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# WELCOME PACKET

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Charleston Elopement Packages





## *Charleston Elopement Packages*

Welcome to Charleston Elopement Packages! This Welcome Packet is an introduction to us as well as setting your expectations! You will receive top notch southern hospitality in all transactions with us as we help you create the elopement you envision!

### **Who we are:**

We help destination couples (as well as locals) have the wedding they envision within their budget! Each couple is different, therefore each package and ceremony is personalized to YOU! We have over 15 years experience in all aspects of weddings and elopements.



### **Our Beliefs:**

We believe that every wedding is unique and special. We take the time to get to know You! We believe weddings are a joyous occasion, and we are going to be smiling and having fun! We want the ceremony to reflect the couple's personality and capture the love they share with a personalized wedding ceremony. Couples say they hired us because of our personality, passion, and positive reviews from previous couples. We honor and respect the couple's traditions and needs without judgment and look past any differences in race, sex, creed, situation or circumstance. Yes, we support same sex and gay marriage!

### **Wedding Locations:**

We can perform wedding in almost anywhere you would like. If a private location, you must have permission. We work with many venues, and perform weddings at the parks and beaches every week! Need help finding a [location](#)?

### **Contacting us:**

After you read all the information in this packet, if you still have questions you can email us. Email is [charlestonelopements@gmail.com](mailto:charlestonelopements@gmail.com). Preferred method of contact is email. This way we can have everything in writing so nothing gets confused. It also gives us a chance to pull your file and verify what is in your package or where we left off. With over 75 couples contacting us on a monthly basis, as well as booking hundreds of weddings per year, you can imagine how hard it is to remember which “Jennifer” we are talking to. Emails are returned within 24 hours, many times within 12 hours. We can answer an email while waiting for a bride to arrive at a wedding, but can't take a phone call. On weekends it may be longer to get an answer from us since we are usually busy with weddings, please be patient.

### **Phone call:**

I know sometimes it is easier to discuss some details or questions than to type them out in an email! Due to performing and getting ready for weddings, we request that calls be scheduled. Email us to schedule a call!

### **Meetings:**

Some couples request a meeting. In most cases all of your questions can be answered in a phone call. However, if you would like a personal meeting, we can schedule that as well.



### **Next Steps:**

Read through this packet.

Select what services and location you would like.

Email us with your date, time, location and what services you are interested in.

Once we have an agreement on services and price, we will write up a contract, and place a temporary 7 day hold on your date and time. This gives you time to complete the contract and pay the deposit.

After receiving the deposit, you will receive a link to the sample ceremonies so you can start working on creating your ceremony!

### **Ceremony Options:**

We have many ceremony templates for you to choose from and personalize! You will find several types of ceremonies. Examples include religious, semi-religious, spiritual, civil, and location based to name a few. You are not required to use our templates or ceremonies. If you have a favorite ceremony, we will be happy to perform it for you!

We view the vows of marriage as a personal choice made between 2 people. We honor and respect the couple's traditions and needs without judgment and look past any differences in race, sex, creed, situation or circumstance. Yes, we support same sex and gay marriage!



### **Photography:**

The packages are set up for a specified number of photos. However, you will be able to purchase additional images if you desire. Depending on the number of photos the following photos will be taken: Individual portraits of the bride and groom, detail photos, ceremony photos, group and family photos, wedding party and then newlywed photos around the area. Photos are retouched and edited usually with 10-12 days. During busy season it could be longer. You will always receive a couple of photos within 24 hours as a sneak peek to start sharing. Once photos are edited, you will be emailed a link to view and choose your images! The photos are not copyrighted or watermarked, you have complete rights to the photos. \*See FAQ for more Photography information.



### **Marriage License:**

You will need a marriage license from the state where the ceremony is performed.

Charleston County probate court can do the application online! For more information, please visit the [Charleston County Probate Court Office Website](#).

The Charleston County Probate Court office is conveniently located at 100 Broad Street, Suite 469 Charleston, SC 29401. For your convenience, the office is open from Monday through Friday 8:30am – 4:30pm. However, we recommend you contact the office you plan to use and confirm their hours and location.

For a SC marriage license, you can get one from any county in the state. The main consideration is the 24 hour waiting period. If you apply for your license at 2 pm on Thursday, you cannot pick up your license until 2pm on Friday. You can get this at any time as it does not expire. Each county has its own price and required documentation.

### **Officiant Services:**

Many times the difference between a decent wedding and a wonderful wedding is whether or not the wedding ceremony reflects your love for each other to your guests and family. You not only want a personalized ceremony that speaks of your love, but also delivered by a professional speaker and wedding officiant. We are experienced and professional officiants that can step up and handle any incident that occurs quickly and efficiently without stress or drama.

Wedding officiant services include: unlimited phone and email support, personalized wedding ceremony that captures your love, professional delivery of your ceremony, file the marriage license with the proper court and travel to your ceremony location.

Digital Newlywed Packet contains name change information and forms.



### **Getting started:**

- Email us with your date, time, and location you are interested in.
- Select the wedding services needed.
- Once we have an agreement on services and price, We will write up a contract, and place a temporary 7 day hold on your date and time. This gives you time to return the completed contract with the deposit.
- Once the contract and deposit are returned, you will receive a link to the sample ceremonies so you can start working on creating your ceremony!
- We will work on the other details of your package as we get closer to your wedding on a timeline that is comfortable for you!

### **Deposits/Payment Methods:**

You will return the completed contract with the 25% deposit to reserve your date, time, and services. The balance is due 1 week prior to the wedding. We use a third party processor (Stripe) to process your payments. We never see your personal information. All credit/debit cards are accepted as well as checks. The deposit is non-refundable. Please see cancellation and refund policies.

### **Cancellation Policy:**

Life happens, and something could prevent your wedding from occurring as planned. Your contract will lock in *Charleston Elopement Packages* to your date and time of ceremony; henceforth blocking *Charleston Elopement Packages* from booking another Couple on same date and time. For this purpose; if for any reason a decision is made not to use the services of *Charleston Elopement Packages* after retaining by deposit, the Couple must inform *Charleston Elopement Packages* in writing at least 30 days prior to the ceremony date to release the Couple from the contract. The Couple will be able to reschedule using the monies paid for 6 months after the cancellation date. No refunds will be issued.

### **Refund Policy:**

If *Charleston Elopement Packages* is unable to perform your wedding due to an unforeseeable event (hurricane, virus pandemic, zombie attack, etc) a choice will be given to the Couple. The Couple can choose to reschedule to a later date, keeping the package at its agreed upon rate, or receive a refund minus any fees incurred. The refund option is being given as *Charleston Elopement Packages* is unable to perform the services on the contracted date and time. For example, if we are under evacuation due to a hurricane.

### **FAQ:**

*How long is the wedding ceremony?*

Each ceremony is personalized to the couple. Average time is 10-15 minutes,

depending on what the couple chooses to include in their ceremony. The length of the ceremony depends on many variables such as: will someone read a poem or sing a song; how many people in the wedding party, specialty ceremonies, etc. Couple's are not charged based on the length of the wedding ceremony.

*Does the photographer only take the selected number of photos?*

The photographer removes all of the test shots where they're checking lighting, focal length, etc., as well as any that might be out of focus or have images of the bride or groom with eyes closed or making unintentional weird faces. The photographer takes multiple clicks of each pose to capture the best moment. All images will be edited and released to you in a gallery. You can then choose which photos you would like. You will receive full resolution digital images in the specified number. You will also have the opportunity to purchase additional images if you would like.

*Can the photographer edit the photo so I look 30 pounds lighter?*

Editing includes lighting, clarity, sharpness, and other light editing techniques. Small dress stains or small background objects (trash cans) can be removed. It does NOT include photo manipulation such as "making you look 30 pounds lighter" or removing large objects like cars.

*Do you provide an arbor or arch, chairs, or other decoration?*

No. We do not have the means to transport these items. There are also liability issues associated with these items, such as the arch blowing over, or a chair breaking and a guest getting hurt. Therefore, we do not offer this as part of our packages. We will recommend rental companies that you can contact and set up the delivery and setup of your items.

*What happens if you cannot perform a wedding ceremony due to an emergency?*

Every one of your vendors should have a contingency plan! As we all know, life happens! Once *Charleston Elopement Packages* has been booked by the contract, we are bound to perform the ceremony. Having a team working for *Charleston Elopement Packages*, this is not a concern! A bride saying her officiant/minister cancelled out on her with a week's notice often contacts us. If for some reason we cannot perform your wedding, we will arrange for another trusted officiant to take our place. In fact, in their emergency situations, other ministers often rely on us.



### *What happens if it rains?*

Shh, we don't like to use the R-word!! I know, rain happens... First thing we check is when is the rain. The general weather may say 60% chance of rain, but if that is in the morning and you have an afternoon wedding, no problem! Next we check the where. It could be pouring on Folly Beach and not a drop in Charleston. How flexible are we with timing? If it is an elopement it is easier to say afternoon storms, so let's do the wedding at 2 instead of 6pm. If we have 12 guests, it is harder to change time. In most locations, there is a covered area close by. We also check with where the reception is being held to see if we can use the space, or if there is an area at your accommodations. Often we hear from brides, "we don't care if it's raining, we are going ahead with the ceremony!" We understand that thinking, however, if it is thunder and lightning, for safety, *Charleston Elopement Packages* and any vendor contracted under *Charleston Elopement Packages* will not be out in the weather. If it is a soft rain, the officiant can still perform the ceremony, but most photographers will not allow their equipment in the damaging weather.

### *Why do you prefer email?*

After having performed over 200 ceremonies a year for over 15 years, we have found that when we both put everything in writing, the process is more organized and efficient. That's why we prefer to use email rather than phone calls. We create a folder for every couple and then we have instant access to every detail of your ceremony. With the busy lives that people have, we often play phone tag. Therefore, we prefer to schedule a call when we can focus solely on you, at an arranged time!

### *Can we set up a personal meeting?*

The whole point of our packages is to put the wedding together for you so that you don't have to drive into town and do the leg work yourself. Our couples and/or their parents are thrilled that they do not have to drive here and we've made many couples and their families and friends happy with our services. It is also why we answer all of your questions via phone and internet. However, if you would like to have a meeting we can schedule that. Weekends are more difficult to schedule than weekdays as many weddings happen on weekends, and they take priority.

### *Do you reserve the venue or ceremony location?*

No. Although we can recommend locations to have the elopement you envision, you

are responsible for contacting the location to reserve and pay any fees they require. We will advise if the location you choose requires a permit or has a fee.

*Can you help us with other recommendations such as accommodations and restaurants?*

Of course! We can recommend hotels, rental houses, and restaurants closest to the area you are having your ceremony! You will receive a planning packet with all this information after services have been retained.

*Can I make changes to my package after the contract?*

Absolutely! Whether extra guests are added, or you decide you want to add a detail you previously thought you didn't want, changes are very common! Let us know as soon as possible and we will add (or remove) whatever items and adjust your balance accordingly!

*Why do you limit the amount of guests?*

We specialize in elopements. An elopement is up to 6 adult guests. We offer a discount when it is the couple only. Some packages allow up to 12 guests. On rare circumstances, we will approve up to 15.

*Why do you charge additional fees for extra guests?*

Additional guests = additional work. It has been our experience, when there are over 6 guests, that the ceremony rarely starts on time, as someone is running late, or is lost (stuck in traffic) ect. Gathering guests for the ceremony, followed by the additional time to gather everyone for photos. For some reason group photo of everyone, needs to be repeated specifically to 1-2 individuals that are hanging back. Then in the other group photos, someone has wandered off, and we have to yell, or send someone after them. These are just some of the most common examples.

*What forms of payment to you take? Credit cards? Payment Plans?*

We accept all major credit cards and debit cards. We also accept checks, money orders, and cash.

*Do you require a deposit to reserve the date?*

We require a 25% deposit to reserve the date and time. The balance is due 1 week prior to the ceremony, as stated in our contract.

*Should we tip the officiant and photographer?*

Tips are not required, but appreciated. As with any service provider that you tip, you will base the amount on how you feel the service was.

Thank you for considering *Charleston Elopement Packages* for your wedding! We look forward to being part of your special moment!!



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