



Frequently Asked Questions 2021-2022

1. **What catering is available?** Thyme & Seasons Catering (T&S) is the owner of Riverdale Manor (RM). This means that no food service may be provided by any other Caterer, or food service provider and it may not be provided personally by the client. The exception to this is wedding cakes and similar specialty items. Wedding cakes or other specialty items must be provided by a licensed and insured vendor. There are some restrictions and requirements for these items.

2. **What is your alcohol policy?** T&S and RM cannot provide any alcohol for your event. However, we do provide all necessary bar supplies, mixers, bartenders, etc. and we will chill and serve your alcohol. We would be happy to help you calculate the amount of alcohol that you will need to purchase. We do limit bar service to five hours and we reserve the right to restrict service of alcohol for any reason at any time we deem necessary. Shots and shooters, spirits on the rocks and similar are strictly prohibited and all alcohol must be distributed by our bartenders or managers inclusive of favors with alcohol. There are insurance requirements for home brewed beer, wine or spirits.

3. **What deposit is necessary?** Separate deposits and contracts are required for the rental and the catering at RM. The first contract is with RM for the rental of the facility. The deposit for this contract is 50% of the rental cost. Your rental deposit holds your date while the catering contract is being completed and is not refundable. The second contract is with T&S and is generally completed within thirty days of the RM contract. This contract is for all food, beverage, service staff, linens, etc. The first deposit for the T&S contract is \$2500.00 for Saturday events and \$1500.00 for all other days and is not refundable. Our receipt of both the rental and first catering deposits and signed contracts guarantees your date. A second catering deposit (equal to the initial deposit) will be due no less than 90 days prior to the event date.

4. **Do you have a ballroom minimum?** A ballroom minimum is the amount you are required to spend on food, beverage & labor in addition to the cost of the rental of the room, linens, fees and taxes. This minimum is required mid April through early November as follows: Saturdays and Holiday Weekend Sundays- \$9,000 and 130 guests, Fridays - \$7,000 and Sundays - \$6,000. At other times of the year, and on weekdays there presently is no minimum.

5. **What types of payment do you accept?** The balance due RM and T&S shall be paid by check or cash no less than one-day prior to the function. Expect checks to be electronically processed immediately, please make sure funds are available before presenting them. *Returned checks will add \$100.00 in processing fees, in addition to any bank charges we incur, to your bill. Returned checks for deposits are also cause for termination of your contract.* If using Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express, transactions will have 2% additional charge added and final payment is due the Tuesday before your function. *(We strongly urge you to contact your credit card provider before you present your card. These are often considered to be 'unusual' transactions and your card is very likely to be declined if you have not notified them in advance.)*

6. **Should I hire a wedding coordinator?** T&S and RM provides a coordinator for all parts of your event from the moment you arrive here until the last guest leaves. This is at no cost to you but it is a requirement. If your ceremony is not here, or if you hire a coordinator for any other aspects of your wedding that is fine. If you hire a coordinator with the intent of having them run your ceremony at RM, we require that they at a minimum attend your final walk-through meeting and rehearsal (if applicable) and that they provide detailed timelines and floor plans no less than two weeks before your wedding. A certificate of insurance will be required 30 days prior to your wedding.

7. **Is there an extra cost to have my ceremony at RM?** There is a ceremony set-up and breakdown fee of \$695.00 (\$750.00 for 2022) which includes the white wood padded chairs for outdoor ceremonies and turnover for indoor ceremonies. All other tables and chairs from our extensive inventory are included in the site rental fee. The ceremony fee includes an additional 1/2 hour of time for your ceremony and one-hour of time for your rehearsal (based on availability)

8. **What about linens?** T&S will coordinate your linens but the costs are not included. There are countless choices of colors, patterns and styles that you may select to reflect your personal style. Our wedding coordinators will be happy to provide you estimates of their cost.

9. Is there a charge for china? China service, flatware, etc. is included in your food pricing. The exceptions are plates and glassware for food that we do not provide such as the plate and fork for the wedding cake/cupcakes or similar. The fee for these items is no more than \$ 2.00 pp * *select a baker from our Preferred Vendor list and the fee is \$1.00 pp*

10. Is the gratuity extra? T&S and RM do not charge a gratuity or other percentage. T&S does charge for labor at an hourly rate. This cost will be determined based upon the style of service and the final menu. Any additional tips or gratuities are appreciated by our staff but are not expected.

11. What about D.J.'s, florists, bands, photographers, etc? We can provide you with lists of highly reputable companies that we have worked with. Remember that they may arrive no sooner than two (2) hours prior to your guests scheduled arrival time. These vendors often need our direction and we want to help them to be of service to you but we do expect these businesses and individuals to arrive with all their own tools and equipment necessary for them to perform their service. Florists are expected to arrive with their work nearly completed and understand that they may not use our building as their workshop and they may not use our kitchen for any purpose. RM will need a list of your vendors providing services for your event and their contact information no less than six weeks prior to your event. RM will contact them to confirm their arrival time and coordinate any special requirements. Certificates of insurance will be required 30 days prior to your wedding.

12. May I act as my own vendor? You are more than welcome to be your own florist or DJ, but the same rules still apply. All fresh products may not be delivered sooner than two (2) hours prior to your event, and additionally, the building cannot be used as your workshop. Your creations must be nearly completed prior to delivery. Wedding cakes and baked goods must be supplied by licensed and insured vendors.

13. How about photographs before the wedding? You are welcome to have photographs taken on the grounds prior to your wedding. This will need to be scheduled in advance with our wedding coordinator.

14. Where can we have our ceremony on the grounds? April 15 through October 15, three locations are available with stunning river backdrops. Under the sycamore trees on the sweep of lawn in front of the farmhouse is grand, in the gardens with cascading hydrangeas and seasonal flowers is romantic and on the foundations of the 300-year-old mill is intimate. You may compete with the deer, fox, ducks, geese, herons and turtles to be the center of attention! Please be aware that these areas may not be accessible to guests of different abilities.

15. I'd like to have an outdoor ceremony but what if it rains? Depending upon the number of guests and upon the severity of the weather we have several options. Our charming Pavilion can be utilized for your ceremony in the case of inclement weather. With its heating system, the Pavilion also accommodates winter ceremonies on chilly days. We can also provide ceremony seating indoors utilizing about ½ of the ballroom. This has been a delightful setting for many brides and is sure not to disappoint. It is the final decision of RM to proceed with an outdoor set-up in case of inclement weather. In any situation you will know your alternatives in advance. The decision to move to the pavilion or indoors is based upon weather conditions and forecasts and their effect on the safety of your guests, potential damage to the grounds and damage to equipment. Please appreciate that the grounds require tending until a few minutes before guest arrival.

16. Is there an extra charge for the Pavilion? There is not an extra charge for your use of the pavilion, but if heating the space is necessary an additional \$375.00 will be assessed. Weather dependent, the heat fee also includes heating on the enclosed side patio, candle lit lanterns on the walkway and driveways, twinkling white lights throughout the grounds, and propane heaters and perhaps a fire on the patio.

17. When can I have my rehearsal? Our wedding coordinators will schedule your rehearsal time as close as possible to your wedding day. Typically, rehearsals will be held the morning prior to your wedding based on our availability. A separate contract will be provided for the rehearsal date and time (at no additional cost) in general about two months prior to your wedding. Rehearsal time is provided as a courtesy and cannot exceed one-hour. We strongly encourage you to have your officiant attend your rehearsal.

18. How long is the rental of RM? The rental of RM is for the specific time period encompassing 8 hours as stated on your Reservation Contract. This includes 2 hours for set-up, 5 hours of party and 1 hour of clean-up. No deliveries or set-up may be done prior to the stated period. All equipment and other materials must be removed at the end of the event.

19. **I'd like to use the bride's and groom's changing suites. Is this an extra cost?** There is no charge for the use of the rooms although special set-ups may require additional fees. They are available no earlier than 3 hours prior to your guest arrival time or 9:00 am whichever is later. If you would like beverages or a special meal in the rooms, please see the Bridal Suite Menu 2019-2020. You may not bring in any food from anywhere else to be consumed anywhere on the premises. The rooms are not attended and are expected to be left reasonably clean with all of your possessions removed and all trash in receptacles. You may have beer & wine only in the changing rooms if all members of the bridal party are over 21 (bring ID) but please remember officiates cannot perform marriage ceremonies for impaired couples or bridal parties.

20. **I'd like to have some special decorations, what may I use?** Helium balloons and glitter cannons are not permitted on the premises. Confetti, glitter or similar is strongly discouraged - there may be an additional cleaning fee incurred. Decorations, signs, etc. may not in any way be affixed to the walls, floors, ceilings, surfaces, etc. Specifically, nothing may be hung from the ceilings or trees. The use of tape, tacks, nails, glues or any other adhesive material is strictly prohibited. You may want to rent easels. Any candles provided for centerpieces must have a substantial base and globe that prevents wax or spark from damaging the table linens. All decor decisions are subject to the approval of RM to ensure that they in no way cause any damage to the facility, impede egress from the building in case of emergency, or compromise the service of the guests. Décor on the grounds and in the pavilion should be easily removable, not likely to blow or tip over and be bio-degradable. We do our best to prevent any trash from accidentally getting in the river.

21. **Do you provide any décor?** No, décor is all your personal choice but RM does have several items that you may borrow such as a ceremony arch, chuppah, pedestals, a few easels, a chalkboard, birdcages for cards, etc. Check our website for current items. There is no charge for these items but they must be returned in good condition. We also rent votive candles at \$.50 each and cylinder vases in 3 heights at \$1.00 ea. with other options for candles

22. **How much is parking?** Parking is free but it is provided as a courtesy. 129 spaces are available for your guests (most guests come two or more per car, there really is plenty of space!) Guests and vendors will be directed to the proper parking locations by attendants as they arrive. Vehicles may not be left overnight except with specific permission of RM. Valet or shuttle services may be hired, please include them on your vendor list.

23. **We are expecting to invite several children, is that okay?** Children are always a treat. The natural beauty at RM does include some natural hazards. Anyone (children of any age) observed to be acting in a hazardous manner will be asked to leave the premises. The river, riverbank, stone walls, and deeply wooded areas are absolutely a dangerous place for children. At no times should children be allowed to be unsupervised anywhere on the premises and especially near the river. Guests who are bringing children to your event should be notified in advance that they will need to provide constant and vigilant supervision. May we suggest that you hire a babysitter to provide that supervision and that after dinner the kids use one of the changing suites as a playroom. RM has two high chairs for your use

24. **What is your smoking policy?** Smoking is prohibited everywhere indoors at RM and in the Pavilion and is very strictly limited to one designated outdoor area. Smoking is not permitted anywhere else including the lawns or in the parking lots. Any damages or fines from smoking out of the designated areas are the client's responsibility. RM complies with and supports the Pennsylvania Clean Indoor Air Act.

25. **Can our dog be in the wedding?** Sorry but no, we are a food service establishment so dogs or any other animals are not permitted anywhere on the premises indoors or out (service animals of course are accepted). Guests are asked to please not leave pets in their cars. The parking lot is far too hot for animals.

26. **I'd like to have a photo booth** – Sure, we have some recommendations on our vendor list. When planning for a photo booth do be sure to check with your RM Coordinator to make sure the photo booth will fit where you'd like it and to check on the best times to have it open.

27. **How about fireworks, sparkler send-offs, Chinese sky lanterns etc.?** Fireworks must be provided by a licensed insured vendor and have a permit from East Lampeter Township. Sparklers must be purchased from RM at a fee of \$100.00 and the client must provide proof of insurance for their use to RM at least 30 days prior to the event. Certain weather conditions may prevent the use of sparklers and any damage or injury is the clients' responsibility. Chinese sky lanterns and similar are not permitted, we have far too many trees!