



VIVID EXPRESSIONS LLC PRESENTS

2021

# WEDDING TRENDS REPORT

---

JAN 2021/ PREPARED BY JANEL BAILEY KEEN

# CONTENTS



ANGIE MCPHERSON PHOTOGRAPHY

---

## 03

INTRODUCTION  
+ OVERVIEW

---

## 06

PLANNING +  
PREFERENCES

---

## 09

FOOD +  
BEVERAGE

---

## 11

DESIGN +  
DECOR

---

## 16

SPACES +  
ENVIRONMENTS

---

## 18

GUEST  
EXPERIENCES

---

## 20

ABOUT US +  
CONTACT

# 2021 WEDDING TREND REPORT

Ok, let's just address the elephant in the room by name, shall we? Yes, the unthinkable happened.

COVID-19 impacted every aspect of our lives in 2020 - especially the events industry. Overnight an industry built on serving "large numbers of people gathering together" what paused, postponed and even cancelled due to the dangers of "large numbers of people gathering together".

Although a great deal of the trends we'll see going forward will have some ongoing impacts from COVID-19, it won't be the **ONLY** trend influencer in 2021 (Thank goodness).

In fact, financial forecasts show a **tremendous up surge of weddings and spending** that will **begin starting in 2021** and moving forward (see page 5 of this report, "Bad News... and Good News"). Also, the "Creativity Game" has been elevated to a higher level than we've seen in years. I'm excited for the solutions that continue to slowly move the wedding industry forward. The following report will focus on 30 Wedding Industry Trends for 2021 in 5 major buckets:

- Planning & Preferences
- Food & Beverage
- Design & Décor
- Spaces & Environment
- Guest Experiences

As always, if you have questions or need support remember, I'm only an email away. Here's to a better future, momentum and all the magic we will create for couples in 2021 and beyond.

Cheers,

*Janel Bailey Keen*

**JANEL BAILEY KEEN**  
**VISIONARY &**  
**EXECUTIVE CREATIVE DIRECTOR**



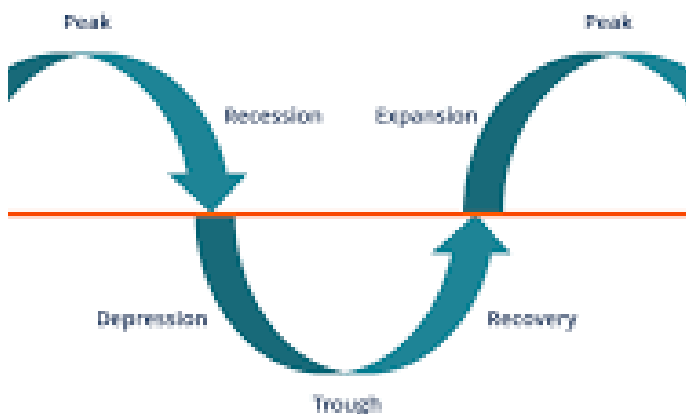
# BAD NEWS... AND GOOD NEWS!

There's not doubt that 2020 has been a challenging for many industries but especially the wedding, conference, and special events industry.

"The Bad News" this COVID-19 was an unusual catalyst for a common phenomenon. Businesses cycle through this regularly. Sure, it may not be as drastic but sometimes it's a dot.com bubble or a housing bubble or a recession. And this time it was a global pandemic.

"The Good News" is, its a cycle and even though it feels like a "Recovery" is not happening, the truth is, it is. More than that, a surge is coming. When it happens it will happen fast. The Best News this is now is the time to prepare and position yourself to ride the wave. The information in this report is a good place to start. There's an increase in both events and spending around the corner. Focus the grown between them and get ready now.

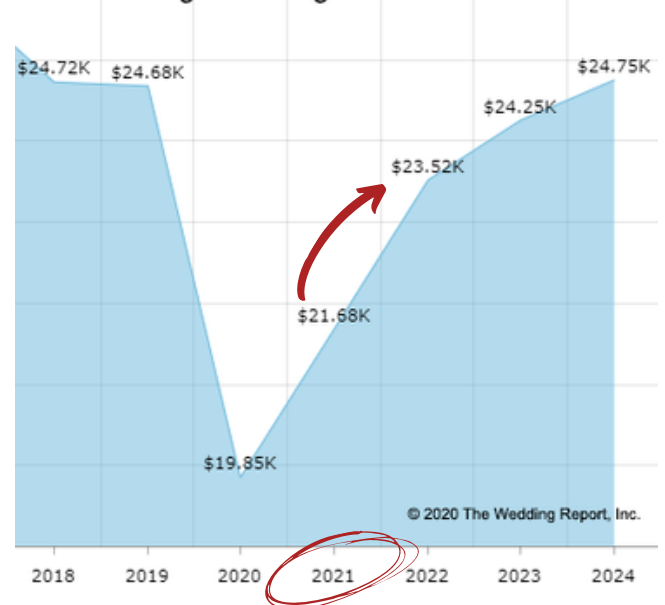
## Business Cycle



Number of Weddings 2018 to 2024



Average Wedding Cost 2018 to 2024



Bad News... and Good News

Weddings in 2021 and  
**BEYOND**

## AVOID THE "LOW-PRICE, LOW-QUALITY" PERCEPTION

Now is the time to position yourself "where you *want* to pick-up the wave, not *behind* it". Don't lower your price or value out of fear and anxiety. Putting yourself and business in a state of deficiency will not help you and won't help clients understand your hard work. Remember, a "purchasing decision" is not based on budget, approval or timing. It's made on the perception of resolving a desire, especially with creative or luxury purchases. 41 % of luxury consumers say "the feeling" they get when buying luxury products is better than sex (Really?). 47% say it's better than "the feeling" on a great first date. There will always be someone willing to do a worse job for less and position themselves as cheap. Never engage in a race to the bottom.

## WEDDING STATISTICS: THE COUPLE'S PERSPECTIVE

THEY'RE EXCITED AND READY FOR EVENTS TO MAKE A COME BACK.

92%

*92% who're postponing have already booked a new date.*

29%

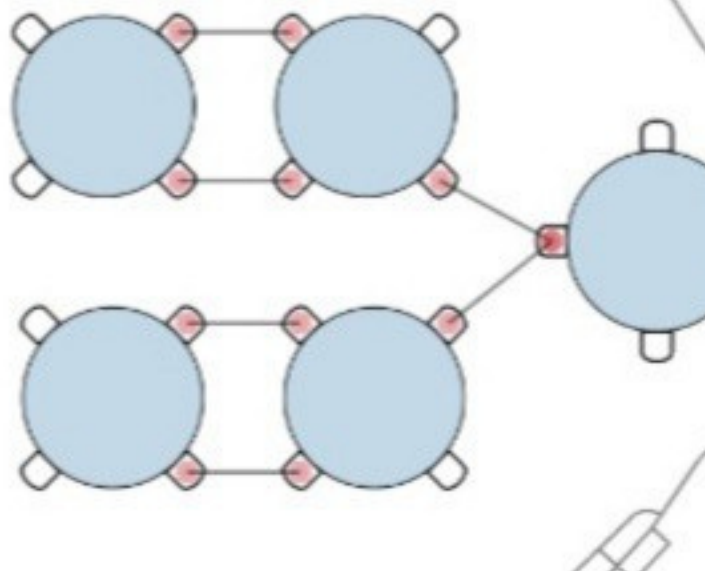
*29% are choosing to "SPEND MORE" on dream must-haves*

3  
OUT OF 4

*3 out of 4 couples postponed their wedding one time, while 1 out of 4 postponed two or three times in 2020.*

96%

*96% of couples prioritize guest safety as a very important factor, and safety protocols are the new norm.*



## PLANNING + PREFERENCES:

### 1. HYBRID WEDDINGS

# "62%"

*of event planners say that the future of events is hybrid."*

#### **\*Budget Note:**

*Overall, smaller weddings are leading to bigger focus on guest experiences and a larger "per guest" spending budget.*



So, standard wedding planning **will** continue to be in the works in 2021. The truth is nothing will truly replace the large or live event experience and nothing will replace people planning them either. But many planners are also seeing Hybrid Weddings continuing to be an option for couples who want feel secure, safe, and have an immediate solution. Hybrid weddings, of course, are an alternative event format that uses untraditional guest counts, layouts, technologies, or a range of solutions,

We'll still see these Hybrid Wedding options most in 2021:

- **Micro Wedding:** \*Small wedding ceremony and/or reception. Typically less than 50 people. Note: Deeply custom, elaborate and intimate weddings may also be referred to as, "Micro Luxe" or "Permintimate" (personal and intimate).
- **Split-Date Micro Wedding:** Small Ceremony planned for the present and larger reception at later date. (also called "Sequel Weddings")
- **On-site overflow Wedding:** The ceremony or reception may be spread out over the distance of different rooms or locations over a venues property (including indoor and outdoor)
- **Off-site virtual Wedding:** Smaller ceremony and reception access for additional guests to attend virtually through streamline and other interactive experiences.

# PLANNING + PREFERENCES:

## Other planning trends

### 2. Smaller weddings, not smaller budgets

One benefit of a smaller guest count (less than 50 guests) is the ability to go "big" on other aspects like decor, food, details, etc to create a more elaborate event experience.

### 3. 2-Extremes: DIY vs. Professional Touch

Initially Brides (and Grooms) consider DIY planning primarily for 1 of 2 reasons; to "save money" or feel a sense of "control over the planning". Because of this, we may see a small resurgence of easy, low-end looks like (dare I say it?), mason jar centerpieces. However, as the year progresses, brides will want to go back to quality and lowering stress. They'll want to work with a "Professional Planner or Designer" for the exact same reasons. Professionals, of course, "save money" and present "the most available options" to couples (thanks to professional contacts). It will be extremely important to have strong knowledge and systems in place to stand out as the expert.

### 4. Visual Planning:

"Visual planning" has always been a key part of our process at Vivid Expressions LLC for over 15 years. Now that so much planning will be done virtually, visual planning & presentations will be more important than ever. Well beyond Zoom, expect to see visual presentations used to develop and communicate compelling design concepts, estimating materials, plan logistics, and more.



### 5. Quality & diversity in vendor selections:

More couples are taking factors like diversity, quality of service, personal connection, and skill level as they choose their vendors.

### 6. Styled shoot wedding experience:

Many couples shift their funds into "getting more of what they want", which will include more floral focused, curated, and detailed wedding ceremonies and receptions. Expect to see couples, their designers, and their photographers to use this opportunity to style and create an editorial/styled shoot as well as an environment to make memories.

### 7. Unique statements & non-traditional twists:

Millennial couples are known for avoiding "cookie cutter" weddings. They are certainly not shy about hiring pros to do ariel shots, project floor-to-ceiling inactive environments, or a Mentalist to stroll and live perform for guests. Expect to see them actively seek technologies, artists, fashion, decor, and experiences to add personalized touches and modern twists.

### 8. Color, Capes, and Colossal Accent:

- Color- When planning attire, expect to see more colorful selection in suits for both Grooms and even some Brides.
- Capes - Bridal gown capes will continue to be popular (sheer, billowing or embellished)
- Lace - From sexy illusions and romantic beautiful backs, expect to see lots of lace.
- Big Accents - Look for clean, modern gowns accented with BIG, exaggerated bows and ruffle that create distinctive yet clean lines and interest.

# 25%

*25% are also relieved and even finding consolation in the extra planning time.*

# 55%

*55% of couples are scheduling virtual wedding vendor appointments*

# FOOD & BEVERAGE:



## 9. Continuing Food Trends:

When it comes to celebrating during events, guest safety will continue to a priority. Of course, guests will more than likely be wearing masks except when eating and drinking but when they're not wearing masks these trends will a focus to increase comfort levels. Visible attention on food safety - branded masks, hand sanitizer bottles, and of course gloves

- Menus that feature sustainable, seasonal and locally sourced foods.
- Plant-based food options
- "Grab & go" - specialized and theme treats are always way to express a couple's personality but individual presentations of snacks and treats remain popular

## SERVING STYLES, TRENDS AND SAFETY

### 10. Re-imagined family style & servings

Newer trends appearing in 2021 are influenced by guest comfort and safety. Re-imagined "Family style & servings" ex: personal charcuterie boards as Hors d'oeuvres

### 11. Individually packaged

We've seen pre-wrapped utensils before in casual event dining but expect to see this elevated with formal silverware pre-packed to be both safe and elegant.

### 12. Individual mini desserts & small cutting cakes

Couples with small weddings may choose a mini, single tier cake along with complementing individual desserts.

### 13. Al fresco dining & Bistro celebrations

We saw an uptick of outdoor dining due to COVID-19 restrictions but the truth is, when the weather permits, couples and guests will welcome the idea of being outside. Expect to some creative and enchanting al fresco receptions.

### 14. Flexible catering options

All-inclusive packages and "minimum Food & Beverage" requirements have been a sure way to attract couples to book with venues. However, with guest counts dropping, these options are not as appealing. Venues who offer custom options or showcase flexibility will attract more couples.



Sam Hughes Photography

# 55%

*55% have changed their food  
service plan to be plated in 2020*

*(for context, 64% of wedding meals were  
served buffet or family-style according)*



# DESIGN + DECOR

## **5. Concept Lighting**

The trend of creative concept lighting will gain popularity in 2021. Concept lighting is a more elevated, theme, or creative interpretation of lighting equipment. Yes, you'll see standbys like uplights, gobos, and color washed walls but you'll see massive cascades of twinkle lights and other artistic effects.

## **16. Vintage & Unique Seating Options:**

Defined theme areas, Large statement furnishing, unique seating and comfortable living room decor will be popular. Creating a safe, relax yet elegant environment will be top of mind in wedding design. You'll see these seating options in the ceremony (making use of the space from smaller wedding), as vignettes during cocktail hours and at the reception, and even in unusual tablescapes designs

## **17. The Great Big Outdoors Everywhere**

Fresh and luscious greenery will continue to be seen in ceremonies and tablescapes. Perhaps it's the desire to be outside but expect to see fresh elements used in many different styles and themes from large tropical leaves to flowing garlands and vines.

You'll see them being used in everything from simple and rustic to grand and modern designs. Speaking of grand, expect to see statement ceremony pieces continuing to in popularity as more of a focus and spending will go into more intentional and elaborate ceremony designs and statement, focal points at receptions.

# 56%

*56% of couples are shrinking  
their guest list*

# 49%

*49% are considering streaming  
their wedding for a longer-list  
of attendees*

# DESIGN + DECOR

## COLOR

Expect to see the following collections of vivid displays of color in wedding design:

- **Color(s) of the year 2021: Yellow & Gray**

Just like in 2016, this year's color is actually 2 colors - Illuminating Yellow and Ultimate Gray. As with most "colors of the year" it may take a little while for this color to filter down but for those who naturally gravitate to yellow, sunflowers, and warm colors the this color will be a welcome addition and hopefully a cheery, sun kissed glow to 2021.

- **Warm & Earthy:**

Continuing with the longing for being outdoors and being more grounded expect to see more neutral, warm earth-tones such as; cream, sand, cappuccino, and terracotta

- **Happy & Vibrant:**

Couples are looking to bring more joy into their weddings and what better way than with vibrant colors. Expect to see more "happy" colors like; butter yellows, light pinks, papaya orange, aqua, etc.

- **So fresh, so green:**

Along with seeing greenery in florals and decor you'll see couples bringing the fresh, natural feel of green with colors like; olive, mint, matcha, and other deeper foliage tones

- **Soft, relaxed and muted:**

After a high-anxiety year like 2020, some couples will introduce a feeling of calm and romance with light blues like cornflower, robins egg, periwinkle, and pastel or muted hues like lavender and dusty rose.

- **The Metallic Touch:**

Yes, you'll still see plenty of rose gold but metallic colors will have a moment too. You'll still see some "mixed metallics" but you'll see more accents and touches of warm, yellow or antique gold.



# #18

## 5-Color influences to watch

# STYLE INFLUENCE SPOTED

## *Royal Regency Era Style Re-imagined*

*Movies and pop culture are always great inspiration. The hit Netflix series "Bridgerton" takes a modern, multicultural twist on Regency era London and is gaining momentum as a source for design inspiration.*

*It features a breathtaking range of over-the-top outdoor galas, grand romantic gardens parties, and exquisite, elegant colorful fashions that are sure to influence weddings as the year moves forward.*

# DESIGN + DECOR

## 19. Sentimental Ceremonies:

Couples will want to make every moment of their wedding to count and be intentional in every part of the event. This means ceremonies will have a true focus on design and detail. Alters will have personalized, elaborate and even iconic looks. They will be designed with details and more meaningful focuses on each accent of the ceremony.

## 20. Floral focus and outdoor foliage:

Once again, there's something about nature. Couples (typically brides) will be more focused on bringing in flowers and freshness into the decor. Expect to see greenery and flowers prominently incorporated into the designs.

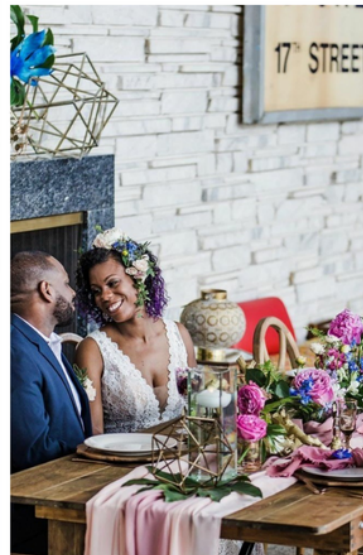
## 21. Personalize and elaborate details:

A more custom look will be more in demand. Some couples will want elaborate, well curated designs while others will want their looks to be less over-the-top but extremely personalized with lots of details.

## 22. Back to nature bouquets:

Dramatic statement bouquets will still be around but overall it will color, innovation, and feel will be more important than size. Expect to see more of the following:

- **Bouquet shape** (most popular):  
Nature inspired Hand-tied
- **Bouquet Styles:**
  - Timeless, romantic, and neutral
  - Vivid, modern, and bold
  - Soft and feminine
- **Bouquet materials:**  
Fluid, leaves/foilage and other natural elements will play an accent and even focal role not just filler,
- **Bouquet flowers & colors:**  
Antique pastels (antique hue flowers), cream, beige, taupe, and soft yellows,



# SPACES + ENVIRONMENTS

## 23. Defined & perceived space

Backdrops like drapery, greenery walls, etc. will continue to be part of room decor but there will be a demand for more creative ways to define spaces (and distance) and visually imply the flow and directions (also known as "way-finding") as guests move through events. Decorative and theme signage will continue to be seen but other ways including distinctive flooring and area rugs, clear dividers and pillars, large art pieces, displays, and other visually suggested barriers like large plants, side tables, and ottomans.

## 24. Tents

As mentioned before, Al fresco or Bistro dining when ever available (and weather permitting) will continue to grow in popularity. Expect to see more planning that will include home/backyard tents, clear tents, custom dance floors, and other decor like draping and lighting to enhance the look.



## 25. House rentals & extended weekday:

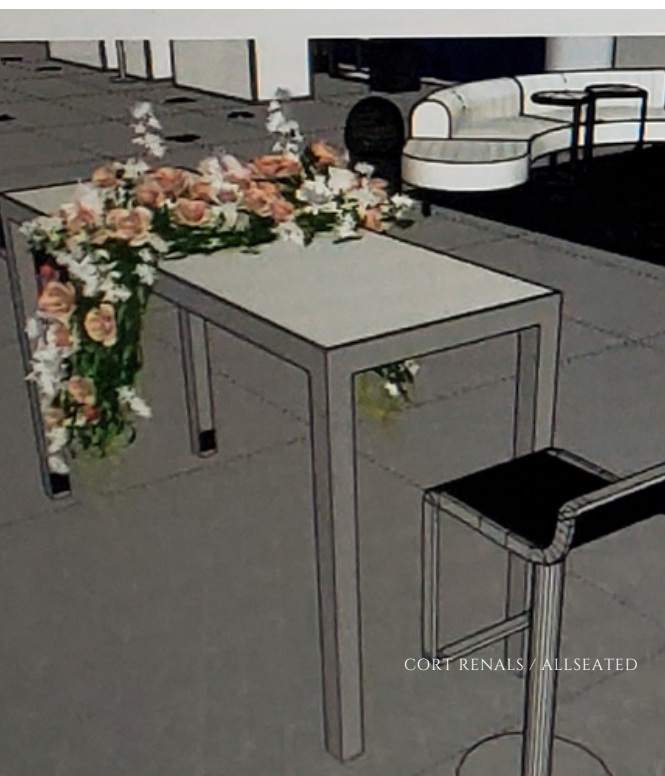
Couples who are attracted to destination weddings and/or have a smaller guest count will be taking advantage of the option of renting a rental property to host their wedding instead of a backyard or smaller venue. Some couples will also extend their own stay their or simply host their wedding during the week day.

## 26. Creative layouts & table solutions

Expect to see more creative room layouts and tabletop set-ups that were born out of COVID-19 restriction but become on trend because of their uniqueness.

## 27. Pods, bubbles and spacing

Open seating has become more complicated over the last year thanks to physical distancing. Assigned seating has become a safer and easier option especially with smaller guest counts. The concepts of grouping guests who know and/or arrive together at one table or area is known as Pods or bubbles. Expect to see this continue.



32%

*32% have moved their  
celebrations to an outdoor  
venue*

# GREAT GUEST EXPERIENCES

## 28. Guest safety – Wellness Stations

We see a more structured and obvious version of this at other types of events like conferences. "Wellness Stations" in those cases guests have temperature checks and other protocols upon arrival. However, in weddings, these stations will be more subtle and will make guests feel more catered too.

Beautiful signage, hand sanitizers displays, decorative masks, and other personalized checks as guests arrive.

## 29. In-personal Welcome boxes:

From personal props for your Photo Booths to persona notes from the couple to any items that can be distributed to guests will less contact that will make them feel special.

## 30. Virtual engagement Remote guest:

Finding ways to make guests who can only attend via streaming the challenge. Mailing packages to guests will be a trend in hybrid events (weddings, conferences, etc.). Guest who are joining remotely may be shipped packages with items designed to help them engaged and interact along with guests who are physically at the event.

This will allow guest to feel like they are part of the event. Consider including items like:

- Mini bottles of bubbly (non-alcoholic may be shipped across state lines)
- Toasting glasses
- Sweet treats
- Programs, photos, or other special notes
- Favors, props, or other items



*"As we go into 2021 there will be more of a focus on telling the couple's personal love story.*

*I love getting up each day and knowing I get to help people use their gifts to manifest dreams in the world."*

*- Janel Bailey Keen*



ANGIE MCPHERSON PHOTOGRAPHY

## ABOUT VIVID EXPRESSIONS LLC

Janel Bailey Keen is the Owner and Executive Creative Director of Vivid Expressions LLC.

A formally trained artist, marketing professional, and corporate trainer turned an award-winning event and floral designer with over 20 years experience of personal development, project management, logistics, coordination, installation and production work to help bring your amazing visions to fruition.



FRESH LOOK PHOTOGRAPHY

If you have questions, need more information, or want to join us for our next educational program please don't hesitate to contact us.

Professional Course & Coaching available at:  
[www.vividexpressions.com/education](http://www.vividexpressions.com/education)

Vivid Expressions LLC  
 3921 Granby Street  
 Suite B  
 Norfolk, Virginia 23504  
 (By Appointment - Virtual Consultations Available)  
[janelkeen@vividexpressions.com](mailto:janelkeen@vividexpressions.com)

