

# The Bridal Extravaganza

## *Reception/Etiquette/Tradition*

### *Receiving Line*

If you skipped the receiving line at the ceremony site, it can be held at the reception site as guests arrive during the first 30 to 60 minutes. See the receiving line formations on page 91. Beverages would be served as guests mingle, pick up their place cards, and find their tables. If dinner is to be served immediately, the bridal party proceeds to the head table.

### *Bridal Dance/Order of Dances*

Even the most informal weddings will often recognize the tradition of the bridal dance—to the first song chosen by the newlywed couple.

At more formal affairs, cocktails and hors d'oeuvres may be served following a receiving line. At this time, the bride and groom may begin the dancing with their bridal dance. The parents of the bride would join the next dance, father with the bride and mother dancing with the groom. The bride's mother may remove her daughter's veil after the bride has danced with her father. Parents of the groom would follow in the same arrangement. How to handle multiple stepparents really becomes a personal decision. The wedding party would join the dance next and then the guests. After the first dance, the bridal party is seated at the head table.

At an extremely large wedding, guests may be invited to begin dancing once they've been through the receiving line. In a less formal format, the first dance may be held immediately after dinner.

### *Toasting*

After the first dance, the bridal party is seated at the head table. The clergy or a family member then offers a blessing. The best man raises his glass in a toast to the newlyweds. Everyone except the bride should rise and join the toast. The groom then toasts his thanks to the best man, complements his bride, his parents, and his new in-laws. The bride, the parents, and other well-wishers may then rise to toast.

### *Cutting the Cake*

Shortly after dinner, before dessert is served, the couple will cut the wedding cake. At a cocktail reception, the cake is cut immediately after the receiving line concludes.

### *Bouquet and Garter*

After dessert, the single women are urged onto the dance floor for the tossing of the bouquet. If you want to preserve your bouquet, ask the florist to prepare a second one for the traditional throwing. The bouquet toss is usually followed by the gathering of single men for the tossing of the bride's garter. The bridal party can organize and encourage any reluctant singles.

### *Ice Sculpture*

Ice carvings come in every imaginable size and shape, from a simple heart design to a city skyline, complete with blinking lights. Ice can also be carved into useful serving bowls to hold punch or a raw bar. Plan ahead—ice carvers are in great demand during peak wedding season. Ice carvings require coordination with your catering manager to ensure proper storage, lighting, draining, and table support.

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## Reception Keepsakes

Make a list of special items that you want collected and delivered to your home, or another specified location. Remember the cake top, the anniversary layer of the cake, cake knife and server, toasting goblets, guest book and pen, card box, disposable cameras, a plate of cookies from the cookie table, and your place cards.

Several days before the ceremony, set aside an imprinted napkin, a favor, and a copy of the wedding program for your keepsake album.

## Reception TimeLine

Event	Time	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/> Site available for vendor arrivals	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Site available for guest arrivals	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Musicians arrive	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Gift table, guestbook and decorations set up	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Cocktail hour if planned	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Additional bridal party wedding photographs	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Wedding party arrive	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Formal introductions	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Receiving Line	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Meal	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Toasts	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> First dance	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Protocol dances	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Bride and groom mingle with guests	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Cake Cutting	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Bouquet toss	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Garter toss	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Dancing	_____	_____

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- Dedications (songs) \_\_\_\_\_
- Last Dance \_\_\_\_\_
- Grand Exit \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_