

From whence come wedding cakes, Daddy?

Once a couple has decided on the date for their marriage, one of the next steps is to contact the church or synagogue.

Usually the mother of the bride initiates the wedding arrangements. Unless a weekday wedding is planned, three months is most often needed. A longer lead time is desired.

To book a caterer on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday, orders may have to be made a year in advance.

FATHER THOMAS shields, pastor of St. Regis Catholic Church of Birmingham, said three months notice is preferred, but if the church is available three months notice is not necessary. At St. Regis one member of the couple must belong to the parish.

Father Shields said a couple can "make up their own vows, as long as the essential content is preserved." No fees are involved. If desired, contemporary guitar music may be played.

The Rev. Frank Brannon of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Troy said, "We like three months notice. The new Canon law requires one member of the couple to be a member of the church." The 1973 Canon law requires three counseling sessions with the minister, he added.

Mrs. Charlotte Shapiro, administrative assistant at Shaarey Zedek Synagogue in Southfield, said couples do not have to be members of the congregation for a wedding ceremony, but they must both be Jewish. No fee is charged if they are members of Shaarey Zedek. Again, three months is usually needed.

RABBI IRWIN Groner, a cantor and associate cantor perform the ceremony. Receptions may follow in the Morris Adler Social Hall or their West Social Hall.

A staff member of the First Presbyterian Church of Birmingham said the couple does not have to be church members to be married in the church. Although there is no charge for members, a nominal fee is charged for the organist and sexton for non-members.

"Usually at least three months is preferred, but there is no problem if the church is available," a spokesman said.

At First Presbyterian, a reception can be arranged in the church parlors. No alcoholic beverages may be served.

SHAAREY ZEDEK has its own caterer, Marvin Siegel, who said catering reservations must be made anywhere from one month to one year in advance.

"Our wedding cakes are baked on the premises," Siegel said. They have from two to nine layers and can vary from fruit cake to Black Forest Torte, with cake prices ranging from \$45 to \$450 for a towering nine-tier cake.

The Dearborn Inn suggests that wedding reception arrangements be made "as soon as a definite date is set." A spokesman said the Inn has bookings "years ahead" in some cases, but weekdays are available on much shorter notice.

The Alexandria Ballroom at the Dearborn Inn has a capacity of up to 250 for dinner and dancing. Prices vary widely depending on the type of reception.

CAKES AT THE Inn are made "with real butter and eggs."



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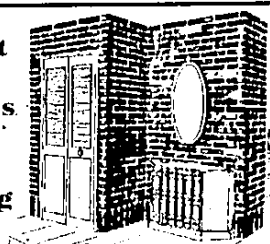
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