

Welcome!



Tallahassee Association
of Wedding Professionals

2011 TAWP Bridal Expo

How to Order a Wedding Cake



Tallahassee Association of Wedding Professionals (TAWP)

When should I order it (or start the looking process)?

- Generally speaking it depends on the date of your wedding but most bakeries will suggest you order (on average) 3-9 months before your wedding with 6 months being a good rule of thumb.
- During the busy spring months of March-June most cake bakers will have the most popular dates filled by the time Jan.-Feb. arrive. So it is usually a good idea to start talking to cake bakers by August-September and make your decision by November (for spring weddings) whenever possible.



How much cake should I order?



Things to keep in mind

- When your wedding will be (date)
- Approximate number of invited guests, (not number of invitations)
- How much food you plan to serve, (big meal or lighter fare).
- Time of day reception will take place.
- Will alcohol be served?
- Are you planning to have a Groom's cake and how big will it be?
- Do you already have a certain "LOOK" in mind for the wedding cake?

What Flavors of Cakes are there (and can I taste them in advance)?



Call the bakeries you are interested in and set up appointments to find out what each bakery offers. Generally you will find: yellow, chocolate, marble, almond, lemon, strawberry, carrot, hummingbird, red velvet, pound cake, & Italian Cream. While these are the most common flavors, some may not be available at all bakeries and there may be other flavors a bakery may offer.

You are serving a large number of people, so you may wish to choose a flavor that is popular for the large part of the cake and put your favorite flavor in the top tier to save you're your first anniversary. Some bakeries will let you have different cake flavors in each tier so you should check and see if this is possible. Keep in mind this does complicate the serving process.

Some bakeries will allow you to add filling between the layers, so be sure to ask is this is an option. Common fillings are lemon, strawberry, raspberry, and Bavarian cream. Other fillings may be available at a higher price as well.

What kind of icings are available?



Once again it does depend upon the baker and what they offer but in general you will find buttercream, rolled fondant and cream cheese to be the most common with some variables depending upon the baker.

How are your cakes priced?

This will also vary according to each bakery but most are priced by the serving and will have a base price for basic flavors such as yellow, chocolate etc. with buttercream icing. Most start around \$3.00 a serving and will increase their prices for things like fillings, rolled fondant and more complicated designs. Most bakers will add for things like pearls, gumpaste flowers and other time consuming additions.



What kind of designs can I choose from? (Can I bring one I have seen elsewhere?)

All bakeries should have an album of cakes they have already done for you to look through and will usually allow you to bring pictures you have seen for their approval. They may be willing to do your design or they may suggest something else. Some designs may not be suitable for your size wedding or may need to have dummy cakes used if your wedding is small and the design/set-up you want is large. This will all depend on what you are looking for and that bakers comfort factor.



What about fresh flowers? Can I have them on my cake? Who puts them on?

Most bakers/cake decorators have done this at one time or another, you should check with them about their comfort factor on this. Some florists do not feel comfortable touching a wedding cake so this should be worked out between them. It depends on what you have in mind usually. If an arrangement is made by the florist for the top, most bakers will gladly add it for you. If you are going to just have a few loose blossoms placed on the cake, make sure the flowers are not toxic and free of pesticides. You should never allow stems to be stuck into your cake as you could make your guests sick. It is usually better to either put flowers in a dish or add parchment paper or saran wrap or even wrapped stems between your fresh flowers and your cake unless you know your flowers are non-toxic and pesticide free.



How many meetings (consultations) do you allow?

A great question to ask when scheduling meetings with potential bakers!

Most bakers will allow the first meeting and perhaps one additional follow up meeting without extra charges. Some will allow the first meeting and one additional for free, some will charge for the first meeting but rebate you into your final cost if you book with them.

Most will charge if you decide to totally re-design or make major changes after the contract is written up or if you make a lot of demands upon their time. There is usually a deadline for changes in size or design by most bakers of 2-3 weeks or a month before the wedding.



How are deposits/retainer fees and final payments handled?



All are going to want a deposit or retainer fee up front, most ask for a percentage of the total, usually anything from 20%-1/3 or even half at the time the contract is written. You should ask this question at the time the appointment is made. Some may have a payment schedule but all are going to want the balance paid by a particular date before the wedding, usually 3 weeks or a month before the wedding.

What happens if I need to cancel?



You should check your contract or ask up front. You will usually find a cancellation clause because that baker will have held that space for you on their calendar and possibly turned down business to do your wedding cake. Most will maintain at least part of your payment depending on when you cancel. Usually if you cancel within the last 2-3 weeks most may still expect full payment since they are unlikely to book another wedding cake in your place.

Do you deliver and how far? When?

Most cake bakers will deliver to a specific area and you should check with them about where you would want yours delivered to. Usually there is a delivery fee and with today's gas prices they may have a clause concerning gas prices. They will usually work with you on the time of delivery.

If a florist and caterer are involved it is usually a good idea to work out the best time for the tables to be set-up with the tablecloths, then the cake should arrive and the florist should arrive either at the same time as the cake or after if the florist is the one to add the flowers.

Cakes should be set-up indoors whenever possible as cakes are very sensitive to heat and sun damage and can also be damaged by birds, kids, animals. If your wedding reception is to be held outdoors a tent is advised and shade is suggested. If the cake is to be set-up outdoors the cake tables should be level and delivery just before the start of the reception is advised. Extremely heavy cakes or complicated set-ups should be delivered by the bakery. Presentation and whether it is done by the baker should also be discussed in advance. Some deliveries of a complicated set-up can take extra time and this should be considered in setting up your time schedule for the day.

Special cake stands and their return?

Most bakers/cake decorators will have some special cake stands. If you have something special in mind you should ask up front if they have it or perhaps they will know who you can rent it from. They will normally charge a rental fee for these and usually a deposit will also be added that may be refunded upon its return. You should also ask when you need to return it by. Most will give you a contract that will specify this information or you should be sure and ask.



Katie's
CAKES & CATERING

Thank you for attending!



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