



C STUDIOS

SEE THROUGH THE SEA OF PHOTOGRAPHERS

TREND TALK ON THE WEDDING WALK

When you think of the wedding photographs from your parents' or grandparents' weddings, there was really only one style, one type of album and oftentimes only one or two photographers from which to choose. In those days, the photography style and products offered by various studios were so similar, the decision to choose a photographer was generally determined in order of: investment, products, personality and art. Today, those determining factors are in the reverse order of: art, personality, products and investment.

Over the past ten years, the local wedding photography market has become saturated with hundreds of photographers, giving you more photography options than at any point in history. Within that deep sea of photographers, it is most likely there are only a handful that are the right fit for you. Using the guidelines below, you can narrow down your overwhelming choices to easily see through the sea of photographers to find the perfect wedding photographer for you.

ART / STYLE

WHAT DOES THE PHOTOGRAPHER CHOOSE TO DOCUMENT?

Photographers feature images in their portfolios they connect with as artists and storytellers. Be certain you truly connect with everything the photographer shows (details, people, formal portraits, informal portraits, candid moments) because they are going to create a very similar set of images for *your* wedding day. Be sure you see everything that you hope to have documented for your wedding.

HOW DOES THE PHOTOGRAPHER HANDLE COLOR STYLIZING?

There are as many ways to color-process images as there are photographers! Some photographers present images with a vintage, retro color stylization, some choose a clean, true-to-life color, while others show images with high contrast, boldly saturated color. Look at several photographers to understand the color you are naturally drawn to and what color style will enhance the look of your wedding day.

WHAT IS THE PHOTOGRAPHER'S STYLE OF PORTRAITURE?

Portrait style is one of the most important factors in choosing a photographer. A photographer will set up an image, choose lighting, location, camera settings and composition – but it's what you bring to the moment that creates the final image. Portraits can be high fashion, glam inspired, classic and traditional or relaxed and soft – with a wide range in between! Be sure you feel comfortable doing any of the poses and can see yourself in all of the portrait styles from a photographer's portfolio.

PERSONALITY / APPROACH

WHAT IS THE PHOTOGRAPHER'S TRUE PERSONALITY?

Social media now gives you the opportunity to do more in depth research on the photographers you are considering. Read as much as you can from a photographer's website, blog, Twitter feed and Facebook page to get a true sense of their personality.

DO YOU PERSONALLY CONNECT WITH THE PHOTOGRAPHER?

It seems easier to request information such as catalogs or pricing by email, but it's important to spend at least 15-20 minutes chatting on the phone with your top choices for photographers to see how well your personalities connect and how the photographer makes you feel.

DO YOU AND YOUR FIANCE BOTH CONNECT WITH THE PHOTOGRAPHER?

Be sure that both you and your fiancé attend the photography meetings. Your wedding photographer will be by your side the entire day, so it's absolutely crucial that both you and your fiancé like the photographer's personality, style and approach to the wedding day.

WHAT IS THE PHOTOGRAPHERS APPROACH DURING THE WEDDING?

Some photographers enjoy being close to you throughout the day, warmly interacting with you and your guests while documenting the day. Other photographers prefer to document the day from a distance with little to no personal interaction. As a general rule, most quiet, introverted couples enjoy a photographer who documents the day from a distance with little interaction, and most outgoing, extroverted couples prefer a photographer who documents the day with more personal interaction. If you aren't sure of the photographer's approach, just ask! Photographers will gladly tell you how they like to document weddings to ensure you are a good match for each other.

PRODUCTS / PRESENTATION

IS THE PHOTOGRAPHER WILLING TO SHOW YOU COMPLETE WEDDINGS?

Seeing a photographer's hand-selected favorites within their general portfolio helps you understand what they personally love to document at weddings. However, once you narrow down your top choices for photographers, it's important that they show you at least three complete weddings, either as sample books or online galleries, so you can see how they document weddings from beginning to end.

DOES THE PHOTOGRAPHER HAVE PRODUCT SAMPLES OF THEIR WORK?

Photographers don't need to show hundreds of product samples, and oftentimes keep their sample product line limited so that they can discuss the books with you individually as you are introduced to them. However, it is vital that you see at least one sample of each type of product or album they offer, especially the products you are considering for yourself. There are dozens of professional album companies and print houses available to photographers, all ranging in quality of print, products, construction and expense.

DO YOU LIKE THE PHOTOGRAPHER'S DESIGN STYLE?

The quality, color and construction of a photographer's products are highly important – but equally important is the photographer's design style. Every photographer has their own design aesthetic and will typically not alter their design style from one couple to another. Even if you love everything else a photographer has to offer, but are not in love with their design – keep looking. Your book will be viewed for generations, make sure it's a design style that matches your personal style, tells your story and enhances the feel of your wedding day.

INVESTMENT / BUDGET

WHAT IS A PHOTOGRAPHER'S RANGE OF INVESTMENTS?

Most couples begin their search with the simple question, "How much?". But there are several factors to take into consideration before allowing a single price to dictate your decision to book or not book a photographer. That being said, your budget is extremely important and all photographers should respect that you need to know their range of investments before continuing the process of interviewing and consideration. A photographer should always be open with you about their collections and be willing to share that information with you.

WHAT FACTORS SHOULD I CONSIDER WHEN COMPARING PHOTOGRAPHY INVESTMENTS?

With so many photographers saturating the wedding photography market, there is a vast range of experience, talent, style and quality. A photographer's investment structure is most typically based on the following:

EXPERIENCE + EDUCATION

Photographers who have been professionally educated and trained in wedding photography, have more years of experience and invest in continuing education will naturally require a higher investment than someone who is just entering the business.

NUMBER OF WEDDINGS

When a photographer accepts a large number of weddings per year, the investment will typically be lower because the studio spends less personal time with each client, and less time creating custom stylized imagery and custom designed products. Photographers who accept a limited number of weddings per year will typically require a higher investment because of the increased personal attention with their clients and time involved creating custom imagery and custom designed products.

CUSTOM ARTWORK

Custom imagery, artwork and design take a great deal of time. Photographers who invest a large portion of their time providing clients with custom stylized, professionally enhanced and retouched images, as well as custom designed products will require a higher investment than those who don't spend the same amount of time creating finished artwork.

QUALITY OF PRODUCTS

As previously mentioned, there are dozens of professional album companies and print houses available to photographers, all ranging in quality of print, products, construction and expense. Not all products are created equal and it's important to take your time evaluating a photographer's products to understand why an investment would be more or less than another studio.