

# Winter Weddings



# Cozy Winter Cuisine

From heartwarming comfort food stations to creative twists on winter classics, these innovative catering ideas bring a touch of warmth and coziness to the celebration.

Innovative catering ideas become a canvas for couples to express their personalities and tastes as they create a celebration that resonates with the season's spirit. Such things as a hot tea and coffee bar, the interactive charm of fondue stations or the reinvention of winter classics can craft an unforgettable culinary experience that complements the cozy atmosphere.

## STEAMING CUP OF COMFORT

A steaming cup of tea or coffee can be more than just a warm beverage. It's an experience that elevates the senses. A hot tea and coffee bar offers an array of aromatic teas, robust coffees and a variety of fixings to create the perfect cup.

Guests can personalize their beverages with choices of creamers, syrups, spices, honey, sugar cubes and whipped cream. It's a thoughtful touch that warms both hearts and hands, allowing everyone to savor their preferred flavors. Another popular option at winter weddings is a hot cocoa bar with cinnamon sticks, marshmallows and



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whipped cream.

## INTERACTIVE CULINARY ADVENTURE

Fondues add an element of interactive indulgence to winter wedding catering. Couples can opt for savory cheese fondue stations with an assortment of bread, vegetables and fruits for dipping. The second course can be pots of oil and broth to cook meat, seafood and vegetables in. For a sweet

twist, a dessert fondue station featuring rich melted chocolate accompanied by marshmallows, fruits and bite-sized pastries creates a delightful ending to the meal. The communal aspect of fondue encourages mingling and conversation, enhancing the overall wedding experience.

## COMFORT FOOD WITH A TWIST

Traditional winter dishes can

take on a new life with creative reinterpretation. Consider serving bite-sized portions of classic comfort foods like mini pot pies, gourmet sliders or elegant macaroni and cheese cups. Serve creamy tomato soup in a bread bowl. Infuse global flavors into the menu with international favorites like spiced lamb stew or vegetable curry. These twists on winter classics not only satisfy appetites but also engage guests with unex-

pected delights.

## SHARING A STORY

Another option that works well for a reception, regardless of season, is for the couple to use it to share their love story. Serve up a favorite meal that the couple has had together. Include a childhood favorite or perhaps the dish the couple ate on their first date. Alternatively, put the couple's favorite candy bar at each place setting.

# Fun Guest Activities

The joy at a wedding lies in both the vows exchanged and the moments shared.

Fun activities that embrace the season's spirit can craft an atmosphere of warmth, connection and delight. It can transform a wedding into more than just an event, but an enchanting journey that your guests take in which they celebrate your love while creating their own cherished memories of your beautiful wedding.

Seek out captivating ideas that make the event an unforgettable experience and take advantage of all the season has to offer. Wedding magazines and social media sites such as Pinterest or Instagram are great sources for ideas to use at receptions. Here are just a few ideas to spark your brainstorming.

## HOT COCOA WONDERLAND

Embrace the coziness of the season by setting up a DIY hot cocoa station. Provide an array of hot chocolate varieties, marshmallows, whipped cream and a collection of flavored syrups. Let your guests personalize their cocoa creations, turning a simple beverage into an interactive winter delight. To add a touch of elegance, include cinnamon sticks, peppermint candies and decorative mugs that double as keepsakes.

## FIRE PITS AND S'MORES

Gather your loved ones around outdoor fire pits adorned with plush blankets and inviting seating. There's something magical about the crackling flames against the winter backdrop. Add a playful twist by offering s'mores kits, allowing guests to roast marshmallows and create gooey delights. The kits can include graham crackers, chocolates, marshmallows, peanut butter cups, Oreos, roasted berries, coconut, banan-



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as or packets of caramel. This activity not only warms hearts, but also encourages bonding and delightful conversations among your wedding attendees.

## PHOTO BOOTHS

Set the stage for memorable snapshots by incorporating a winter-themed photo booth. Provide an array of whimsical props like faux fur stoles, cozy scarves and sparkling snowflakes. Guests can pose with their loved ones, creating candid and heartwarming photos that serve as cherished mementos of your special day. Encourage creativity

and laughter, making your wedding truly picture-perfect. You can also create and distribute your own winter filters for social media photos along with a hashtag created for your wedding.

## KEEPSAKES AND GAMES

Offer your guests unique winter-themed keepsakes that tie into the season's charm. Consider providing personalized mittens, snowflake ornaments or mini pinecone fire starters. Many magazines recommend blankets or throws for outdoor weddings. Elevate the experience further with interactive

games like snow sculpture building competitions or a frosty treasure hunt.

## GINGERBREAD HOUSES

Will you have children at your reception? Or maybe just a lot of people who are kids at heart? Consider having a station where people can build and decorate gingerbread houses, perhaps with a prize for the team able to create the best "dream house" for the newlywed couple. Another option is to ask the caterer to bake gingerbread hearts which guests can decorate and then take home with them.

# Romantic Ice Sculptures

Crafted from frozen water and carved with meticulous precision, these art pieces serve as unique focal points, turning any winter celebration into a mesmerizing spectacle.

With the marriage of artistry and nature's frozen beauty, ice sculptures add a touch of magic to winter weddings that transcend the ordinary. As couples incorporate these creations into their special day, they create memories that are as unique and sparkling as the ice sculptures themselves.

## ART OF DESIGNING

Creating an ice sculpture begins with a vision that marries the couple's personality with the splendor of the season. Couples collaborate with skilled artisans who specialize in turning ideas into icy masterpieces. From elegant monograms to intricate snowflakes, the design can be tailored to the couple's theme and style.

Some ice sculptors may be able to provide a catalog of what they are able to do while others may encourage the couple to bring their own drawings and designs to the meeting. The transformation from a solid block of ice to a sculpture requires the hands of a skilled artisan. They'll use



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a combination of chainsaws, chisels and other specialized tools to carve away layers to reveal the details.

When seeking out an ice sculptor, follow the same sort of steps you do for other vendors. Examine their portfolio. Ask for references. Compare prices. Ask how much experience they have and how they make their sculptures. The larger an ice sculpture is, the

longer it will take to melt. Part of the joy of an ice sculpture is that it will change throughout the day as it melts, becoming more abstract but maintaining its beauty.

Wedding Style magazine suggests using ice sculptures for such things as a drink platter, an ice bar for appetizers or desserts, hanging decoration to replace a chandelier, shot glasses or even entire

landscapes such as arches or ice walls.

## PLACING THE SCULPTURE

Positioning the ice sculpture strategically is key to getting the most out of it. It can be placed at the entrance to the reception or wedding, used as a centerpiece on tables, set at the cake table or even be part of the bar. It can be a conversation starter and a visual delight

for guests.

Ice sculptures are delicate creations that require careful attention. To keep them looking their best throughout the celebration, professionals often incorporate specialized lighting techniques. Colored LED lights can enhance the sculpture's beauty and tie it into the wedding's color palette, adding an extra layer of enchantment.

# Set the Mood with Music

While traditional wedding songs will always be popular, some couples are delving into a spectrum of musical genres, seeking out music that resonates with their distinctive style.

Here's a curated list of (mostly) nontraditional songs for people seeking out a unique wedding experience.

## INDIE FOLK MAGIC

The delicate melodies of indie folk provide an ethereal backdrop for a winter wedding. Some of these songs strike a balance between whimsy and emotion, mirroring a wedding's enchanting atmosphere. Some songs in this genre used in weddings include "We Fell in Love in October" by Girl in Red and "Only Love" by Ben Howard.

## SOULFUL RHYTHMS

Inject soulful rhythms into winter nuptials with songs like "You Are the Best Thing" by Ray LaMontagne or "L-O-V-E" by Nat King Cole. These selections infuse warmth and authenticity, embracing the season's spirit of togetherness.

## CONTEMPORARY JAZZ ELEGANCE

For a touch of sophistication,



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consider contemporary jazz renditions. Tracks like "Feeling Good" by Michael Buble or "Don't Know Why" by Norah Jones add a refined edge to the celebration, capturing the essence of a cozy winter soiree.

## ELECTRIFYING INDIE ROCK

For those wanting a modern twist to their wedding, electrifying indie rock anthems might fill the bill. Tunes like "Dog Days Are Over" by Florence + The Machine and "Shut Up and

Dance" by WALK THE MOON infuse high energy into an event, setting the stage for joyful festivities.

## CLASSICAL CROSSOVER DELIGHTS

Couples can elevate the ambiance with classical crossover pieces that blend traditional elegance with contemporary allure. "Time" by Hans Zimmer or "Bittersweet Symphony" by The Verve reimaged by a string quartet create a fusion of old-world

charm and modern appeal.

## DREAMY AMBIENT SOUNDS

Evoke a sense of magic with dreamy ambient tracks. Songs like "Clair de Lune" by Debussy and "Porcelain" by Moby create an otherworldly atmosphere that transports guests to a realm of enchantment.

## GLOBAL FUSION TUNES

Expand horizons with global fusion tracks that draw inspiration from diverse cultures.

"Bailando" by Enrique Iglesias or "Wavin' Flag" by K'naan bring an international flair, symbolizing unity and love across borders.

## PROCESSIONAL POP SONGS

Wedding Forward Magazine recommended several pop songs that could be played for an upbeat trip down the aisle including "Happy" by Pharrell Williams, "A Thousand Miles" by Vanessa Carlton and "I Gotta Feeling" by The Black-Eyed Peas.

## CLASSIC CHRISTMAS

Non-traditional only in the sense that most people don't think of Christmas carols as wedding music, there are some romantic seasonal songs that infuse the event with holiday spirit such as "I've Got My Love to Keep Me Warm" by Ella Fitzgerald, "You Make It Feel Like Christmas" by Neil Diamond, "A Christmas to Remember" by Dolly Parton and Kenny Rogers and "Kissin by the Mistletoe" by Aretha Franklin. For a more modern option, Jillian Edwards wrote "All My Christmases" as a wedding song.

These musical selections offer a canvas for couples to paint their own winter wedding narrative, embracing the season's beauty while carving their unique path. By venturing beyond the boundaries of conventional romance, couples can curate an unforgettable experience that resonates with their personalities, values and shared journey.

# Bridging Distances

Winter weddings, with their mystical and dream-like charm provide the perfect backdrop for integrating modern technology.

From bringing together distant loved ones through live-streaming ceremonies to offering virtual reality wedding tours, couples are seamlessly weaving technology into their nuptials.

## LIVE STREAMING

For couples whose guest list might be affected by distance, winter storms or unforeseen circumstances, live streaming ceremonies bring the celebration to screens around the world. With high-quality streaming platforms, loved ones who can't be physically present can still witness the vows and heartfelt moments in real time.

Live streaming technology, which has become cheaper and more accessible since the COVID-19 pandemic, ensures that the couple's cherished day is shared with everyone, regardless of location. Some couples will combine projections and videos that can be a part of the live stream and then recorded for posterity.

## VIRTUAL REALITY WEDDING TOURS

To give guests a truly immersive experience, virtual



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reality wedding tours offer a captivating glimpse into the venue before the event.

Guests can explore the reception space, ceremony setting and even take virtual walks through the wintry landscape. This innovative use of technology provides an interactive preview that heightens anticipation and allows guests to connect with the surroundings before they arrive.

## DIGITAL GUEST BOOKS

Replace the traditional paper guest book with a digital version that captures heart-

felt messages, photos and well-wishes from attendees. With touchscreens or tablets strategically placed at the venue, guests can leave their mark in a virtual guest book that becomes a treasure trove of memories.

These digital keepsakes can be easily shared with the couple, making the well wishes accessible long after the celebration has concluded.

## INTERACTIVE PHOTO BOOTHS

Photo booths are not just fun, they can also be a technological marvel. Couples can

incorporate interactive photo booths that offer instant printing and digital sharing options.

Guest can capture candid moments against winter-themed backdrops and instantly receive printed keepsakes or digital copies to share on social media, creating a virtual album that extends the joy beyond the event.

## VIRTUAL WORLDS

For couples who met online, have family and friends throughout the world or who are frequent visitors to virtual worlds, a fully virtual wedding

can be a fascinating possibility. Virtual world weddings transcend physical limitations, enabling couples to exchange vows and celebrate their union in immersive digital environments.

In these digital realms, couples can craft unique and fantastical settings that mirror their dreams and aspirations, from lush garden landscapes to magical castles suspended in the virtual ether. While unconventional, these weddings offer a novel way to connect with loved ones across distances and explore innovative avenues for personalization.



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# Magical Wedding Party Outfits

As winter weaves its enchanting spell, embracing themed attire choices can elevate the celebration's magic to a new level.

From whimsical winter movie-inspired costumes to ensembles pulled from folklore, couples are exploring imaginative ways to dress their bridal party and all those involved in the wedding.

From the youngest members of the bridal party to the most seasoned, these themed ensembles become a testament to the power of imagination, weaving a tapestry of wonder and joy that will be cherished for years to come.

## CINEMATIC WHIMSY

Channeling the charm of beloved winter films, couples are opting for themed attire that pays homage to iconic characters. The bridal party can

embody characters from such movies as "Frozen," "The Chronicles of Narnia" or even "Harry Potter." Bridesmaids can adorn themselves in gowns reminiscent of ice queens, while groomsmen sport dapper ensembles inspired by dashing heroes. These costume-inspired choices transform the wedding into a magical, cinematic experience.

## ENCHANTED FOLKLORE FLAIR

Drawing from age-old stories and folklore, themed attire can transport the bridal party and guests to the pages of fairy tales. Couples may choose attire inspired by mythical creatures like woodland fairies, elves or winter spirits. Bridal party members can don elegant

cloaks, ethereal dresses or even leafy headpieces.

## FAMILY ELEGANCE

Incorporating parents of the couple into themed attire adds an extra layer of sentiment. To ensure harmony, couples can opt for attire that complements the chosen theme while retaining elegance. A shared color palette or coordinating accessory, like a special boutonniere or a stole, creates a visual connection that unites the extended family with the bridal party's vision.

## EXTENDING THE MAGIC

The officiant, a crucial part of the wedding ceremony, can also be included

in the themed attire concept. Whether it's a robe adorned with mystical symbols or a cloak that reflects the chosen theme, the officiant's attire can seamlessly merge with the enchanting ambiance, contributing to the overall magical atmosphere.

Some reception venues will also be willing to add costume elements to the uniforms of the servers and attendants to fit the theme. Many couples have even extended the invitation to dress in costumes or theme to all the guests of the wedding.

By extending themed attire beyond the traditional bridal party, couples craft a wedding celebration that transcends the ordinary and embraces the extraordinary. These creative choices infuse the event with whimsy and charm and allow every participant to become a part of the narrative.

# Winter Wonderland Themes

Embrace enchantment with the frosty air and glistening snow creating a picturesque scene.

From the vintage charm of a ski lodge to the ethereal allure of an enchanted forest, these themes add a touch of magic to the celebration.

The unconventional winter wonderland themes let each couple find a setting that is unique to them. Couples can create an immersive experience that resonates with their personalities and desires. It can transform their wedding into an enchanting journey, leaving an indelible mark on the hearts of all who attend.

## TIMELESS JOURNEY IN TIME

Transporting guests to an era of cozy elegance, a vintage ski lodge theme evokes memories of classic winter getaways. The theme can start with the wedding invitations — done up as ski passes. At the end of the wedding ceremony, have the groomsmen hold up ski poles to create an arch for the couple to walk out under.

Other ways to bring this theme to life involve adorning the venue with antique wooden skis, vintage sleds and plaid blankets. Decor accents like old-fashioned lanterns and rustic wooden signs can add an authentic touch. Each table can be named after a major ski resort. Warm, earthy color pal-



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ettes and classic winter comfort foods, like hearty soups and hot cocoa stations, complete the nostalgic ambiance. Consider having a Swiss cheese fondue with French bread.

## A MAGICAL ESCAPE

For a dreamy and whimsical experience, the enchanted forest theme transforms the venue into a mystical realm. Couples can incorporate fairy

lights, hanging greenery and faux moss to create an otherworldly forest atmosphere. Twinkling fairy lights and lanterns suspended above the dance floor evoke a starlit canopy, while tables adorned with cascading foliage and woodland creatures accentuate the magic. Deep jewel tones and ethereal gowns enhance the enchantment.

However, the theme isn't just

about the venue. Add pine trees or birch trees to the invitation. Put together a woodland welcome package for guests with trail mix, rose petals, pine cones or maybe even a magic wand made from twigs.

## A FROSTY FAIRY TALE

Combining the rustic charm of wood with the icy allure of winter, a rustic ice palace theme marries warmth and

elegance. To achieve this aesthetic, couples can use distressed wooden furniture juxtaposed against shimmering crystal chandeliers and icy blue accents. Faux fur throws, transparent ghost chairs and sculpted ice table centerpieces create a visual contrast that's both cozy and regal. A snowflake motif woven throughout the decor adds a touch of winter royalty.