

THE TWO WORDS THAT SEND DREAD THROUGH ANY COUPLE - GUEST LIST. I'M NOT GOING TO LIE- THIS IS THE PART ABOUT WEDDING PLANNING THAT I HATED MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE. FIRST AND FOREMOST - GOOD LUCK!!!

WHAT I THINK IS ALWAYS A GOOD THING IS TO GO WITH A VENUE THAT HAS A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF CAPACITY AROUND THE FIGURE THAT YOU ARE THINKING. NOT ONLY WILL THIS BE A GREAT EXCUSE FOR NOT INVITING PEOPLE, THIS WILL ACTUALLY ALSO HELP YOU KEEP YOUR NUMBERS IN CHECK, WHEN YOUR SECOND COUSIN TWICE REMOVED IS ASKING TO TAKE THEIR NEW GIRLFRIEND OF TWO WEEKS ALONG.

#### 1. FIRST THINGS FIRST - IMMEDIATE FAMILY.

PHEW - THAT WAS EASY!

#### 2. DISTANT FAMILY - THIS IS WHERE THE FUN STARTS

MY THEORY IS THAT IF YOU DON'T ACTUALLY HAVE MUCH OF A RELATIONSHIP WITH THESE PEOPLE IT'S OKAY TO LEAVE THEM OFF. (ESPECIALLY IF YOU HAVEN'T SEEN THEM IN 3 YEARS AND THEY LIVE AROUND THE CORNER.) OTHERWISE ASK YOURSELF - WOULD I BE INVITED TO THIS PERSON'S WEDDING? REMEMBER - THIS IS WHERE IT IS USEFUL TO DRAW THE 'LIMITED SPACE' CARD. OF COURSE THIS ONLY HELPS IF YOUR IMMEDIATE FAMILY IS SUPPORTIVE OF YOU LEAVING CERTAIN FAMILY OFF THE LIST.

#### 3. FRIENDS - SO SIMPLE, RIGHT?

I THINK IT'S ALWAYS A BIT EASIER TO KNOW WHO YOUR CLOSEST CIRCLE IS. I THINK IT'S ALSO REALLY HELPFUL TO ASK YOURSELF IF ITS LIKELY THEY WILL STILL BE IN YOUR SOCIAL CIRCLE IN A FEW YEARS OR EVEN TEN YEARS TIME. ALSO - DO YOU INVITE SOMEONE IF YOUR PARTNER HAS NEVER MET THEM? IN THEORY THAT CAN BE A GOOD GUIDE - IE IF BOTH PPL HAVE NOT MET THE PERSON YET, THEY AREN'T ON THE LIST. HOWEVER, IN REALITY THIS DIDN'T WORK FOR US!

#### 4. WORK COLLEAGUES

IF YOU HAVE WORKED WITH PEOPLE FOR A LONG TIME, THESE PEOPLE CAN PRETTY MUCH BE LIKE YOUR FAMILY. IF NOT, I THINK IT'S REASONABLE TO INVITE VERY CLOSE COLLEAGUES ONLY, OR THOSE WHO YOU HAVE WORKED WITH FOR A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF TIME. I DARE SAY THAT NEWER WORK COLLEAGUES WOULD BE THE LEAST LIKELY TO GET OFFENDED IF THEY ARE LEFT OFF THE LIST.

#### 5. PLUS ONES - OH THE GREAT MEMORIES ARE JUST FLOODING BACK!!

I THINK UNLESS THEY ARE VERY CLOSE FRIENDS IT'S APPROPRIATE TO NOT INVITE PARTNERS UNLESS THEY ARE IN A LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIP OR ARE MARRIED. I THINK IN SOME INSTANCES TOO, IT'S OK TO NOT ADD A PLUS ONE (I.E. WORK COLLEAGUES) ALSO, WHEN YOU ARE TRYING TO KEEP WITHIN A SPACE LIMIT OR BUDGET THE PLUS ONES CAN MAKE OR BREAK YOU. 100 GUESTS PLUS ONE EACH IS A WHOLE OTHER BALLGAME.

## 6. FAMILY FRIENDS

CHAT TO YOUR PARENTS ABOUT THIS. (AGAIN SPACE LIMITATIONS CAN BE HELPFUL)

## 7. KIDS

THIS ONE IS REALLY BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR PARTNER. WE DECIDED TO ONLY HAVE OUR NIECES AND NEPHEWS, AND THAT WAS COMPLETELY FINE BY OUR OTHER GUESTS WHO HAD KIDS. MOST PARENTS LOVE A NIGHT OUT WITHOUT KIDS. THEY WILL MOST LIKELY THANK YOU FOR IT.

SOME HELPFUL TIPS -

NEVER INVITE ANYONE VERBALLY.

IDEALLY KEEP IT FAIR WITH NUMBERS BETWEEN FAMILIES. THIS WAS DEFINITELY NOT THE CASE WITH US (A LOT OF MY FRIENDS AND FAMILY ARE OVERSEAS) BUT IN HINDSIGHT I THINK IT DOES MAKE A LOT OF SENSE TO DO THIS.

INCLUDE YOURSELF IN THE COUNT! (HONESTLY, THIS IS EASY TO FORGET!)

IF YOU ARE CONFRONTED RE NOT GETTING AN INVITE - REPLY WITH 'UNFORTUNATELY WE WOULD LOVE TO INVITE EVERYONE BUT WE ARE LIMITED BY SPACE, OR ARE ALREADY OVER BUDGET!' OR- WE ARE HAVING A VERY INTIMATE WEDDING WITH CLOSE FRIENDS ONLY.

IF YOU CAN'T DECIDE IF YOU SHOULD INVITE SOMEONE, YOU PROBABLY SHOULDN'T

KEEP A SPREADSHEET OF NAMES, NUMBERS, DIETARY REQUIREMENTS AND ADDRESSES. MAKE SURE TO PRINT ADDRESS LABELS TWICE (USEFUL FOR THANK YOU CARDS TOO)

REMEMBER SOME PEOPLE WON'T BE ABLE TO MAKE IT (FACTOR IN AROUND 10%, BUT DON'T RELY ON IT)

BE REALISTIC - THE GUEST LIST REQUIRES NEGOTIATION AND COMPROMISE, AND IT'S TRICKY FOR EVERYONE. ALSO, REGARDLESS OF NUMBERS THERE WILL PROBABLY ALWAYS BE SOME PEOPLE WHO CAN'T MAKE THE CUT.

EXPECT A FEW PEOPLE TO RSVP AND NOT SHOW UP ON THE NIGHT (YES, AFTER YOU'VE PAID)

IF ALL ELSE FAILS, ELOPE.