

2023 Guide

# Stateside Local vs. Destination Weddings

Destify is a leading destination wedding specialist that helps couples from around the world plan their dream wedding!



## What's inside:

- About Destify and Our Findings
- Venue Costs
- Catering/Food
- Wedding Decor
- Costs for Guests
- Hotel Costs
- Entertainment
- General Time and Effort Spent
- Further Resources

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# Introduction

The concept of destination weddings has been increasingly popular – with couples opting to tie the knot in exotic and enchanting locations due to its convenience and affordability. Destination weddings provide the flexibility to have a seamless week-long celebration without worrying about multiple events in different places.

We're here to answer the question: *which option is more cost-effective?*

According to data from [The Knot Real Wedding Study](#), the average cost of a wedding in the US is \$35,329. For millennials struggling to pay off student loans, it may be tough work to host their dream wedding.



This article explores the financial pros and cons of opting for a destination wedding by Destify. We will take a keen focus on venue costs, catering, wedding décor, costs for guests, hotel costs, entertainment, and other factors that will come into play.

**Let's dive right in!**



## Couples Statistics

### Destify wedding cost

**\$13k**

The average cost of a Destify destination wedding is \$13,000 based on 50 guests.

### Age of couples

**25-34**

The average age of our wedding couples is 25-34, followed by 35-44 and 45-54.

### Most popular destination

**Cancun**

Cancun is home to many all-inclusive resorts, perfect to plan for the destination wedding of your dreams.

### Largest wedding?

**178**

While most couples average 50 or less guests, our largest wedding boasted 178 attendees!

### Common dates

**Apr-Jun**

April, May, and June are our most popular months because they are outside of hurricane season, followed by our most popular date of 11/11.

### Most popular resorts

**Mexico**

Our top resorts are Majestic Elegance Costa Mujeres, Grand Palladium Jamaica / Lady Hamilton, and Dreams Tulum.



## Venue Costs

According to [Wedding Wire](#), the average cost of a stateside local wedding venue costs \$6,000, with some couples paying up to \$11,000. Finding a budget-friendly venue to host your dream wedding in the US may be a problem, as most are not equipped with the necessary amenities.

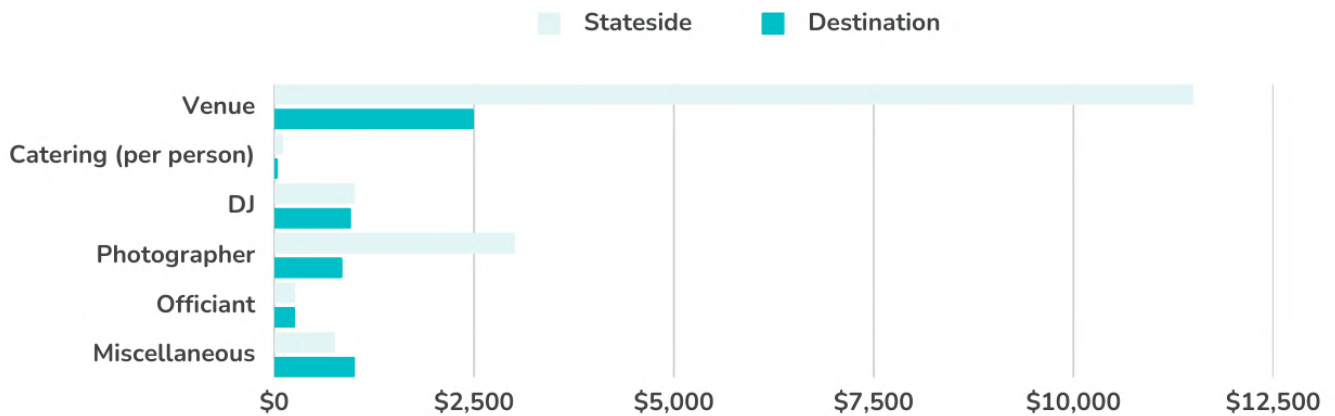
At Destify, we provide cost-effective all-inclusive resorts with venues that operate differently from local weddings. For starters, destination resorts come with multiple ceremony and reception venues to choose from, including ballrooms, gardens, and beachfront locations. These venues are designed to accommodate weddings of varying sizes, from intimate punctuated ceremonies to large celebrations.

Another benefit to an all-inclusive resort is that you have access to various amenities throughout your stay. Some include guided excursions, water sports, spa services, and swimming pools for an enjoyable and relaxing experience.

What's more? You get access to this package for half the price of local weddings! For instance, the venue for our [destination wedding in Mexico](#) ranges between \$999 and \$3,990.



## Cost Comparison



## Comparison Information

Our top selling destinations are [Mexico](#), [Jamaica](#), and the [Dominican Republic](#). Above, we have chosen Mexico as our sample destination, due to the high number of all-inclusive resorts on offer and that it has the pristine beaches our customers expect. It is also the most accessible destination we offer travel-wise with an average flight time of 5 hours from many major U.S. cities.

### Stateside Weddings

Multiple items are taken into account for stateside weddings that may be included in destination wedding packages, including:

- Ceremony venue separate from reception venue,
- Officiants,
- Rentals (chairs, sound systems, dining amenities, tents, etc.),
- Flowers,
- Alcohol,
- Catering and cake, and more!

### Destination Weddings

After analyzing over 100 of our destination weddings and comparing their costs to that of stateside, we've found that the vast majority of wedding couples save greatly, due to all-inclusive wedding packages. The biggest factors contributing to [destination wedding costs](#):

- Choice of your location
- Choice of your venue
- How many guests\* attend

*\*Expect about 50% of your guests to attend your wedding, which is often much higher for a local wedding.*



# About Destify and Our Findings

Destify is an award-winning organization focused on helping couples from around the world plan their dream wedding. With a strong focus on personalization, affordability, and convenience, we help couples realize their dream weddings in the world's most scenic locations.

One of our most vital points is our pricing. The average Destify wedding package costs around \$13,000 for 50 guests – based on our Beyond Memorable package with Dreams resorts. Add-ons on the package include:

- A private reception
- A wedding cake
- DJ
- Ceremony setup, and so much more

We understand that these costs may vary depending on the factors such as the destination wedding resort and the number of guests.

Our services suit wedding couples seeking a more affordable wedding experience. With a specialized focus on personalization, we ensure that every couple experiences the wedding they've always dreamt about.

Regarding nuptial dates, we have found that April, May, and June are popular, as they are typically outside of the hurricane season. Plus, the price points are relatively cheaper compared to peak periods. Similarly, November 11th is also a popular wedding date for our clients due to its unique symbolism.

We have helped plan weddings of all sizes, with our largest wedding hosting 178 guests. This proves that no matter how large or small your guest list is, we have the resources and expertise to make your day memorable.



# Catering/Food

Another consideration for weddings is the catering services. Your guests must be adequately fed as they cheer you on your big day. When you compare the cost of catering services between stateside local and destination weddings, it is way better to opt for the latter.



According to [Roaming Hunger](#), the average cost of wedding catering in the US per person is \$85. If you're planning for 50 guests, you'd be spending over \$4,250.

Destination weddings bring something new to the table. Standard options include a semi-private or private dining experience based on your selected package. Add-ons may include midnight snack stations and upgraded desserts.

Our Dreams of Love Package at AMR, billed for 30 guests, includes a ceremony, three-hour reception with dinner and an open bar, a photography package, a bouquet/boutonniere, hair makeup for the couple, and a floral centerpiece – all for \$3,399. Dessert add-ons and late-night food stations will be included at \$10/per person and \$15/per person, respectively.

While catering services for local weddings are billed separately, destination wedding meals are included in an all-inclusive, budget-friendly package.



# Wedding Décor

The wedding ceremony and reception venue need to look their best. However, when you compare the costs, opting for destination weddings abroad is highly recommended. The average wedding decoration cost can range between \$2,000 to \$10,000.

Destination weddings offer you the unique opportunity to incorporate the beauty and elegance of your chosen destination into your wedding décor. At Destify, you can get access to floral arrangements, table settings, lighting, and other decorative elements that ramp up your wedding reception.

We work with unique vendors who can provide a comprehensive package of specialty items such as photo backdrops, custom signage, and lounge furniture. Costs are usually between \$300 to \$500 per vendor.



# Costs for Guests



The best part of weddings is saying ‘I do’ in the presence of friends, family, and well-wishers. Attending a traditional wedding held in the US is slightly expensive compared to destination weddings.

According to a survey conducted by [Compare Cards](#), the average cost of attending a local wedding is \$1,422 per guest. At Destify, your guests enjoy more for less: the median flight is \$400 and lodging \$600, which equates to \$1,000 per guest on average at a scenic location abroad.



*\*An example of direct flights available to Cancun from many of the United State’s major airports.*





# Hotel Costs

Lodging and accommodation are essential for the guests attending your dream wedding. From our conclusive analysis, opting for a wedding abroad is way better than organizing a local stateside wedding. **Plus, when booking with Destify, you're guaranteed flexible booking, ensuring that you don't pay for your guest's booking fees.**

According to [Charlotte Observer](#), the average hotel cost per night is around \$212. However, you can expect for \$150 per guest with all-inclusive hotels. The following are included in the upfront fee:

- Food
- Alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks
- Entertainment
- Tips
- Other amenities provided by the hotel management

## Entertainment



You and your guests need to be treated to great music. So, it's a commonplace to hire a DJ and live music band. It is also better to consider travel destination locations compared to local weddings.

According to [Brides](#), the average cost of hiring a professional DJ is around \$5,500. Hiring a live band would require a massive chunk of your finances - \$25,000 on average. This puts your entertainment budget over \$20,000 for a local wedding.

Opting for destination weddings will allow you to spend less on entertainment. At Destify, you'd get to pay \$650 for a professional DJ for three to four hours. Or you could also opt for a live band from the country, such as a mariachi band, for 45 minutes for about \$400.



# General Time and Effort Spent

Weddings present a fantastic opportunity to connect with your guests. There's also room to exchange pleasantries before, during, and after your wedding.

Couples can expect to spend up to 5 hours with their guests for a one-day stateside wedding. However, with a 3-day destination wedding, you get to spend a little over 10 hours with guests on average. The average time period you get per event with a destination wedding includes:

- Two-hour rehearsals
- Two-hour welcome party
- 30-minute wedding ceremony
- One-hour cocktail party
- Three-hour reception
- Two-hour farewell brunch

These times are spread across the three-day destination wedding instead of spending all of them within the same day as traditional weddings.



Destination weddings provide a unique opportunity to get the wedding of your dreams – no matter your budget. For instance, a non-inclusive destination wedding costs around \$20,000 compared to spending close to \$100,000 in cities such as New York or Los Angeles.

It also allows you to spend quality time with your guests, as they'd all be in the exact location simultaneously. Local weddings present a challenge, as family members scattered across the country may not arrive at local destinations at the same time.

Looking at the costs, it is clear that you will be spending less on destination weddings than stateside local weddings. The team at Destify would love to talk with you about planning your dream destination wedding within your means!



# About the Business

Destify is an award-winning organization focused on helping couples from around the world plan their dream wedding. We offer a range of services that cater to different budgets, styles, and preferences, ensuring that each wedding is unique, personalized, and unforgettable.

One of the key advantages of working with Destify is that we have extensive knowledge and expertise about various destinations and venues worldwide. We have a team of experienced wedding planners, travel agents, and concierges who can handle every aspect of the wedding, from choosing the perfect location to concierge services for guests.

