



Destination Weddings in Charleston, South Carolina

Charleston SC, Top Destination Wedding Location in the US

by Glenna Musante

In addition to winning recognition as the number one place to vacation in America, Charleston, South Carolina, is also becoming known as one of the country's most popular spots for destination weddings — it's even trumping Las Vegas.

It's easy to understand why — Charleston is rich with history, many of the best chefs in the country have moved there to open restaurants, the subtropical setting on the water is balmy. And of course there are all those palm trees and carriages, plus the iconic antebellum mansions along the Charleston Battery's Rainbow Row. And did I forget to mention the plantations?



Thousands of couples descend on this city every year to marry, often bringing large wedding parties together at one of the city's hotels in search of that unique experience becoming known as the Charleston destination wedding. After all, says Tressa Wright, marketing director for the historic [Francis Marion](#) hotel on King Street, "Charleston is a good place to have a great time," in addition to being beautiful. The setting and the food, she adds, "offer a real, true taste of the South," and hands down, she says, "that's what brides are looking for."

But planning a wedding at home is tough enough. How does one plan, stage, and pull off the perfect Charleston destination wedding from afar?

First, advises Caroline Bean, the wedding coordinator at the Francis Marion, hire a local wedding planner to manage the details. A large property such as the Francis Marion or the nearby [Belmond Charleston Place](#), routinely works with the city's top wedding planners and vendors. The wedding coordinators at these hotels know which ones can deliver on the promise. With any wedding, says Wright, "you are managing 10 different vendors" and it helps to have someone on location coordinating those details for you.



The Colonial Ballroom at the Francis Marion



The Gold Ballroom at the Francis Marion

Wright and Margaux Gwynne-Vaughan, a wedding planner at the [Belmond Charleston Place](#), add that destination weddings can be easier when most of the activities take place in one hotel. For example, says Gwynne-Vaughan, many of the bridal parties who

anchor in at Charleston Place host most of the events there, from the groom's dinner the night before, to the wedding reception, to the morning after brunch. The brunch, by the way, is becoming very popular. The same is true at the [Francis Marion](#), which offers several grand ballrooms, like the two seen above, as well as smaller, inviting party spaces.

That takes care of the parties, but what about the ceremony? These can be staged at the hotel, says Bean and Gwynne-Vaughan. But if you want a church, the beautiful and historic French Huguenot Church, located in what was Charleston's original walled city, is the chapel of choice recommended by Charleston Place because it can be rented by non-members, only costs \$500, and is not too large for a small to medium-sized wedding.



The famous Charleston Place Hotel in downtown Charleston, SC



Built in 1835, the French Huguenot church is also an easy carriage ride back to any of the hotels along King Street or in the city's historic district. And yes, the horse drawn carriage is an iconic part of the Charleston destination wedding experience.

A hotel in the city's historic district is also a great anchor point for a plantation wedding and the wedding planners at these and other venues can help you pull those details together as well.

Gwynne-Vaughan, Wright and Bean offer these additional tips for your destination weddings in Charleston, South Carolina:

1. Plan ahead. Wedding venues book quickly and far in advance in Charleston.
2. It's smart to begin the planning process with one or two initial scouting visits.
3. Consider having your ceremony on a Friday. The prices may be lower, and the venues may actually be available.
4. Anticipate that every one of the people to whom you send an invitation will attend. With most weddings, a good percentage won't show, but Charleston has become such a popular vacation destination that your attendance may be larger than you expect.
5. Plan time for your wedding party to explore the city and enjoy visiting the plantations or historic sites downtown.

And don't be afraid to dream big! Charleston specializes in hosting fairytale weddings and offers all of the ingredients needed for you to have a magical day.

<https://heartofncweddings.com/destination-weddings-charleston-south-carolina/>

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