

The Estates at Pecan Park

Wedding Venue Questionnaire

1. What dates are available in the month I'm considering?
2. How many people can this location accommodate?
3. What is the rental fee and what is included in that price? Is there a discount for booking an off-season date or Sunday through Friday?
4. How much is the deposit, when is it due, and is it refundable? What's the payment plan for the entire bill?
5. Can I hold my ceremony here, too? Is there an additional charge? Is the ceremony site close to the reception site? Is there a bride's changing area? How much time is allocated for the rehearsal?
6. Is the site handicap accessible?
7. What's the cancellation policy?
8. What's your weather contingency plan for outdoor spaces?
9. How long will I have use of the event space(s) I reserve? Is there an overtime fee if I stay longer? Is there a minimum or maximum rental time?
10. Can I move things around and decorate to suit my purposes, or do I have to leave everything as is? Are there decoration guidelines/restrictions? Can I use real candles?
11. What time can my vendors start setting up on the day of the wedding? Is it possible to start the setup the day before? How early can deliveries be made? How much time will I have for décor setup? Does the venue provide assistance getting gifts or décor back to a designated car, hotel room, etc. after the event has concluded?
12. Do you provide a coat check service (especially important for winter weddings)? If not, is there an area that can be used and staffed for that purpose?
13. Is there an outdoor space where my guests can mingle, and can it be heated and/or protected from the elements if necessary? Is there a separate indoor "socializing" space?
14. Do you have an in-house caterer or a list of "preferred" caterers, or do I need to provide my own? Even if there is an in-house caterer, do I have the option of using an outside caterer instead?
15. If I hire my own caterer, are kitchen facilities available for them?
16. Are tables, linens, chairs, plates, silverware and glassware provided, or will I have to rent them myself or get them through my caterer?
17. What is the food & beverage cost on a per-person basis? What is the tax and service charge?
18. Can we do a food tasting prior to finalizing our menu selection? If so, is there an additional charge?
19. Can I bring in a cake from an outside cake maker or must I use a cake made on the premises? Is there a cake-cutting fee? If I use a cake made on site is the fee waived? Do you provide special cake-cutting utensils?
20. Can I bring my own wine, beer or champagne, and is there a corkage fee if I do? Can I bring in other alcohol?
21. Are you licensed to provide alcohol service? If so, is alcohol priced per person? By consumption? Are there additional charges for bar staff? Is there a bar minimum that must be met before the conclusion of the event? What is the average bar tab for the number of people attending my event?
22. Are there restrictions on what kind of music I can play, or a time by which the music must end? Can the venue accommodate a DJ or live band?
23. Is there parking on site? If so, is it complimentary? Do you offer valet parking, and what is the charge? If there is no parking on site, where will my guests park? Are cabs easily accessible from the venue? If a shuttle service is needed, can you assist with setting it up?
24. How many restrooms are there?
25. Do you offer on-site coordination? If so, what services are included and is there an additional charge for them? Will the coordinator supervise day-of? How much assistance can I get with the setup/décor?
26. What security services do you offer? Do I need to hire my own security guards, or does the site hire them or have them on staff?
27. Does the venue have liability insurance?
28. Can I hire my own vendors (caterer, coordinator, DJ, etc.), or must I select from a preferred vendor list? If I can bring my own, do you have a list of recommended vendors?
29. What overnight accommodations do you provide? Do you offer a discount for booking multiple rooms? Do you provide a complimentary room or upgrade for the newlyweds? What are the nearest hotels to the venue?
30. Do you have signage or other aids to direct guests to my event?
31. Do you have a recycling policy?

*If you really love the site, ask the venue representative to put together a proposal with all the pricing and policies—including the tax and service charge—so you have an idea of the basic cost.

*Use your cell phone (or a digital camera) to take photos or videos of the locations you visit, so that you have a record of what you liked or didn't like about them. And if you're planning to visit more than a few venues, it's a good idea to snap a photo of each one's sign when you arrive—that way you won't get confused about which place is which when you review your photos later.

*Pay attention to the venue as a whole: Check out everything, including the restrooms, the foyer, the dressing rooms, the outdoor lighting and even the kitchen. You want to be sure your vision can be realized at this location. If possible, make arrangements with the site representative to visit the venue when it's set up for a wedding.

*Your date is not officially reserved until you sign a contract and, in many cases, give a deposit—even if a site contact says you don't need to worry about it. Once you've found THE PLACE, make sure you ask what is required to get your booking locked in and then follow through on satisfying those requirements. And don't assume that just because the site coordinator said you can have 4 votive candles per table you'll get them. Before you sign a contract, read the fine print and make sure it includes everything you and the site contact agreed on. As new things are added or changed in your contract, have the updated version printed out and signed by you and the site representative.

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