

# LET'S DO BRUNCH

*If you're more bloody Mary and brioche than beef and Bordeaux, a brunch wedding may be your perfect match.*



Upon arriving to Lindsey and Chris Leaf's wedding, guests were treated to hot beverages, traditional brunch fare, and heavenly towers of caramel rolls and doughnuts.



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THERE'S NO DENYING THE APPEAL OF BRUNCH—sipping mimosas while pulling apart a gooey cinnamon roll is the way every weekend morning should start. And as more and more brides are trading tradition for personalization, brunch weddings embody the sweet, unique flair that today's bride is looking for. Considering a brunch wedding? We delve into all the details, down to each delicious morsel.

### *You Had Me at 'Breakfast Food'*

"When Chris and I sat down to decide what we wanted most at our wedding, my immediate thought was caramel rolls. I think that's when the brunch ideas started rolling," says bride Lindsey Leaf, who married husband Chris last year on a brisk October day at the Woods Chapel in Orono. "Once we realized that we'd be in a good position to negotiate reduced rates with our vendors because our event would be early enough in the day that they could schedule another one after us, we were completely sold."

A brunch wedding also offered the classy yet comfortable vibe that they wanted—and it meant more time alone together after guests had gone home. "We liked that our reception couldn't become an hours-and-hours-long affair," says Lindsey. "Chris and I are both introverts, plus with our guests trickling out around 2 in the afternoon, we knew it'd give us a little extra time with the photographer and the venue."

Upon arrival to Lindsey and Chris's wedding, their 100 guests were offered custom coffee and hot beverages prepared by La Vita Espresso to keep them warm during the outdoor ceremony. After the couple exchanged vows, guests headed to the reception on the venue's patios, where they were treated to traditional brunch fare, including waffles, quiche and custom omelettes.

Lindsey and Chris opted for cake-shaped towers of caramel and cinnamon rolls instead of a wedding cake, and vintage Polaroid cameras for their guests' entertainment instead of dancing. After guests cleared out, Lindsey and Chris took photographs at the venue for another hour, allowing them to spend their first evening as husband and wife alone with one another.

### *Why Brides Brunch*

Gone are the days of bidding adieu to a dream venue because it's booked on your wedding date. With brunch wedding ceremonies typically starting at 10 or 11 a.m., and receptions wrapping by 4 p.m., venues can double up on bookings with enough time to spare for an evening bash.

"The sky is the limit when you're doing a brunch wedding because you're not competing with other venues," says Amy Rubins, owner of Fête Perfection in

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Minneapolis. “Plus, brunch weddings are a little more casual—they’re more about the guests, and a lot less pressure.”

Budget concerns? Brunch weddings typically are about four hours, so you’ll pay roughly half of what you’d pay for the usual eight-hour evening wedding on the venue, entertainment and catering.

“A big reason why brides are booking brunch weddings is because we don’t have food and beverage minimums on Sundays,” says Marguerite von Duerckheim, senior event coordinator at Three Sons Signature Cuisine in Minneapolis. “And people just love breakfast food.”

### *Bacon and Bloody Marys*

Whether you’ve got a sweet tooth or you lean more toward the savory side, there’s something for everyone at a brunch wedding. We tapped some local experts to learn more about the most delicious brunch wedding trends.

“Doughnut stations are the big thing—from filled to classics to favorite flavors,” says von Duerckheim. “And by design, we do a lot of customization, so if couples have particular flavor combinations, we can make those, too.”

For the sweet tooth, mini caramel rolls or French toast sticks with maple syrup are big hits, while savory hors d’oeuvres like mini pigs in a blanket, quiches or toffee-dipped bacon kabobs are other delectable options.

“You don’t need to go straight breakfast—you can still do a light chicken piccata or a salmon entrée-style piece,” says Cheron Rubenstein, senior catering sales manager at Lancer Catering in St. Paul. “Fruit pies, ice cream sundae stations or cheesecake martini bars instead of wedding cakes are also popular.”

And while an open bar is not typical at a brunch wedding, there’s still plenty of room for personalized bloody Mary bars, mimosas and champagne.

*Bring the brunch theme into your beverages. Espresso bars will give your guests a kick, as will mimosas and bloody Marys.*

“Brunch weddings by design are less outrageous, and people are more subdued,” says Rubins. “The menu changes, which what’s so fun about a brunch—you can do more creative things for your guests and the inherent nature is the food is different, so the experience is different.”

### *Sophisticated Charm*

What makes for a great brunch wedding venue? “Historical locations that are small and more intimate have more charm and appeal than a hotel ballroom,” says Rubins. “A café that’s not normally open for lunchtime, or an old-timey cabin resort in northern Minnesota would be a good fit.”

And just because brunch reads more casual than an evening wedding, there’s no reason to skimp on elegant décor or favorite floral arrangements.

“Your centerpieces might not be floral extravaganzas; they might be potted plants or succulents that guests can take home with them,” says Rubins. “Looking at costs, you could give away those centerpieces as wedding favors, or have dessert centerpieces that guests can help themselves to.”

Infuse a little fun into your reception with board games or custom crossword puzzles, and if the venue includes an outdoor space, lawn games like croquet or beanbag toss pair perfectly with a brunch wedding.

“Brunch weddings typically don’t have a traditional dance, but they might have a jazz group or music just for their first dance,” says Sarah Trotter, owner of Lasting Impressions Weddings in Minnetonka. “But you could also do a photo booth, or play lawn games, depending on the venue.”

### *Brunch Over Bash*

“The stereotype is that wedding receptions should be in the evening, but it doesn’t have to be like that,” says Joan Nilsen, owner of Ambiente Wedding & Event Planning in Minneapolis. “Brunch weddings offer so many alternatives.”

If you want your big day to stand out from the rest, a brunch wedding might be just what you’re looking for. Its sweet, unique nature will surely stick with your guests long after the day is done. “All of my clients want something a little different,” says Trotter. “How much more different can you get than a brunch wedding?” ✕



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