

Alla Breve Guitar & Flute Duo

Selecting Music for your Wedding Ceremony

The process of choosing the music for your wedding day is an enjoyable and rewarding one. It is an opportunity for you to tailor the experience to reflect your own personal tastes and preferences. Time-honored traditions can be varied or combined with original ideas to help provide cherished memories that are uniquely your own.

The amount of flexibility you have in making decisions is largely dependent on the location of your wedding. If you are to be married in a church, synagogue or other religious setting, there may be certain restrictions on the type of music that can be played. Some churches also have policies regarding the use of resident musicians, especially the church organist. Keep in mind that while you may be encouraged to use church musicians, the final decision is usually up to you. If you are being married in a location such as a hotel function room or garden setting, you will be less likely to face restrictions on your selections, but there may be stipulations regarding amplification of the music or the size of the group. Be sure that you have spoken with the officiant and to a representative of the establishment where the wedding is to take place to determine what limitations there are, if any.

We will be happy to work with you to help you make final decisions as to the details of the wedding music. There are a wide variety of options. To start with, we will provide tasteful background music - "prelude music"- to accompany the seating of guests. (We often put together an appropriate selection of melodies from our classical repertoire but would be happy to include any favorites that you may request or tailor the atmosphere to suit your preference.) This prelude music typically begins 15 to 20 minutes before the actual start of the ceremony.

Next, we will provide the processional music, which heralds the beginning of the ceremony (occasionally a church organist takes over at this point if you prefer). This often begins with separate special selection for the arrival and seating of the mothers of the bride and groom or other family members. Next, there is usually a selection for the wedding party as they walk down the aisle, and then a separate selection to announce the bride's entrance and accompany her as she walks down the aisle. Please note that in order to provide the smoothest possible execution, we require a clear signal as to when to begin this stage of the music performance.

While the above scenario is traditional, many people prefer a simpler format, especially for smaller weddings, where the "aisle" itself is short or non-existent, or the wedding party is very small. You might opt, for example, to have one special selection to announce the arrival of the bride (including wedding party and/or escort) and smoothly accompany her procession to the point at which the officiant takes over. Again, the musicians will require a cue to begin the processional music. It is ideal if a third party is available to discreetly approach the musicians and cue them without disturbing the flow of the performance.

You may also wish to include music in the midst of your ceremony. This could coincide with standard points in the church service at which there is typically music. Or, it may accompany a candle-lighting ceremony or period of reflection. Some couples simply wish to highlight a song that holds special meaning for them. Then again, having no music during the ceremony is also very common.

The final phase of the ceremony music is the recessional, which occurs at the completion of the ceremony and accompanies the bride and the wedding party as they return down the aisle. This music (and further selections if needed) can continue as long as it takes most of the guests leave the room.

We have provided a song list and music samples to aid you in making the specific choices as to the selections you would like at the different points in your wedding. We are very happy to speak with you over the phone to make suggestions based on our experience of what others have done. It may also be helpful to obtain a recording of wedding music from the library or a music store to give you an even wider range of possibilities. Even if these songs do not appear on our list, the likelihood is that we are familiar with them and can provide them with no trouble if we are given a reasonable amount of notice. We are also happy to work with other musicians if needed. For example, we frequently accompany vocalists who are chosen to sing at some point during the ceremony. (Only in the case of very unusual music requiring extensive arranging or rehearsing time will we be compelled to charge an extra fee.)

We hope the above explanation will prove helpful. We will plan on being in touch with you before your event to finalize the details of your decisions. As always, do not hesitate to call if any questions or concerns arise.