A Florida beach wedding is a unique and unforgettable experience and it is our goal to make your wedding day one of the best days of your life.

Services:

***Why should I hire you?*** This is our business.  We’ve built it ourselves.  We take great pride in what we do.  We absolutely love what we do.  We operate maintain and care for and build all of our equipment ourselves, and treat every single wedding as if it was our own.  We like to think every couple we work with end up being a part of our family.  We are professionals.   We care about your wedding and want you to love your wedding day and think back and love and appreciate us and what we did to make it happen for you, the way you dreamed about it but better.

***Who performs the ceremony?*** We have in house Reverends of matrimony and notary’s.  This is what is included in our packages.  If you prefer a minister of a certain denomination, most likely there will be an additional charge for their services.  If you have your own Officiant, we can deduct the price of this service from your package.  If you bring your own Officiant, please make sure that your Officiant is licensed in the state of Florida to perform ceremonies.

***Where do I find a ceremony for us to use?*** Upon booking your wedding with us, we will send you our collection of ceremonies, vows and poems.  Feel free to use any of them, and mix and match to suit you.

***Does Destination Weddings of Florida, Inc.  perform vow renewals and commitment ceremonies?*** Yes! We love vow renewals, they are a special celebration of where you have been, and celebrating a new beginning.  We also do commitment ceremonies for same sex couples.  We respect love in all forms.

***How long does the ceremony take?*** A typical ceremony last only minutes, typically less than 5-15 min.  We are usually on the beach with you shooting photos of arrival, ceremony, and photo session, between an hour and two hours, depending on services and photography.  So if you are making dinner reservations, give it two hours plus travel time to restaurant from beach location, so you aren’t rushed.

**Who sets up the decorations?** Our team does the setting up and tearing down of the decorations, and this is included in the cost of the decoration rentals.  We have taken the up most care and creativity to produce and use our own designs and decorations and we are confident our decorations are safe and secure for use on the beach.  For this and safety reasons, we will not use any decorations that are not ours.

***Can we use silk petals or bird seed in the wedding?*** You may only use fresh petals in most areas.  There are a few areas where these are not allowed such as; St Augustine. But most every other place it is ok.  We supply fresh petals in most of our packages, if you want to bring your own petals no credit will be given to your package.  We do not recommend bird seed, since it attracts too many birds, and you don’t want to have any “accidents” with a bird on your day, neither will your guests appreciate their donations of “good luck”.  Absolutely no rice is allowed on the beaches, since it is bad for the birds.

***Deposits requirements refundable?*** No sorry these are not refundable.  Once we accept your wedding on our planner, we begin the ball rolling securing any vendors, and preparing decorations, etc… Your deposit will be applied to the package price and deducted from the total price due.  We require a 1/3 deposit of the total package to hold your date and get your wedding on our books.

***Is sales tax added in to our package price?*** Yes it is required for us to charge 6.5 % Florida sales tax to any part of the services that is required for us to charge sales tax for, such as items, and rentals.

***Which holidays is there an additional charge for***?  Easter, Memorial day, Fourth of July, Labor day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, or Christmas day, New Year’s Eve, or New Year’s day.

***What is your cancellation or postponement policy?*** If you need to cancel or postpone your wedding date, your deposit paid is non-refundable, but you will have an option to reschedule one time, and is based on vendors involved and our availability.

***When is final payment due?*** Prior to the start of your ceremony.  So if you haven’t prepaid the balance, you must present cash or money order before ceremony starts.

***Ceremony start time?***  You can choose your own start time.  We suggest that if you want an evening wedding, best time is an hour and a half to two hours prior to sunset.  (see our locations section for our sunset time/table) keep in mind that if you are late for your own wedding, late fees will be assessed, and will have to be paid before the ceremony starts.  If you are more than 45 minutes late, we have the option to cancel the wedding and no refunds/rescheduling will be done.   Please keep in mind that changing tide conditions, and other weddings that may be scheduled and courtesy to your guests, and vendors and be there on time.

***Can we do a sunrise ceremony?*** Yes, but keep in mind that the east coast is the best place for sunrise weddings, and that the sun rises very fast, and very early.  So we have to be clear on the start time and start on time.  There is an up-charge for sunrise weddings, and minimal decorations are allowed for sunrise weddings.  They are a favorite of ours, and we enjoy starting our day with a wedding with the rest of the day to enjoy.

***Can the packages be customized or changed***?  You will have many choices in the packages that we have prepared, we will make some changes, but they are designed to work together.  If you don’t see everything you want in one of our [complete packages](http://www.cocoabeachweddings.com/florida-packages.html), then we also have a [create your own package](http://www.cocoabeachweddings.com/create-your-own-wedding.html) service list that you can customize your own package from.  We love to hear your ideas so send us an email with the services you would like and we will put a custom proposal together for you at no cost.

***Are there any extra charges for a wedding party or extra guests?*** There is no charge for wedding parties, unless you want to give them boutonnieres, bouquets, or the girls bridal sandals [(see create your own package)](http://www.cocoabeachweddings.com/create-your-own-wedding.html) for photos, descriptions and prices.  There are rehearsal charges that may apply if you want a rehearsal a day ahead of time, or earlier in the day of the wedding.  As for extra guests, our packages are designed for 20 or less guests, but you can have as many as you want and is allowed at your location of choice.  Any additional costs for more then 20 guests are chairs, cake, refreshments and that sort of thing and is minimal.  We will work with you to acquire your distinguished wedding.

***What kind of music will I have at my ceremony?*** If your package includes music (CD/I-POD player) we play music (yours or ours) prior to and upon wedding party entrance, than the song of choice played for bride’s walk down the aisle way, and then  a song will be played after you are pronounced man and wife.  If you have a musician or a D.J. included in your services, than that will be according to what we will arrange for them.

***Do we help with hotel reservations?*** Once we are contracted with you we will certainly offer any assistance with your Hotel.  Unless you have purchased our all inclusive package.

***Do you guys handle the reception?*** We typically don’t get involved in the receptions except for the photography/video or flowers for centerpieces.  (except of course our beach side mini-receptions) We will certainly help you in finding a venue that suits your budget and taste, once you have accepted and contracted your wedding with us.

License:

***Do I need a Florida Marriage License to get married in Florida?*** Yes! You must obtain your own marriage license to get married in Florida.  You can obtain it from any court house in Florida.  It doesn’t have to be from the same county that you are getting married in.  Residents of Florida: there is a 3 day waiting period after you apply for your license.  Non Florida residents: there is no waiting period for you.  Non residents of United States of America: you may need an Apostle Stamp.
The cost of a marriage license is $93.50.  If you are a U.S. citizen, then as a service we will obtain it for you for a fee of $200 which includes the $93.50 cost of the license.  If you are not a U.S. citizen, the fee is $250 and we need at least a month to obtain your license for you.  Obtainment of license is included in some of our packages, or you can just add it in if you want this service.

***Will we need a permit to get married on the beach?***  Some beaches do require permits, and we have done a lot of research and care in making this easy for all of us.   Please see our locations section, where you can see if your location requires a permit.  In most cases, we will obtain it for you as a service.

***Beach wedding attire suggestions including hair, veils and shoes:*** any type of wedding attire you want is great for beach weddings.  Your wedding dress can never be too formal, or too casual.  The groom can wear a Tux, or khakis and a nice shirt.  It is up to you.  As far as your ***hair*** – even on the most beautiful beach days, there is usually a breeze, so remember to have extra pins and possibly hair spray to pin up fly away curls or bangs.  A ***veil*** is beautiful on or off the beach, but can be an annoyance if it is too windy.  Why not a beautiful orchid haku or halo for your hair not only keeps your hair out of your eyes, it is a nice alternative to a veil, and the smell is intoxicating.  (see our bridal hakus in Flowers- alal-carte) Another important thing to understand is high heels are gorgeous but on the beach they can make you look clumsy.  You really can leave shoes off your “to buy list,” since they are not required for beach weddings.  Or a nice white flip flop, or sandal.  But barefoot or our barefoot sandal works best.  (see our barefoot sandals in ala-carte accessories)

Locations:

***Do I have to find my own beach wedding location?*** You may certainly find your own location, however we do have a locations section that has lots of good information that we have gathered to help your choice be made a little easier.   Keep in mind, there must be reasonable access and parking for us and your guests.  For private properties, you must obtain permission.  Some locations require a permit.

***Can we have weddings in locations other than the beach?*** Certainly!  We ourselves are willing to work just about anywhere and thankfully most of our decorations are adaptable to also work anywhere, so if you again make sure we have reasonable access, and permissions, we love to discover new locations.  Again you may check out some parks we currently list in our “locations” section of the website.  There are some exceptional parks in Florida that are not on the beaches.

***Are there any private beaches?*** All beaches are public beaches.  We make the most effort choosing our sites that we know are typically less crowded.  We are creative with blocking people out if they are in the focal view of your pictures and do the best we can to make it look as if you were on a private beach.  Another good alternative is to rent a home or condo on a beach, usually there is less or no traffic in front of private residences.  It is wonderful to have your facility in the same place as well.

***What happens if it rains?*** This is a tough one.  It’s Florida.  It rains here.  Good news is when it does, it usually only last about 20 minutes.  What this typically does for us is clear the beach and cool things off.  We pray about all the weddings we do including for good weather.  If you want to have a beach wedding,  It is a good idea to resign yourself to the fact that rain or bad weather could be a variable.  I can tell you that it presents as a problem so little that we don’t like to dwell on it.  We like to make the most of what we are given everyday and  just like life, when your given lemons, make lemonade, and we usually dance in the rain and end up with wonderful sexy photos.   I believe no one can accurately predict the weather, not even the day of your event, so if your into giving yourself ulcers over this one, then watch the weather, because that is all your going to do.  It’s needless worry.  We will assist you in finding a nearby back up location, but this is ultimately up to you.  We DO HAVE THE CHAPEL. We want you to feel comfortable and will do what we can to achieve that for you.  With that said,  As for your decorations and bad weather, we will do our best to adjust your time around any bad weather.  If we are not able to use the decorations that you have ordered, your money will not be refunded.  Understandably, since we still prepared and transported them.  If the forecast is really bad for your day such as a hurricane, we will do our best to accommodate the next date and time available for you and will carry over all credits due.

***Who is responsible for finding the alternative indoor location***?  It is your responsibility to have your own backup plan, however we will assist you as much as we can.  We will need to know if you want to use location or back up location prior to set up time, since we will only set up our decorations once.

Photography/video:

**Can i see your photography portfolio?** Yes please do [click here](http://sherrilester.smugmug.com/gallery/1003538#179366752_EFKVf), but come back... you can get lost looking at all those pictures.  We also have a facebook portfolio [http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Authentic-Photography-Captured-by-Sherri-Lester-Aguirre/165135803502320](http://www.facebook.com/#%21/pages/Authentic-Photography-Captured-by-Sherri-Lester-Aguirre/165135803502320)

**Do you have any referrals?**  You may scroll to the bottom of my online portfolio page and see the comments past couples have left there, or I have many more upon request and will provide some references,  if you would like to contact them.

***When does the photography start?  How does this flow?*** Our basic photography package which is what comes with all of our packages, includes a start upon arrival to the ceremony site.  Generally we like to take some solo photos of the groom, and of the bride, and wedding party prior to start, then we move into the ceremony and capture all the special moments such as the rings, vows, sand unity ceremony (if applicable) and most importantly, the kiss.  If you have a shell or stone ceremony immediately after the ceremony we capture that then move right into a group shot of all in attendance.  Then the bride’s family starting with the largest group, down to the grandparents, and parents and siblings. We then do the groom’s family the same way.  We then like to do the wedding party and then if you have our beach side mini-reception, we cut the cake and make the toast, and leave your guests enjoying their cake and refreshments, while we take just the couple, or the couple and their children (if applicable) and do all of our famous intimate and romantic portraiture.  This all last about an hour and a half, depending on weather, lighting, guests and family cooperation how many photos we can collect for you.   See our ceremony guideline to work with us design your custom ceremony flow.  Our let us do this for you.

***How many images will we get?*** Again this pretty much depends on guest cooperation and starting on time, but it is safe to say a good average is between 200-400 images for the ceremony location.

***Do I have to purchase my prints from you?***  If you get our basic package, it includes online sharing and high resolution master CD and copyright release.  This means that you also own your images, and you may get them printed anywhere.  We do however offer beautiful prints in any size, and not only prints, but T-shirts, coffee mugs, puzzles, and wrapped canvas.  It is also made convenient for you to order right from your online gallery.  We also offer high quality hardcover linen or leather coffee table books that you can order directly from me at very reasonable prices.  We will do all the artwork and create a beautiful family heirloom.

***Do you do touch ups and editing?*** Well we do basic editing for composition and color balance.  Additional editing is available.  In fact, we also do photo restoration.  Do you have some old family photos that need to be repaired and turned into digital files?  There are a lot you can do with a digital file.  Those precious old images, our artistic ability, and the possibilities are endless.

***We would like a slideshow of images to music for our reception, do you do this?*** Yes, a slideshow of your images to music is only $125., make sure you let us know before we send you your images and we will get that ready for you too.

***Do you do digitalize other images?  Like our old family photographs?*** Yes, we do create digital images for you with your old family photos and we also will restore precious old photographs.  This is great for you to have at your reception.  The bride and grooms childhood pictures up to present.

***We are going to a restaurant or second location for dinner and/or a reception.  Will your photographer/videographer come there and cover the events?*** This is not included in our standard packages, but a photo/video reception/dinner upgrade is available.  See our [Photography ala-carte](http://destinationweddingsofflorida.com/photo%20packages_wedding.html) for more information.

**How long until I get my photos?**We normally have them to you within two weeks of your wedding.