

Weddings at Riverbanks

This document is meant to provide a general overview of how weddings at Riverbanks come together! Please contact us for additional information.

Facility Rental - We have two great spaces for your wedding reception. The pricing below is for a 4 hour event during our peak times. Certain months, Fridays and Sundays may be available for a slightly reduced rate.

Magnolia Room in the Botanical Garden - \$1,750

Ndoki Lodge in the Zoo - \$1,850

- All tables, chairs, and black, white or chocolate brown linen are included in your facility rental.
- Access begins at 3:00 pm the day of for set up and vendor load-in.
- Delivery instructions will be provided to your vendors prior to the event date.

Magnolia Room Only

- Tram service provided to your guests from the garden entrance, up to the front of the Magnolia Center.
 - A small, private boardroom can be used as a Bridal Suite.
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Ceremony - Should you wish to have your ceremony on-site there are a few additional fees.

Ceremony Chair Rental - \$1.65 (per chair/subject to change)

Ceremony Chair Delivery Fee - \$80

Ceremony Set-Up Fee - \$450

- All ceremonies must take place one hour after the Zoo & Garden close.
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Food & Drink Minimum Spend - This is calculated based on your guest count and event date. Riverbanks has an exclusive onsite caterer that you must use. Catering staff is full-service.

Menu Styles:

- Plated Dinners
- Dinner Buffets
- Heavy Hors d'oeuvres

Bar Options:

- Full Bar or Beer & Wine Packages
 - Consumption Bars
 - Cash Bars
 - Specialty Cocktails
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Vendor Policy

On our website we do have a list of vendors we recommend. However, you may also use your own vendors for cake, floral, photography, band or DJ. All contractors and vendors that are not listed on Riverbanks Zoo & Garden's 'Preferred Vendors' list must be pre-approved, in writing, by your Sales Representative.

Next Steps - Let us know your preferred event date and estimated guest count and we would be happy create a standard proposal for you. If you already know the menu and bar option you are interested in please let us know. Providing those additional details will let us create a more detailed proposal for you.

FAQs - In order to save you time, please scan through the below frequently asked questions as we may have an answer for you already!

May I use my own caterer?

No, Riverbanks Zoo & Garden has an exclusive on-site event specialist caterer who is contracted for all Food & Beverage in the Zoo and Garden. This ensures maximum efficiencies, as the layout and logistics of our venue is quite unique. Popular options include our set menus, but we can be flexible in customizing a menu to your taste, budget and vision.

Is there a Food & Beverage minimum spend?

During the peak wedding season, we ask for a minimum spend on food & beverage. An example could be a minimum of 100 guests @ \$45 per person (excl. service charge and tax) or simply achieving a minimum spend of \$4,500. We can certainly be more flexible during the off-peak season!

Do you host menu tastings?

Our executive chef hosts group tastings twice a year, which are free to attend. Alternatively we can set up a private tasting for a small fee to cover our catering costs.

When can my wedding begin?

We recommend that guests arrive at least one hour after the Zoo closes to the public. In fall and winter months ceremonies may begin at 6:00pm. In the spring and summer this will change to 7:00pm.

When must my wedding end?

At Magnolia Room the standard is a 4-hour rental as music must be turned off by 11:30pm, out of respect for the local residents. We recommend the bar close by 11:00pm. Our Ndoki Lodge and Tuskers, however, may be open a little further into the night.

Can I have a ceremony without booking a reception?

No. All events at Riverbanks require a minimum Food & Beverage spend. A solution would be to have a cocktail hour or cocktail party immediately after such a ceremony.

How many chairs does the ceremony area hold and where can I rent them?

The Botanical Garden's ceremony area will hold a maximum of 150 chairs. Chairs can be rented through your event sales representative and styles start from \$1.65 per chair, delivery fee not included.

Can I bring in my own decorations?

Yes; however, decorations other than centerpieces must be pre-approved by your event sales representative in writing (email is fine) prior to your wedding day. Decorating outdoors cannot begin before the park closes, unless pre-approved in writing.

What is included in my Facility Rental?

You have exclusive use of the event space for an agreed timeframe. In addition, furniture of indoor chairs, banquet tables and cocktail tables are included. Black or white linens and napkins are also included. Any quantities other than what are owned by the venue must be rented at your own cost. For all inclusions, see each venues room bio.

What will be blooming in the Botanical Garden?

Our dedicated horticulture department works year-round to provide an exquisite exhibit of flowers and greenery throughout the Botanical Garden. Feel free to ask your event sales representative to check what will be blooming on your wedding date.

May I bring in my own vendor(s)?

Yes, although if you do not choose a vendor from Riverbanks' list of 'Preferred Vendors', then you must seek written approval from your event sales representative. Your new vendor must agree to Riverbanks' 'Vendor Procedures' in order to receive such approval or they will not be allowed to enter the premises.

Is there a changing facility for the bride?

Depending on your chosen wedding space, we will be able to recommend the best place to change, at no extra cost. For example, at Magnolia Room a small, private boardroom is nearby.

Can you recommend a wedding planner and do you recommend having one?

It's of course up to you. We can recommend a couple of great planners that we enjoy working with and who know our premises and policies well. We do provide an event manager on your wedding day; however, this person's key duties are to a.) oversee the set up and clean up any rentals or catering that we have provided/booked, b.) expedite kitchen production and oversee staff for bar and meal service, c.) serve as the primary contact for you and any booked vendors, and d.) be responsible for the safety of guests, staff and Zoo property. The event manager is not responsible for setting up personal decorations, helping the set-up of other vendors, helping the bride get ready, and so on. These are more event planner responsibilities.

Can I tentatively hold a date?

Yes, we will be happy to place a temporary 14-day hold on your date and space(s) and during this time no other parties can hold it. After 14 days, and possibly without notification, we must be fair and accept other offers.

How can I confirm my event?

To confirm your event we require 1.) a signed contract, and 2.) a deposit which is the value of your Facility Rental plus 25% of all remaining charges. When we receive both items, your event is firmly secured in our event calendar. Until both requirements are received, we reserve the right to accept other offers for the date and space(s) you are considering for your event.