



expert advice from a...planner

TEISSIA TREYNET, Firefly Events
New York & Los Angeles, Firefly-Events.com

How should couples begin the planning process?

It's all about organization. Start with a budget, timeline and a design board. The budget will keep you from getting overwhelmed financially, the timeline will give you monthly goals instead of worrying about the daunting year ahead, and the design board will keep you focused.

What are your favorite wedding trends right now?

We love getting inventive with décor, so we're all about the surge in massive installations. Nothing beats a hanging floral canopy over your dance floor or an amazing light wall for your ceremony backdrop. With offices in New York and Los Angeles, we're also connoisseurs of creative cocktails and love to incorporate them whenever we can. We work with some amazing mixologists who really know how to get a party started and can take your event to the next level of customization.

What should couples consider when choosing a venue?

Light! In New York especially it's so important you find a venue that has great natural light. This will be key when you look back at your photos. You should also pay attention to the flow of the space. There's nothing worse than being herded through a room, waiting in line for a drink or simply not knowing where to go next. Make sure your venue allows for a seamless flow throughout the evening.

What are your best tips to keep from going over budget?

Skip the band. Don't get me wrong, bands are fantastic, but so is a great DJ—and they'll save you upward of \$20,000. Another great place to save some money is on your dress. There are tons of designers out there these days that are making beautiful gowns at really great prices.

What's the best reason to hire a planner?

So you don't have to do all the work! Wedding planning should be *fun*; it shouldn't be your job. Also, planners can get the best deals. We have repeat business, which means other professionals are more apt to give us a great rate. Plus, we look at amazing weddings all year long, so we're often able to spot and create new trends before anyone else.

What's your best tip for planning a wedding in six months?

It might seem daunting, but planning a wedding in just a few months is actually kind of fantastic. You have to make decisions much faster but you also don't have as much time to second-guess yourself. Just trust your gut and start checking things off your list ASAP.

flip>> Find more wedding pros in your area in our Ultimate Directory Guide on p. 509