



LIVE Q&A HOSTED BY GALIA LAHAV

Everything you need to know about Wedding Planning
during COVID-19



Anthony Beltran
Galia Lahav Stylist
@prettyboi_ant



Nicole Froelich
Destination Wedding Planner
@nicolepleaseweddings

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Everything you need to know about Wedding Planning during COVID-19

Hi Brides & Grooms,

Everybody is experiencing the exact same COVID-10 pandemic situation, but everyone in different ways.

We can't give the exact same advice to everyone but there are always solutions and more than just one option.

First of all, if you're feeling overwhelmed, know that you're not alone. Take time to process as we're dealing with unique circumstances and many of you are facing difficult decisions. It's ok if you're feeling angry, sad, disappointed or frustrated. Acknowledge where you're at and have self-love, compassion for yourself, set your priorities and just take it day by day, step by step.

It seems to be very stormy at the moment but it won't rain forever.

I was thinking about how I can contribute to you more and I am committed to help you, guide you and support you through this journey.

I will offer my consultation services for free because despite the situation, you deserve a stress less journey and a magical day.

Even if it's just to be reassured about your next steps that you're taking or brainstorming about solutions, just send me a

WhatsApp +852-9721-0096 or **Email me ask@nicoleplease.com**

Meanwhile, this guide will support you during Wedding Planning at times of COVID-19.

When should I start considering postponements?

- That all depends all on your actual wedding date but consider as well destination, event format (outdoor/indoor, plated dinner or buffet, etc.) & final guest list (guest count/ high risk guests)
- As the situation is ever-changing, work day by day and keep monitoring travel restrictions and look out for new & expired regulations.
- We all have access to the same information & we don't know more than you in terms of when this pandemic will end. Here are some links to keep yourself in the loop:
 - [World Health Organization](#)
 - [Centers of Disease Control & Prevention](#)
 - [Worldometer](#)
- If your wedding is in Spring/Summer 2020, we suggest you to postpone your wedding asap
- If your wedding is in Fall 2020 onwards, you can wait a bit before making any decision but meanwhile, work on a backup plan to avoid any last minute stress & losing potentially your vendors
- Then take your final decision 2 months before your big day

Should I postpone or cancel my wedding?

- Always choose postponement over cancellation
- Mainly because it is the most magical day of your life. It's the only day in your life, where you have all your loved ones at one place in their best moods ever, cheering for your love and supporting this big decision that you're taking. Trust us, you don't want to regret not having such an amazing day.
- If it's a budget concern, this is actually a good time to negotiate because vendors are now more understanding than ever and some give incentives to couples to consider postponement over cancellation.
- After all these home quarantines and country lockdowns, guests can't wait to travel and celebrate again. Once social distancing is off the table, we all can't wait to dance, hug and cheers together again, so the wedding will be THE party of the year for everyone.

How do I start a postponement procedure?

1. Every vendor has a different clause in their contracts so avoid rebooking too fast before considering all the other points. Remember to go step by step, otherwise it can get overwhelming.
2. Before reaching out to anyone, go through all your contracts with booked vendors about rescheduling policy & force majeure clause.
3. Every vendor negotiates differently but at the moment everyone is being understanding, just stay genuine for better results.
4. Get 3x new dates from your venue to have options.
5. As a lot of couples are changing their dates at the moment, you might need to consider weekdays too. Try to be flexible with your initial criteria. Monday weddings & Thursday/Friday weddings are becoming the new trend now. You can always tie it in with a long weekend trip.
6. Check with your immediate family/ bridalparty & anyone that must be present at the wedding, if they can make it to ensure the least disappointments.
7. Pick your 3x top priority vendors & make sure they can match the date.
8. Usually a wedding includes between 16-30 vendors so don't get frustrated too fast because it will take time & requires a lot of patience.
9. If it gets too much for you which would be absolutely understandable, consider hiring a wedding planner just to help with the rescheduling & negotiations.
10. Inform all other vendors one by one for the date change & request to add an addendum contract with the new date & updated payment details.

11. Don't forget details such as adapting new stationary, adjusting color palette, updating food menu for seasonal ingredients, dress code if it's a different season etc.
12. Once the new date is all set, inform all of your guests by email & through wedding website/app. Anticipate that date change could affect the final guest count (higher or lower). Re-invite the guests that have declined the previous RSVP'ed because it is absolutely possible that the new date could work for them.
13. Put together your own checklist to make sure you don't forget anything (eg. rehearsal dinner reservation, airport pick up, visa applications, wheelchair rental for your grandmother etc.)

Do I need a new vendor contract?

- We suggest having a new contract in place because not only the date changes but as well the payment terms needs to be updated. You don't want to be lazy about this part and potentially ending up having a misunderstanding on final payments for example.
- If it is easier, instead of a complete new contract just include an addendum. This serves as an additional document to your existing contract.
- The addendum contract includes the new date, updated payment terms & a rescheduling/cancellation clause.
- Include COVID-19 (disease) in the force majeure clause.

What can I do for the next few weeks from my sofa (now that my wedding has been successfully postponed)?

- Besides to relax, make sure you use this time for couple quality time
- Create your seating arrangements because you will be surprised how long this could take. Consider not only who is sitting at the same table but as well who is facing who, from table to table.
- Compile your wedding music playlist, from getting ready, ceremony, cocktail hours, grand entrance, dinner reception, party & last song.
- Write your personalized vows & take the time to find the right words.
- Work on your thank you cards. Usually during post-wedding you want to have a break from your wedding planning duties & then it will just drag for weeks/months on your to do list. Trust us, you will feel better to have that prepared.
- If you haven't sent your wedding invitations yet, address those envelopes & prepare your wedding suite. Complete & update your registry.
- Practise your first dance. No more excuses!
- Update your wedding website & even take the time to add a travel guide or more information about your bridalparty or your love story.
- Browse through endless inspiration on how to personalize your wedding further. If you don't have a Pinterest board yet, it's time to make one. If you need any ideas, check out the [Nicole Please Pinterest](#).
- Learn on how to do some DIY decoration on Pinterest/Youtube.
- Fine tune any wedding details, the more organized you are, the more reassured you will feel on your big day.
- Keep in touch with all of your wedding guests to keep the momentum in positive spirits & touch base with your vendors to see what they've been up to.
- On your original wedding date, have a romantic date night or do a zoom call with all your guests just to cheers

What are the alternatives of getting married if I can't have a wedding party?

- Have an Elopement instead (couple, 2 witness, officiant)
- Downsize to a Micro-Wedding (5-50 guests)
- Organise a Sequel Wedding (Split up, so Civil now & Party later)
- Live Streaming the ceremony (Zoom, FaceTime, IG Live, Lovecast App, Houseparty, Skype). If you don't want guests to download anything, use a Zoom link or just call with FaceTime.
- Don't forget that to make your marriage registration legal, you need the officiant & witness physically present.
- Get creative due to Social Distancing (eg. You hop on an open bus & drive to all your guests' home or Rooftop & Drone Party etc.)

Should I relocate my destination wedding to my home town?

- This depends on your cancellation policy with all the vendors already booked.
- Monitor travel restrictions & country lock down.
- Evaluate this decision as well based on guestlist (high risk guests/travel restriction).
- Cross-check if your top priority vendors can be relocated to your home town.

Should I continue with vendor meetings and how to conduct those meetings?

- Just because you're staying home doesn't mean the wedding planning needs to stop, so yes you can still get prepared during the downtime.
- Meetings can be conducted via Facetime, Zoom, Skype etc.
- Discuss the vendors' experience, view their portfolio & they can share with you their working process & discuss initial details of their packages
- Remember to go step by step to avoid being overwhelmed. You have the time now, so all good!
- Find out any order & confirmation deadlines that you can add in your Google Calendar. Like that you make sure you won't miss out on any important bookings.

How do you conduct Venue site visit:

- Virtual Tour through FaceTime with the venue manager
- Hire a Drone footage (this is how we scout unique venues in nature)

How do you do Make up & Hair trials:

- Trials can be done 1-2 months before your wedding date. That means that by the time of the trial, the wedding date confirmed
- So no stress, just make sure the artists are available for your new date
- Meanwhile look for reference photos for Hair and Make Up through Pinterest. Ask the artist to work on a Make Up sheet for you with the color palettes, based on the reference you sent to him.

How do you do Food tastings:

- Keep it for something closer to date. However make sure that you still have enough time to print the menu cards, which takes approx. 2 weeks once design finalized.
- Venue's kitchen: Usually the kitchen needs to order the ingredients approx. 1 month before the wedding day, so by the time of tasting, your wedding date is confirmed & you should be already safe to go for food tastings.
- Catering company: Spend more time on your research and rely on reviews/recommendations from the industry. Reserve the selected catering company for your date and do the trial as soon as everything is confirmed & safe to go.

How does Galia Lahav do dress fittings during COVID-19?

- Galia Lahav does virtual consultations to find the gown before reopening the doors.

How can you store the wedding dress so it's safe & the fiancé doesn't see it?

- Storing the gown is very easy because the gown comes in a cloth garment bag to keep it safe from sunlight, pets & children.
- It makes it very easily to be stored in your closet.

We just got engaged, what's next?

- First of all congratulations! It is just the perfect timing, because usually life gets in the way so use this time to do all the prep work & give yourself the time to make key decisions.
- Make your Guest list (A list & B list, & don't forget the Plus Ones & potential Plus Ones)
- Choose your Bridesmaids & Groomsmen
- Determine a Budget
Our rule of thumb; Take the cost per head of your best restaurant experience including food & beverages. Then multiply it by * 3 & multiply it by your guest count. Once you have that, you can then readjust accordingly.
Example: 200 USD * 3 = 600 USD. 600 USD * 150 guests = 90,000 USD could be your total budget. It's now up to you to adjust it & deduct or add up.
- Create your Mood board & styling
Finally you have the time to really work through your Pinterest & Instagram feed. On a simple PowerPoint Presentation, Keynote or a design board platform like Milanote, you can create individual design boards. We suggest to create for each topic a mood board. You can start with: Color Palette, Stationary, Monogram, Wedding Dress, Bridalparty wear, Flowers, Decoration for each area from Ceremony, Cocktail, Dinner reception & Party, Lighting & Mood, Must Have's & Customized Items or DIY, Welcome Party & Farewell Brunch or you can call them Recovery Brunch etc.
- Start selecting your Date & scout for Locations: Check for festivities & public holidays, weather forecast, high season vs low season as that will have an impact on pricing. Check guests' flying route (how many stop overs) & visa applications, as you want to make it as convenient as possible for all of your guests.
- Select 3x of the most important vendors & start communicating. Keep in mind that it will take approx 4-8 months, just to order a wedding dress.

How to communicate with the wedding guests about postponement?

- Email template to your Wedding Guest
- As for the emergency situation, it's absolutely fine to send an electronic change of date to everyone.
- Subject Line: Change The Date

Dear Wedding Guests,
Hope you are well & staying safe!

Due to these unforeseen circumstances & current uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic, we had to face a tough choice together. Your safety & health is the most important to us which is why we have decided to postpone our wedding date so we can celebrate safely.

We are monitoring the ongoing situation as the guidelines are ever-changing & we joyfully re-invite you to a future celebration to be determined at a later date. In lieu of this situation, please kindly help to stay patient as all of our vendors are going through some turbulent times.

The best way to move forward is to staying positive with us, as it's just an adjustment of schedule! Updates on the new date will be shared with you once confirmed via E-Mail, the new online RSVP's and more information will be found on our wedding website We hope you'll join us and apologise for any inconvenience.

We won't let you hanging and here are the next steps:

- If you have booked at XYZ & make it for the new date, we will do our best that your deposit will be transferred to the new date.
- If you have booked at XYZ and won't be able to make it, we will get back to you with the alternative options & get a possible refund. Please note that this is still under discussion.

We cant wait to celebrate with you without social distancing, hug you & cheers the night away!

We're in this together!

Stay safe

How to communicate with the wedding guests about cancellation?

- Email template to your Wedding Guest
- This is one of the only times, that guests will be very understanding & they will most probably be more worried about you than themselves.

Dear Wedding Guests,
Hope you are well & staying safe!

We have been monitoring the ongoing situation as the guidelines are ever-changing & due to these unforeseen circumstances & current uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic, we had to face an extremely tough choice together.

Your safety & health is the most important to us which is why we have decided to cancel our wedding.

The best way to move forward is to staying positive with us. Our love is stronger than any virus & even if we're cancelling the wedding, our love is stronger than ever.

We're in this together!
Stay safe

How to communicate with the wedding guests about downsizing?

- Email template to your Wedding Guest
- If you have no choice to downsize & decide this, over cutting something else, good news is that the pandemic is a valid excuse.
- Stay as honest as possible, even if it's hard & difficult to swallow
- Guests would be understanding during this difficult time, however still expect an explanation so stay sensitive & vulnerable
- Call them up to make it personal, stay genuine & show them that you're sad
- Explain that it was the most difficult decision to make & you are extremely affected about needing to downsize
- If budget allows, plan a simple gathering at your place (Garden BBQ/ Afternoon Tea) to make up for the guests that got out-vited

Dear Wedding Guests,
Hope you are well & staying safe!

Due to these unforeseen circumstances & current uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic, we had to face an extreme tough choice together. Everyone's safety & health is the most important to us which is why we have decided to downsize our wedding party. In lieu of this situation, please kindly accept our apology because....

- *our venue changed their policy & asked us to downsize our wedding party.*
- *the Government regulations have changed & we are now forced to follow these rules by downsizing our wedding guestlist.*
- *we decided to only invite immediate family & witness/ bridal party*
- *we decided to only having an intimate wedding due to budget concerns*

We hope you'll join us and apologise for any inconvenience. We can't wait to celebrate with you without social distancing, hug you & spend some quality time together! We're in this together!
Stay safe

Email Templates to Friends/Family

- It's important to stay sensitive & mindful at the moment.
- A shift in planning can cause a lot of questions & great communication is key.
- Here are some replies that might be helpful to deal with family/friends messages.

What is the update on your wedding?

Hi Wedding Guest. Thank you so much for your concern. Since we very recently made the decision to postpone our wedding day, we're still in the process of rescheduling everything. We will send change-the-dates as soon as possible. Stay safe, Bride & Groom

What is happening with your Summer wedding?

Hi Wedding Guest. Thank you for sending your message. We agree, what is going to happen? We're currently monitoring the situation & we will be in touch as soon as we make a decision. In the meantime, check for all the updates on our wedding website for any FAQs. Stay safe, Bride & Groom

Are you angry/sad/frustrated?

Hi Wedding Guest. Thank you so much for checking in. Yes, we're sad about having to change our exciting plans. We spent a lot of time & energy planning our wedding day, so this is definitely frustrating. We're taking the time to process everything, & we'll be in touch with any important information. Stay safe, Bride & Groom

Why is your wedding on a weekday now?

Hi Wedding Guest. Thanks so much for your concern. We searched for options, but a weekday was the best option given the pandemic situation & all the couples rescheduling at the same time. We hope you would be still able to make our new selected date! Stay safe, Bride & Groom

Can I bring my new girlfriend/boyfriend?

Hi Wedding Guest. We're trying to be diligent with our guest list, so unfortunately we can't accommodate your request. But we are so excited to have you at our wedding & hope you can attend! Stay safe, Bride & Groom

What should I do about my hotel reservation?

Hi Wedding Guest. As you can imagine, postponing our wedding is taking up most of our time at the moment. I'm so sorry you're dealing with these issues. Here are hotel options in the area that might work better for you. Our wedding website also has additional information with different options to choose from. We are so excited that you can make it to our wedding! Stay Safe, Bride & Groom

What should I do with your wedding gift?

Hi Wedding Guest. Thank you so much for your concern. As you can imagine, postponing our wedding is taking up most of our time at the moment. Already feeling blessed & thank you so much for your gift. We really appreciate it. Please contact our Bridalparty XXX as she/he has all the answers regarding gifting! Stay safe, Bride & Groom

Because of your dress code change, I need a new dress!

Hi Wedding Guest. We apologize for any inconvenience caused. We know a change in dress code can be confusing & time consuming! You definitely don't have to purchase any new clothing for our wedding. Feel free to wear something you already own or try one of the online dress rental companies. We've heard great things about them! Stay safe, Bride & Groom

I don't understand why you are so worried?

Hi Wedding Guest. Thank you so much for your concern. As you can imagine, postponing our wedding takes a lot of time, as it requires coordinating different vendors. We'll be in touch with information after we finalize our new plans & share with you our change-the-date. Stay safe, Bride & Groom

It's just a wedding, don't worry too much!

Hi Wedding Guest. We appreciate your message. We know everything will be OK. We spent a lot of time & energy planning our wedding because we want our guests to enjoy it. We'll be in touch with you, once our new plans are secured. Stay safe, Bride & Groom

Can I help you with anything?

Hi Wedding Guests. Thank you so much for the thoughtful offer. If there's anything specific you feel comfortable taking on, please do let us know. Any help at the moment is highly appreciated! Stay safe, Bride & Groom

If It Were My Wedding...

Hi Wedding Guest. Thank you for your opinion, but we're going to continue following our own plans. We'll send out the new dates as soon as we finalized the plan. Stay safe, Bride & Groom

I will attend but you don't need my RSVP again!

Hi Wedding Guests. We're thrilled that you can make it! It's much easier for us to keep track of RSVPs with all the rescheduling going on at the moment. However our solution is very simple as we created a wedding website where you can simply click Attending to your invitation. We appreciate your response as soon as you can. Thank you! Stay safe, Bride & Groom

Email Templates to Vendors

- It's important to stay genuine & patient at the moment.
- A shift in planning can cause a lot of frustration & great communication is key.
- I suggest to hop on a call to discuss rescheduling & then confirm the conversation by email to make sure you have it in writing.
- Here are some replies that might be helpful.

Email template to your Wedding Planner

Hi Vendor,
I hope you are safe.

Given the ongoing climate of the coronavirus pandemic, we would like to discuss about postponing our *DD/MM/YY* wedding.

We have a few questions about next steps:

- Would you recommend a certain month for postponing? These are the dates we had in mind, but we rely on your guidance and expertise (Option A, B, C)
- Are you & your team available on these optional new dates?
- Could you please share with us which vendors require rescheduling fee & a summary about each of their postponement/ cancellation policy?
- Are there any changes we need to do with the vendors, now that the date/ season has changed?
- We would like to include an addendum to the existing contract with the new date, updated payment details & force majeure.
- When should we go ahead with the postponement & when can we notify the guests?
- These are our 3x top priority vendors whom we must have for our new date.

Thank you so much for all that you do.

Best,
Bride & Groom

Email template to your existing Venue

Hi Vendor

I hope you are safe. Thank you so much for being an incredible part of our wedding planning process so far.

Given the ongoing climate of the coronavirus pandemic, we would like to discuss about postponing our *DD/MM/YY* wedding.

We have a few questions about next steps:

- Do you have availability on any of these dates Option A, B & C?
- When do you think should we place hold of these dates? Do we have a deadline for that?
- Can we place a hold on two dates until we have matched it with the top priority vendors? Do you have a deadline for that?
- Could you also provide your up-to-date force majeure & postponement policy?
- Will you be issuing an addendum contract to our existing contract, should we decide to postpone?
- Are there any costs associated with changing my date such as non-transferable deposits, rescheduling fees, or up-charges?
- If we change to a new season, will our menu change as a result? Will a second tasting be included?

Thank you, & we look forward to hearing from you.

Best,
Bride & Groom

Email template to a potential new Venue

Hi Venue,

I hope this email finds you well.

I'd like to introduce myself & my partner as we're both interested in your venue for our upcoming wedding.

We'd like to marry between (*month - month 2021/2022*).

We know you're dealing with possible postponements into 2021 at the moment, so we wanted to get a move on our wedding planning sooner than later.

- Do you already have your available dates during those weekends to share with us?
- If not, what are your available dates close to our time frame?
- Are you able to conduct a virtual site visit for us via FaceTime or Zoom?
- Can you please share with us a photo album of your venue?
- Can you please share with us a photo album of a wedding at your venue?
- Please send us your food plan
- What is the maximum guest capacity?
- What is your curfew time?
- How many bedrooms do you have?
- To privatize the venue, do we need to block all your rooms & for how many night?
- Are you limited to work with some other vendors?
- Do you have any package fees that you can share with us, for approx 100 guests?

Thank you,
Bride & Groom

Email template to existing Vendor

Hi Vendor,

I hope you are safe. Thank you so much for being part of our wedding planning process.

We have several questions regarding a potential postponement of your service XYZ booked for our *DD/MM/YY* wedding.

- We are currently looking at the Option A, B, C. Which of these dates would you be available?
- If we are postponing to a different time of year, will there be a cost associated with creating a new proposal based on the seasonality?
- Will our paid deposit to date be carried over to our new date (this year or next year)?
- Are there any costs associated with postponing our plans? Including non-refundable deposits or rescheduling fees?
- Are you able to offer a second mockup once a new design plan has been discussed?
- Are there any additional fees for the new mockups?

We'd like to set up a call as soon as you are available as we're trying to align these new dates with all of our vendor contracts & communicate with our families & friends soonest.

Please advise on next steps & how we can proceed from here.

Thank you,
Bride & Groom

Final advice for you

- We recommend to get someone professional involved to support you with all the tasks, helps you with the rescheduling, negotiation, execution, anticipate everything on the actual day, planning flow & to act as a mediator. Email me if you need more help ask@nicoleplease.com
- If you can't get a wedding planner, then please invest in a month –of-coordinator who will handle the last month of planning & is there to execute on the wedding day. Email me if you are interested ask@nicoleplease.com
- Remember to keep communicating with your guests to keep the momentum high & positive
- Shout out for the ones who are going through a tough time at the moment & acknowledging the ones that are struggling. Spreading love to you all!
- You feel like crying? Me too! It's totally ok to cry, let it out. It's all about your mindset, it's "just" postponing because you're still marrying the same man of your dreams.
- It happens that it gets extremely stormy at times & this is a moment of unpredictable storms. However, remember that it won't rain forever!
- If you are still struggling, do a meditation, listen to some crystal signing bowls or book yourself a floating session. Sing & dance to let it out! Anything that helps, just do it & do it again.
- Stay safe, stay home & you will go through this.

We love you
xxx Nicole & Anthony

ABOUT NICOLE PLEASE



Hi lovely, I'm Nicole Froelich, your Wedding Guru and Destination Wedding Planner.

Background: I am Swiss-Taiwanese, brought up in Switzerland, education in the Swiss Hospitality School, since over 10 years living in Asia and based in Hong Kong

Personal: Most days you can find me working on weddings globally in my yoga pants and snacking on Swiss chocolate or otherwise at the spinning studio.

I am mostly known for my positive high-energy, crazy attention to details and being extremely organised.

Brides refer me as their Wedding Guru that loves creating lists for everything.

Language Skills: I am fluent in Mandarin Chinese, German, Swiss German, French and English

Planned Weddings: Zurich, Lucerne, Barcelona, Ibiza, Queenstown, Marrakech, Chiang Mai, Lake Como, Tuscany, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Bali, Bogota & many more

Press: I have been featured as one of the [Best Wedding Planners in Hong Kong](#), [Galia Lahav](#), [Tatler Philippines](#), [Sassy Hong Kong](#), [Asia Wedding Network](#) and many more.

You may recognise my work on [Instagram](#), but here all consolidated on my [Website](#) and being spotlighted by some brides with their [Testimonials](#).

CONTACT NICOLE PLEASE



Nicole Froelich
Your Wedding Planning Guru

Whats App +852-9721-0096

WeChat ID nicolefroe

E-Mail ask@nicoleplease.com

Website www.nicoleplease.com

Instagram www.instagram.com/nicolepleaseweddings

Facebook www.facebook.com/nicolepleaseweddings

Pinterest www.pinterest.com/nicolepleaseweddings

Weibo www.weibo.com/nicolepleaseweddings