



A GUIDE TO CHOOSING YOUR  
HAMPTON ROADS, VIRGINIA  
WEDDING VENDORS

*by Angie McPherson Photography*



## *Congratulations on your engagement!*

I'm Angie McPherson, a wedding photographer based out of Hampton Roads, VA! You are most likely knee-deep in wedding planning so I created this e-book to share the secrets of choosing the right vendors for your special day!

I've interviewed some of the TOP wedding vendors in Hampton Roads, including planners, hair stylists, florists, DJs and much more. You'll discover tips for choosing your wedding gown and florist and common mistakes brides make when choosing their wedding day hairstyle and makeup. I'm so thankful for these businesses sharing their knowledge and expertise! I hope you find this e-book helpful and if you have ANY questions, feel free to reach out to me! :)



Angie McPherson Photography  
angie@mcphersonphotos.com





## *Choosing A Wedding Planner*

### **Just Dandy Events**

#### ***What are your 3 tips for choosing a wedding planner?***

1. Make sure their packages meet your specific needs. This seems like a no-brainer, but it's important that you are getting what you NEED out of each of your vendors and especially your planner. Do you need full-service planning throughout the entire process? Or are you looking for someone to execute the wedding day so you can enjoy it? Ask questions and really communicate what you're looking to get out of booking a planner.

2. Meet with them in person and get to know them! Out of all your wedding vendors, you'll likely be working the closest with your planner, so it's important that your personalities mesh well together. And it's an added bonus if you gain a new friend!

3. Communication is worth its weight in gold. If you inquire with a planner, or any other vendor for that matter, and they don't get back to you in a timely manner, move on. It's so important that you feel valued as a client and that you and your wedding are getting the attention you require throughout the planning process.

#### ***What is the biggest mistake brides make when trying to plan their own wedding?***

So many couples consider themselves DIY couples, which is AWESOME... to a point. There are tons of things that they can do themselves, and do well, to really showcase their personalities and relationship throughout their wedding. However, a lot of couples also think that because they are the do-it-yourself type, that they can do EVERYTHING themselves. That's just not true. Having a planner can really help couples hone in on what is great to DIY and what is best to trust a professional with. This bit of insight can save you time and money in the long run....not to mention unnecessary stress!

#### ***What is the best or most unique thing about your service?***

I'm a problem solver by nature. I love being the person that my couples can come to when they are having a difficulty while planning their wedding. Whether it be working with a really tight budget or handling tricky family dynamics, I love being the person that can help them navigate through the issue and get back to enjoying being engaged and planning for their future together!

# *Choosing A Wedding Photographer*

**Angie McPherson Photography**

## ***What are 3 tips for choosing a wedding photographer?***

1. Find someone who suits your style. Are you drawn to light & airy, dark & moody, or something else? Candid, posed or a mix of both? Find what aligns with your vision for the wedding and visit photographer websites and galleries.

2. Find someone who suits your personality. Your wedding photography experience should be personal! Visit their social media profiles and pay attention to their email tone to see if they are someone you genuinely like as a person. I truly believe your photographer shouldn't be seen as just a vendor, but a friend. This will help you to feel relaxed and comfortable while getting your pictures taken during your engagement session and wedding day. A relaxed couple = better pictures and a better experience.

3. Find someone whose photography experience suits your needs. You will probably see quite a few different packages when inquiring with various photographers. In addition to wedding day coverage, do you want a second photographer, engagement session and digital files? Before you make your decision based on cost alone, study the packages to see that it includes everything you need.

## ***What is the biggest mistake brides make when it comes to planning for photography?***

Not allowing enough time for portraits and special details on the big day! Be sure to work with your photographer to create a timeline that accommodates enough time for different aspects of the day, especially your romantic portraits!

## ***What is the best or most unique thing about your service?***

I like to keep the photography experience fun, easygoing and light-hearted! Engagement sessions are included in my photography packages so we can get to know each other better before the wedding. I'm here to help my couples every step of the way!



# Choosing A Wedding Dress

## Studio I Do Bridals

### *What are your 3 tips for choosing a wedding dress?*

1. Give yourself plenty of time! It typically takes between 4-6 months for a gown to come in and you will need to add an additional 6 weeks for alterations. Giving yourself time for these timeframes will greatly reduce stress when picking out a dress!
2. Bring only a few people you trust to your appointment. Everyone will have an opinion so you need to bring friends and family who will be both honest and encouraging.
3. Let the dress pick you! Relax and pay attention to how you FEEL when you see yourself in the gown. If you feel comfortable, beautiful and joyful-that's the one!

### *What is the biggest mistake brides make when searching for their wedding dress?*

Don't try on a gown that is outside of your price point. There are plenty of options within your budget so stick to dresses that fit your budget otherwise you run the risk of falling in love with a gown that you can't afford and it adds stress to the process that is unnecessary.

### *What is the best or most unique thing about your service?*

We have the largest selection of dresses in the Hampton Roads area with a dedicated stylist for each bride. When you come in for your appointment, you get one on one attention with one of our bridal gown experts who can answer all of your questions and help you choose the perfect gown.







## *Choosing A Hair Stylist*

### **Stephanie Michelle Hair**

#### ***What are your tips for choosing a hair stylist?***

Ask around, a referral is a great way to find a hairstylist! This way you can get a genuine firsthand review from someone you trust. The Hampton Roads wedding community is large, but for us it is a small group and chances are we have all worked together at least once. If you don't get any help asking friends and family, don't worry. The next best people to ask will be your event planner or venue manager, photographer, even your cake designer!

#### ***What is the biggest mistake brides make when choosing their hair style?***

Skipping a trial appointment with your hairstylist. Especially if you are having any doubts on what style to go with or are thinking about using a hair stylist that does not have experience with formal or editorial styling. I love trial appointments! This gives us a chance to discuss any and all the details without being on a timeline. I like to see the dress, talk about the veil placement or any hair accessories and look at inspiration photos. It's very common for a bride to bring a friend or family member to the trial appointment for reassurance on their choice and that's great, but remember to go with what makes YOU feel beautiful and confident! Don't make a decision based on how someone else sees you on your wedding day.

#### ***What is the best or most unique thing about your service?***

We travel to you, it takes so much stress away for the entire bridal party! It's much more relaxing to be able to get ready at your wedding site or at a location nearby. Even though there is definitely a timeline the day of, you and your party won't have the strict schedule of a salon, worrying about driving around or people showing up on time for their appointment. It can be hard managing a large group! When your beauty team travels to you, you get the unique opportunity to relax and to bond with your closest friends and family before you walk down the aisle.

# *Choosing A Makeup Artist*

## **Dhalia Edwards Makeup**

### ***What are your 3 tips for choosing a makeup artist?***

1. Make sure your artist has wonderful wedding reviews, there is a difference between artists that specialize in weddings and ones that specialize in individual services. Wedding days can be very busy and hectic at times so you have to be prepared and have a great work ethic under timeframes and pressure to get the job done on multiple faces.
2. Make sure your artist has a selection of 4-5 different eyelashes. Not everyone's eye shape are the same and you have to consider age and makeup style request. You cannot put huge dramatic lashes on everyone.
3. Make sure when doing your trial that the artist has options of 3-4 different foundations/airbrushes. Everyone's skin type is different and the requested look also plays a factor on if you'll need natural coverage, medium coverage or full on coverage.

### ***What is the most common mistake brides can make when it comes to their wedding day makeup?***

When the bride doesn't require that her bridesmaid get professional makeup done! If you're going to look fabulous, you want all your girls to look beautiful too. This is just going to make all your bridal group photos look great and everyone will pop and not have an odd ball from the bunch.

### ***What is the best or most unique thing about your service?***

First and foremost, I love to talk about skin care. Your makeup will look 10 times better if you take care of your skin and pamper it. I'm always giving skin care tips based on what I use and personally love.



# *Choosing A Florist*

## **Fluttering Flowers**

### *What are your 3 tips for choosing a florist?*

1. Check out the reputation of your florist; look at their website and reviews.
2. Meet with your florist. Are they willing to give you what you want? Not what they think you need.
3. Choose a florist you feel comfortable communicating with.

### *What is the biggest mistake brides can make when choosing wedding florals?*

Talk with your florist about what flowers will withstand your wedding conditions; such as wind or possible high temperatures. Be willing to substitute similar flowers that fit your vision.

### *What is the best or most unique thing about your service?*

We believe every bride deserves to have her special day. We strive to make each wedding unique to the bride. We also do require a minimum on florals and we allow our brides to use our vases and votives at no charge.





# Choosing A Wedding Cake

## Kadi Bakes

### *What are your 3 tips for choosing a wedding cake?*

1. Know your crowd! What the two of you and your guests like, matters. If you are huge cake fans order a beautiful cake, if you want options you can opt for a dessert bar + cake combo. There are always options!
2. Maintain guest safety. When you hire a professional pastry chef/cake designer they should have license, insurance and inspection if home based. They will help walk you through allergy specifications and offer expertise on what they can offer. I personally offer vegan, gluten free, and dietary restricted items! That's why you hire a pro!
3. Have fun and eat fresh cake! Enjoy your beautiful wedding and know that Kadi Bakes created your sweets within the last 24-48 before your wedding. On your anniversary, call Kadi and order a discounted 4" cake to enjoy instead of eating frozen cake!

### *What is the biggest mistake brides can make when choosing their wedding cake?*

Thinking that anyone can do it. You may be awesome in the kitchen, but do you want to be baking until 2 am when you're supposed to be resting for your wedding?

Do you want to get a last minute call from your friend of the family because XYZ happened to the cake on the way to the ceremony? Invest in a stress free, fresh, yummy cake/goodies! I promise you don't want to leave the last course to chance!

### *What is the best or most unique thing about your service?*

You are not an invoice number. You matter to me, and I own and operate my business! I started Kadi Bakes because people matter to me, and so does dessert. I am a professional pastry chef with years of experience, and I am passionate about getting to know you, what you love, and what you want to eat at your wedding, and then creating the perfect items for the sweetest day of your life!



# *Choosing Your DJ*

## **Astro Entertainment**

### *What are your 3 tips for choosing a wedding day DJ?*

1. Research their website to make sure they're reputable. If they DON'T have a website, I'd question their credibility.
2. Meet the DJ. Make sure that you feel comfortable with their ability and personality. It's very important that the bride and groom are a good fit .
3. Research their reviews. Get the opinion of how other brides and grooms view the DJ.

### *What is the biggest mistake brides can make when choosing a DJ?*

One of the biggest mistakes a bride and groom can make is hiring a DJ who is NOT a wedding DJ. There is a big difference between a club DJ and a wedding DJ. They are like two different animals. Make sure the DJ knows that weddings have a certain format.

### *What is the best or most unique thing about your service?*

The most unique thing about our company is that not only do we offer a wide variety of DJs, we also offer photo booths, uplights, and day-of-coordination.





# *Choosing Your Wedding Day Lighting*

## **Blue Steel Lighting Design**

### *What are your 3 tips for transforming a wedding day with lighting?*

1. Uplighting is the most impactful way to create ambience. Whether you are looking for classic and romantic or fun and celebratory, it's definitely a must!
2. Pinspotting your guest tables will help highlight the details of your centerpieces and add a glamorous touch! If the budget doesn't allow for all the centerpieces, focus on the larger centerpieces and the cake!
3. Add personalization to your wedding with a custom monogram! This could be showcased on the dance floor or a wall!

### *What is the biggest mistake brides can make when choosing reception lighting?*

Eliminating a wash for the dance floor. This is a subtle yet stunning enhancement for all those special moments that occur on the Dance floor. From the first dance to the toasts, this feature adds a wash of light for that added elegant touch!

### *What is the best or most unique thing about your service?*

Being a full service production company, most of our packages are customized to fit each couples needs. We enjoy meeting with and getting to know them to help make their wedding a reflection of their style. Visiting our studio to get visuals of chandeliers, draping, specialty bulb lighting and many other options is how it all begins! The possibilities are endless!



# *Choosing Wedding Day Rentals*

## **Waterford Event Rentals**

### ***What are your 3 tips for choosing wedding day rentals?***

1. It's super important to "know" your venue! When meeting for linens, it's very crucial to know table sizes, what kind of chairs are provided and if there are any linens included.
2. It's also very helpful to have an idea of an estimated guest count. All of our rentals are a la carte, so in order to give a good proposal, we need to have an estimated number of guests attending.
3. Inspiration pictures. We all love Pinterest, but when choosing rentals, it's so helpful to have some pictures that you love. This will help us make sure we are grasping your vision.

### ***What is the biggest mistake brides can make when choosing their rentals?***

The biggest mistake that brides make is just doing what everyone else does. This is your time to shine! Take your time, don't rush through and pick "whatever works." Fall in love with your rentals because they will make such a huge impact on the wedding day.

### ***What is the best or most unique thing about your services?***

At Waterford Event Rentals, we provide a complimentary consultation to come in and view our rentals. We sit down with each client, chat about details, colors, centerpieces, etc and then go into our warehouse and pull items that we think our clients will love. Rather than a client feeling overwhelmed, we want everyone to have a one on one experience.







*I hope this guide was useful in your planning process!*

If you'd love more information about these amazing vendors, please visit their websites.

If you'd like to chat with me about my wedding photography experience,  
feel free to send me an email :)

---

ANGIE@MCPHERSONPHOTOS.COM

[WWW.MCPHERSONPHOTOS.COM](http://WWW.MCPHERSONPHOTOS.COM)

 @ANGIEJANINE