



Planning Your Dream Outdoor Wedding in Niagara

By: Lauren Charley

The classic fantasy of a traditional “big white wedding” frequently takes place on a warm, mid-summer day when the trees are blossoming and flowers are in full bloom, painting a picture of an enchanting, Disneyesque “fairytale” wedding. Although most traditional marriages take place within a church, followed by an indoor reception at a hotel or event hall, outdoor weddings are becoming increasingly popular with modern brides. The Niagara region is a popular location for outdoor weddings, as it provides countless venues with beautiful landscapes and scenery and offers ample luxury accommodations for couples and their guests.

The peak wedding season in Niagara is between April and October, with a majority of the ceremonies taking place in July, August and September. In recent years, however, Cheryl Rogers from the online bridal directory, “Niagara Wedding Helper”, has discovered that October has become a very popular choice, as brides adore the vibrant red and orange colours of autumn foliage and the mildly cool outdoor temperatures. October weddings are perfect for capturing beautiful outdoor photographs, but ceremonies and receptions are best planned to be held at an indoor location.

For summer marriages, the Niagara Region offers world class scenery and a selection of outdoor locations to choose from for both ceremo-

nies and receptions. When picking a venue for your outdoor ceremony, it is important to be aware that not all locations provide ministers for your service. Often, brides will have to find their own officiates who will prepare the paperwork and marriage license, as well as perform the service, bible passages, and vows. There are many gorgeous spots throughout Niagara which appeal to couples for different reasons. It is important to research the places you choose for the best match for your perfect, ideal wedding and that your party has exclusive access to the locations.

Queenston Heights Restaurant

Experience the serene, natural beauty the Niagara region has to offer >>

Images courtesy of Niagara Parks



by uniting in holy matrimony while overlooking enchanting views of the Niagara River. Queenston Heights provides a charming venue for receptions in any season, but especially outdoors in the warmer months. Parties can enjoy the sweet aroma of spring blossoms, beautiful displays of summer flowers, or even the vibrant, changing colours of the fall on the Queenston Heights patio.

Couples are often captivated by the breathtaking views of the Niagara River from the Laura Secord Monument, perched high in the Niagara Escarpment. Ceremonies here are complimentary with the rental of reception services at the Queenston Heights Restaurant either in the Queenston Room or restaurant patio, accommodating up to 80 guests. Whilst photos are being taken, guests can be treated to specialty cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, while relaxing on the patio, overlooking the escarpment.

Botanical Gardens Arbour Ceremonies

Secluded within the luscious floral arrangements of the famous Niagara Botanical Gardens is a white lattice, Victorian-styled wedding arbour, perfect for a memorable marriage ceremony. The venue accommodates up to 150 guests, and offers several ceremony times in the morning, afternoon, and evening. Tent and chair

rentals are available through Niagara Parks Weddings, as are beautiful floral packages with extravagant, custom designs.

Floral Showhouse Gardens & Tropical Foyer

The Floral Showhouse is a paradise location for outdoor weddings, just a ten minute walk from the natural wonder of Niagara Falls. Ceremonies take place in the Artist's Garden amid the rose bushes, surrounded by ponds and tall grasses with the majestic beauty as your backdrop. This peaceful, sophisticated wedding option can accommodate 20 - 50 guests depending on if you wish to hold your ceremony in the foyer or garden, respectively. Receptions can be held throughout different locations on the grounds and a variety of tent and food options are available to keep the celebration outdoors.

Legends on the Niagara Clubhouse

The Legends on the Niagara Clubhouse is a stone, mahogany, and cedar building situated on a golf course overlooking the Battlefield Course lake. Surrounded by manicured greens and colourful floral arrangements, the clubhouse on the lake is a wonderful place to hold both your wedding ceremony and reception, with both indoor and outdoor seating arrangements for up to 200 guests.

The terrace can be set up for the service, and then transformed into an outdoor reception for cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, before migrating to the beautiful banquet room for an exquisitely catered meal, followed by a night of dancing.

Hernder Estate Winery

For a truly memorable experience, say "I do" while overlooking the picturesque view of wine country by reciting your vows amongst the flat green lands and rows of luscious grapes in the Hernder Estate Vineyards. Outdoor ceremonies take place in two different locations, the first being in front of the pond with white folding chairs accommodating up to 300 guests, and the second is the east patio with green wrought iron chairs, suitable for 200 guests. The Hernder Estate Winery property offers many gorgeous settings for wonderful wedding photos, where the backdrop of Niagara's spectacular scenery gives each picture a romantic and peaceful beauty.

Balls Falls Conservation Area

What better way to remember your very special day than with pictures of Niagara's remarkable heritage and scenic vistas at the Balls Falls Conservation Area, located in Jordan. Balls Falls offers beautiful backdrops of historic buildings, lush vegetation,



and panoramic views of the Niagara Escarpment. The conservation area is perfect for wedding photography, as it provides a story book setting with blossoming trees, rustic wooden bridges, peaceful streams, and historical architecture.

Indoor and outdoor sites are available to hold both your wedding ceremony and reception. Balls Falls Historical Church is a renovated, quaint and elegant chapel situated on the conservation grounds, accommodating up to 110 guests, perfect for a traditional and formal ceremony. Outdoor weddings are held on the picnic pavilion area for smaller parties of 25 guests. Reception venues can be rented through the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authorities, with all catering and decorating arrangements organized separately by the bride and groom. These include “The Big Barn”, with a capacity of 190 guests, and “The Glen Elgin Room” which seats 120.

Niagara-on-the-Lake Wedding Gazebo

For small, intimate weddings of up to 12 people, the Niagara-on-the-Lake Wedding Gazebo invites couples to join in matrimony under this famous landmark, overlooking, and feeling the crisp breeze of Lake Ontario. The Gazebo is located within Queens Royal Park, just a short walk from the

main shopping and dining area of Queen Street. The spectacular views of the lake and park make beautiful outdoor pictures with extraordinary, breathtaking surroundings.

Kurtz Orchards

Located across from the Niagara River in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Kurtz Orchards offers brides and grooms an elegant and peaceful venue for their marriage. The property comprises seven acres of vineyards, and orchards with fruit trees such as peaches, pears, plums, apricots, apples, and cherries. Kurtz uniquely offers wedding guests the opportunity to pick fruit from the orchards as a party favour.

Couples may choose from two locations for the ceremony, including the area in front of the historic Gracewood Estate House, or a beautiful, 200 year old pear orchard with rows of trees, which form a natural aisle for the bride to walk down. Outdoor receptions take place under marquee tents, and are catered in house by Kurtz, who use their homegrown fruit in the cuisine and presentation of the food. The beautiful orchard property is an especially wonderful choice for larger weddings, as they comfortably accommodate up to 300 guests.

Elope Niagara


Elope Niagara is a tiny little log chapel located in Stevensville, just ten minutes from Niagara Falls. The quaint and intimate church is situated on a large, private property with natural surroundings on Black Creek, running into the Niagara River. The chapel was built brand new on December 12th 2012, on pre-existing wooden flooring, over 60 years old. A combination of antique and modern furnishings contribute to its’ signature style as “an eclectic mix of old and new”.

Elope Niagara’s business partners, Kim Cartmell and Kathy White, cater especially to small, destination style weddings for 2 to 10 people. The services can take place inside or outside the chapel, under the direction of a minister which Elope Niagara is happy to provide. Kathy and Kim will work to customize your elopement by developing your ideal wedding theme such as the “Nightmare before Christmas” or “Wizard of Oz”. They also welcome same-sex marriages, and offer alternative ceremonies such as vow renewals and “commitment

ceremonies.” Commitment ceremonies join together blended families in a non-legal, but sentimental union; each family member pours a different colour sand into a jar, to symbolize uniting together in a way they can never be separated.

Elope Niagara operates in all four seasons, 7 days a week during the Spring and winter, and 6 days a week during the summer and fall seasons.

Regardless of the season, there are many additional outdoor activities for couples and their guests to enjoy during their stay in Niagara, such as fireworks by the falls, walks along the lake, festivals and parades, or a peaceful horse and carriage ride in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Whatever your ideal wedding fantasy may be, the Niagara Region is proud to offer couples an extensive variety of locations, venues, and scenery in order to fulfil the dreams of their special day. 

Things to consider when planning your perfect wedding day:

- Rules and permits – public locations may have specific bylaws on where and when you can and cannot host a wedding on the property.
- Keep your guests’ comfort a top priority by making sure your site is adequately equipped for the weather and the season with amenities such as outdoor fans, heating lamps, well lit paths, and mosquito repellent candles.
- Talk to your photographer about where the sun will be during your ceremony and plan your seating arrangements and pictures accordingly, so that you are not squinting in the sun or hidden in the shadows.
- Make sure your decorations are secure and able to withstand high winds.
- Provide welcome bags with inexpensive items guests may find useful during the ceremony such as water bottles, sunscreen, or sunglasses.