

The Official
Magazine
of the IADWP

ÉPICA

Issue 20
August 2025

WEDDINGS & EVENTS



**Second Weddings,
First-Class Experiences**

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Editor's Note

August 2025 | By Adrián Pavía

Director, ÉPICA | Director, IADWP Latin America & Spanish-Speaking Caribbean Chapter

Dear community of weddings and romance,

The industry is changing, and so are we.

We will soon celebrate a milestone: **the 15th edition of the LATAM Wedding Congress**, a gathering that has become the beating heart of our Latin American and Spanish-speaking community.

This year, more than ever, the Congress invites us to embrace **sustainability** as a path, not a trend. Because love—the very thing we celebrate each day—cannot continue to grow on structures that neglect our planet or our people. **The change has already begun, and it is happening now.**

Querétaro: the perfect stage for a renaissance

Querétaro is not just the host city; it is the protagonist. Its historic center, a UNESCO World Heritage site, merges with its vibrant contemporary scene to welcome us

with a unique energy. Amidst vineyards, magical towns, mountains, and colonial architecture, this destination inspires us to reimagine the future of our industry, rooted in **beauty, authenticity, and a commitment to the essential.**

It is in this land of contrasts and possibilities that we will experience days of profound learning, strategic networking, and moments of pure human connection. The Querétaro Centro de Congresos will be our epicenter, but the true magic will unfold in every talk, in every glance, in every new bond that is formed.

Speakers who inspire, transform, and define an era

This year, we have gathered a distinguished lineup of speakers. From **Fallon Carter**, a global authority on destination weddings with purpose, to **Teddy Manuel** and **Eddie Zaratsian**, masters of design with artistic vision. Talents from our own region also fill us with pride: **Lucero Álvarez, Sandra Alas, Yaniris Pérez, Claudia Saldaña, Diana Sandoval**, and many more will generously share their processes, their discoveries, and even their mistakes.

Each of them represents a **potent and necessary vision**, with distinct styles but a shared spirit: to **redefine what it means to create epic experiences in a world that cries out for sensitivity, sustainability, and meaning.**

EPICAAWARDS: A new standard of excellence

And as with every year... **our grand night** approaches. On September 24, the **Gala of the EPICA Awards** will be the crowning moment, where we celebrate the very best of us.

The **EPICA Awards** were born to **honor the extraordinary**, recognize the authentic, and project what is to come. This year, they will shine even brighter with new categories aligned with who we are and what we aspire to be: sustainable, diverse, creative, human.

Pay special attention to the Revelation of the Year category, which opens for submissions from August 10 to September 5. If you know someone (or if it's you) who has shined with their own brilliant force in a short time... this award awaits their name. **It's time to stand out.**

To reunite, to look each other in the eye, to learn, create, and embrace our shared passions as a community... there is nothing more valuable.

Thank you for walking this path with me, with us, with everyone. The romance industry would not be the same without you.

Adrián Pavía

Director, ÉPICA | Director, IADWP Latin America & Spanish-Speaking Caribbean Chapter



ÉPICA

AWARDS

A candid conversation

Kitzia and Adrián on the
Épica Awards



Adrián: Kitzia, tell me something... What are the ÉPICA AWARDS, and why did we feel it was necessary to create them now?

Kitzia: For the IADWP, recognizing the professionals in our industry is nothing new. Over the years, we have bestowed awards in honor of people who are very significant to our community, like the Noé Ariza and Ed Cotton Awards. But the ÉPICA AWARDS mark a new chapter. We are not looking to applaud ourselves or inflate egos, but to create a space for authentic visibility. We felt it was necessary to launch these awards now because the industry needs real inspiration, ethical role models, and a platform that gives visibility to both established talents and the new voices who are transforming our sector from different fronts.

Adrián: Kitzia, your turn... What makes the ÉPICA different

from other awards that already exist in the industry?

Kitzia: The difference is clear: we do not award based on popularity or convenience. The ÉPICA AWARDS are built on ethics, purpose, and a global perspective. We are not looking to celebrate ourselves, but to inspire. Our intention is not to hold a "pretty" awards ceremony, but to be a true engine of visibility for those who are positively impacting the romance tourism and events in their regions, even if they are not part of our community. The ÉPICA awards are not a mirror; they are a window.

Adrián: Kitzia, could you clarify something many people are asking: who can apply for the awards? Is it just for planners?

Kitzia: Not at all. From its foundation, the IADWP has been characterized by breaking barriers and being inclusive. The ÉPICA awards are for any person or project generating positive change, innovation, or impact in our industry. Producers, creatives, educators, planners, travel agents, destinations, specialized media, photographers, designers, experts in sustainability... everyone has a space. We want to broaden the conversation and look beyond the immediate circle.

Adrián: Kitzia, tell us, why did we choose the name ÉPICA? What does it really mean to us?

Kitzia: Because we want to recognize stories that deserve to be told. Because behind every true achievement lies an epic journey, with challenges, courage, passion, and purpose. We chose ÉPICA because we believe the industry needs to reconnect with that essence: doing things with meaning and leaving a mark. And like any epic story, it means recognizing the triumphs as well as the failures and falls behind them.

Adrián: Kitzia, if you had to present one of these awards in person... which category would excite you the most and why?

Kitzia: The "Revelation of the Year" category touches my heart. Because many times, the greatest talents are not in the spotlight, but they deserve to be seen, heard, and valued. Giving that push of visibility can change a trajectory, open doors, and for me, that has immense value.

Adrián: Kitzia, I want to know: how was the ÉPICA AWARDS Council formed, and what does it mean to have that team of judges behind the project?

Kitzia: The Council was formed carefully, seeking a diversity of voices with authority, ethics, and a commitment to the industry. People who not only understand the trends or the business of wedding,

tourism in its entirety but who also value substance, the real impact. Having this panel of judges is a guarantee of integrity and professionalism. They are the ones who ensure that the ÉPICA awards do not stray from their purpose.

Adrián: Kitzia, we know the judges' names are revealed after the awards ceremony... but tell us, what will they be looking for when evaluating a submission?

Kitzia: Authenticity, impact, vision. They will be looking for stories that inspire, that go beyond aesthetics or easy recognition. They want to see proposals with purpose, that contribute to the industry, that raise the standard. It's not about "who has the most followers," but about who is making a difference.

Adrián: Kitzia, from your perspective, what does the Revelation of the Year category represent? Why is it so important?

Kitzia: Because we all need someone to see us. Revelation of the Year is that gaze that discovers, that propels. This category represents our conviction that talent is everywhere, but often without a platform. And if ÉPICA can be that platform, then it was all worth it.

Adrián: Kitzia, a key question... what was the biggest challenge we faced in creating these awards?

Kitzia: Not falling into the same old routine. Doing it differently, with ethics, with criteria, with transparency. Staying true to our purpose without being swayed by the pressure of "what is expected" from an award. The challenge was to create something that doesn't revolve around us, but serves the global community.

Adrián: Kitzia, without revealing too much... is there an awards gala coming? Where, when? At least a small spoiler?

Kitzia: Yes! The gala will be during the LATAM Sustainable Weddings and Events Congress, in September, in Querétaro. We want it to be not just a ceremony, but an emotional, ethical, and aesthetic experience. A place where the truly epic stories come to life. And yes, it will be unforgettable.

Adrián: Kitzia, let's imagine someone is about to apply... what do they need to do? How do they participate?

Kitzia: First, they need to believe in themselves. Then, go to the website, read the categories, and submit their story, their project, or their impact. It's a simple, yet profound



process. It's not about putting on a show, but about sharing what they are doing from a place of professional soul and leaving a real lesson.

Adrián: Kitzia, and for the grand finale... what would you say to someone who is still hesitant to apply? Is it worth taking the step?

Kitzia: Yes, because this isn't just another award. It is an act of visibility. If you don't win, your story might still touch someone, inspire, transform. And if you do win, let it be for what you do, not who you know. Honestly, I don't know if we will achieve everything we've dreamed of with ÉPICA... but we are going to try with all our hearts. Because we have the platform, the community, and the intention. And that, in itself, is a lot.

When love unites what the world divides

A catholic and hindu wedding
celebrating a fusion of cultures





I visited Dani and Prako's home on a few occasions during the planning process, and I have tattooed in my mind the altar in their living room with all their gods. As Dani recounted in her vows, there was the Virgin Mary, Ganesh, a small candle, and their infinite respect for one another. We met with their parents and siblings via video call, traveled for two site inspections, had meetings until 10:30 p.m., and in the final month of the wedding, we went into a deep dive where the chat nearly exploded. As a planning firm, we decided to stop accepting new weddings to focus on what truly impassions our soul: creating unforgettable days. With them, quality was non-negotiable; the number of guests and all the challenges elevated us to a doctorate in our career, for which I will be eternally grateful to have graduated the best team.

Friday was the Catholic wedding. We began with a Caribbean air; the ceremony and cocktail hour were on the beach. But at 1:00 p.m., three hours before the start, an electrical storm hit—one of those that brought us to our knees in prayer, forced us to activate a kiosk as a Plan B, wash the setup equipment, and trust that even the groom's and his friends' rain dance would dissipate that black sky.

The wedding of Prakash and Daniela in the magical city of Cartagena, Colombia, is a clear reflection that love transcends cultures, differences, and borders; it unites what we sometimes believe is destined by birth to never converge. It was a four-day celebration that began with a serenade night, invoking only love, the surprise of Dani leaping with emotion, and those gazes full of magic that never ceased to vibrate between them. She, a Colombian born in the cool climate of Bogotá but with a Caribbean soul, deeply Catholic, a lover of Cartagena's traditional posta, coconut rice, and the sea. He, from an Indian family of the Sikh faith, with half a Chilean soul, a fan of butter chicken, pani puri, and Daniela's choices.

The first call came from Prako, who mentioned he had references of our work. In an industry where 80% of calls come from the bride, you begin to understand why the Barat (the groom's grand entrance in the Pheras ceremony) and many other details would make the planner's control-freak mindset spin, forcing you to relearn. You realize that ten years of experience are valuable, but this challenge of orchestrating Indian, Hindu, and, in their case, a traditional Catholic ceremony, would blow your mind and fill your heart.





Dani, the calmest, most confident, and secure of the two; Prako, a bit more nervous, decided to enjoy his getting ready, and that made all the difference. The sunset was spectacular—golden, orange; the photos, otherworldly; the coconuts branded with the wedding logo. The reception then offered the flavors of the Colombian coast in its buffet, where, with permission from Prako's mother, Mrs. Tara, we served red meat for those who wished, accompanied by a large salad bar for the vegetarian



guests. The night concluded with a party full of Latin rhythms, a "crazy hour" inspired by the Barranquilla carnival, and the flavor of two cultures meeting on the dance floor.

On Saturday, we opened the doors to the Mehndi and the Ghari Puja, two beautiful rites. The women adorned themselves with henna, sharing stories after the party. Indian music shone, and then Prakash arrived with a bouquet of flowers, searching for his initials in the art on Dani's hands. It was time to dance and celebrate that he could finally see her, as her beauty and the artist's strokes



himrecover. Within an hour, he was ready to get dressed, this time with his protector and guard, to take beautiful photos and then descend for another pre-Barat ceremony: his grand entrance, parade, dance, and the start of the big day. Dani, for her part, felt the role reversal and playfully complained that she wasn't getting the same attention as on Friday. But once she was ready, an absolute goddess, we were all in awe of her in red, in a 16-kilo dress, in her maximum splendor. The heat was not normal. The Barat, according to the Maharaj's calendar, had to start at 3:00 p.m. and tie their hands before 3:45 p.m. We took over the hotel lobby, and the Barat, to the rhythm of drums, dances, laughter, and jigs, dazzled even those of us who already know what groom and bride entrances are like. But with so much joy, we felt as if we were being reborn to create weddings that day.

The battle of the feet between Prakash and Daniela had no clear verdict. This contest to see who would rule the household left us with the sense that a Colombian woman dominated, but that in their perfect tie, they are pure balance. Two hours of ceremony in Hindi, with few translations into Spanish, transported us to the anticipated cultural shift. It was also accompanied by a spectacular spread of cheeses from a company we love, because if it's normal for guests to eat, stand, and drink during a Hindu ceremony, something refreshing without



had been even more radiant all day. Seven married women stitched a blanket, following Mrs. Tara's instructions, and they all took home precious souvenirs brought from India. Prako then went to pray with the Maharaj to receive all the blessings, and some friends and family accompanied him in this important moment. The fast from meat and liquor began, and then everyone rested for the grand day on Sunday, the third day of celebration.

Meanwhile, the team transformed the reception hall. The mandap for the ceremony was delayed because the rains continued, but as night fell, everything began to take the perfect shape that only a wedding can.

On Sunday, Prako awoke ill, voiceless, and with all alarms raised for his care. We called a doctor, gave him all the infusions, tea, and necessary attention to help





liquor, and even converse for a while, the rice on the fire marked the time. The families, upstairs, barefoot, marrying them; the fight for and theft of Prako's shoes by Dani's brothers; the new name Dani received, who is now Nandini to the family—it all continued to transport us, breathless and with a profound sense of wonder at what we were living.

It was the day with the most food: long tables, more sauces, the nan bread was a star, thanks to Chef Rafa and his team. The foyer smelled of spices, of India—very different, spicy, and everyone wanted to try the lamb. The food also expressed what we wanted to say: welcome to the Hindu celebration. A change of outfits into saris and kurtas, with everyone rehearsing their dances to end at the Sangeet, where the culture of dance is truly expressed at its highest level. The DJ had studiously prepared the playlists and finished with some electronic music, great tunes, and a touch of reggaeton for the Latin friends. Colombia, chi, chi, le, le, India, and many flags were waved to remind us that we are all one in love.

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Second Weddings, First-Class Experiences





There is a quiet magic to second weddings. A kind of radiance that doesn't clamor for attention, but glows from within. These are not weddings built to prove something. They are created to honor everything that has already been lived—and everything that is still possible.

And I must confess... I adore them.

There is something deeply moving about watching someone choose love again. Not blindly. Not urgently. But with eyes open, heart steady, and soul ready. Second weddings are not about rewriting the past. They are about reclaiming the present—with elegance, maturity, and joy.

And the celebrations that unfold from that space? They are, without a doubt, some of the most extraordinary I have ever had the privilege to design.

Love: Now with Intention

There's a certain clarity that surrounds second weddings. The couple is not looking for a fairytale. They are building a future—with depth, tenderness, and wisdom. That alone changes everything.

They know what matters. They're not guided by pressure or expectation. There's no "should" anymore—just what feels right.

That freedom? It allows for incredible creativity.

One bride wore deep emerald velvet and walked herself down the aisle to Nina Simone. One couple married barefoot at dawn on a volcanic rock overlooking Lake Atitlán—just the two of them and their handwritten vows. Another chose a black-tie soiree in a private villa, where every guest wore white and the night ended with cigars, espresso, and string quartet renditions of 90s rock ballads.



You don't forget weddings like that. Because they weren't trying to be perfect. They were trying to be true.

Luxury, Redefined

Second weddings redefine what it means to celebrate with style. There is a delicious confidence that flows through these events. Quiet luxury often finds its most authentic voice here.

No gimmicks. No overdone themes. Just details with soul: a signature fragrance inspired by the couple's favorite hotel, heirloom flatware passed down from a grandmother, poetry pressed into napkins, silk-bound menus, vintage champagne served at dusk.

Everything has a reason. Nothing is there just to impress.

And let me say this—when a couple knows themselves this well, when they no longer perform for anyone else—the result is breathtaking. Not loud. Not large. But rich. Lived. Undeniably them..

The beauty of real life

Second weddings are often layered. There are children. Former spouses. Families coming together in new constellations. And yet, there is a beauty in that complexity that can't be found in traditional scripts.

I've seen teenage sons hold their mother's veil. Daughters give speeches that silenced entire rooms. I've watched ex-partners offer genuine blessings. I've seen guests cry—not just tears of joy, but of understanding, of full-circle emotion.



Because these weddings don't erase the past. They embrace it. And they say: Yes... and now, again.

Let me tell you about María and Jean.

They met in Antigua, Guatemala. She was walking with a friend; he was having coffee alone across from the Central Park. A smile turned into conversation, and the conversation never ended. Both had lost their spouses. Both believed love had quietly exited their lives.

And yet there they were. Beginning again.

So they chose to marry in Antigua—not out of nostalgia, but out of gratitude. They wanted to seal this new chapter in the same place where it began.

It was a garden wedding, intimate. Elegant. Surrounded by adult children, grandchildren, and their closest friends. She wore ivory silk trousers and a hand-embroidered tunic. He wore a cream linen suit, with a vintage brooch once belonging to his late wife pinned to his lapel.



They entered together, hand in hand, as a violinist played La Vie en Rose.

After the ceremony, a dinner under the stars. Seventeen guests. A handwritten menu. Soft opera in the background. And a short but eternal toast: "Thank you for witnessing not our beginning—but our continuation."

To this day, it remains one of the most moving weddings I've ever designed.

Because true love isn't just for the young. It's for the brave. For those who still believe in the extraordinary—even after everything.

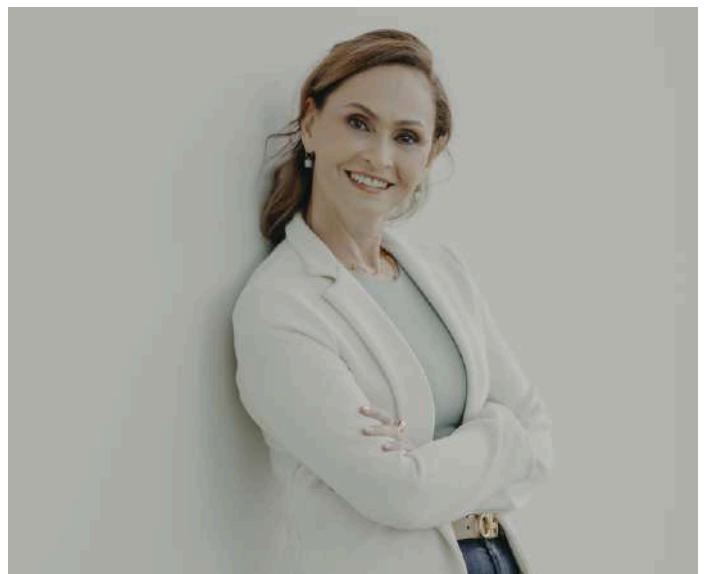
Planning with Soul

As a planner, I don't just admire second weddings—I treasure them.

They invite me to slow down. To listen more. To design not for spectacle, but for intimacy. Not for social media, but for the soul.

It is an honor to create space for this kind of love. A love that is quieter... and deeper. Less scripted... and more sacred.

That's why I say: a second wedding is not a second chance.



It is a first-class experience—crafted with elegance, courage, and a kind of grace that only comes from having lived.

It is proof that love—real, unguarded, luminous—can return.

Not in spite of the past, but because of it.

And when it does... I'll be there, in awe. Designing not just another event, but a celebration of everything that still blooms when the heart remains open.

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Destination weddings in the Atacama Desert

Romance, magic, and nature
beneath the stars



In the heart of the world's most arid desert, where the sky is an infinite blanket of stars and the earth narrates millennial histories, San Pedro de Atacama has become one of the most exclusive and fascinating destination wedding locations.

Far from traditional settings, this corner of northern Chile offers an unparalleled experience for those seeking an intimate celebration, charged with symbolism and surrounded by landscapes that seem taken from another planet. Here, love and nature merge in Andean ceremonies at dawn, intimate sacred rites led by a celebrant with ancestral wisdom.

Weddings in the Desert: The Magic of the Unexplored

More and more couples are choosing San Pedro de Atacama to seal their commitment, whether with an elopement, an intimate wedding, or a petit wedding designed for a select group of guests. The mystical atmosphere of the desert and its ancestral energy transform every ceremony into a unique experience.

Perfect Settings for an Unforgettable "I Do"

Valley of the Moon: A surreal landscape where dunes and rock formations create a breathtaking backdrop.



Salar de Atacama: An ethereal setting where the immensity of the desert meets the sky reflected in the water.

Altiplanic Lagoons: At over 4,000 meters above sea level, these turquoise water mirrors offer an intimate and mystical environment, ideal for a ceremony of connection with nature.

Under the starry sky: The Atacama Desert boasts one of the clearest skies on the planet.

Among vineyards in the desert: For those seeking a more sophisticated touch, the Atacama vineyards offer a







combination of exclusivity and authenticity.

Wedding Tourism: Experiences that complement the celebration

A destination wedding in the desert is not just a special moment, but a complete experience that the couple and their guests can enjoy in the days before and after the main event.

Romance Under the Stars

Astronomical tours are one of the most magical activities in San Pedro de Atacama. Imagine a private evening with high-end telescopes, where an astronomer guides you through the universe while you share a glass of wine under the purest sky in the world.

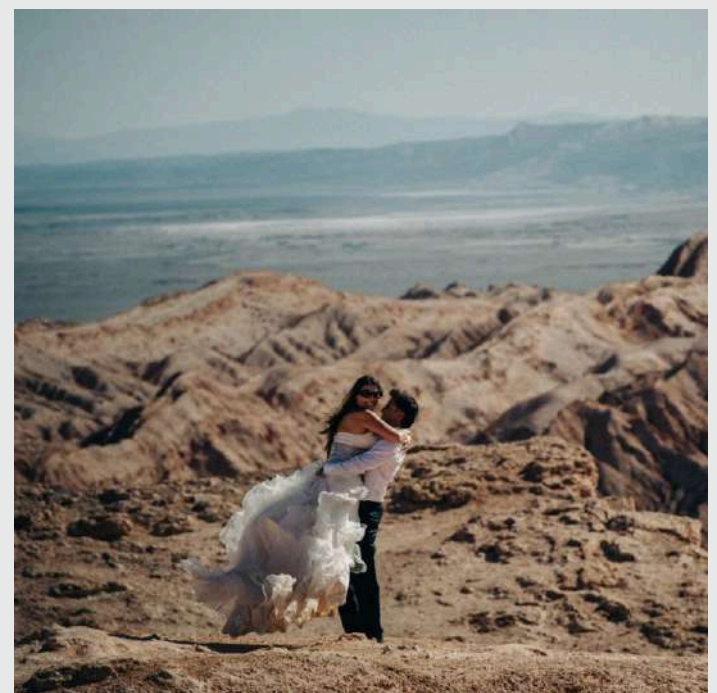
Hidden Lagoons of Baltinache: A Paradise for Two



These saltwater lagoons allow you to float effortlessly, creating a sense of weightlessness that symbolizes the lightness of shared love. Their intense blue waters contrast with the white of the salt flats, offering a perfect landscape for a "trash the dress" or a post-wedding photo session.

Relaxation at the Puritama Hot Springs

After the wedding, the Puritama Hot Springs are the ideal refuge for newlyweds. Thermal waters with medicinal properties, surrounded by vegetation and with natural terraced pools, create an oasis of tranquility in the middle of the desert.





Sunrise at the El Tatio Geysers

For adventurous couples, a sunrise at the El Tatio Geysers is a breathtaking experience. Watching the sun emerge as steam rises from the earth is a spectacle that symbolizes the beginning of a new chapter in life.

High-Altitude Gastronomy

San Pedro de Atacama surprises not only with its geography but also with its cuisine. Menus for destination weddings here can include local ingredients like quinoa, llama meat, rica-rica, and high-plain fruits, creating a sophisticated and authentic culinary experience.

San Pedro de Atacama: The Perfect Destination for a Dream Wedding

Planning a wedding in the Atacama Desert means going beyond the conventional. It's about choosing a place where nature becomes the main character, where every detail takes on a special meaning, and where memories are built in an environment of indescribable beauty.

For wedding and event tourism professionals, this destination represents an exceptional opportunity to create exclusive celebrations, with experiences



designed to measure for couples seeking something unique and memorable.

If you dream of an "I do" in the world's most stunning setting, we are here to make it a reality. Let's make your desert wedding an unforgettable story.

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The styling of your civil wedding

Elegance in intimacy



Civil weddings, with their discreet charm and personal atmosphere, offer a wonderful opportunity to reflect the couple's essence without the formalities of traditional ceremonies. Far from the grandiosity and ostentation of religious and formal events, a civil wedding leans towards a more relaxed and authentic style, allowing every detail, from the decor to the last bite, to speak of the couple's personality. The key is to create a cohesive experience that, while intimate, does not skimp on beauty and sophistication.

Creating the Perfect Atmosphere: Decor and Ambiance

The 360-degree styling of a civil wedding begins with the decor and ambiance. Think of spaces that convey warmth and closeness. Instead of ostentatious floral arrangements, opt for more minimalist and delicate centerpieces, perhaps with seasonal flowers or green foliage that adds freshness. Lighting plays a crucial role: garlands of warm lights, lanterns, or even strategically placed candles can transform any space into a romantic refuge. Consider incorporating personal



elements, like photographs of the couple or memories that evoke their history. Including photos of the bride and groom with their childhood friends and cousins could add a unique and emotive touch. The furniture can also be key; simpler chairs and tables, even in a vintage or rustic style, can perfectly complement the desired informality. These types of weddings are well-suited for outdoor locations—mountains, the beach, and why not? A Glamping site! Glamping is on-trend and offers a full experience in romance tourism, gatherings, and weddings with the unique charm of this type of accommodation, as the concept bridges the gap between the luxurious and camping in all its elements.





Attire, Table, and Palate: Harmony in Every Detail

The dress code for a civil wedding is usually more flexible. For the bride, a short dress, a two-piece set, a jumpsuit, or even a pantsuit are fantastic options that combine elegance and comfort. The groom can opt for a linen suit, a vest with a collared shirt without a tie, or even dress pants with a more casual jacket. The important thing is that the attire reflects the overall tone of the celebration. The table linens should follow this line of elegant simplicity; natural fabrics like linen or cotton in neutral or pastel tones are ideal, perhaps with a touch of color in the napkins or dinnerware.

When it comes to food, the intimate atmosphere allows for more interactive and personalized options. Think of finger-food style stations, cheese and charcuterie boards—a tasting of wines, rums, and cigars with gastronomic pairings featuring local color and flavor would fit perfectly here. A more select menu served family-style, which encourages conversation and shared enjoyment, also works well. The dessert can be more creative and less traditional, like a varied dessert bar or a smaller, more minimalist wedding cake.

Shared Adventures: Destination Weddings and Personal Themes

For those couples who love to explore and live new experiences together, a destination civil wedding can be the perfect choice. Imagine exchanging vows on a paradise beach at sunset, surrounded by your closest loved ones, or in a picturesque villa in Tuscany, enjoying the local gastronomy and idyllic landscape. The destination itself becomes the backdrop and can inspire the entire aesthetic of the wedding, from the colors to the decorative details and the menu. The intimacy of a civil wedding lends itself wonderfully to these smaller, more focused celebrations centered on a shared experience.



Another way to personalize a civil wedding is to base it on the experiences and passions that unite the couple. If they are nature and adventure lovers, a wedding in a glamping setting could be an original and enchanting option. Luxury tents decorated with a bohemian touch—glamping is on-trend and a full experience in romance tourism, gatherings, and weddings with the unique charm of this type of accommodation, as the concept bridges the gap between the luxurious and camping in all its elements.

An outdoor ceremony under the stars and activities like bonfires or hiking would create a unique and memorable atmosphere.

For wine enthusiasts, a wedding in a vineyard offers a romantic and sophisticated setting. The ceremony could take place among the vines, followed by a wine tasting and a food-pairing dinner with local products. The wine theme could extend to the decor, with centerpieces of grapes and corks, and gifts for the guests related to enology.

Capturing the Essence: Photographic Tone and Overall Cohesion

Finally, the photographic tone should be a faithful reflection of the atmosphere you've created.



Look for a photographer who captures the spontaneity and authenticity of the moments, prioritizing emotions and interaction among the guests. A more documentary or natural style of photography will perfectly suit the informality of a civil wedding, creating an album of genuine, life-filled memories. In summary, the success of a civil wedding's styling lies in the coherence of every element. By aligning the decor, attire, gastronomy, photography, and chosen theme with the vision of an intimate and personal celebration, the couple can ensure a truly memorable and authentic experience, where every detail whispers their love story.

Did you enjoy this article? Here are my coordinates for you to reach out. If you have a particular topic you'd like us to discuss, just let me know. Until the next edition.

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Panamá for two

Romance between mountains
and sea



Panama, with its vibrant jungles, mist-shrouded mountains, and sun-drenched beaches, emerges as an unexpected and perfect setting for love stories. Beyond the canal and the capital's skyscrapers, this small country holds magical corners where romance blossoms naturally. Intimate getaways, shared adventures, and landscapes that seem lifted from a postcard are just the beginning.

Boquete: Love in the Highlands

In the heart of the Chiriquí highlands, Boquete presents itself as a refuge for couples seeking to escape the noise and reconnect with nature and each other. This charming mountain town, known for its cool climate, artisanal coffee, and cloud-enveloped trails, invites you to walk without hurry, to toast with wine by the fire, and to awaken among hummingbirds and wildflowers.

Just ten minutes from the town center, a castle rises among gardens and coffee plantations: Bambuda Castle. This boutique hotel, unique in its style in the entire region, combines the architectural fantasy of a real castle with the soul of Boquete. With panoramic views of the Barú Volcano and meticulously designed spaces, it is a place where reality feels like a dream..



Romance: a private garden with views of the volcano, a perfect pool for a sunset toast, and a restaurant with rustic architecture, from which to enjoy some of the best sunsets in Panama. Here, every corner tells a story.

The experience extends to the rooms: private suites within the castle, family spaces for group getaways, or the unforgettable Hobbit rooms, inspired by fantasy homes. Sleeping beneath their green roofs, with the volcano in the background and the sound of the forest as a soundtrack, is an experience worthy of a magical honeymoon.

Outside the hotel, Boquete offers unique experiences: hikes to the Barú Volcano to see the sunrise from the country's highest point, visits to coffee plantations with tastings, dips in hidden hot springs, or canopy tours among ancient trees. Every plan is a shared adventure.

Santa Catalina: Love by the Sea

The Pacific coast of Veraguas offers a completely different, yet equally irresistible proposal. Santa Catalina is the best-kept secret of sea lovers.



With its relaxed vibe, consistent waves, and connection to Coiba National Park, this coastal destination is ideal for couples who want to trade stress for sand, sea, and time together.

Facing the ocean, surrounded by palm trees and a salty breeze, Bambuda Santa Catalina is a sanctuary of tranquility and tropical design. Here, days pass without a clock: between golden sunrises, barefoot walks, and sunsets that paint the ocean orange. Every space, from its gardens to its poolside restaurant, invites you to celebrate the present.

The Bambuda Santa Catalina Peninsula, an open-air corner with an infinite view of the Pacific, is ideal for dinners under the stars or simply for sitting in silence and watching the horizon. The green areas facing the sea and the proximity to the ocean make the hotel feel like a world of its own, perfect for disconnecting and reconnecting.

With the capacity to host over 100 people, Bambuda Santa Catalina is ideal for intimate getaways or celebrations with friends. Its Ocean View Premium and Flagship rooms, the most exclusive in the hotel, offer privacy, luxury, and views that enchant at first sight. Santa Catalina also invites adventure. From surf lessons on tropical beaches to diving and snorkeling in Coiba, considered one of the world's best marine destinations, there are activities for all tastes. You can also rent a kayak, explore nearby islands, or simply walk along the beach at dusk.



Boquete and Santa Catalina are two opposite worlds: one among mountains, the other facing the sea. But both share the same essence: offering authentic, profound, and memorable experiences. Here, luxury is not in the ostentatious, but in the details: the sound of birds at dawn, the smell of freshly brewed coffee, a walk without hurry, a conversation without interruptions.

You don't need to wait for an anniversary or a honeymoon. Sometimes, the best trips as a couple are those taken for no reason, just because. Because love also deserves a vacation. Because routine is broken with an escape. And because every love story deserves a setting as unique as itself.

Whether between castles and volcanoes or between waves and stars, Panama is a country that invites you to fall in love, again and again. Perhaps the real destination is not a place, but a shared experience. And at Bambuda, those experiences are lived intensely.

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Children at weddings

The definitive guide
for couples and professionals



Deciding whether or not to include children at a wedding is one of the biggest questions couples face when they begin the planning process. It is a personal decision for each couple, which is why I am sharing this blog with some experiences to break down a topic that, although adorable, often generates many questions and debates: the presence of children at weddings. My goal is to offer a clear and honest perspective, based on experience, so that both couples and professionals can make the best decisions for an unforgettable day.

Weddings and Children? A Dynamic That Demands Planning and Realism

Let's be honest from the start: weddings, by their nature, are not typically events designed with children in mind. I have witnessed countless ceremonies and receptions, and the reality is that little ones, as adorable as they are, find it difficult to comprehend the solemnity of an "I do" or the rhythm of an adult reception. For them, it is an environment that can become boring very quickly. There are no children's games, no stories, no freedom to run around endlessly. This lack of appropriate stimulation is what often leads them to become restless, bored, and sometimes, to disrupt key moments of the event. This is not a "children's party," and it is crucial that both parents and organizers are clear about this.



Another vital point to consider is the parents' expectations. If their idea is to "party," dance, and socialize without worries, believe me, it will be almost impossible to supervise their children at the same time. Attention gets divided, and the little ones can be left unattended, which can lead to uncomfortable situations for everyone, or even a minor accident. The responsibility for the care and behavior of the children always, and without exception, falls on their parents. This is something that we as professionals must communicate clearly and that guests must assume.

If the "Yes" is for the Little Ones: Invest in Their Experience

Now, if after deep reflection, you decide that you want children to be part of your celebration, excellent! But it is fundamental that you understand this implies a responsibility and an investment on the part of the hosts. If you want the little ones to enjoy themselves and not just "be present," it is essential to allocate a part of the wedding budget to create an experience for them.





This means considering a dedicated section for children's activities and entertainment. Think about options like:

- **Nanny or Professional Caregiver Station:** Trained staff to supervise the children throughout the event, allowing parents to enjoy themselves with peace of mind.
- **Dedicated Play Spaces:** A safe and defined area with age-appropriate activities, such as building blocks, books, costumes, or even small art stations.
- **Guided Crafts:** Tables with materials for them to explore their creativity under the supervision of an entertainer.
- **Special Kids' Menu:** Food options that they will like, are easy to eat, and presented in an attractive way.

Children, just like adults, need to feel attended to and entertained to genuinely enjoy themselves. If they are going to be part of it, do it this way, and the children will be happy to be part of it too. If the budget is tight and these options are not viable, then the most sensible decision is not to consider the presence of children. It is preferable for them to be comfortable and safe at home than to have a bad time at an event not designed for them.

Golden Rules for Guests (With or Without Children)

And for our dear guests, some rules of courtesy that apply to any wedding, ensuring a harmonious celebration for all:



Respect the "No Children" Rule: If the invitation clearly states "No children," please understand that **it means NO children**. The couple has made a thoughtful decision, and it is crucial to respect it. Do not try to negotiate or show up with your children expecting an exception.

. Don't Take It Personally: The decision not to include children at the wedding is the couple's and **is not personal**. It is not an attack on your children or a slight towards you. It is simply a choice about the type of atmosphere they desire for their special day. The couple was kind enough to want you there; value that and respect their decision.

. If You Attend with Your Children, Be Responsible: If the wedding is child-friendly and you decide to bring yours, **the absolute responsibility for their care, safety, and behavior rests 100% with you as the parent or guardian**. It is not the job of the couple, the wedding planning team, or the other guests. From the moment you arrive, and especially after the first toast, remember that your obligation is to supervise them actively. Their well-being and respect for the event's proceedings are your number one priority.

Mutual Respect and Understanding

We understand that this topic can generate diverse opinions. Some couples dream of seeing little flower girls and ring bearers walk down the aisle, creating endearing moments, while others prefer an



exclusively adult, intimate, and focused celebration of the couple. Both positions are valid, respectable, and, above all, **the couple's decision**.

As industry professionals, our job is to guide couples to make informed decisions that reflect their desires and needs. And for the guests, empathy, understanding, and respect for those decisions are essential to ensure that everyone enjoys a celebration filled with love and joy

At the end of the day, the most important thing is that the couple feels happy and comfortable with their decisions, and that all those present, whether adults enjoying a quiet evening or little ones entertained in their own space, contribute to a truly magical day.

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Heaven Sent Wedding Consultants & Travel Agency

25 years of curating unforgettable moments



Experience Design: From the Altar to the After Party

At Heaven Sent Wedding Consultants & Travel Agency, we believe that the best events are not just attended... they are felt. That is the power of experience design. It's not just about coordinating flowers, food, and entertainment. It's about choreographing moments that leave a lasting impression. From the bride's entrance to the last midnight toast, every detail should tell the couple's story.

Some of our most memorable ceremony moments include a custom-designed rose petal aisle in Mexico, with floral patterns that mimicked the bride's bouquet, and a lantern send-off in Jamaica that left every guest speechless. These are not ideas taken from Pinterest; they are personalized memories, conceived and created just for that couple.

We design weddings as true emotional journeys. And the foundation of that journey is always a calm, confident, and cared-for bride. That's why one of Christina's firmest promises is: **"As long as I'm in charge, no bride will be stressed."**

Our clients often tell us they feel they can breathe a sigh of relief the moment we take the reins.



And it's no coincidence: it's applied psychology. We create proactive timelines, mediate between vendors, and manage the logistics behind the scenes, so the couple can stay focused on enjoying themselves.

Market Masters Guidance That Saves Time, Money, and Sanity

After the vows and the cake, what couples remember most is how they felt. But before all that magic happens, there are budgets, planning, and many decisions—and that's where our experience shines.

We pride ourselves on being Masters of the Market. We accompany couples throughout the entire process, especially during the most critical stages where making smart decisions can lead to significant savings. From negotiating complex contracts with vendors to designing realistic timelines that don't exhaust the couple, we are known for bringing clarity to chaos.

A myth we love to bust:

The venue coordinator is NOT your wedding planner.

The coordinator works for the venue. We work for you. That difference is everything. We have



intervened in dozens of weddings where couples thought they had planning support, only to discover that key details like transportation, signage, or ceremony timing had been completely overlooked.

As a dedicated planner, Christina Maddox ensures that nothing is left to chance. She has accompanied couples on site visits, designed personalized floor plans, created menus for rehearsal dinners, and even found last-minute tailors. We are natural problem-solvers.

86 Destination Weddings... and Counting

Planning a wedding is already a challenge. Doing it across



time zones, languages, and international customs requires an experienced team. To date, Christina Maddox and Heaven Sent Wedding Consultants & Travel Agency have successfully organized 86 destination weddings in Mexico, the Caribbean, Hawaii, Europe, and beyond.

Our approach is based on cultural respect, logistical precision, and relationship building. We don't just "book the trip"; we ensure that the couple and their guests feel supported every step of the way. From local translators and ready documentation for customs to airport transfers and welcome bags, every detail is carefully



carefully thought out.

Some of our favorite success stories:

- A barefoot ceremony on the sand in Montego Bay, with a personalized playlist mixed live by a local Jamaican DJ.
- A celebration among vineyards illuminated by candles in the USA, where traditions from Italy, Liberia, and American hospitality were fused.
- A wedding in Mexico where we organized a sunset photo session among ancient ruins, followed by a private blessing in a cenote.

No matter where in the world our clients say "I do," our mission remains the same: to offer a seamless, joyful, and elevated experience from the first contact to the final farewell.



Why Heaven Sent Wedding Consultants & Travel Agency?

Because our name reflects our mission. God called us to do this work. We bring peace where there is pressure, joy where there is chaos, and elegance to every environment we touch. Additionally, we pray for every couple because we know that the closer they get to the big day, the more nerves can appear.

25 years later, we are still just beginning

Whether you are planning a luxury destination wedding, a romantic honeymoon, a vacation, or you simply want to breathe easy knowing that someone truly has your back... we are here.

With blessings,

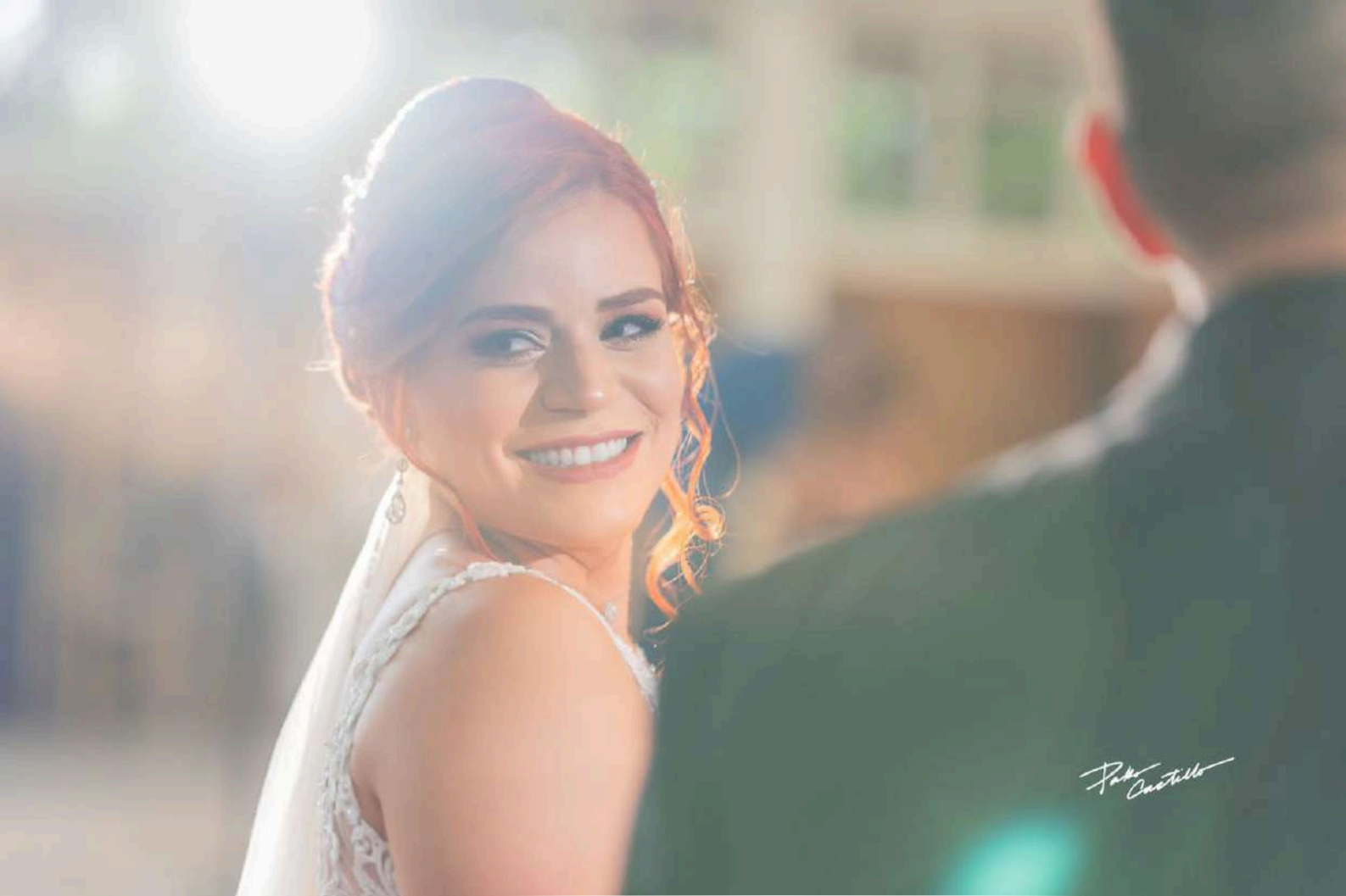
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A woman with dark hair is lying on a massage table, wearing a white spa cap. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is softly blurred, showing a white towel and a patterned chair. The overall atmosphere is calm and relaxing.

Beauty with consciousness

Myths and truths about
aesthetic treatments
before the big "I do"



"Looking spectacular is important, but feeling confident and authentic is what truly shines at the altar."

The wedding day is a memory that will be etched in photos, videos, and in the hearts of each couple.

Amid the excitement and preparations, many brides want to look radiant and turn to aesthetic treatments that promise quick results.

However, with so many offers and recommendations, it is easy to fall for myths that generate stress or unexpected outcomes.

Common myths vs. essential truths

Myth 1: Getting a facial the day before will make my skin look its best.

Truth: Dermatologists and aestheticians recommend having deep-cleansing facials weeks in advance. Doing them at the last minute can cause irritation or breakouts.

Myth 2: Fillers and rejuvenation treatments look natural immediately.

Truth: These procedures require 3 to 6 months to show definitive results. Planning them with time allows the skin to recover and look radiant without surprises.

Myth 3: An express or spray tan the day before will make me look radiant.

Truth: If not tested beforehand, it can leave stains or an uneven tone. It is better to do it in advance or achieve luminosity with makeup and progressive skin care.





9 months before the wedding

- Maintain the routine without changing products.
- Explore options like light peels, gentle lasers, microneedling, or dermapen.
- Consult about body contouring or hair loss treatments if applicable.

6 months before the wedding

- This is the last window to try new treatments.
- Adjust your diet with antioxidants and green vegetables.
- Consider supplements under medical supervision.



Strategic skincare plan for brides

1 year before the wedding

- Schedule an appointment with a dermatologist for a personalized plan.
- Start a daily routine of cleansing, moisturizing, and sun protection.
- Introduce active ingredients like vitamin C, retinol, and AHAs (alpha-hydroxy acids) under professional supervision. These include glycolic acid (from sugarcane), lactic acid (from milk), and citric acid (from fruits). Take care of your neck and décolleté if they will be exposed.

3 months before the wedding

- Schedule professional facials to tone and hydrate.
- Avoid new exfoliants that could cause reactions.
- Use calming masks according to your skin type.

1 month before the wedding

- Get any touch-ups or Botox to allow them to settle.
- Reduce alcohol and salt to prevent bloating.
- Avoid direct sun and opt for a tried-and-true organic spray tan.

Ongoing care: a monthly facial as a ritual of conscious beauty

Beyond the event, monthly facials are key to balanced, luminous, and healthy skin. By



integrating this habit, you not only improve your external appearance but also create a space to reconnect with yourself, a moment to pause, breathe, and care for your overall well-being.

The secret to looking spectacular is to care for your body and mind with consciousness. Sleeping well, staying hydrated, maintaining an exercise routine, and dedicating moments to self-care will make your inner light the protagonist.

As a wedding planner, my proposal is to accompany you holistically so that every decision reflects well-being and authenticity.

On your big day, your natural beauty will be what steals every glance.

Article reference: <https://www.brides.com/>

Photographs courtesy of **Pako Castillo y Uxen Studio**

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The true
strength
of belonging
to the IADWP



Being part of the IADWP is not just about having a membership; it's about belonging to an international network that boosts destinations, connects talent, and transforms romance tourism. In Ecuador, this force takes shape in a team of seven passionate professionals who lead their provinces as Regional Chapter Leaders, under the guidance of National Chapter Leader, Lissner Ortiz. Together, they not only believe in love as the industry's driving force but also in the immense potential that Ecuador holds as an authentic, diverse, and magical destination.

From the highlands to the coast, every scouting trip the Ecuador Chapter undertakes is an act of commitment and vision. Through these projects, these leaders highlight the virtues of each province and, with a strategic eye, identify areas for improvement to further enhance the experience for future couples who choose our country. Being an active part of this association allows for the creation of real impact: international visibility, professional growth, strengthening the value chain, and benefits that transcend the nuptial sector, touching the local and national economy.

This journey began with two visits filled with emotion, professionalism, and purpose. The first, to the province of Guayas, led by Regional Chapter Kika Uribe, opened the door to a deep recognition of the potential of Guayaquil and its surroundings as a cosmopolitan urban epicenter

for destination weddings. Then, in Santa Elena, guided by Angie Rosales, seaside scenarios were explored, imbued with coastal identity, human warmth, and a natural connection to romance. These two routes marked the beginning of a series of visits aimed at showing the world that Ecuador is ready to charm and at forging direct connections with authorities such as the Prefecture of Guayas, the Mayor's Office of Salinas, hotel chains like Hotel Colón Salinas, Wyndham, Oro Verde, Hilton Colón, Hotel del Parque, and Rio Guayas, as well as local venues, restaurants, and suppliers.



Guayaquil, a vibrant jewel for destination weddings in Ecuador

This July, the city of Guayaquil was the setting for an exciting scouting tour organized by IADWP Ecuador, where I had the honor of representing the Guayas region as its director. Alongside other regional directors of our association from different provinces of the country, we explored the richness, versatility, and hospitality that this coastal city has to offer as a wedding destination.

Guayaquil is a city that surprises. Modern, full of life, and with a unique cultural identity, it masterfully fuses the cosmopolitan with the traditional. On our tour, we visited luxury hotels, historic haciendas, open-air spaces facing the river, and rooftops with spectacular views. Each location allowed us to imagine how it could be transformed into the perfect setting to celebrate love, adapting to different styles and budgets.

But beyond the spaces, what captivated us most was the warmth of its people and the local talent. From chefs who reinterpret Ecuadorian gastronomy with avant-garde proposals, to decorators, musicians, and florists who turn any event into an unforgettable experience, Guayaquil has everything to make national and international couples fall in love.



This scouting was also a powerful opportunity to strengthen the bonds between the leaders of IADWP Ecuador. Our joint presence reflects the commitment and strength of a network that works together to position Ecuador as a competitive and diverse destination in the global destination wedding market. As directors, we share experiences, strategies, and vision, driving not only the development of the sector but also the growth of our regions.

Guayaquil, with its unique energy, its constantly evolving infrastructure, and its air accessibility, deserves to be in the conversation of the great wedding destinations in Latin America. And from IADWP Ecuador, we will continue to work with passion to show the world everything this corner of the Pacific has to offer.

Salinas, Romance by the sea and an eternal postcard

Located in the province of Santa Elena, Salinas is one of the most exclusive and charming destinations on the Ecuadorian coast. In recent years, it has positioned itself as an ideal place to celebrate dream weddings by the sea. With its warm climate year-round, white sand beaches, oceanfront hotels, and picture-perfect sunsets, Salinas has it all to turn a wedding into a magical experience.





For couples who dream of a boho-chic, romantic, or elegant and intimate wedding, this coastal corner offers versatile settings that adapt to multiple styles. From ceremonies on the beach with arches of natural foliage and tropical flowers, to open-air receptions under garlands of lights and the sound of the sea in the background, each celebration can be designed with a unique and deeply personalized charm.

Its tourism infrastructure also makes Salinas a strategic option. Hotels like Barceló, Blue Bay, or private houses with sea views allow the experience to be centralized in one place, providing comfort, privacy, and exclusivity. It also has a network of specialized local vendors—florists, caterers, live music—that facilitate logistics for both local couples and those who live outside the country.

Just two and a half hours from Guayaquil and with excellent road connectivity, Salinas is accessible and convenient for national and international guests. And beyond the big day, this destination offers activities that extend the experience: yacht trips, water sports, visits to La Chocolatera, or a romantic dinner with an ocean view.



Marrying in Salinas is not just about choosing a beautiful landscape: it is about creating lasting memories in an environment that fuses the natural, the exclusive, and the deeply emotional. It is an invitation to live a different kind of wedding, where the sea, love, and celebration meet on the same horizon.

"As the Regional Chapter of IADWP in Santa Elena, I am filled with emotion and pride to show the world the beauty of my province. Salinas is more than a coastal destination; it is a place where love is breathed in every corner, and where weddings can become unforgettable experiences by the sea. Accompanying this tour has confirmed that we have everything to shine as a romance destination with identity, charm, and a lot of soul."

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IIADWP Ecuador Chapter

The fifth sense

Designing weddings through scent





There are loves that begin with a glance. Others with a song. Some with the taste of a late-night dinner, the texture of a handwritten note, the sound of shared laughter in a place far from home. But there is one sense—often forgotten, rarely named—that has the quiet power to bring it all back in an instant: **scent**.

In the realm of luxury weddings, where detail becomes language and beauty becomes memory, scent is emerging as the most intimate form of storytelling. Not loud. Not visual. But **emotive, invisible, and eternally evocative**.

Because the truth is: when we forget the speeches, the menu, even the florals—we never forget how something made us feel. And scent... scent carries feeling.

A Whisper in the Air

For years, we've designed weddings with the eyes in mind. Carefully curating color palettes, tablescapes, lighting, fabrics. But now, the new language of luxury is multisensory. And among all senses, none evokes the heart as powerfully and subtly as scent.

Couples are now working with perfumers, herbalists, and ambient fragrance artisans to design



olfactory experiences that are profoundly personal. Fragrances that don't simply "smell beautiful," but mean something. That belong to them.

A scent that captures the feeling of their first embrace, or the garden where they spent an afternoon in Seville, or the perfume she wore the day they met.

These are not just aesthetic choices. These are emotional compositions.

When Amalfi Came to Guatemala

One of the most intimate weddings I've had the joy to design took place not on a distant coast, but in the heart of Guatemala City. A small celebration. Warm, elegant, full of quiet joy. **An afternoon wedding, just as it had to be**—bathed in natural light, honest and fresh.

But the emotional compass of the celebration? It pointed unmistakably toward **Amalfi**.



That's where they met—two strangers beneath the lemon trees, on a sun-drenched terrace, where life felt simple and scented with citrus. When we began planning their wedding, there was no doubt: it would not mimic Amalfi. It would evoke it.

And from the very beginning, **Limoncello** became our guiding light.

It wasn't just an element—it was the entire essence.



We filled the air with citrus. Bright yellow lemons, fresh and unapologetically vibrant, lined the tables and ceremony aisle. Olive branches danced between them, softening the palette. Custom lemon oil was misted lightly into the space, subtle but unmistakable. Every menu was tied with lemon-hued silk. Napkins held miniature lemon branches. The scent was everywhere—but always in whispers.

And then, at the golden peak of the afternoon, guests were invited to raise a glass of chilled, **handcrafted Limoncello**.

It was more than a toast. It was a memory being shared. A liquid poem. A way of saying: *this is where we began... and now you're part of it too.*

Limoncello wasn't an afterthought. It was our muse.

The Memory Within the Air

This is what scent does. It doesn't announce itself. It lingers. And in lingering, it becomes part of the soul of the event. Guests may not recall every flower or verse spoken. But when they pass a lemon tree one day—or sip Limoncello in some distant summer—they will remember.

They will stop. They will smile. They will close their eyes.
"I was there, when love smelled of Amalfi."

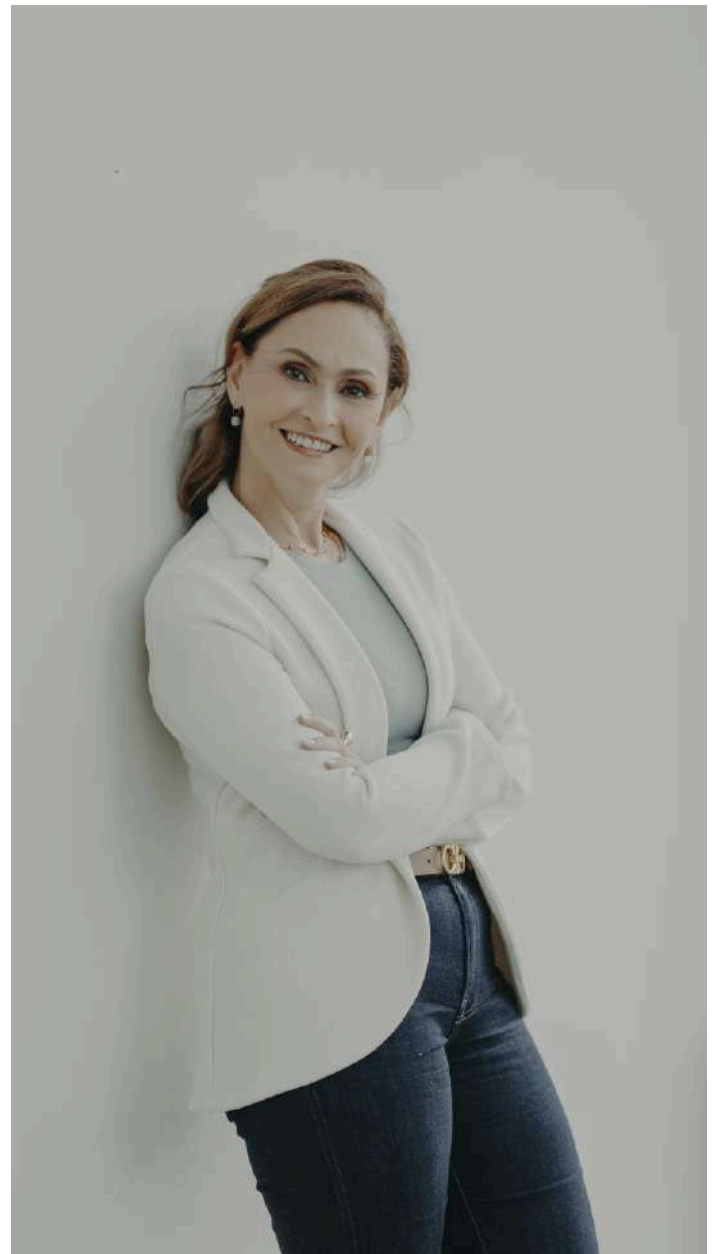
Designing with scent

To design with scent is to work with the most subtle thread that exists. It must harmonize with the flowers, with the climate, with the architecture, even with the menu. It is not decoration: it is a living atmosphere.

The scent can inhabit an invitation. An embroidered handkerchief. A fragrance behind the ear. Or it can float in the air like a memory not yet spoken.

Not all couples will ask for it. But those who do receive not just a personal seal. They receive something much more profound: a living memory.

A love story told with the breath.



Starting with the breath

For those of us ready to design this invisible and powerful layer, the first step is not the trend. It is the story.

You have to ask:

- Where did their love awaken?
- What does their story smell like?
- If their "forever" had a scent... what would it be?

Because some weddings are admired.

Others are remembered.

And a few, those woven with scent, are never forgotten.

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Why obtaining
the "Wedding
Tourism Specialist"
quality recognition
is a true
differentiator



In the wedding and event industry, competition is not just intense... it's **global**. Today's couples seek authentic, memorable, and highly personalized experiences. And to achieve this, they need to trust professionals who not only promise excellence but can also **prove it**.

In this scenario, having a **quality distinction**, like the **Wedding Tourism Specialist**, ceases to be a luxury and becomes a key strategy for professional **positioning**.

Organizing a local wedding is not the same as organizing a wedding on a beach in Tulum, a villa in Tuscany, or a vineyard in Chile. Destination weddings require specific knowledge in tourism, logistics, international protocol, attention to foreign guests, culture, and sustainability. Therefore, having a differentiator is vital.

Furthermore, the trend towards sustainable, inclusive, and experiential weddings reinforces the need for qualified professionals who understand the new language of love in the 21st century.

An expanding (and transforming) market

The demand for destination weddings continues to grow by leaps and bounds. It is estimated that this market will reach 47.7 billion USD in 2025, with thousands of professionals competing to attract couples looking to celebrate their love far from home.

In this global landscape, the big question is:

What makes you different as a vendor, planner, hotel, or destination?

The value of being a Wedding Tourism Specialist

Having a recognition like this is not just an addition to your resume: it is a strategic tool that opens doors and builds trust.

Key benefits:

✓ International Credibility

It demonstrates that your company masters global standards in organization, customer service, and user experience.





✓ Confidence for Couples

In a market driven by social media and recommendations, a distinction is tangible proof of your professionalism.

✓ Real Differentiation

When everyone offers "the same thing," your accreditation speaks for you. It positions you as a specialist and a leader in the sector.

✓ Preferential Opportunities

Destinations, DMCs, and high-end hotels often prioritize vendors endorsed for their commitment to quality.

✓ Internal Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

These types of programs invite you to review processes, detect areas of opportunity, and elevate your brand's value proposition.

More than a recognition: a declaration of excellence

Obtaining the **Wedding Tourism Specialist** distinction elevates your profile and that of your brand, projecting a clear message to the market:

"I am prepared, up-to-date, and committed to excellence in romance tourism."

In an industry where emotions are the protagonists and expectations are sky-high, **talent counts, but professional backing makes all the difference.**

Are you ready to take your career to the next level?

In a world where everyone promises magic, only the best can guarantee **it. Make your experience count. Start today!**

We thank Oaxaca Destination Weddings for the photos #ProudWTS.

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After the “I do”...

The emotions
that no one tells you about



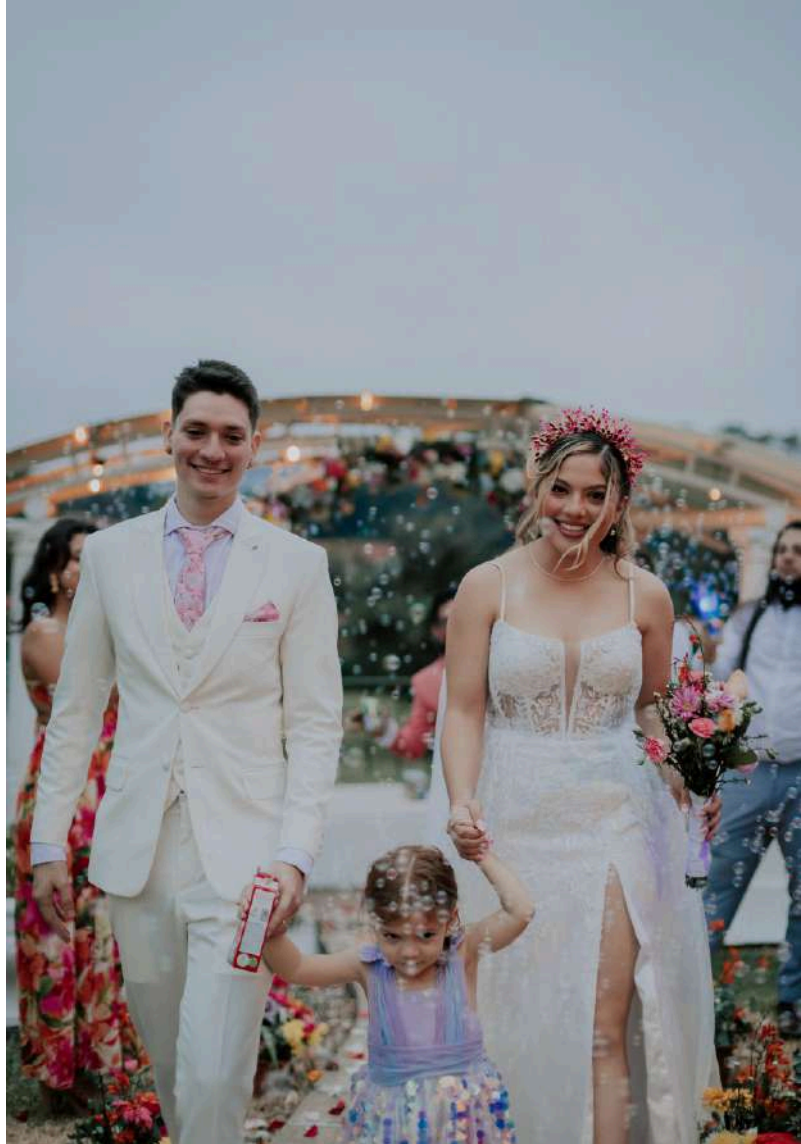
The "Yes" That Changes Everything

The "I do" is one of the most emotional moments in a couple's life. It marks not only the commitment of love but also the beginning of a stage full of dreams, expectations... and yes, many unexpected emotions. As a Wedding Planner with years of experience and a mother of already-married children, I have had the privilege of seeing this journey from multiple perspectives: professional and personal. And if there's one thing I've learned, it's that after the longed-for "yes," an emotional roller coaster begins that is rarely anticipated.

What They Don't Tell You About the Engagement

1. The Emotional Starting Point

That "I do" is much more than an affirmative answer. It's a watershed moment. Once spoken, reality sets in: we're getting married! The countdown to one of the most important days of their lives begins, and with it come intense and sometimes contradictory emotions: excitement, nervousness, joy, insecurity, and even fear.



It's not uncommon for stress to manifest from the very first weeks. Why? Because along with the excitement of sharing the news comes an avalanche of opinions, unsolicited advice, and social expectations that can be overwhelming.

2. The Reaction of the Environment

1. Once the news of the engagement becomes public, family and friends feel involved and, in many cases, entitled to an opinion. You will hear comments about the ideal type of wedding, recommendations for vendors, suggestions about children, properties or bank accounts, and even financial warnings.

This is the moment when many couples face their first significant discussions: Do we want a big or an intimate wedding? How will we split the costs? To what extent should our families be involved?

This is where love must evolve into respect, empathy, and communication. Because the true "yes" is not just to the marriage, but also to the teamwork that sustains it.

Planning: A Shared Journey

Although organizing a wedding may seem like a logistical task, it is actually an emotional experience in itself. From choosing the date, defining the budget, visiting venues, tasting menus, finding the perfect dress, or deciding whether to have a symbolic or religious ceremony... the whole process involves shared decisions, negotiation, and many dreams.

Having a professional Wedding Planner becomes an invaluable ally. Not only does it lighten the load, but it allows the couple to focus on what's most important: enjoying the process and growing stronger as a team.

Recomendaciones:

· **Allow yourselves to feel:** It is valid to be excited, nervous, overwhelmed, or even confused. The emotions are part of the journey.



· **Constant communication:** Talk about what you feel, what you expect, what you dream of. Listen to each other without judgment.

· **Define your priorities:** What is most important to you? The type of ceremony, the number of guests, the experience you want to provide?

· **Establish boundaries:** Not all external advice is useful. Learn to say "thank you, but we prefer to do it our way."

· **Celebrate every milestone:** From choosing the venue to sending out the invitations. Every step is part of your love story.

· **Trust the experts:** Hiring a Wedding Planner will give you the peace of mind of knowing you are in good hands, minimizing stress and maximizing joy.

· The "I do" is the prologue to a great adventure. A stage where love is tested, expands, and transforms. The wedding is a beautiful chapter, but not the end of the story. Learning to choose each other every day, even in the midst of the chaos of planning, is the true gift of commitment.

So if you are engaged, take a deep breath, embrace every emotion, and remember: every great story begins with a YES... and is strengthened by a daily "I choose you."

ANDREA ISABELL CASCANTE PORRAS

Destination Wedding's by Wedding Fairy
@DestinationweddingsbyWeddingFairy
Tel: +506 60387919

Photography: Esteban Aguero
@esaguero_photographer



Ph: Rebus

A photograph of a bride with dark hair, wearing a white wedding dress with a low back and a long veil. She is looking over her right shoulder towards the camera with a slight smile. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Beauty that Transcends

The art of feeling like yourself
on your wedding day

"A bride doesn't need to be transformed. She only needs to feel at home in her own skin."

On the cusp of one of the most important days of her life, a bride is not looking to become someone else. She is looking to recognize herself. To feel comfortable, luminous, alive. And right there, in that intimate moment where emotion and nerves intertwine, a key figure enters the scene: the stylist.

Bridal beauty has evolved. Today, the most powerful trend is not measured in layers of foundation or defined eyeliner, but in honesty. In embracing the skin's texture, in highlighting real features, in understanding that beauty is not created: it is already there.

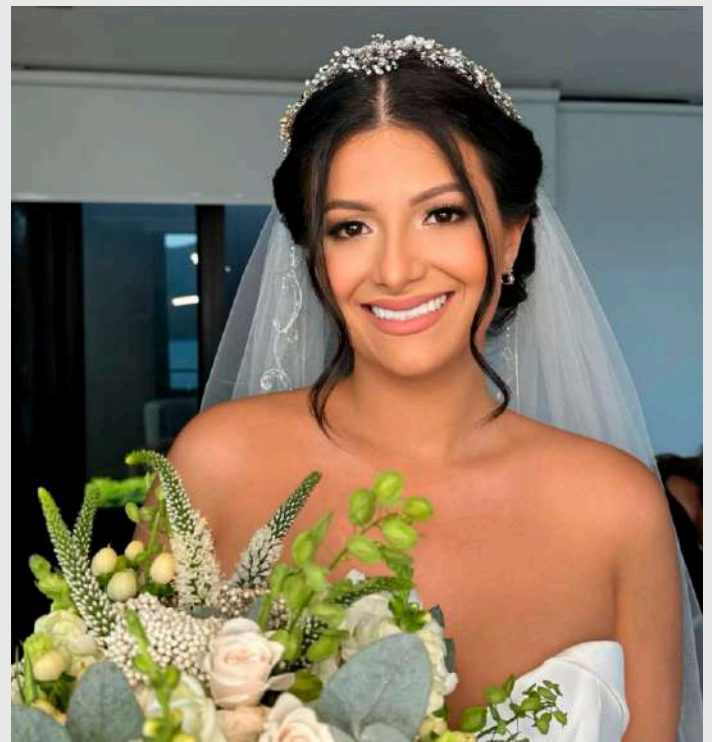
"Less filter, more skin": The 2025 makeup trends celebrate real texture, a healthy glow, and individuality. The skin is prepared, not covered. The lips smile with color, not disguised. The eyes shine, not hidden. It is the art of accompanying without altering.



With over 12 years of professional experience, Noé Ascencio, founder of Ascencio Makeup, has established himself as one of the most renowned bridal stylists in El Salvador. His training includes specializations in HD makeup techniques, visagism, and international trends, as well as bridal fashion styling in Mexico, Colombia, and Spain. His approach combines technique, artistic sensibility, and genuine empathy.

In his space, the process begins long before the big day. Conversations, trials, adjustments, laughter. It's not just about tones or techniques, but about trust. Because behind a serene face, there is a team that knew how to listen.





The emotional role of the stylist: Noé becomes the voice that calms the nerves and the accomplice who understands what a bride wants to communicate with her image. "Every bride is a universe. My job is to read that non-verbal language that communicates her essence and translate it into light on her face," he shares.

The importance of the pre-wedding trials (makeup + hairstyle) is part of a true self-care ritual. It is not a technical procedure; it is an intimate space where the bride connects with her image, tries out styles, and confirms that the result represents her.

As a wedding planner specializing in destination weddings, my commitment is not only to design the perfect experience but also to ensure that every professional who accompanies the bride brings peace, clarity, and emotion to her process.

The different types of brides help us orient the styling: the romantic usually seeks soft and ethereal finishes; the minimalist opts for cleanliness and polished elegance; the bohemian loves natural and free touches; the fashion-forward wants impactful proposals; the classic maintains the timeless; and the free-spirited bride... is simply herself. The challenge is to respect that essence and enhance it.

This type of emotional styling has become essential for brides who prioritize authenticity over imposition. Who want to look in the mirror and say, "This is me, just a little more radiant, because today is special."

In a world full of filters, this new generation of brides chooses transparency. They choose to be. They choose to feel. Because makeup, when born from the soul, doesn't transform... it reveals. And that is beauty in its purest form.

I am deeply grateful to Noé Ascencio for sharing his experience, sensitivity, and vision in this note. His commitment to authenticity and real beauty is an inspiration for all brides and professionals in the sector.

With love,

REBECA JEREZ

Destination Wedding & Event Planner
Rebeca Jerez CO

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Train, connect, and inspire

The role of the event
organizer and their allies



In the world of events, every detail matters. From the venue to the smallest vendor, everything builds the experience that our clients will live—and remember—forever. Being an event organizer today is not just about coordinating; it's about creating memorable emotions, and to achieve that, constant training is key.

As part of the IADWP community, I have learned that being at the forefront means much more than following trends: it means preparing, sharing knowledge, and surrounding yourself with strategic allies who elevate every celebration. In this association, we find not only inspiration but also practical tools, forums for exchange, and a network of reliable vendors who share our same vision of excellence.

In one of our most recent Romance Talks, I reaffirmed a personal conviction: vendors are not an accessory; we are the heart of the event. From the setup to the final detail of the ambiance, each collaborator contributes to the final success. Therefore, building solid and ethical relationships between planners and vendors is essential to creating magic.

A great lesson I have learned on this path is that the most memorable brands don't just sell products or services... they make you feel. Building a brand



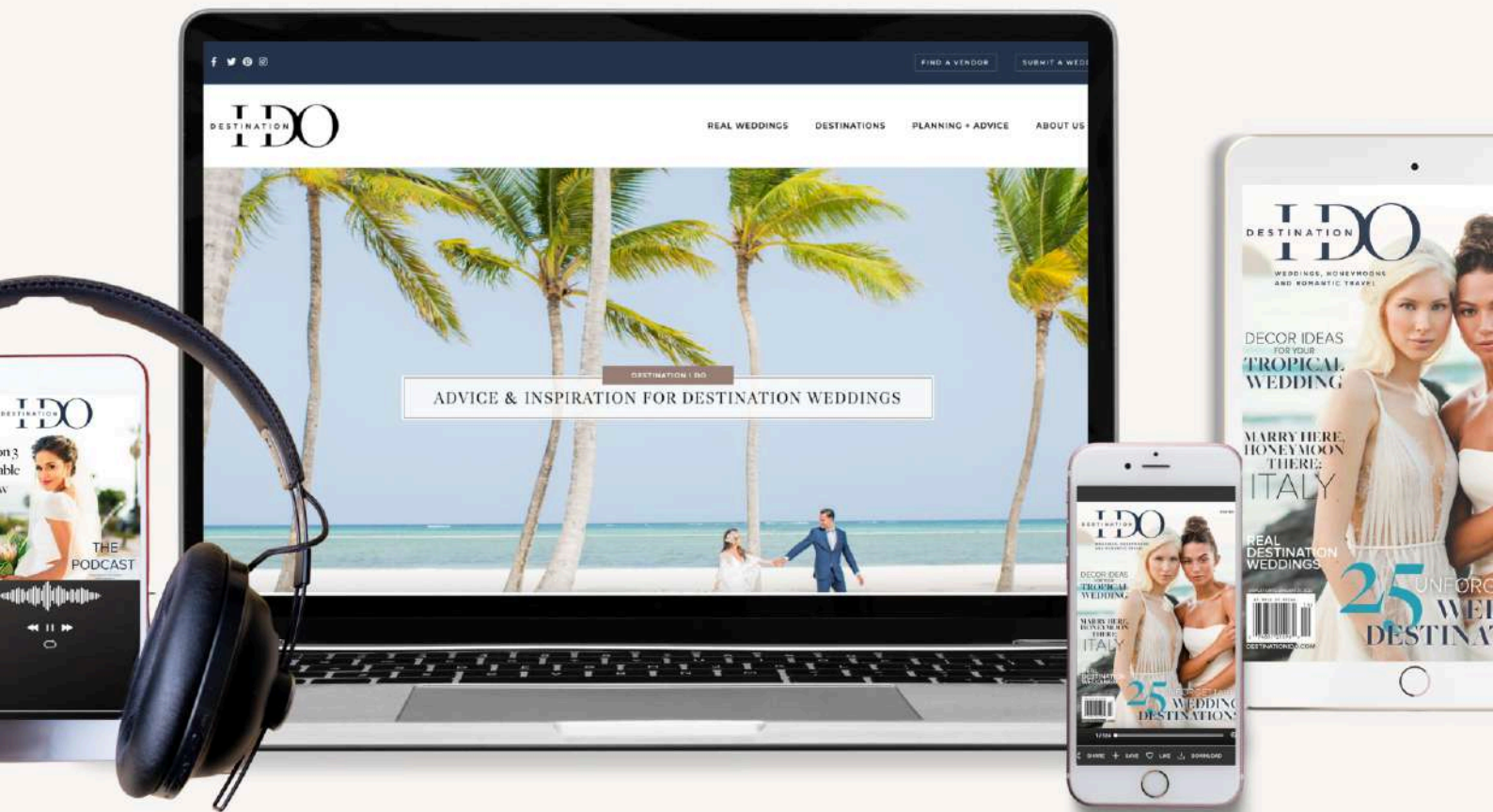
with purpose, that connects emotionally, is what truly leaves a mark. At DulcesTípicos Santo Domingo, we don't sell sweets: we create sweet memories. Our brand conveys identity, culture, and warmth, becoming a bridge between tradition and emotion. And that is what truly differentiates a company in the world of events.

Train, connect, and inspire. That is the true path to success for those of us who live to transform events into unforgettable experiences.

ROSAELENA BRAN OBREGÓN

Founder of DulcesTípicos Santo Domingo - Guatemala
Regional Chapter Guatemala IADWP

Tips for getting your work published in the wedding industry



Publishing your work in the wedding industry can mark a before and after. Whether you are a photographer, planner, travel advisor, or another creative collaborator, being featured on a popular website, in a magazine, or on a recognized social platform can give you credibility, attract your ideal clients, and elevate your brand. But with so many proposals reaching editors' inboxes, how do you stand out? Here are some practical tips to get your work seen and published.

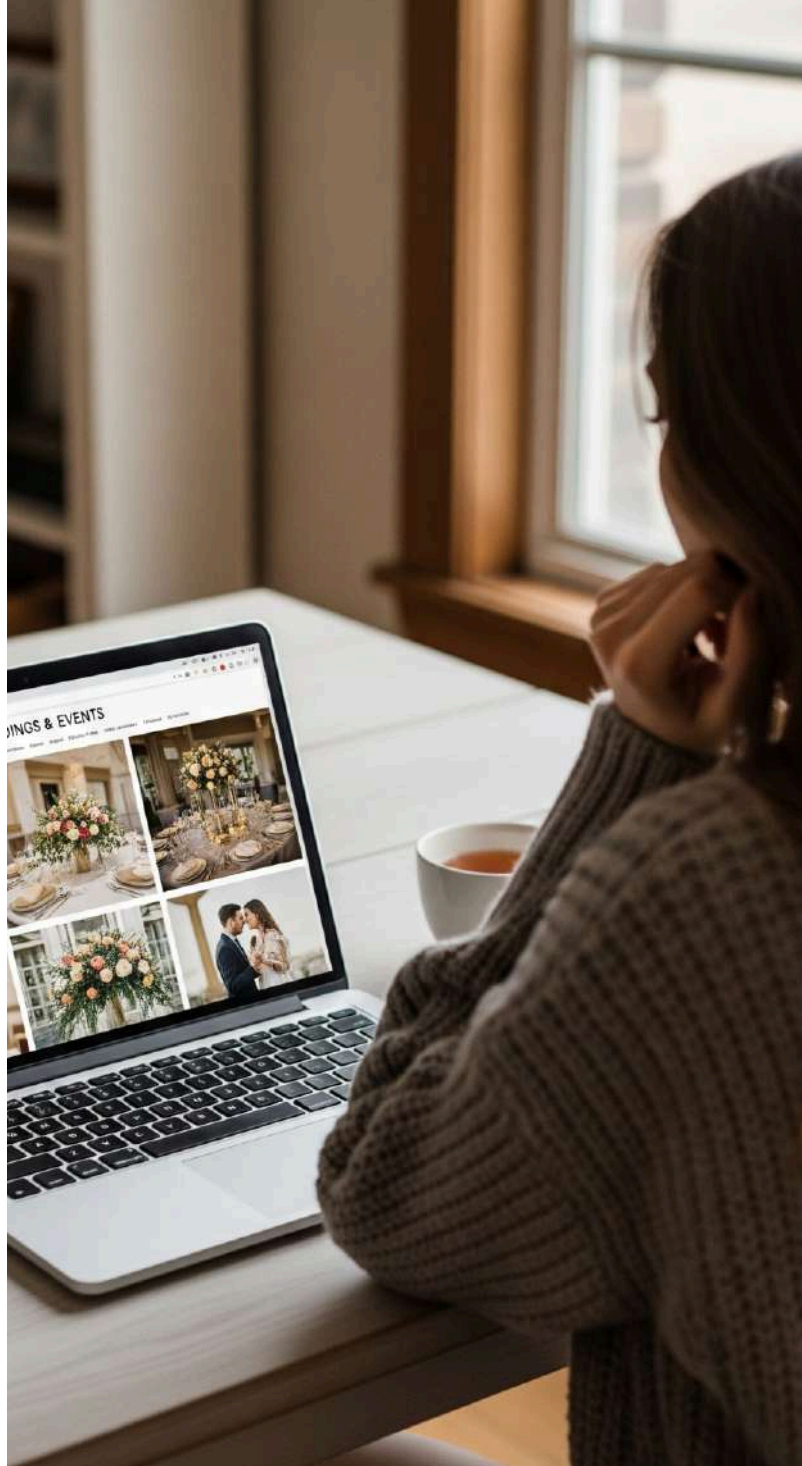
Align with the Team

Before submitting a real wedding for publication, it is essential that both the couple and the entire creative team are aligned on where and how the proposal will be presented. Having a shared vision ensures that everyone is comfortable with the level of exposure and the type of media outlet, whether it's a national blog, a print magazine, or a specialized site. This collaboration prevents duplicate submissions, mismatched expectations, and potential conflicts over exclusivity.

PRO TIP: When everyone is on the same page, they are more likely to enthusiastically promote the publication once it goes live, maximizing reach and impact for everyone involved.



Ph: Rebus



Know the Media Outlet You're Submitting To

Before submitting your work, take a moment to research the website, magazine, or even the podcast that interests you. Does your visual style align with theirs? Do they focus only on luxury weddings, bohemian elopements, or destination celebrations? Does your proposal reflect their editorial line? Understanding the editorial tone and visual identity of the outlet helps you tailor your submission and increases the chances that they will accept it.

PRO TIP: If you notice that they have already published a wedding in the same destination as yours, ask the editor if your submission would still be suitable. Showing that you respect their time and needs builds trust and a long-term relationship.

Understand and Follow the Submission Guidelines

Every media outlet has its own process. Some want 50 thumbnails on a contact sheet; others prefer a direct link to the full gallery. Many require exclusivity, and some even forbid any image from being published before it goes live on their platform. These outlets often share their requirements on their websites. For example, Destination I Do publishes its submission rules online. Familiarizing yourself with the guidelines of the media you want to submit to gives you a great advantage.

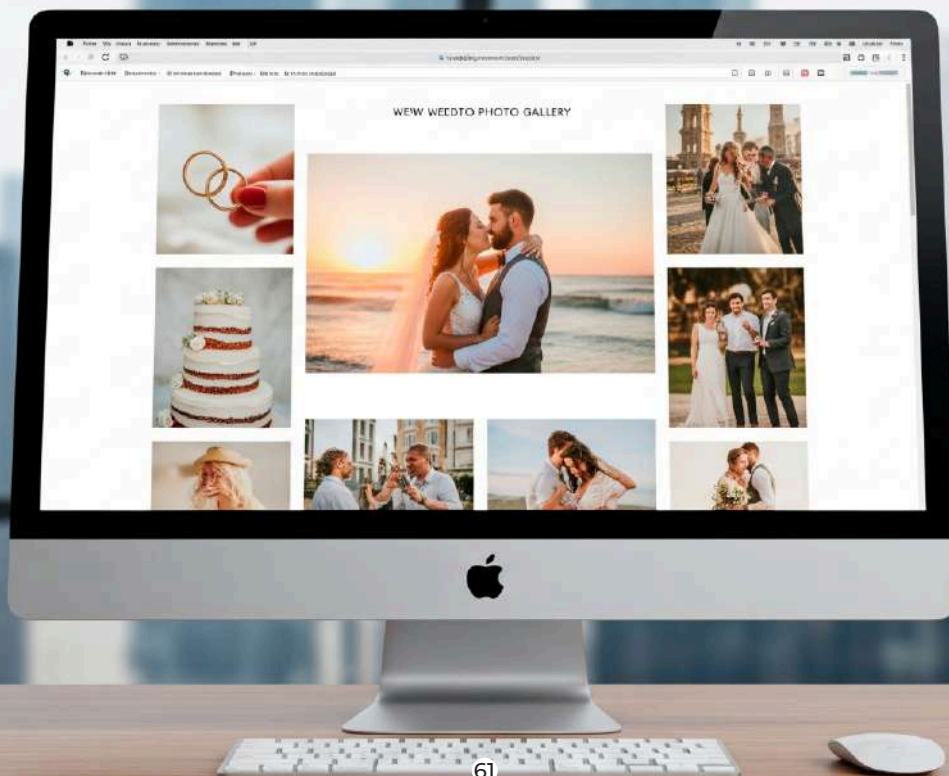
PRO TIP: Following the instructions to the letter and tailoring your proposal according to the outlet's rules will make the editors value you. Making their job easier always works in your favor (and might just be what makes them choose your work!).



Include the Details

Don't just send photos: tell the story. Editors want to know the "why" behind that wedding or production. Was there a unique cultural element? A design challenge that was overcome? A destination with special meaning for the couple? An interesting narrative provides context and makes their job easier.

PRO TIP: But don't feel like you have to write the article for them. Editors are on a tight schedule and receive dozens of emails. An attractive but brief text allows them to quickly decide if it's a fit.



Credit Your Collaborators Correctly

One of the most common and costly mistakes is not including the complete and correct credits for the vendors. Always mention all the creative collaborators with their correct names, the role they played in the event, and their websites or social media handles. The media wants to support the community, and giving credit is fundamental. Furthermore, having to correct notes or edit articles once they are published is a hassle for them.



Be Patient and Professional

Sometimes editors take weeks or even months to respond. Do not submit your proposal to another outlet unless you have been rejected or the indicated deadline has passed. If that deadline has passed and you want to try with another outlet, sending a follow-up email to check on the status is fine. Editors are human, and even the most organized can let something slip.

PRO TIP: If your work is accepted, be grateful. Help promote the publication once it goes live and send a thank-you email to those who made it possible. Acknowledgment always leaves a good impression.



Ph: Nate Howard & The Shalom Imaginative

Publishing your work is a mix of strategy, narrative, and a lot of perseverance. With well-thought-out submissions and a collaborative spirit, you will start to see your work published in the places where you truly want to be.

About Destination I Do:

Destination I Do was founded in 2004 and has since published real destination weddings, useful content for planning your wedding away from home (or your honeymoon), and tips and inspiration for all couples who dream of their ideal celebration. For more information, visit: <https://destinationido.com> and follow us on Instagram: @destinationido or on any other social network.

JENNIFER STEIN

Editor in Chief / Publisher / Owner
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Bringing your love story to life

With a little help from AI

Have you ever sat across from a bridal couple, completely inspired, listening to their love story, their dreams, their “non-negotiables... and then found yourself wondering:

“How am I going to take this vision out of my head and make it something they can actually see?”

Worse yet—how do you translate that vision from your notes or memory into a format that not only excites your couple but is also clear and actionable for the hotel or resort team on the ground?

And what happens when you’re trying to explain those intricate details through a language barrier or different communication style?

It can be frustrating, time-consuming, and—let’s be honest—risky when so much is riding on perfection.

Well, the solution is at your fingertips—literally.



Ph: Rebus



The AI Advantage: Turning Vision into Visuals

In just the past six months, artificial intelligence has made major leaps. We’re no longer talking about futuristic concepts—we’re talking about real, usable tools that make our jobs as destination wedding specialists more streamlined, collaborative, and efficient.

Now, instead of:
Multiple back-and-forth emails,
Misunderstood Pinterest boards,
Or trying to get creative ideas across in writing,
I can build a personalized presentation deck for my clients that visually brings their wedding to life.

What's Inside the Deck?

Let's say I've just finished my initial planning session with a couple.



They've shared their vision for an intimate clifftop ceremony with boho touches and soft peach tones. I take that concept and plug it into AI-assisted design tools that generate:

Venue Walkthroughs

Virtual tours that show the property options with their preferences in mind.

Styled Setup Mock-Ups

Custom visualizations showing their ceremony and reception layouts—based on their guest count, color palette, and style.

Drone-Style Views

AI-generated aerial perspectives that reveal how the full setup will look from above—ideal for understanding flow, spacing, and photo ops. Once it's built, this presentation can be reviewed and edited in real time by the couple—no waiting for the next meeting or trying to remember “what they said” two weeks ago.

Say Goodbye to Miscommunication

Here's the real win: Once the couple signs off, that same deck can be sent directly to the hotel or resort coordinator—clearly outlining what the couple wants with no room for confusion.



.If the property needs to modify anything or provide alternate pricing, it can be done in minutes, not days.

No more lost-in-translation emails. No more “this wasn’t what we discussed.”

Just clear, beautiful alignment from start to finish.

A Game-Changer in the Wedding World

For me, this has been a complete game-changer. What used to take hours—or even days—of back-and-forth planning now happens efficiently, accurately, and visually. It’s helped reduce stress for my clients, simplified



communication with resorts, and honestly, it’s made me fall in love with the planning process all over again.

And the best part? We’re just scratching the surface of what’s possible.

If you’re a travel professional, planner, or wedding coordinator wondering if AI has a place in your workflow—the answer is yes. If you’re a bride or groom trying to figure out how to get what’s in your heart into someone else’s hands—it’s here. You don’t have to do it alone, and you definitely don’t have to settle for guesswork.

Let’s bring your vision to life—beautifully, clearly, and confidently.

BOBBI-JO ROBACK

National Chapter Leader
IADWP Canadá



Safe Weddings

The silent responsibility of the wedding planner



Beyond the romance, aesthetics, and emotion, a wedding must be a safe event for everyone: not only for the guests but also for the vendors and collaborators who make its realization possible

As wedding planners or designers, our responsibility goes far beyond design and coordination; it involves creating spaces where the couple and their loved ones can live their day without worries. From structural safety to emotional well-being, everything must be anticipated with rigor and professionalism.

I want to share some key aspects to ensure a safe event, which provides confidence to clients and, above all, the peace of mind that we as professionals need to act with certainty.

Safety is not a minor issue. It is a priority that planners with experience must assume with absolute clarity and commitment.

Physical Safety of the Setup

Supervision of structures:

Tents, stages, dance floors, ceilings, and any other structure involved in the event must be supervised with attention and technical knowledge. It is not just about an aesthetic or functional aspect, but about

guaranteeing the stability, quality of materials, and their suitability for the environment and climate.

On many occasions, clients request to reduce costs, but it is in these moments that we must be firm: safety is non-negotiable. Ceding on this aspect can have serious consequences. Complying with quality standards is an essential part of our role as professionals

Setup with certified vendors:

Working with qualified technical teams guarantees not only a flawless execution but also a significant reduction in risks. This involves reviewing licenses, prior experience, compliance with protocols, and the presence of qualified personnel throughout the installation process.



Collaboration with venue owners is also fundamental. Every event presents particularities: it is not the same to work in front of the sea, where the weather can change rapidly, as in a closed hall. In all cases, safety must be prioritized over the visual.

Clear evacuation plan and signage:

Every event must have clearly marked, unobstructed evacuation routes and internationally recognized signage. This plan must be coordinated with the venue and communicated to all staff members.

Valid permits and insurance:

Having the necessary municipal and governmental permits is indispensable. Furthermore, liability insurance is a legal and professional backup that protects all those involved and conveys seriousness to clients.



Risk prevention: an unavoidable commitment

Prevention must be planned from the beginning of the project. Some key measures include:

- ✓ **First-aid kit** with basic supplies and immediate access.
- ✓ **Ambulance or medical service**, especially at large weddings or in remote locations.
- ✓ **Security personnel**, indispensable at events with high attendance or in open spaces.
- ✓ **Access control** with lists or credentials, to ensure privacy and better logistics.

Hygiene and well-being

- ✓ **Disinfection stations** at key points.
- ✓ **Strict food handling protocols** by the catering team.
- ✓ **Adequate rest, hydration, and food areas** for staff.
- ✓ **Periodic cleaning** of portable restrooms.
- ✓ **Guaranteed accessibility** with ramps for people with disabilities, even if they need to be created temporarily.
- ✓ **Ensuring the cleanliness** of glasses, cups, and utensils.



✓ **Ensuring cleanliness** in kitchens and food handling areas.

✓ **Verifying that fumigation** is done without risking the work team or contaminating areas ready to receive guests.

Technical and electrical safety

✓ Hidden, secure, and correctly marked wiring.

✓ Professional supervision of audio and lighting equipment.

✓ Generators located in ventilated areas, away from the public.

✓ Fire extinguishers at strategic points.

✓ Clear signage on stairs and ramps.

✓ Determining safe areas for the use of special effects (fireworks and others of their nature).

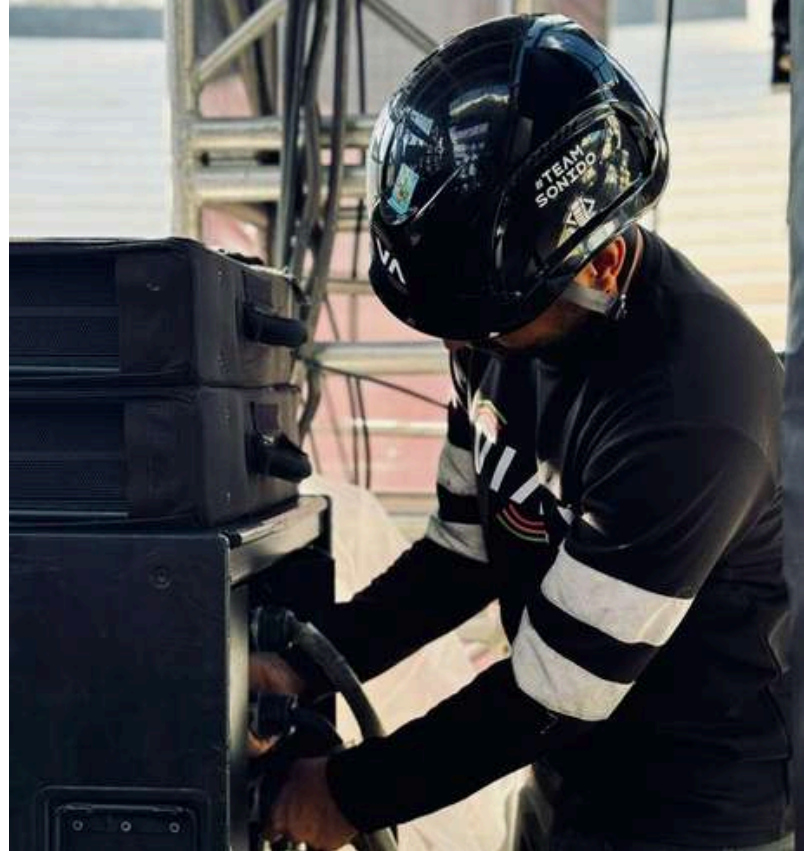
Clear and efficient communication

✓ General briefing with the entire team before the event.

✓ Identified, visible, and trained personnel to act in emergencies.

✓ Emergency contact list (ambulance, firefighters, clinics) shared with the couple and the team.

✓ Emergency timeline with defined times and responsibilities.



Checklist for planner safety

✓ Updated permits for the venue

✓ Liability insurance

✓ Supervision of structures by professional

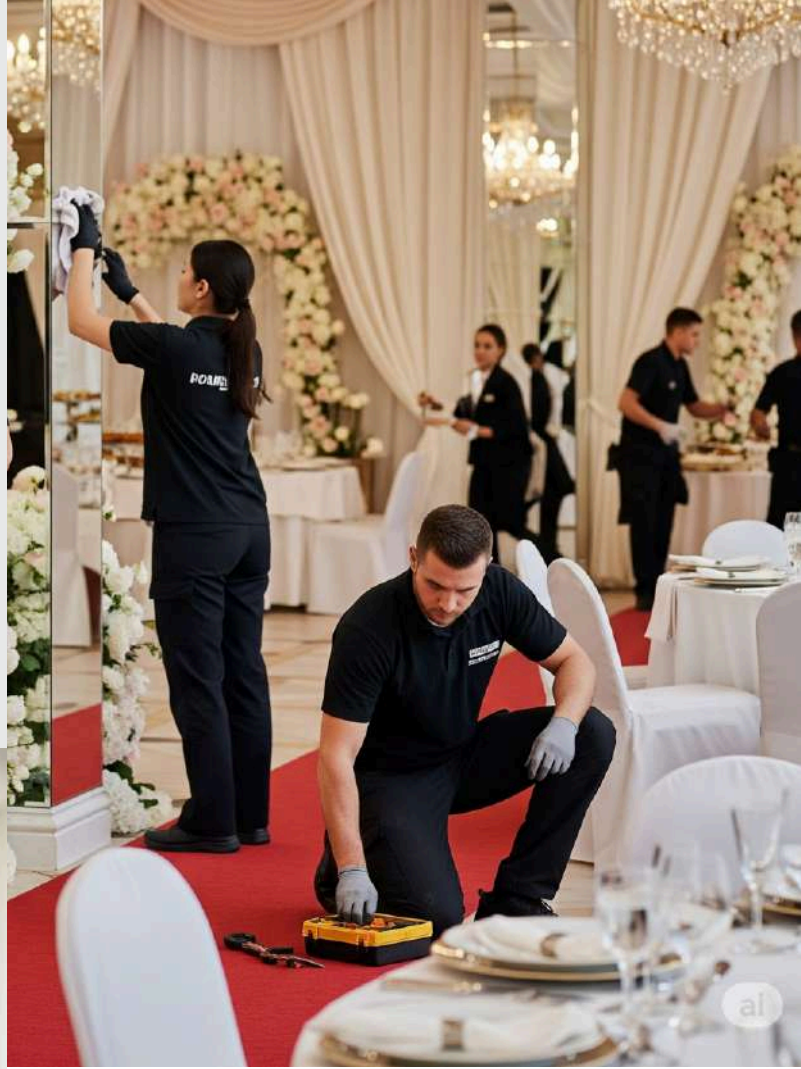
✓ Clear evacuation plan

✓ Visible signage

✓ Covered wiring and checked connections



- ✓ First-aid kit
- ✓ Ambulance or medical personnel (if applicable)
- ✓ Security personnel
- ✓ Hygienic spaces for staff
- ✓ Safe food handling
- ✓ Guaranteed accessibility
- ✓ Plan B for extreme weather conditions
- ✓ Shared emergency telephones
- ✓ Previous coordination meetings



Final recommendations for planners

- 1. Anticipating is better than reacting:** Design protocols from the beginning and share them with all teams.
- 2. Work with reliable vendors:** Experience and professionalism make the difference.
- 3. Train your team:** It's not enough to know how to set up an event; you have to know how to act in critical situations.
- 4. Tranquility generates confidence:** If you handle the situation with serenity, the couple and the team will also feel secure.

"A well-planned wedding or event flows without tension. Safety is not an extra expense; it is an invisible investment in the experience."

Let's assume this commitment with determination. Preventing an accident is much more valuable than facing its consequences. I invite you to reflect on and implement these practices in every project. Let's be agents of change towards an industry where safety is not an option, but a priority.

MARYPILY LÓPEZ
National Chapter Leader
Dominican Republic



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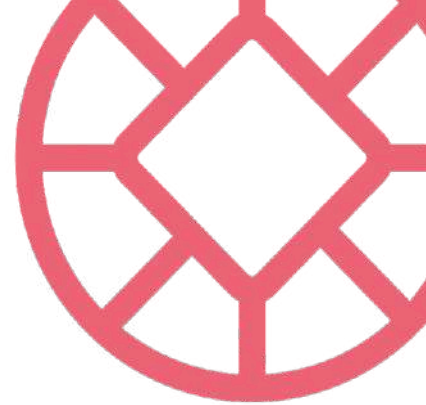
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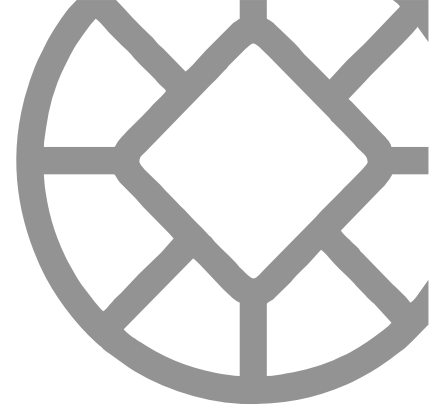
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We are delighted to feature some of our exceptional Platinum members of the International Association of Destination Wedding Professionals:



Nydia Alegría

Nydia Alegría Wedding Planner

Regional Chapter Leader Santo Domingo

@nydia_alegría

I'm Nydia Alegría Maldonado, an entrepreneur since age 12 with deep experience in design, corporate events, and pharmaceutical marketing. I've spent 18 years in the corporate world and hold international certifications in weddings, floral design, and multicultural expertise.



Badel del Carmen Gómez Nechar

Soirée Events

Regional Chapter Leader of Yucatán

@soiree_eventos

Badel Gómez, director of Soirée Event Planning and IADWP Yucatán Chapter Leader, is a passionate wedding planner from Mérida. With a background in tourism, she specializes in destination weddings that celebrate Yucatán's culture. Her work earned her the 2019 "Wedding Concept" award.



Jossy Giselle Quezada Sánchez

Jossy Quezada Wedding Planner

Regional Chapter Leader Perú

@jossyquezadawp

Jossy Quezada, a Translation graduate with a Marketing diploma, founded her event planning business 10 years ago. A member of IADWP and Belief Wedding Creators, she's been recognized as one of Lima's top wedding planners and a Belief Awards winner.



Diana Laura Hernández Fuentes

Hacienda Real

@haciendarealrecinto

Diana Hernández, 24, found her passion for events early on by organizing parties for herself and friends. The launch of Hacienda Real marked her professional start in wedding planning. She now has 2 years of experience and several certifications as a wedding planner.

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