

Wedding Night Reservations?

YOUR CEREMONY WAS BEAUTIFUL—even your father shed a tear when he saw you in your gown. The reception was a blast—the music was perfect and you’ve never laughed so much in your life. And now . . . it’s your wedding night, and you can’t get that picture of Aunt Edna out of your mind.

Where is she sleeping? It may sound ridiculous, but setting up overnight accommodations for your guests isn’t always a walk in the park. It used to be that only out-of-town guests needed a place to spend the night after the big day; now even locals are choosing to celebrate late into the evening, or even over the course of a few days. Ensuring that they are well taken care of is an important first step to making your exit into your own Wedding Night bliss.

In recognition of this need, some hoteliers have added online guest management tools to their web sites, saving couples time, energy, and guesswork about where to send those welcome baskets. Event planners can enjoy these tools as well.

By using online features such as Hilton’s “Guest List Manager,” a couple can download and print their guest list, monitor who has reserved their room and follow up on your RSVPs, day or night. The wedding checklist tools at Hilton (including all Hilton family hotels, such as Doubletree, Embassy Suites and Hampton Inns) will help you manage the list and know exactly who will be where, and when. You can reserve from 5 to 25 guest rooms, set it up so that each guest uses his/her own credit card to pay for the charges, and even set up a personalized Web page for your wedding to make sure everyone arrives at the right place, at the right time. The “Prepare it with Hilton” tab on www.weddingsbyhilton.com will lead you in the right direction there.

Starwood, the parent company of Sheraton and Westin hotels among others, offers several online planning tools that are easy to use, regardless of the size of your party. StarGroups allows you to create a web site through which your guests can make their own room reservations at the guaranteed rate. If they book after your cut-off date, they can still get the best available rate at that time. Couples can upload their itineraries; list of recommended restaurants, golf courses and spas; and offer words of welcome directly through this site. Start planning at www.starwoodhotels.com/meetings.

Whether your guest list is large or small, savvy couples want to



be sure that friends and family are well taken care of after they’ve said their farewells. Sometimes, more than one property may be needed to accommodate the differing budgets and particular needs of your guests, so plan ahead.

After all, you’ll want to be sure there are enough rooms to accommodate all your fiancé’s fraternity brothers, and to be sure their rooms are far away from yours! Online planning tools make it easier to decide if you need to light a fire underneath some of these guys—or Aunt Edna—to make their plans while rooms are still available.

Relax and enjoy your wedding night knowing, your guests are doing the same.