

ModernBride Chicago



THE NATURAL CHOICE

Plan the Perfect Outdoor Wedding

BY JENNIFER HOPPE

AHH, THE GREAT OUTDOORS. THERE'S A reason it's earned that title: lush lawns, grand trees towering overhead, colorful blooms that'll take your breath away.

Yet by holding your event outdoors you'll introduce new concerns to your wedding planning, including the biggest uncertainty of all: the weather. Fortunately, most problematic scenarios associated with outdoor weddings can be avoided—if you prepare for them.

"WHAT DO WE DO IF IT RAINS?" ...Take our ex-perts' advice: If your wedding will be outdoors, you always need a backup plan. "Your plan B will never be your first choice," says Casey Cooper, owner of Botanicals, a Chicago florist who handles several outdoor weddings each year. "But it has to be a choice you are comfortable with."

Once you have your backup site designated, determine how all of the details you have planned will carry over into it. Like many vendors, Cooper and her team try to ensure their clients' comfort by encouraging them to consider alternatives from the get-go. After making a sketch of the floral design for an outdoor event, Cooper tells brides to imagine how each element could translate to an indoor space. She also suggests flowers that work

well indoors and outdoors. On the big day, she has pedestals, candles and runners on hand to ease the transition.

"WE CHOSE A SEPTEMBER DATE, BUT THE TEMPERATURE HAS BEEN KNOWN TO DROP INTO THE 50s AT NIGHT AROUND THEN. HOW CAN WE BE PREPARED?" ...In the case of a last minute temperature drop you may want to take matters into your own hands. Cooper remembers a wedding where the bride's father bought 100 sweatshirts in different colors, which guests wore over their more formal attire. "He made it fun," she says.

"WE'RE GETTING MARRIED ON THE BEACH. I DIDN'T THINK ABOUT WIND, WHICH I HEAR CAN BE A REAL PROBLEM." ...Cooper encourages couples planning outdoor events to select sturdy bases, like stone garden urns.

"I'M PETRIFIED THAT I'LL OVERLOOK A SMALL BUT IMPORTANT DETAIL." ...Smells may not come to mind, but at the same time "may not be what you had in mind." Cooper says. If you're getting married on a terrace overlooking the city, is there an alley filled with garbage cans beneath you? If you can imagine something like this affecting your event look into it ahead of time. ♡