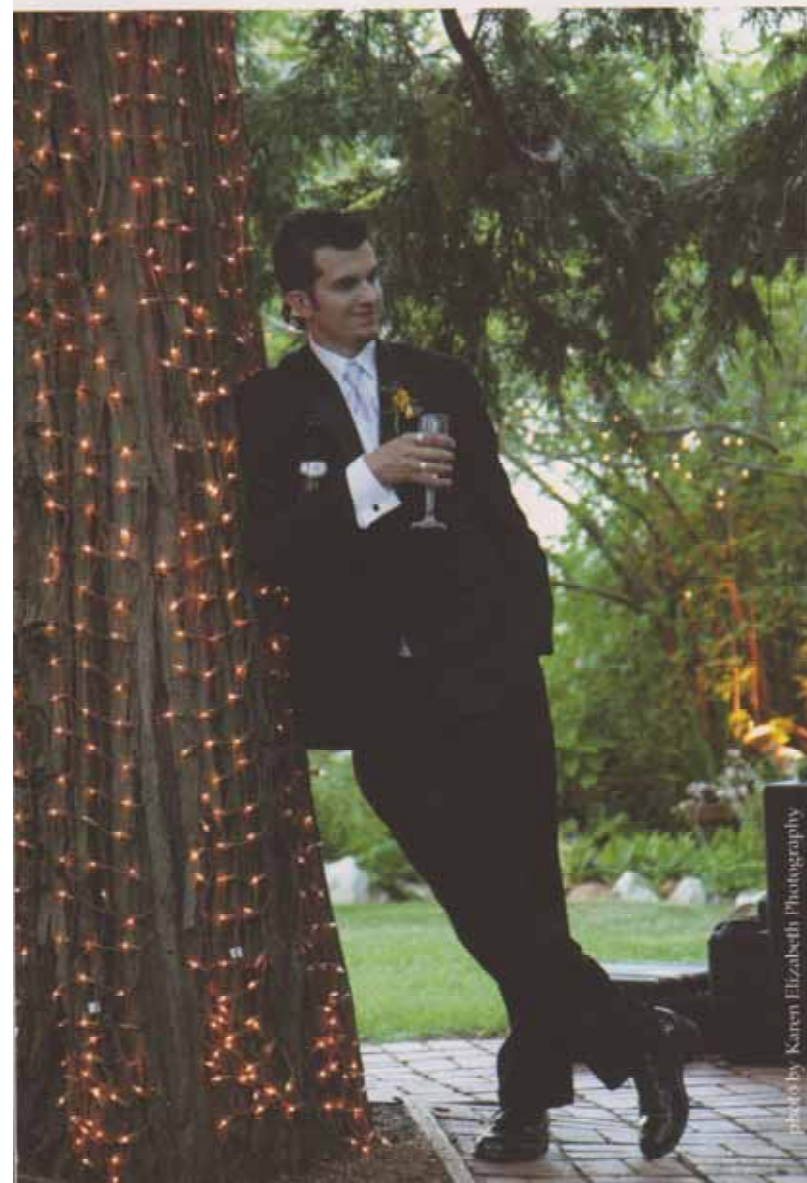


photo by Karen Elizabeth Photography



photo by Madison Grace Photography

- Increasing the aisle length might call for a larger venue for your ceremony, increasing your cost.
- Adding "just one more" guest may also put your total guests over the limit for a smaller, less expensive venue for your reception, considerably increasing your cost for a larger venue.
- With a larger venue comes a more complex audio system set up that may raise the rate of your DJ/Sound Services.
- Reception guest table
- Reception guest chair
- Guest chair cover and/or sash
- Table décor/centerpiece for that extra table.
- Guest table linens: table cloth, overlay, napkin, table runner, etc.
- Guest table dinnerware: dinner fork, salad fork, cake fork, knife, steak knife (if needed), spoon, dinner plate, bread plate, cake plate, a glass for water, wine, champagne and coffee.
- Reception dinner menu
- Reception guest seating place card or escort card
- Reception Food: hors d'oeuvres and buffet or served meal
- Reception beverages: Bar costs go up tremendously with added persons drinking alcoholic beverages.
- Wedding cake
- Larger tent or canopy to accommodate a higher guest count

Now, imagine if you have 10, 20—even 50—or more "just one more" persons on your guest list! Now imagine the cost. So, just remember: a bigger budget isn't necessarily better. Control your guest list and watch your budget increase, allowing your dreams to become your reality!

Sara McHatton is president and CEO of McHatton, Inc. WEDDING BOUND® Coordination Specialists. She can be reached at (530) 891-1039 or via the Web sites [www.eweddingbound.com](http://www.eweddingbound.com) and [www.weddingdaysoiree.com](http://www.weddingdaysoiree.com).

## AUTUMN WEDDING & EVENT FESTIVAL

"Join us for the celebration!"  
Sunday, October 19, 2008

12 PM - 4 PM

FREE Parking

\$1000s in Prizes

Staged Fashion Shows

Food & Cake Tasting



Historic Downtown Oroville

[www.AutumnWeddingandEventFestival.com](http://www.AutumnWeddingandEventFestival.com)



a Division of McHatton, Inc.

**EMMETT'S**  
SOUND PRODUCTIONS

**A Full Service  
DJ and Wedding  
Entertainment Company**

Family Owned Since 1977

**530.891.1039**

[www.emmetts-sound.com](http://www.emmetts-sound.com)