

Tips For A Great Wedding Kiss

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When Prince William gave his new bride, Kate, a brief kiss on the balcony of Buckingham Palace last spring, the crowd of thousands wasn't satisfied.

"Kiss again!" they chanted. When the two shared a slightly longer kiss, onlookers erupted in cheers.

Few other wedding kisses will ever be subjected to so much scrutiny. But there's a lesson here: People love the wedding kiss, and they have definite opinions about how a couple should seal the deal. Some want passion; some don't. Some like staged moments; others want to keep things natural. Everyone wants the kiss to be heartfelt.

"There are extreme thoughts about the kiss," said Kristin Koch, a senior editor at the wedding Web site TheKnot.com. "Some people think it's too public and they don't want to do too much. Others think, 'This is your big declaration of love!'"

Here are some tips to make The Kiss cheer-worthy instead of cringe-worthy:

• **Talk about it.**

You talk through everything else about the wedding, from the guest list to the bridesmaids' dresses. You and your partner should talk about what kind of kiss you want to share, or even whether you want to share one at all. Chatting beforehand can help things go more smoothly on the big day.

Chelsea Kopperud, 26, who is planning a wedding for next June in her hometown of Rushford, Minn., said her parents weren't comfortable kissing in front of everyone when they got married, so they waited and kissed at the back of the church. But Kopperud and her fiancé, Jeffrey O'Donnell, do plan to kiss at the end of the ceremony, and they've already agreed on what the kiss should look like: classy and loving.

"We agree that it shouldn't be just a quick peck, we want it to be more intimate than that. It is our first kiss as Mr. and Mrs.," said Kopperud, who coordinates accounts for an industrial supply company. "I would guess it will probably be about five seconds long."

• **Practice.**

It sounds silly. After all, most couples have a lot of practice kissing. But you might want to put in a little practice time, especially if you're doing something you're not used to, like having the groom dip the bride.

Hope Bourgeault, 21, a social work student at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, says she and her fiancé, Jeff Betterman, are planning to do a dip at their wedding next August. They're already practicing so it won't look awkward.

"I could imagine without some practice he'd either drop me from being nervous or else I'd bend a certain way to

dip and he'd think I was leaning the other way and it would just be a mess," she said.

• **Or don't practice.**

Some people insist that the kiss should be natural, and that you should do whatever you feel is right at that moment. Andrea Fassacesia, a New Yorker who's getting married in April, said she and her fiancé have decided to "wing it."

"A rehearsed kiss looks rehearsed," she said. "It should be natural, intimate and romantic. And, while it's in front of hundreds of people, it should just feel like the two of you."

An informal poll of members of The Knot found that just a third of the 71 respondents planned to practice the kiss. Most, 61 percent, said they'll go with whatever they're feeling at the moment.

• **Do something you're both comfortable with.**

Don't plan a dip or any other acrobatics if you're not sure you want to go through with it. Koch said grooms often feel more pressure than brides about the kiss, since tradition dictates that it's something the groom initiates. Koch says you should remember that you may already be nervous when you're on the altar, and you don't need the added pressure of a fantastic kiss.



• **Don't be gross.**

Just about everyone agrees that extra-long, over-the-top displays of affection are a no-no. They can look forced and make guests squirm. Remember Al Gore's long, sloppy kiss

with Tipper at the 2000 Democratic National Convention?

"Have fun with it, be true to you, but a huge make-out or a tongue kiss is just not appropriate, especially if grandma and grandpa are watching," Koch said.

Help Make Your Dreams A Reality With Wedding Insurance

(ARA) - Getting married is a dream. Who hasn't fantasized about the dress, the jewelry, your dad walking you down the aisle, the music, the cake, the reception following the ceremony?

Because people travel so much these days, weddings aren't always local any more. Destination weddings on the beaches of Hawaii or the Bahamas, or in a castle in Scotland or even in a 900-year-old bed and breakfast in Ireland are extremely popular, which can make planning a bit more difficult due to the distance. Often couples are not able to travel to the wedding location prior to the ceremony to get everything organized, and rely on telephone and email conversations.

Not being able to directly interact face to face with wedding organizers at the church and reception hall, and vendors who will be handling the cake, photos and flowers, to name a few, can make planning a bit more of a challenge.

Wedding dreams can turn into nightmares well before the wedding - your wedding dress shop, the caterer or even the venue goes out of business - or the day of - a tornado strikes the church where the wedding was to be held. But sometimes the nightmares end up to be extremely funny stories that will be retold time and time again - and they can happen whether the wedding is taking place locally, or halfway across the country.

Stories like the bride, who shortly before the wedding, dis-

covered her brother thought her dress needed a bit of extra color, and took his finger paints to the beautiful white fabric. Or the cat that decided to give birth - nestled into the folds of the bride's wedding gown.

"Wedding disasters occur on a daily basis," says Robert Nuccio, president of R.V. Nuccio & Associates, Inc., the exclusive program manager of the Fireman's Fund wedding insurance program in the U.S. "Weather, vendors going out of business, the father of the bride not being able to attend due to sudden illness - you name it, it's happened. You can't plan for these disasters. But you can have a plan B."

Under one policy through Wedsure.com, a division of R.V. Nuccio and Associates, couples can pick and choose a la carte up to nine wedding insurance coverage options they want and may need. In addition to cancellation and additional expense, the coverage options also include gifts, jewelry, loss of deposits, photographs and video, professional counseling, rented property, special attire and personal liability and medical payments.

Weather is the biggest offender causing wedding cancellations. If a hurricane, snowstorm, ice storm, tornado or airport closure forces you to move or postpone your destination or travel wedding, Wedsure.com wedding insurance pays all the nonre-

fundable expenses you incur, including the honeymoon.

Having a plan B can save you plenty of ups and downs on the emotional roller coaster if something turns your dream wedding into a nightmare. For example, if the wedding gifts were to be stolen from the reception, wedding insurance can help protect you from experiencing grief.

"If the photographer fails to appear, or he does show up and takes pictures but is nowhere to be found several weeks later when you want your wedding photo proofs, the policy will pay to restage the wedding," says Nuccio, who is the author of the policy. "This includes flying everyone back, putting them up in hotels, feeding them, redressing them, rebuying the cake, rebuying the flowers, renting the facility, rehiring a photographer and flying everyone home. Basically photographs and video coverage will pay to recreate the entire fairytale just for the photographs."

Planning a wedding takes a lot of time and energy, especially when you and many members of the family have to travel for the event. While a disaster could disrupt the dream event, it doesn't have to cause you financial devastation. Be prepared with a plan B and anticipate that this special time of your life will proceed just like it did in your childhood dreams.

Navigating An Interfaith Wedding

Faith plays an important role in many people's lives, perhaps even more so when it comes time to celebrate a wedding. However, couples who do not share the same faith may have to make some compromises.

Although romantic feelings may transcend faith, heritage and other factors that make people so different, individuals who are quite religious often find that there are some challenges to getting married to someone outside their own faith.

Depending on the faith, some religions will not honor a wedding that does not conform to their strict guidelines for a wedding within the faith. Oftentimes, this means that both participants need to have been raised according to the faith, including meeting certain religious milestones throughout their lives. For example, Catholics must have been baptized, received communion and been confirmed under the auspices of the Catholic church before being allowed to marry. They must present official certificates of these sacraments in order to receive a religious Catholic wedding.

Those of the Jewish faith may believe in a "bashert," a belief that everyone has a soul mate. According to the Talmud, 40 days before a male child is conceived a



voice from heaven announces whose daughter he is going to marry. In Yiddish, this perfect match is called "bashert," a word meaning fate or destiny. The bashert is typically one who is also Jewish.

To handle the intricacies of an interfaith marriage, it is wise to speak to clergy in your respective religions to see what will be required of you as a couple. There could be workarounds, depending on what the couple decide.

Some couples feel it is in their best interest if either one of them

converts to the other's religion so that the ceremony is easier. Others choose to hold two distinct religious ceremonies if the officiants are lenient in their rules to allow it to happen. In other cases, couples feel it is better to have a non-denominational wedding to avoid any obstacles. Even though this ceremony will not be sanctioned by either church, the couple can still choose to include prayers and customs specific to their faiths in the ceremony.

Many couples decide that their mutual love and happiness is reason enough for an interfaith wedding, even if that means sacrificing acceptance by their clergy and church. Interfaith couples should begin wedding planning early to discover what will be expected of them to have the wedding they desire.

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