

# CELEBRATIONS

B E M I N E

## Celebrate your friendships on Galentine's Day

By LAURA SCHILLER

Love gives life its meaning. We love our partners, spouses, children, parents, siblings — and perhaps most importantly, the people we truly choose: our friends. If we're lucky, adulthood leaves us with a few close friends, maybe even a bestie or two, the ones we confide in and roll over laughing with, the ones we show up for. It only makes sense that there's a day devoted to celebrating them.

Its origins? The mockumentary-style television series "Parks and Recreation." In Season 2, Episode 16, the indomitable Leslie Knope, played by Amy Poehler, addresses the camera from her Parks Department office to explain her favorite holiday.

"Every February 13th, my lady friends and I leave our husbands and our boyfriends at home, and we just come and kick it, breakfast-style. Ladies celebrating ladies," she said. "It's like Lilith Fair, minus the angst, plus frittatas."



COURTESY OF RAILWAY ARTS STUDIO

Celebrate Galentine's at Railway Arts in Croton Falls with a Tarot and Crystal reading or a Ceramic Jewelry Workshop, where friends can sculpt and glaze custom charms to be finished with sterling silver.

Later, Knope's friends arrive laden with breakfast foods, exchange gifts and enjoy one another's company. The scene has become a cultural touchstone, inspiring real-life Galentine's Day brunches every Feb. 13. A more gender-neutral version, Palentine's Day, has also emerged, and we'll happily take it.

The value of friendship is backed by science as well as sitcoms. In "Eat Your Ice Cream: Six Simple Rules for a Long and Healthy Life," doctor Ezekiel Emanuel argues that social connection may be the single strongest factor in happiness and long-term health — more influential even than diet or exercise. Humans, he notes, are "by nature social animals," and time spent with friends has measurable physical effects: lowering stress, calming the heart and protecting against the risks of loneliness. Simply put, friendships make life more worth living.

This year, Galentine's Day falls on Friday the 13th. No need to be spooked, but it may make brunch tricky for nine-to-fivers. After-work cocktails, a group dinner, or a cozy night in are all easy ways to celebrate. After all, no one ever said, "Please don't invite me over for a homemade dinner or some yummy takeout with a few friends, some red wine and too much dessert."

For those looking for a creative twist, making art together, with a BYOB option, can be a fun way to connect. The Giggling Pig Art & Party Studio, located at 6 Lower Trinity Pass Road, Pound Ridge, hosts adult events from private parties to team-building gatherings, crafting experiences that feel like a classic girls night out. Meesha Chang, a Katonah resident who teaches art at Giggling Pig and

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On February 14th, the Wolf Conservation Center hosts an Adults-Only Valentine's Sunset Walk, where guests can explore the grounds and learn about the social bonds of the pack.

From wolves to origami:

## Valentine's plans that break the mold

REBECCA BOSE PHOTO

Here it is again — Valentine's Day. That Hallmark-imposed holiday we either love or hate. We love it if we're in love, especially if the spark is newly ignited; we hate it if we're single — or worse, newly single and still nursing a broken heart. And then there are those of us in the middle: happily partnered and perfectly content to show affection, but less thrilled by the pressure of roses, obligatory chocolates and the scramble for dinner reservations at an overcrowded restaurant offering an overpriced prix-fixe menu. (Sidenote to my husband: keep the reservation, darling.)

By LAURA SCHILLER

This year, for better or worse, the holiday falls on a Saturday, leaving an entire weekend to celebrate together. You can start Friday night and stretch things into Sunday morning — staying out late, sleeping in and savoring the flexibility weekends allow. That might mean a romantic breakfast or brunch instead of dinner, cooking at home or skipping the meal altogether in favor of something unexpected and enjoyable. Here are a few ideas.

### Mating and dating: winter wolf howl

At the Wolf Conservation Center, located at 7 Buck Run, South Salem, you and your mate can wander at dusk among wolves during the one time of year they pair up — winter, not just

Valentine's Day, as it turns out. The WCC is offering a special adults-only sunset walk Saturday, Feb. 14, at 5 p.m., where visitors can learn about (and even howl with) the endangered wolf breeding pairs in residence. You'll meet wolves such as Nikai, Silas and Kinari, and learn about the mythology, biology and ecology surrounding these fascinating animals. Wine and light snacks are included. Other Valentine's events with the wolves are planned for the weekend.

For registration and more information visit [nywolf.org](http://nywolf.org).

### Howl with laughter at a comedian

If you like the idea of howling, you might also enjoy howling with laughter when comedy legend Jon Lovitz

### An off-beat Valentine's Day

#### FEBRUARY 12

**Sumi Ink Bouquet Painting** ..... 6:30 p.m.  
Petite Art Studio, Katonah  
Register at [petiteartstudio.com](http://petiteartstudio.com)

#### FEBRUARY 14

**Origami Expressions** ..... 2 p.m.  
Mount Kisco Public Library, Mount Kisco  
No registration required

**Adults-only Sunset Walk** ..... 5 p.m.  
Wolf Conservation Center, South Salem  
For tickets visit [nywolf.org](http://nywolf.org)

**Comedy Legend Jon Lovitz** ..... 8 p.m.  
Ridgefield Playhouse, Ridgefield, Connecticut  
For tickets visit [ridgefieldplayhouse.org](http://ridgefieldplayhouse.org)

**Dogs In A Pile in Concert** ..... 8 p.m.  
The Capitol Theatre, Port Chester  
For tickets visit [thecapitoltheatre.com](http://thecapitoltheatre.com)

takes the stage at the Ridgefield Playhouse, located at East Ridge Road, Ridgefield, Conn. One of the most recognizable comedians of the past three decades, Lovitz earned an Emmy nomination during his time on "Saturday Night Live" where he created a parade of side-splitting characters — most memorably Tommy Flanagan, the Pathological Liar, whose signature line "Yeah...that's the ticket!" became instant shorthand for absurd exaggeration. He has appeared in more than 40 films, often stealing scenes with his unmistakable voice and smug-but-lovable delivery. It's a perfect way to share love and laughter — and chances are, you'll hear a Valentine's Day joke or two.

For tickets and more information, visit [ridgefieldplayhouse.org](http://ridgefieldplayhouse.org).

### Groove with the dogs

Staying on the canine theme — but trading howls for grooves — some very different dogs are heading to The Capitol Theatre, located at 149 Westchester Ave., Port Chester, for a Valentine's Day performance. Dogs In A Pile is a fast-rising quintet from Asbury Park, N.J., known for high-energy shows that blend psychedelic-tinged

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## THE BIG DAY

### Destination weddings close to home

By KAYLA GARRITANO

Having a destination wedding doesn't mean you have to fly overseas or across the country to feel like you're far away from home. In fact, there are many venues a drive away that will take you to a magical getaway. In just two hours or less, you can drive to the Catskills, Berkshires and even pop out of state to New Jersey, Connecticut or Massachusetts. Whether looking for cottage charm, mountain views or a unique structure, these seven venues offer a one-of-a-kind wedding experience just a stone's throw away.

#### Lambs Hill Venue, Beacon

A private residence with exclusive views, Lambs Hill provides an intimate setting for microweddings (50 guests max) and elopements. The ceremony frames the landscape of the Hudson River and mountain ranges, with the beautifully manicured grounds help make the views pop. For cocktail hour, the rustic-chic setting and spectacular views are met with wide-stone stairs that lead from the main lawn to the pool area. Here you are greeted with a vanishing-edge pool

and poolside bar, covered stone patio and covered deck. Then, for the grand finale, a 1,400 square-foot barn with vaulted ceilings and reclaimed wood walls, string lights and crystal chandeliers, combining rustic elements with modern, luxurious space.

For more information, visit [lambshill.com](http://lambshill.com).

#### The Barn at Liberty Farms, Ghent

Tucked away in the Hudson Valley on vast acres of certified-organic farmland, The Barn at Liberty Farms is a renovated thoroughbred stallion barn that keeps its original charm, turning any wedding into a country-road retreat. The secluded venue features views of the Catskills and Berkshire Mountains, and offers an intimate setting with its own dedicated driveway and surrounding paddocks that lead up to the farm's greenhouse. Just opposite the entrance, one of the paddocks provides an outdoor setting that's ideal for anything from a ceremony to an open-air cocktail hour to a tented reception.

For more information, visit [thebarnatlibertyfarms.com](http://thebarnatlibertyfarms.com).

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JULIEN JARRY PHOTO

Windham Manor's Enchanted Forest: A short path into the woods brings one to wooden benches ready to seat guests, a babbling brook and pines as far as the eye can see.

### Expert tips and proven strategies for low-stress wedding planning

By AMY SOWDER

After the initial exhilaration of your wedding engagement settles into a happy hum, it's time to have "the talk."

No, not that talk — the one about guest lists, budgets and whether you're the type of couple who needs flowers literally everywhere. Before you dive into the Pinterest rabbit hole or start touring venues, wedding planners say there are crucial conversations to have that will save you stress, money and maybe even a few family arguments down the road.

#### Start with the big three: people, money and priorities

"First thing people should do, understand your guest count," said Yvonne Unubun, owner of Events by



FABIAN MOLANO PHOTOGRAPHY

Yvonne Unubun of Events by Mayven at a White Plains home wedding.

Mayven in White Plains. "It's your guest list, your partner's guest list and the parents' guest list. Keep in mind

who's paying for this."

That guest list conversation can get emotional fast.

Unubun's advice? Give grace. "Even before you were born, your parents have been envisioning this moment. While it's big for you, it's just as big for them," she said.

Next up, the budget talk. "Have a strong sense of what you can comfortably afford without going into debt. Because at the end of the wedding, everyone is going home, and it will be both of you alone," Unubun said.

Brett Cameron, co-owner of La Maison Fête in Bedford Village, agreed that budget-setting is essential early on.

"Whether your budget is \$100,000 or \$1 million, you still have to think about which aspects are more important to you," Cameron said. "Are you a foodie? Are flowers your thing?"

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THE BIG DAY

# As wedding season approaches, why not think outside the registry?

By LESLIE LONG

When invited to a wedding, it's always convenient to send a gift from the bridal registry. And while it's lovely to help your family or friends outfit their home or contribute to their honeymoon fund, you can also use your knowledge of the couple (and your own creativity) to give a unique gift that really stands out from the crowd. Here are a few ideas.

### A decade of anniversary toasts

With the help of a wine expert like William Tisherman at Katonah Wine & Liquor, located at 120 Katonah Ave., Katonah, choose 10 special bottles that will reach peak maturity on the couple's first through 10th anniversaries. Wrap each bottle with a tag around the neck that says something like "Happy First Anniversary! Enjoy your special day with this Rombauer Chardonnay from California." Add some tasting notes (your wine expert can help), sign your name and they'll think of you every year they celebrate.

For more information, visit [katonahwine.com](http://katonahwine.com).

### The gift of art

If you know the couple's tastes, head to an art gallery and look for

something they'd like. Not sure? You can always give a gift certificate. Oak & Oil Gallery in Katonah has rotating shows of excellent artists and a section on their site called "small works" with beautiful paintings ranging from \$275 to \$500. Chroma Fine Art Gallery also in Katonah is another source of contemporary art. If original art is outside your budget, visit PSTR Studio, a website offering fine art prints of all descriptions, or give them a gift card to make their own selection from hundreds of options.

For more information visit [oakandoil.com](http://oakandoil.com), [chromafineartgallery.com](http://chromafineartgallery.com) or [pstrstudio.com](http://pstrstudio.com).

### Presents that keep coming

Consider a subscription service for something the couple loves, like fresh-roasted coffee, pasture-raised beef, flowers and farm-fresh prepared meals. Try Atlas Coffee Club for a monthly gift of single origin coffee, tasting notes and even a postcard from the country where the coffee was grown. Cortlandt Manor's Hemlock Hill Farms has a CSA that's open for membership four times a year; you can order a selection of pasture-raised sausage, beef, chicken, pork or lamb for many memorable meals.

For more information, visit [atlas](http://atlascoffeeclub.com)

[coffeeclub.com](http://coffeeclub.com) and [hemlockhillfarm.com](http://hemlockhillfarm.com).

### Olive oil with that extra something

Olive oil is a staple in just about everyone's kitchen, and while decent options are available at Costco or Trader Joe's, first press extra virgin oil elevates every dish. Flamingo Estate harvests and bottles their peppery, green California olive oil and will stylishly personalize the labels. The Twisted Branch in Valhalla can put together an impressive gift basket in which their cold-pressed infused EVOO is the star. Also, check out the offerings from Phat Oil in Katonah.

For more information, visit [flamingoestate.com](http://flamingoestate.com), [thetwistedbranch.com](http://thetwistedbranch.com) or [phatoliveoil.com](http://phatoliveoil.com).

### Culture club

Consider gift tickets to one of Westchester's many cultural offerings. A museum membership to the Katonah Museum of Art or the newly renovated Bruce Museum in Greenwich, Conn., will give them a year of free admissions and special events. Caramoor memberships offer exclusive benefits at this historic Katonah venue including early ticket access and artist receptions. A gift certificate or subscription to a live music venue such as Tarrytown Music Hall or intimate listening room at the

Jazz Forum, also in Tarrytown, would thrill any music aficionado.

For more information, visit [katonahmuseum.org](http://katonahmuseum.org), [brucemuseum.org](http://brucemuseum.org), [caramoor.org](http://caramoor.org), [tarrytownmusichall.org](http://tarrytownmusichall.org) or [jazzforumarts.org](http://jazzforumarts.org).

### A post wedding mini-moon

There's nothing more rejuvenating than a quick getaway. Options include something luxe and local like the recently reimagined Bedford Post Inn, or offbeat like The Saugerties Lighthouse Bed & Breakfast. The lighthouse, built in 1869, is a Hudson River gem and can be reached by foot when the tide is out. Inside, it's like a dreamy return to 19th century life, and a hearty, homemade breakfast is included.

For more information, visit [bedfordpostinn.com](http://bedfordpostinn.com) or [saugertieslighthouse.com](http://saugertieslighthouse.com).

### When the stars aligned

A framed, custom-made print of the configuration of the stars on the couple's wedding night (or the night they met) is a unique and personal gift. Many Etsy vendors, including Emma & The Bean, offer affordable variations. Or check out The Night Sky for an array of starry options.

For more information, visit [emmaandthebean](http://emmaandthebean.com) on Etsy, or [thenightssky.com](http://thenightssky.com).

### Made by hand

Morgen Woodworking in Purchase hand crafts cutting boards, serving boards and decorative boxes, and their items can be personalized with the couples' names and the date of their wedding. For a touch of New England, look at the "celebrations" section on the site for Flower Brook Pottery based in Vermont. You'll find ceramic bowls with hand-painted designs such as seashells or flowers which can be customized with the couple's name and wedding date artfully incorporated into the design.

For more information, visit [morgenwoodworking.com](http://morgenwoodworking.com) or [flowerbrookpottery.com](http://flowerbrookpottery.com).

### Commission a one-of-a-kind painting

While the gift of art is always appreciated, a custom painting or drawing of something meaningful to the couple is even more personal. Maybe it's a special spot at their wedding venue, the exterior of their home or a portrait of their pet. Helen Tullio is a talented artist who accepts commissions of all kinds. (Be sure to look at the keepsake wine or champagne bottles on her website.)

For more information, visit [helen-tulliostudio.com](http://helen-tulliostudio.com).

## Destinations

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### Windham Manor, Windham

In the heart of the Catskills, Windham Manor strives to create a stress-free wedding day while also providing luxury. Guests can stay on the property at the Windham Estate, and couples get the option of having their ceremony in the enchanted forest, located in the woods surrounded by pine trees and a babbling brook or on the lawn overlooking the mountains and a pond with a fountain. Then, party at the barn, holding up to over 300 guests under rustic scenery.

For more information, visit [windhammanor.com](http://windhammanor.com).

### The Venue at Winding Hills, Montgomery

The Venue at Winding Hills is hidden in the rolling highlands of the Hudson Valley. Sitting on over 85 acres of wooded landscape, this is a newly renovated venue, with the inside featuring high vaulted ceilings, large windows and a double-sided fireplace. However, the option for an outdoor celebration is also a beautiful one. The tented patio offers an open, airy and spacious area for up to 200 guests.

For more information, visit the [venue@windinghillsgc.com](mailto:venue@windinghillsgc.com).

### Cottage Farm of the Berkshires, Pittsfield, Mass

Set on the coast of Lake Onota, the Cottage Farm has served as a sanctuary for those seeking calm and beauty for over 120 years. The secluded property features stunning distant mountain views along with apple and pear trees to incorporate a charming country vibe. Get married in the wildflower ceremony field, enjoy a cocktail hour under the portico and walk into the pavilion barn for the reception. While the barn holds up to 75 seated guests, there's also the option to rent an outdoor tent for up to 250 people. Once the party is over, fall asleep in a cottage rental

on the property.

For more information, visit [cottagefarmberkshires.com](http://cottagefarmberkshires.com).

### Bear Brook Valley, Fredon, New Jersey

Located in the rolling hills of northwestern New Jersey, this picturesque venue offers a heart-shaped pond, a vineyard, rolling hill views and romantic sunsets, combining refined countryside elegance with industrial charm. Choose from one of four on-site ceremony locations, either indoor or outdoor. The venue offers only one wedding a day to ensure each couple has an intimate and special event.

For more information, visit [bearbrookvalley.com](http://bearbrookvalley.com).

### Saint Clements Castle & Marina, Portland, Conn.

This property's 90-plus acres overlook the Connecticut River at Saint Clements Castle & Marina. Featuring cute courtyards, stunning views and a versatile event space, there is much to offer to sculpt an elegant wedding experience. There are three unique spaces to say "I do" — the Prince Edward Ballroom featuring elegant decor and high-design carpeting, the Waterford Room with crystal chandeliers and a grand art gallery and the River's Edge Ballroom at the Marina, the newest addition featuring a romantic sunset ceremony. For more information, visit [saintclementscastle.com](http://saintclementscastle.com).



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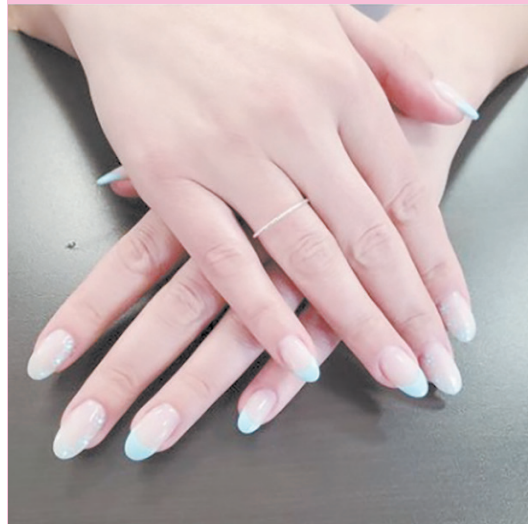


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# Celebrating a milestone anniversary? Make it personal.

By SUE TREIMAN

The time when candles, cards and candy were considered perfect anniversary gifts are long gone. Couples today expect creative, customized and sometimes unconventional ways to mark relationship milestones.

"These days, it's more about creating experiences than giving gifts," said Colleen Cushman, owner of Westchester-based *clinkwithcolleen.com*, an event company that produces in-home cocktail making classes. Like her fellow solopreneurs, she tailors her services to the individual tastes of clients, eschewing a one-size fits all approach.

Some milestone anniversary options include:

## First anniversary

Mark the initial "paper" anniversary with a mocked-up newspaper frontpage that covers the first year in stories and photos. The freelance sites *Fiverr.com* and *Upwork.com* can locate an affordable news writer, while graphic designers, print shops and tech-savvy makers can meld those elements into a convincing publication. Designer Kevin Morgan of Graphics by Color Group in Hawthorne estimated the single-page design fee at about \$200, excluding printing. A savvy Photoshop user or even an office supply store can enlist resources to help.

## Fifth anniversary

Ward Pound Ridge Reservation, Westmoreland Sanctuary, the Mianus River Gorge and Teatown Reservation offer stunning backdrops for a five-years-later photo shoot. Ward Pound Ridge's Meadow area is particularly popular, as is the Westmoreland Sanctuary near its celebrated nature center. Note that engaging a professional photographer triggers the need for a permit fee at many



locations. Informal shoots are free. Golden Hour Photography, Michelle Blum Photography and Amy Drucker Photography are among the nearby professionals.

## Tenth anniversary

The Shepherd + Co. gift shop in Bedford Hills takes personalization seriously. Owner Kristin Hemick works with metal artist Samantha Levine of Auburn Jewelry to help couples eager to mark their tin/metal anniversary design custom clasplless jewelry meant for permanent wear. The hand crafted, custom-fit baubles are spot-welded on the wearer, denoting commitment without the pain associated with tattoos or piercings. "It's so enjoyable to see couples bond as they plan their pieces," said Levine. Her creations can transform a handwritten word, original sketch or the representation of a meaningful object into a sterling silver, gold-filled or solid gold keepsake. Any piece can be converted later into removable ornaments, but most clients prefer the permanence of a custom clasplless creation. Levine's jewelry starts at well under \$100.

## Fifteenth anniversary

Break out the stemware for the

crystal anniversary from *clinkwithcolleen.com*. Cushman's in-home cocktail-making classes introduce guests to the tools, terms and techniques behind next-level cocktails. The lessons can serve as a stand-alone event or as part of a chef-prepared meal. Either way, the experienced mixologist finds that the session always "elevates the evening for the couple and their guests." Rates generally hover around \$120 an hour, depending on the selection of spirits and party size.

## Twentieth anniversary

Couples who prefer books to beverages can build a bound photo album destined to become a family heirloom. Sites like *Shutterfly.com*, *Canva.com*, *Printique.com* and *Mixbook.com* assemble emailed photos and captions into simple or ornate pages. Some chain drugstores and office supply retailers can also help recreate old pictures as beautiful pages in a hard cover volume. Fees begin well under \$100 for the simplest presentation, but custom flourishes and luxury binding can increase the total cost.

## Twenty-fifth anniversary

Relive a quarter century with a mini documentary produced by a

seasoned Westchester videographer. Dominick Torres of *Embedded Storytelling* has traveled the world shooting for feature films, television and documentaries, but prefers "telling a human story through narrative." The cost to stitch old photos, videos and original pix and footage into a brief production (under 15 minutes) depends entirely on the shooting, editing and post-production demands, but can begin at between \$500 to \$700 per production day.

## Thirty-fifth anniversary

Etsy.com crafters, local artists and resourceful makers craft countless original and personalized keepsakes, from customized maps that highlight the couple's travels, to handknit dolls or bobbleheads with their likenesses. Music lovers can order a framed copy of their favorite wedding song, arrange for an in-home fashion show, or see their pictures added to almost any kind of decorative item.

## Fiftieth anniversary

For a memorable golden anniversary, French chef Frédérique "Freddie" Frenkel, founder of *freddiestable.com*, provides customized instruction in French cooking. Her lesson can be a main anniversary

event or accompany a stunningly-catered full dinner. Born and trained in France, Frenkel usually preps and measures each ingredient beforehand, carefully walking students through their assembly into a savory meal. Sessions average \$160/person, depending on the menu and the number of guests.

Anyone still stumped about a milestone anniversary strategy can consult with an event planner, a local cultural center, one of the many nearby nature sites or high-flying tourist destinations that offer hot air balloon rides or helicopter tours.

Whatever the choice, said Hemick of Shepherd + Co. in Bedford Hills, there's always a perfect fit for the couple seeking to make unforgettable milestone memories.

## Planning

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### Get aligned before the chaos begins

You and your partner need to figure out your nonnegotiables before involving vendors or family members.

"You're two individuals coming together, and you need to talk about what you like and don't like," Unubun said. "So, you learn strong nonnegotiables with each other."

She recommends presenting a united front. "Don't say 'she doesn't like' when talking to family members. Say 'we don't like,'" Unubun said.

Cameron suggests starting by visualizing the overall experience. "Once you get into the details, we always start with size," she said. "That's a really important place to start, so you can narrow down your venue."

### The planner question: To hire or not to hire?

Spoiler alert: Both experts say hire a planner, even if it's just for day-of coordination.

"Usually, the planner is the first to go," Unubun said. "They think, 'I

and staying on budget. That's true whether you hire a full-service planner a year out from the big event, a four-month in-advance partial planner or a day-of coordinator.

"It's part of our job to help you prioritize your spending, no matter what the budget," Cameron said.

"It's part of our job to help you prioritize your spending, no matter what the budget."

— Brett Cameron, co-owner of La Maison Fête, on the role of wedding planners

project manage day-to-day in my job. I've planned parties.' But you can't be the celebrant and hosting it at the same time. It's just not possible."

Planners are key to reducing your stress, reminding you of tasks you didn't think of setting the timeline

### Smart moves for staying organized

Both planners recommend creating a wedding website early. "Get those hotels booked early and put that all on the website so when you send the 'save the date,' you can direct them there," Cameron said.

Unubun suggested creating a new email account just for wedding planning to keep everything organized.

When it comes to vendors, Cameron has a key strategy. "Book the vendors that there's only one of, like that one band, that one photographer. We're especially seeing that bands are booking way out," she said.

### The budget reality check

Unubun cautions against falling in love with a look before understanding the price tag. "Folks are going on TikTok or Reddit, and they have no idea how much it costs to get that," Unubun said. "It's expensive for a reason. You have no idea how much went into it."

Research reputable, well-reviewed vendors within your price point. If you're watching costs, Cameron has a surprising tip.

"A venue is always going to be more

cost-effective than a backyard wedding, from renting tents and forks and everything," she said. Cameron also encourages couples to work with local vendors as much as possible.

"People really like to experience the place where the wedding is. It gives the experience more character, a sense of place," Cameron said.

### The bottom line

Planning a wedding doesn't have to be a stress spiral. Start with honest conversations about money, priorities and what you want. Hire help where you can. And remember, at the end of the day, this is about celebrating your relationship—not achieving Pinterest perfection.

As Unubun reminds couples, when everyone goes home, it's just the two of you. Make sure you're planning a wedding that sets you up for the marriage you want.



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## Valentine's Day

*Continued from page 9*

jazz, funk, rock and Americana. The band takes its name from a lyric in the Grateful Dead song "He's Gone": "Cat on a tin roof, dogs in a pile / Nothing left to do but smile, smile, smile."

While Dogs In A Pile has forged its own sound, the name tips a hat to their jam-band roots, a vibe that pulses through their shows. For an upgraded experience, the theatre's VIP package offers early entry to Garcia's Bar, premium stage views and access to a private bar throughout the night, an appealing alternative to a stuffy five-star restaurant.

For tickets and more information, visit [thecapitoltheatre.com](http://thecapitoltheatre.com).

### Fold stuff together

Sometimes lovers can't quite find the words to express how they truly feel — and that's where origami comes in. If you're craving an activity that's quieter and more hands-on, consider folding paper together at the Mount Kisco Public Library, located at 100 East Main St., Mount Kisco, Saturday, Feb. 14, from 2 to 3:30 p.m. From classic paper hearts to whimsical dog ears, origami offers a surprisingly intimate way to slow down and create something together. Take the spirit home afterward: fold a few more shapes, fold some burritos for dinner, and maybe even fold your arms around each other. All are welcome, and no registration is required. For more information, visit [mountkisco.org](http://mountkisco.org).

### Paint each other flowers

Why buy expensive doomed flowers when you



COURTESY OF PETITE ART STUDIO

Petite Art Studio in Katonah invites the public to a pre-Valentine's session Thursday, Feb. 12, focused on the expressive elegance of sumi ink bouquets.

can create your own bouquets, ones that will last for centuries. Petite Art Studio, located at 23 Valley Road, No. 2, Katonah, is offering a pre-Valentine's Day Thursday night (Feb. 12) session focused on painting sumi ink bouquets. Sumi ink is a traditional black ink used in East Asian calligraphy and brush painting, prized for its expressive depth and elegance. Cheese will be provided, but bring your own bottle of wine to share as your love blossoms on the easel. It's a relaxed way to celebrate your love and connect. And who knows? You might befriend someone who knows the hostess at a fine dining establishment and can score you a quiet, romantic table on Valentine's Day.

For registration and more information, visit [petiteartstudio.com](http://petiteartstudio.com).

## Galentines

*Continued from page 9*

designs the events, is even developing an "admin art party" concept, inviting participants to tackle paperwork or computer tasks while enjoying snacks, creativity and good company. For more information, visit [thegigglingpignewyork.com](http://thegigglingpignewyork.com).

At Railyard Arts Studio, located at 621 Route 22, Croton Falls, friends can celebrate Galentine's Day on Feb. 13 by making jewelry for one another at the Valentine's Charms: Ceramic Jewelry Workshop from 6 to 8 p.m. Participants sculpt, glaze and create three ceramic charms, later turned into a necklace and earrings with durable sterling silver. Also at Railyard, on Monday, Feb. 9, gather a few friends for a Tarot and Crystal reading to explore "what's in store for your heart." For more information, visit [railyardartsstudio.com](http://railyardartsstudio.com).

If laughter is your love language, head to Putnam County Golf Course on Feb. 13 for the Love and Laughter Comedy Show. Four comedians take the stage for an evening of laughs, with a dinner buffet served from 7 to 8 p.m. and cookies and coffee during intermission. Doors open

at 6:30 p.m., the show starts at 8 p.m.; the event is for ages 21 and up. Tables can be reserved for groups of eight or more; text Mariano at 914-424-0409 to arrange in advance or visit [putnam-countygolfcourse.com/events](http://putnam-countygolfcourse.com/events).

If comedy feels too loud, a walk outdoors offers a quieter way to connect. February might be cold, but a bundled-up stroll with a friend or two through Rockefeller State Park Preserve, Teatown Lake Reservation, Ward Pound Ridge Reservation or along one of northern Westchester's riverfront paths can be deeply comforting. Walking side by side makes conversation easier, and even a short loop can feel restorative and intimate.

Or sometimes, the most important love is self-love. If you want to do something quiet and restorative, and free from social plans and Valentine's labels, you can literally rise above it all with a float session at Rise Above Floatation located at 111 Main St., Mount Kisco. No crowds, no expectations, just stillness. Love, in this case, will keep you afloat, and that's a Galentine's Day win if ever there was one.

For more information, visit [riseabovefloatation.com](http://riseabovefloatation.com).

## Happy Valentine's Day!

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