

A bride in a white lace dress is holding a glass of champagne and a bouquet of pink and white roses. The bouquet features several large pink roses, smaller white and pink roses, and greenery. The bride is wearing a ring and a necklace. The background is softly blurred.

MC
MARIE CALFOPOULOS
PHOTOGRAPHY

Wedding planning timeline



Congratulations on your engagement!

You are about to experience one of the most beautiful days of your life, and I know how overwhelming planning a wedding can sometimes feel. Between choosing the venue, selecting your vendors, managing the guest list, and handling all the little details, it's easy to feel a bit lost.

Planning a destination wedding in Provence, France can feel even more complex when you are organizing everything from another country, often from thousands of miles away. Coordinating vendors, understanding local logistics, and planning travel for yourselves and your guests can quickly become a challenge.

I created this wedding planning timeline to guide you step by step, from booking your venue all the way to the big day. It will help you stay organized, avoid forgetting anything important, and most importantly allow you to truly enjoy every stage of the process.

Happy planning!

Marie Calopoulos

18 to 12 Months Before

- Print this wedding planning timeline.
- Set your wedding date (or choose a flexible timeframe).
- Establish a realistic overall budget (you can always adjust it as your planning evolves).
- Create a preliminary guest list to estimate the number of guests.
- Define the style of your wedding: bohemian, elegant, countryside, modern...
- Research and book your reception venue (this is the top priority).
- Research the legal requirements to get married in France. In France, a civil ceremony at city hall is legally required before any religious ceremony.
- Verify required documents for the civil ceremony (birth certificates, translations, witnesses, etc.).
- Book your essential vendors:
 - photographer
 - caterer
 - wedding planner (if needed)
- Inform your witnesses, bridesmaids and groomsmen and officially ask them to be part of your wedding.
- Create an inspiration board ([Pinterest](#) or a shared folder).
- Check accommodation options near the venue for your guests.

12 to 10 Months Before

- Book your key vendors:
 - DJ or live band
 - symbolic ceremony officiant
 - videographer

- Research and select:
 - florist
 - decorator (if needed)
 - furniture and/or tableware rental

- Start thinking about your wedding color palette.

- Create a wedding website (optional but very helpful).

- Collect the civil marriage file from the city hall registry office.

- Gather guests' mailing addresses for your Save the Dates and invitations.

- Begin designing your Save the Dates.

- Book international flights to France (especially during peak wedding season).

- Plan transportation to Provence (train, rental car, or private transfer from Marseille Airport, Nice Airport, or Paris).

- Reserve accommodation for yourselves and close family for several nights.

10 to 8 Months Before

- Send your Save the Dates.

- Choose and order the wedding dress.

- Start looking for the groom's suit.

- Book:
 - makeup artist
 - hairstylist
 - pastry chef / wedding cake designer

- Choose the participants and order of the wedding procession.

- Select the couple's transportation.

- Check the availability of a family lawyer if you plan to sign a prenuptial agreement.

- Book your wedding night accommodation.

- Begin planning your honeymoon.

- Make sure to schedule time together as a couple planning a wedding can be demanding.

8 to 6 Months Before

- Order your wedding rings.
- Choose the outfits for the wedding party.
- Select your wedding stationery:
 - invitations
 - menus
 - seating chart
 - table names
- Book:
 - photobooth
 - entertainment or activities
- Draft a first version of your wedding day timeline.
- Think about the important moments you want photographed (getting ready, first look, group photos...).
- Plan an engagement session with your photographer.
- Meet with a family lawyer if you wish to establish a prenuptial agreement.
- Contact your insurance provider regarding the venue and check whether cancellation insurance is recommended.
- Plan welcome events for your guests (welcome dinner, brunch, or wine tasting).
- Create a travel guide for guests visiting Provence.

6 to 4 Months Before

Send out the official wedding invitations.

Purchase:

- shoes
- jewelry
- accessories

Schedule dress fittings.

Finalize:

- flowers
- decoration
- overall design and styling

Choose guest favors.

Plan the bachelor and bachelorette parties.

4 to 3 Months Before

- Check in with all your vendors.
- Finalize the menu with your caterer and attend the tasting.
- Schedule hair and makeup trials.
- Order:
 - guest book
 - card box
 - signage
 - umbrellas, mosquito repellent, fans, bubbles, car decorations, sparklers, cigars...
- Start working on the seating chart.
- Ensure all administrative documents for city hall are ready (passports, recent birth certificates, supporting documents, witnesses).
- Book a babysitter or children's entertainer if needed.
- Begin preparing your first dance.
- Arrange certified translations for official documents if required.
- Check whether an interpreter is required for the civil ceremony.

3 to 2 Months Before

- Follow up with guests who have not responded.
- Continue working on the seating chart.
- Finalize the details of the ceremony.
- Provide your witnesses with the contact details of the wedding planner or MC.
- Submit the complete marriage file to city hall.
- Purchase the remaining accessories.
- Celebrate the bachelor and bachelorette parties.
- Check passports and vaccinations if traveling abroad for your honeymoon.
- Plan to arrive in Provence several days before the wedding to adjust to jet lag and finalize preparations.

2 to 1 Month Before

- Confirm the final guest count with the caterer and inform them of any allergies or dietary restrictions.
- Finalize the seating chart.
- Order wine and champagne for the dinner.
- Purchase soft drinks and alcohol for the cocktail hour and late-night bar.
- Buy disposable tableware, paper napkins, and non-perishable food for the day after if you are not using a caterer.
- Write your speeches and vows.
- Attend the final dress fitting.
- Confirm schedules with each vendor.
- Prepare a backup plan in case of rain (ceremony, cocktail hour, photos).
- Designate a person for the wedding day to coordinate with vendors and provide them with all contact details.
- Prepare payment envelopes for vendors.
- Arrange shuttle transportation for guests.
- Start preparing a playlist for the DJ and key moments.
- Complete hair and makeup trials.
- Wear your wedding shoes around the house for a few evenings to break them in.
- Organize a technical visit of the venue with vendors who wish to attend (caterer, DJ, etc.).

1 Month to 15 Days Before

- Coordinate the decoration setup with the venue for the day before the wedding.
- Prepare ceremony booklets (for religious or symbolic ceremonies).
- Plan for 20 to 30 minutes at sunset for couple portraits.
- Send the list of group photos to your photographer.
- Send the list of children and their ages to the babysitter.
- Organize who will collect decorations and rental items after the wedding.
- Book a massage or relaxation session for the day before the wedding.

2 Weeks Before

- Send the final schedule to all vendors.
- Prepare:
 - wedding rings
 - outfits
 - accessories
- Provide the caterer with the final seating chart, including table names, number of guests per table, individual seating positions, and special meal placements.
- Pack a bag for the wedding night and the day after.
- Attend your final beauty appointments.

Wedding Week

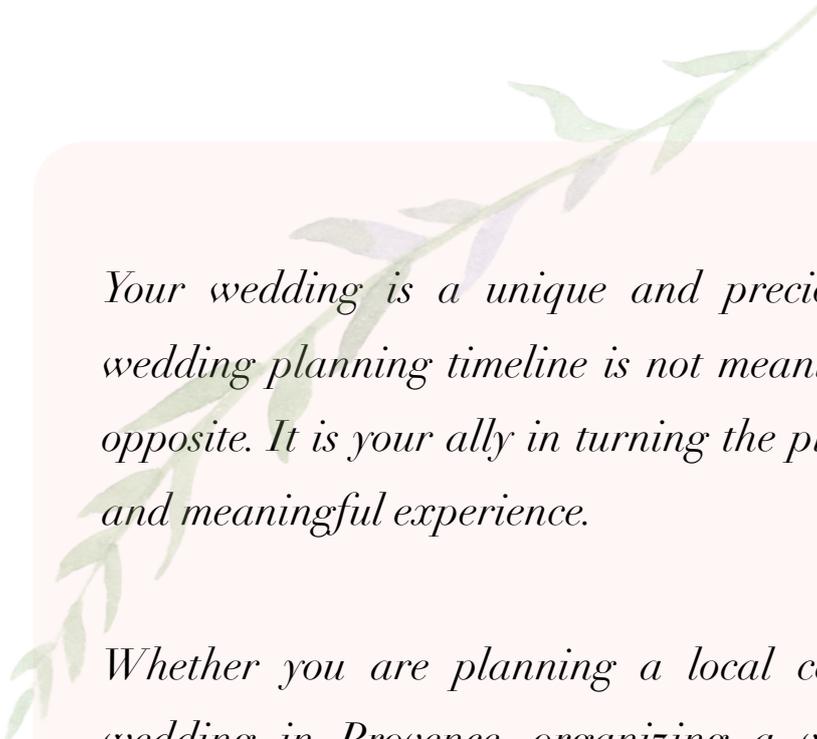
- Check the weather forecast for the wedding day.
- Get a manicure or beauty treatment.
- Prepare a wedding day emergency kit:
 - first aid kit
 - medications
 - bandages
 - tissues
 - makeup
 - safety pins, thread, and needle
- Delegate as many tasks as possible to friends and family if you do not have a wedding planner.

The Day Before

- Set up the decorations if possible.
- Prepare outfits and accessories.
- Practice your speeches or vows.
- Entrust the rings and payment envelopes to a family member.
- Assign someone to collect the card box at the end of the evening.
- Eat light and avoid risky foods such as raw fish or shellfish.
- Rest and enjoy the moment.

The Wedding Day

- Pick up your bouquet.
- Read through your speech or vows one last time.
- Breathe.
- Enjoy every moment.



Your wedding is a unique and precious moment. This complete wedding planning timeline is not meant to feel restrictive, quite the opposite. It is your ally in turning the planning process into a joyful and meaningful experience.

Whether you are planning a local celebration or a destination wedding in Provence, organizing a wedding — especially from abroad — requires preparation, patience, and trusted professionals around you.

By following these steps, you will be able to focus on what truly matters: your happiness, your loved ones, and the unforgettable memories you will create together.

And remember: every detail prepared in advance allows you to fully enjoy your wedding day without stress, stay present in the moment, and let emotions take over.

Your adventure begins here... take a deep breath, smile, and get ready to experience a wedding day that truly reflects who you are.

I can't wait to capture your special day!

Marie Calfopoulos