

WEDDING GUIDE

East End Wedding Experts Roundtable: Wedding Venues

BY DAVID TAYLOR

The Hamptons, North Fork and Shelter Island are home to many breathtaking locales at which to celebrate your wedding day. Here, representatives of some of the East End's premier wedding venues share advice on how to select a venue, assess services and more.

What's one important, but often overlooked, thing to consider when selecting a wedding venue?

Any additional fees, including setup and add-ons, that are not included may add up over time when working with a budget. — *Megan Young, The Boathouse Shelter Island, boathouseshelterisland.com*

Reputation is very important when choosing a venue. How long have they been in business, and are they recommended? With more than 30 years in the wedding business, East Wind is family-owned with a professional staff that caters to you from the time you book to the last dance. Our preferred vendors are the top professionals on Long Island. — *Charlotte Coté, East Wind Long Island, eastwindlongisland.com*

While there are countless beautiful wedding venues on Long Island, couples should consider the simplicity of the planning process when selecting a wedding venue. Wedding planning can be stressful, but with the right venue and vendors, it should be relaxing, stress-free and, most of all, fun! All of the Lessing's properties have amazing sales personnel and event staff with a wealth of knowledge and experience in planning thousands of events per year, making the process for the couple extremely seamless. Your wedding day is one of the most important celebrations of your life. Here at Lessing's, at The Vineyards at Aquebogue, we ensure you will have a positive, memorable experience from planning to party. — *Kate Wiggins, Lessing's Hospitality Group, lessings.com*

What wedding services are being frequently requested and/or expected of their prospective venue lately?

What is included, like tables and chairs, a bridal suite, day-of coordinator. — *Megan Young, The Boathouse Shelter Island, boathouseshelterisland.com*



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THE BOATHOUSE SHELTER ISLAND



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Wedding services frequently requested today are early arrivals and after parties. Couples want to make the party last by scheduling maybe a spa visit or wine tour to relax before the big day. Or after parties, couples extend their time at the venue or visit Desmond's Restaurant in the Inn at East Wind for late-night cocktails and snacks. — *Char-*

lotte Coté, East Wind Long Island, eastwindlongisland.com

The Vineyards has been receiving frequent requests for unique and personalized stations. While we already offer an abundance of farm-to-table and local offerings included within our menus, many of our couples like to take it a step further by adding additional items that

are meaningful to their relationship like beers from specific local breweries, Long Island honey favors, and local wine favors through The Vineyards. We do our best to keep our finger on the pulse of the wedding industry and are always open to new ideas from our couples. Last year, we received a request for an all-American station with jumbo peanuts, hot pretzels and fresh popcorn from a couple who were engaged at a baseball game! It has now become a very popular late-night station for our after parties! — *Kate Wiggins, Lessing's Hospitality Group, lessings.com*

What's something unique about the experience that your wedding venue offers couples?

The Boathouse Shelter Island is really a hidden gem right here on Long Island. A destination with no travel time. — *Megan Young, The Boathouse Shelter Island, boathouseshelterisland.com*

East Wind is Long Island's premier wedding destination with a choice of five venues to accommodate any couple's taste and budget. Couples come to East Wind and enjoy overnight accommodations, a full-service spa and salon with bridal packages, two restaurants, offering rehearsal dining spaces, after party and breakfast buffets. The Shoppes are just steps away — a quaint village of 28 shops along a brick-lined pathway and a grand carousel — a perfect setting for memorable wedding photos. — *Charlotte Coté, East Wind Long Island, eastwindlongisland.com*

The Vineyards at Aquebogue, one of the Lessing's venues, offers extensive planning assistance within our online Vineyards Wedding Dashboard. The Dashboard, a website custom to our venue, includes links for everything from virtual menu planning and seating charts, to helpful tips and frequently asked questions. We strive to make each of our couples' wedding planning experiences as stress-free as possible by allowing them to have access to their wedding planning information at any time of day or night. We also offer monthly Instagram specials, showcasing the new, trending stations our couples can add directly to their wedding at a discount with a simple online form from the comfort of their home. — *Kate Wiggins, Lessing's Hospitality Group, lessings.com*

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