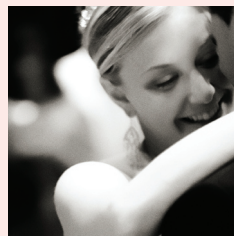
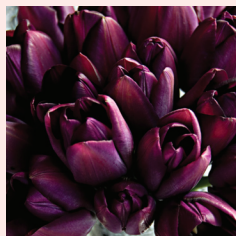


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To Decorate or To Hire a Decorator? By Elana Lancit



PHOTO BY YALETOWN WEDDING GALLERY

If you're a bride-to-be trying to determine the décor you want, you know it's a daunting task. There are so many magazines available, each offering a plethora of wedding decorating ideas. How do you achieve a personal style, particularly if décor is not a subject in which you're well-versed?

The project may appear fun in the beginning, but when you begin to recognize the factors involved and experience required to do the job properly, it can become overwhelming, stressful and unnecessarily expensive.

That's when you know it's time to turn to a professional decorator. Before you make contact, though, consider your colour choices and the kind of atmosphere you want to create. A professional decorator will listen to your ideas and create a personal look for your wedding within the confines of your budget.

When you meet with a professional wedding decorator, you'd be wise to ask the following questions:

1. Is the company fully insured? Does the company have a business license? Ask to see a copy of insurance and the license.

2. As you browse through the designer's portfolio pictures, find out if these are weddings they have decorated or if they are images from a different company or magazine.
3. What are the different design styles, themes and inventory available?
4. Is the inventory in stock or does the designer sub-contract this service? If the items are sub-contracted what is the markup price?
5. Do they have inventory on hand to show you? What condition is their inventory in?
6. How many trained staff does the company employ? How many events do they book a day?
7. Are there any hidden costs that you should be aware of?
8. Ask yourself if you like the designer's work and trust him/her. Are they passionate about what they do?
9. Is the decorator creative? Do they work with today's trends?
10. What kind of service and response did you get prior to and during your meeting? This should be a reflection of the kind of service you can expect in the future.

Remember that professional wedding decorators stay with wedding industry standards and tend not to lower prices just to get a booking. All services booked should be in writing, clearly showing all decorating prices, terms and details.

Elana Lancit, President of Sweet Beginnings™ is a Professional Bridal Consultant™. Sweet Beginnings™ has several locations in the Lower Mainland to serve you better. Please visit us at www.asweetbeginning.com for a professional wedding planner in your area.

Floral Décor Checklist

COLOURS

- Traditional
- Monochromatic
- Multicoloured
- Modern

STYLE OF WEDDING

- Classic
- Contemporary
- Garden
- Victorian

STYLES OF FLOWERS

- Fresh flowers
- Dried flowers
- Silk flowers

WEDDING PARTY

- Bridal bouquet
- Bridal throw-away bouquet
- Bridal headpiece
- Maid of honour's bouquet

- Bridesmaid bouquet(s)
- Jr. bridesmaid bouquet(s)
- Flower girl's basket (wreath, pomander, bouquet)
- Flower girl's headpiece
- Groom's boutonniere(s)
- Groomsman boutonniere(s)
- Ushers' boutonniere(s)
- Ring-bearer's boutonniere

FLOWERS TO BE WORN BY OTHER WEDDING PARTY MEMBERS:

- Mother of the bride's corsage: wrist or pin-on
- Mother of the groom's corsage: wrist or pin-on
- Step parents' corsage or boutonniere
- Grandmother's corsage(s): wrist or pin-on
- Grandfathers' boutonniere

- Father of the bride boutonniere(s)
- Father of the groom boutonniere
- Aunts' corsage(s) wrist or pin-on
- Uncles' boutonniere(s)
- Cake Knife corsage
- Readers' corsage or boutonniere
- Guest book attendant's corsage
- Gift table attendant
- Special or honoured guests

FLORAL CHECKLIST

- Floral Arch or Huppah
- Altar arrangement(s)
- Pew arrangement(s)
- Aisle Runner
- Candelabra arrangement(s)
- Door or Doorway floral decor

RECEPTION FLOWERS

- Head table arrangement(s)
- Buffet table arrangement(s)
- Cake Flowers
- Cake table arrangement(s)
- Guest table arrangement(s)
- Door or Doorway floral decor
- Ladies' Powder Room
- Men's Room

SERVICES

Are there additional charges for delivery, setup and take down at ceremony and reception site?
