

Local planners stress importance of location

When planning a wedding, several local coordinators say location is an important factor to take into account

By Ashley Griffin
Freelance Reporter

Whether it's barefoot on a beach, holding hands in a vineyard or standing in a local chapel, it doesn't take a wedding planner to understand that location is an important aspect of a wedding.

Weddings Extraordinaire wedding planner Marlene Hockema uses outdoor settings because of the flowers, gardens, water and all-around natural beauty they provide. She plans outdoor weddings at local venues, including the Beacon House, Chateau Lorraine, the Coburg Inn, Belnap Gardens and her personal favorite, Eagle Rock Lodge.

"Outside locations are the most popular," Hockema said.

Hockema isn't the only person who prefers outdoor settings — the trend for outdoor weddings has grown such that outdoor locations are often booked up to two years in advance.

Jo Dial has been a wedding coordinator with The Wedding Solution since 1997 and agreed that outdoor weddings are the most popular.

"Outside, the feelings flow with Mother Nature," Dial said. She recommends popular outdoor locations such as Whisper-N-Oaks, a private home just north of Junction City, for spring, summer and fall weddings. Dial said she believes winter weddings are ideal for couples who want to trade vows with a holiday theme. Churches and country clubs are great indoor wedding locations, and decorations are especially easy to come by around Christmas, as most indoor locations provide poinsettias or a Christmas tree. These locations can also accommodate a large crowd, which is an important factor when choosing a location.

One of the factors Hockema uses to decide on the venue is the size of the wedding party. She also considers the season and whether the bride wants a simple or lavish wedding. Hockema and Dial agree that the bride's preferences are considered first and foremost.

"I'm basically looking for a location that fits with the bride's personality," Dial said. "It's her day, and every bride has a dream for her

perfect day."

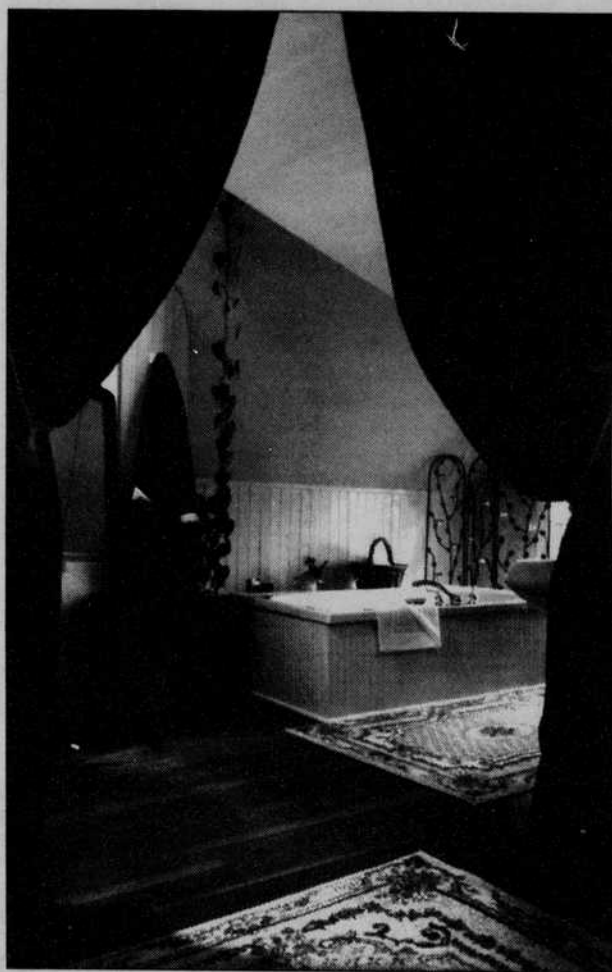
University senior Grace Fisher, 22, already had ideas for her wedding location when she entered into her engagement with high school sweetheart Josh Cramer. Because Cramer is a student in Chicago, the couple have the added challenge of coordinating the Boise wedding over a long distance.

Fisher and Cramer had to consider many aspects about the location before making their decision. Fisher commented on her need to have the ceremony at home, and the couple decided on a chapel for the wedding and a golf club for the reception — both of which needed to accommodate a large crowd. Both students are actively involved in their church and were looking for a traditional wedding atmosphere.

"We were going for an elegant and classy feeling," Fisher said.

Indoor or outdoor, sand or snow, the location can prove to be one of the most difficult and rewarding aspects of a wedding because it will send the newlyweds into married life with memories of the day they said "I do."

Ashley Griffin is a freelance reporter for the Emerald.



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