



# Wedding FAQs for 2017



*We understand that planning your wedding can be an exciting and challenging endeavor. To better assist you during the planning process, we've provided answers to some frequently asked questions:*

## **What steps must I take to secure a date and space for my wedding?**

Once you establish a date, the Duke Mansion will provide you with a formal contract that outlines your event times, location(s) on property and deposit schedules. Your event date will be held tentatively for up to 7 business days while you review, sign and return the contract along with your initial deposit. When your signed contract and deposit have been received, your wedding date will be guaranteed by the Duke Mansion.

## **What is the deposit amount?**

The Duke Mansion requires an initial deposit of \$6,500 to secure your wedding date. This initial non-refundable deposit is a percentage of the estate fees plus food and beverage minimum (*pre-tax/service charge*). A second advanced deposit will be due 90 business days prior to your wedding date, and a third advanced deposit will be due 3 business days prior to your wedding date. Second and third deposits vary and are calculated based on the estimated revenue of your event.

## **Where is the reception site located?**

The estate fee (\$5,500 *plus tax*) consists of use of the mansion's main level for your wedding receptions. The main level includes the following spaces: Grand Foyer, Courtyard, Ray Dining Room, Solarium, Levine Living Room, Front Porch and Garden Terrace.

The estate fee also includes:

15' X 15' Dance Floor	Votive Candles
Floor-length Wheat Damask Linens	4 Chef Attendants
Ivory Bone China	2 Bartenders
Gold Chiavari Chairs with Ivory Cushions	Butler Passing Staff
Silverware & Glassware	Our Inventory of Tables

## **Will any other events be taking place at the Duke Mansion?**

The estate fee grants you exclusive use of the Duke Mansion's main level on the night of your wedding. We guarantee a minimum 3 hours setup time for you and your vendors prior to event start time. Other events may be taking place the Friday night prior or the morning of your wedding. If available, you may opt to rent out the main level of the mansion on the morning of your wedding for total exclusive use of the event space on the day of your wedding. If you are interested in an all-day "privacy rental", please ask your Sales Manager for further info on pricing and availability.

## **What type of security will be at my event?**

The Duke Mansion requires that a minimum of two (2) off-duty police officers are present at your event from 9:00pm – 2:00am. Security for all receptions will be arranged by the Duke Mansion management team and the cost will be the responsibility of the event host.

The cost for two (2) off-duty police officers (meals included) is \$500.

## **Are prices different if I select a Friday or Sunday for my wedding?**

The Duke Mansion is limited to 25 weddings per year, so we are unable to extend any discounts on the estate fee or food and beverage minimum.

## **When is my guaranteed attendance due?**

Guaranteed attendance is due by 12:00pm, seven (7) business days prior to the scheduled event date. This number shall be considered a minimum guarantee and is not subject to reduction. If a guaranteed



count is not received seven (7) business days prior, then number of guests previously stated on the banquet event order will served as your guarantee.

### **May I host my wedding ceremony on-site?**

Our lush Barnhardt Terrace (\$2,000 rental fee) or McGuire Lawn (*lawn subject to availability* - \$2,700 rental fee) creates the perfect backdrop for a beautiful outdoor ceremony. Your ceremony package includes your choice of garden chairs – white, natural, black or mahogany, as well as a ceremony coordinator. The ceremony coordinator will be contracted by the Duke Mansion and brought into the planning process about one month prior to your event date. We do require that you host your reception with us if you are having your ceremony on our grounds.

### **What is your inclement weather policy regarding on-site ceremonies?**

As our only ceremony space is located outdoors, a non-refundable tent deposit of \$800 (about 50% of the total cost for a basic white top tent & marquee) is required by all on-site ceremonies, so that we may hold a tent in case of inclement weather. The Barnhardt Terrace, located to the right hand side of the home, is the only area on the grounds where a tent is permitted. If a tent is deemed necessary by your Event Manager, due to a high chance of inclement weather in the forecast on your event date, the ceremony must take place on the Barnhardt Terrace under a tent. Please ask your Event Manager for full information on tent pricing and décor options.

*\*\*Please note: All tents must be taken down the morning after the event. Standard pickup fees will apply.*

### **Is it possible to have a ceremony rehearsal on property?**

For guests who are hosting their ceremony at the Duke Mansion, a one hour rehearsal will be guaranteed on the evening prior to your wedding date. The time frame of rehearsal is dependent on other events taking place the evening of the rehearsal, and an exact time will be scheduled a minimum of two weeks prior to your event.

### **Is there a space for the bridal party to get ready before the ceremony?**

The Duke Mansion is happy to provide the Dickson Boardroom for you and your bridal party to get ready. If you are interested in offering refreshments, please contact your Sales Manager.

## **Food and Beverage Information**

### **Can I provide my own food and beverage?**

All food and beverage must be provided by the Duke Mansion's Executive Chef and Culinary Team. The Duke Mansion specifically prohibits the removal of food and beverage from the function by the client or any of the client's guests.

An exception to this rule is made for your wedding cake, which may be provided by a baker of your choice. Our cake cutting fee is incorporated into the per person menu price and includes a coffee station. We also require a copy of the baker's license.

### **Can you please clarify the food and beverage minimum?**

The food and beverage minimum is the least amount of money you are required to spend in food and beverage, excluding service charge, sales tax and facility fees. Please keep in mind that this not all you can anticipate to spend. The food and beverage minimum is reached by selecting menu items to equal or exceed the required dollar amount.

The following are examples of items which apply toward the food and beverage minimum:

- Hors d'oeuvres and Display Stations
- Plated Meals
- Buffet Meals & Carving Stations
- Dessert Stations
- Bar Service, Champagne Toasts and Non-Alcoholic Beverages

The following are examples of items which do not apply toward the food and beverage minimum:



- Facility Fees
- Staffing Fees
- Rental Items
- Guestroom Rates

### **What is the food and beverage minimum?**

The minimum you are required to spend on food and beverage is \$12,500 (*before tax and service charge*).

### **What are the applicable service charge and taxes?**

Our service charge is 20% on all food and beverage. State tax is 7.25% on all items (*including the service charge*). A 1% supplemental food and beverage tax is applied to the food and beverage. Taxes and service charge are subject to change without notice.

### **Do you have a different price for kids' meals?**

Yes, we offer kids meals for \$25 per kid (*plus tax and service charge*) for guest 12 years and younger. This meal includes a seasonal fresh fruit cup, chicken fingers with French fries and unlimited non-alcoholic beverages.

### **Do you have a different price for vendor meals?**

Our chef can prepare a cold meal for \$25 per vendor, or a hot meal for \$35 per vendor (*plus tax and service charge*). Vendors are not allowed to drink alcoholic beverages while working at the Duke Mansion.

### **Is there a fee for bartenders or other staff members?**

Two (2) bartenders, four (4) chef attendants and butler passing fees are included in your estate fee. Additional bartenders and chef attendants are available for an additional cost.

All guests in attendance who are drinking alcoholic beverages will be required to have a valid identification regardless of age. Our bartenders have the right to require proof of age if a guest appears less than forty years of age.

### **When will Wedding Menu items and pricing be finalized?**

Wedding menu items and pricing are subject to change on a yearly basis. 2017 menu pricing will be finalized and distributed to wedding clients *no later than* early January 2017, before the Grand Tasting takes place.

*\*\*The Duke Mansion reserves the right to confirm specific menu item prices ninety (90) day prior to your function, and any prices quoted prior to are subject to change. In the event of increased cost of commodities or menu items, the Mansion may, at its option, make reasonable substitutions in menu items. Cost shall not exceed 20% of original price.*

### **Can a tasting of the menu be scheduled in advanced?**

The Mansion hosts an annual Grand Tasting each year for all of our wedding clients. This event is intended to be the sole tasting for your event and normally takes place in January or February. If you are unable to attend the Grand Tasting, private menu tastings may be contracted and scheduled based on the Chef's availability. These tastings may only take place during the weekday and must be scheduled within a month of your event, to maintain the integrity of the seasonal foods. If you need to schedule a private tasting please contact your Duke Mansion planning contact for further pricing information.

## **Event Services**

### **When arriving for the event, where do my guests park?**

Our on-site parking is limited and street parking is prohibited, so in some cases valet parking is required. We estimate \$8 - \$10 per vehicle for valet parking. Shuttle transportation and guests' carpooling is a great way to help reduce this cost. If Duke Mansion's Management Team determines valet parking is not needed, this fee will be waived.

### **Is amplified music allowed at my event?**

Yes, amplified music is permitted but must be contained **inside** the Duke Mansion's walls. Un-amplified music is permissible on the outside grounds.



### **Do I rent upgraded table linens, lighting, etc. through the Duke Mansion?**

We would encourage you to rent these items through your Duke Mansion Sales Manager. We have access to a wide selection of linen companies, lighting technicians, sound engineers and furniture/equipment rental in the Charlotte area. Our relationships with vendors and knowledge of the venue make this process much easier for you. A fee may be assessed if you or your wedding planner decides to rent linens from your own vendor.

### **Do you have a preferred vendor list?**

We are pleased to recommend any number of vendors and provide you with our preferred vendor list. It is our preference to work with our preferred and recommended vendors. By forging a relationship with these vendors, the Duke Mansion can ensure both exceptional quality and value.

All vendors you choose to work with must read and sign the Duke Mansion's Vendor Policies and Code of Conduct Agreements. All vendors are required to provide The Duke Mansion with a Certificate of Liability 72 hours prior to the event.

### **What types of grand exits are permitted?**

We are happy to work with you to create the picture perfect exit for your special day! Depending on your choice of exit a \$100 cleaning fee may apply. Sparkler exits must be coordinated through the Duke Mansion. We will provide the sparklers and necessary equipment for this exit at \$1.00 per person.

### **Does the Duke Mansion have any event time restrictions?**

Duke Mansion requires that all events conclude by 11:00pm. No time extensions will be granted.

### **When are my deposit and final payment due?**

The initial non-refundable deposit is due with your signed contract. An additional deposit is due 90 days prior to your event date. Your estimated event charges must be paid in full at least 72 business hours prior to your event and must be made by either credit card or money order. Any additional charges incurred on the day of your event must be paid within 30 days after your event.

### **Is smoking permitted at the Mansion?**

The Duke Mansion allows smoking outside in the designated smoking areas. A \$250 smoking fee will apply if you or your guests smoke inside or on screened porches.

### **Does the Duke Mansion require that I hire a wedding planner?**

We *strongly* encourage and recommend you hire a wedding planner – at minimum, for the day of your event. When it comes to organizing a major event, planning should be a memorable experience rather than a great stress. A planner offers the best décor and vendor recommendations, as well as a friendship and support during this emotional and important time.

Some responsibilities of a wedding planner include:

- Manages overall organization of the event
- Assists with protocol for written materials such as invitations and menus
- Creates timelines and maintains schedules for the venue and all hired vendors
- Liaison between family, wedding party and all vendors
- Collect personal items once the event is over

## **Guest Rooms**

### **Can my guests spend the night at the Duke Mansion?**

The Mansion operates as a historical bed and breakfast with 20 guest rooms on-site. We would love for your guests to stay at the Duke Mansion on the wedding weekend.



**Am I required to have my guests reserve rooms at the Duke Mansion?**

The mansion holds a total of 20 guest rooms. The 7 rooms on the second floor are required to be filled by your group on the night prior to your wedding, and all 20 guest rooms are required to be filled by your group on the night of your wedding. A group discount room rate will be extended to all guest rooms in your wedding room block. If you require more than 7 rooms on the night prior to your wedding; please ask your Sales Manager about third floor availability. The discounted group rate for the 2nd floor is \$219/night (before tax), and the rate for the 3rd floor is \$199/night (before tax), and include our delicious in house breakfast buffet in the morning. **Your package will include a complimentary Bridal Suite on the night of your wedding!**

**Will any other guests be staying at the Duke Mansion during the weekend?**

The Duke Mansion does encourage securing all 20 guest rooms (seven 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, thirteen 3<sup>rd</sup> floor) for your wedding guests on the night prior to your wedding. Should you decide not to contract the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor rooms on this night, then these rooms will be available to the public for booking, and we cannot guarantee availability at a later time.

**Will I need to sign a contract?**

Yes, to receive a discounted group room rate, a signed agreement will be required.

**What happens if my guests do not fill all of my room block?**

You are required to fill all 7 guest rooms on the second floor the night prior to your wedding, and all 20 guest rooms the night of your wedding. If your guests do not fill these rooms, you will be responsible for the payment of remaining rooms.

If you decide to contract additional guest rooms on the third floor the night prior to your wedding, you may drop up to 20% of the additional contracted guest rooms 30 days prior to date of first check in. After this date, 90% of the remaining block is your responsibility. All unused rooms will be charged to the credit card on file.

**How will my guests access the special rate?**

Your guests will call in and speak to a Front Desk Agent to make their reservation at the special rate. Reservations cannot be made on-line at the special rate.

**What is the cancellation policy for individual rooms?**

Individual cancellations must be received 48 hours prior to arrival (check-in) to avoid full payment of their stay.