



## Frequently Asked Questions 2025

**1. What catering is available?** Thyme & Seasons Catering (TS) 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?** TS 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. All guests, including the bridal party who appear to be under the age of 30 will need to provide ID to be served alcohol. Anyone providing alcohol for an underage or an impaired guest will be not be served any more alcohol and may be asked to leave the premises.

**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/ menu is being developed and is not refundable. The second contract is with TS 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 TS contract is \$4,000.00 for Saturdays, Holiday Weekends & New Year's Eve events, \$3,000 for Fridays, and \$2,000.00 for all other Sundays & weekdays. **All deposits are non-refundable.** Our receipt of both the rental and first catering deposits and the signed contracts guarantees your date. A second catering deposit (equal to the first deposit) will be due no less than six months prior to the event date. Non-payment of the second catering deposit in a timely manner is cause for cancellation of the event with loss of all previous deposits.

**4. Do you have an event minimum?** An event 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 April 19, 2025 through November 2, 2025 as follows: Saturdays and Holiday Weekends - \$12,000 and 130 guests, Fridays - \$9,000 and Sundays and other weekdays - \$6,500. At other times of the year, and on weekdays there presently is no minimum.

**5. What types of payment do you accept?** There are several options; On-line payments by either credit card or bank transfer are preferred. The balance due RM and TS shall be paid no later than the Tuesday prior to the function (*3 days prior to the event for weekday functions*). Checks are electronically deposited upon receipt, 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 cause for termination of your contract. If using Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express, transactions will have an additional 2% convenience fee. *(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?** TS and RM provides a coordinator and an assistant 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 no less than two weeks before the wedding. TS coordinators will produce all floorplans and run dinner service. 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 \$895.00 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. Rehearsal time is based on our availability, typically the morning before the wedding.

8. **What about linens?** TS 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. Clients cannot provide their own linens except for table runners or similar accents.

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?** TS and RM do not charge a gratuity or other percentage. TS 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 can only be supplied by licensed and insured vendors.

13. **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.



14. **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. 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 Garden Terrace is based upon weather conditions and forecasts and their effect on the safety of your guests, potential damage to the grounds and damage to any equipment. Please appreciate that the grounds require tending until a few minutes before guest arrival.

15. **Is there an extra charge for the Pavilion?** There is not an extra charge for your use of the Pavilion, but Oct 15-April 15 and if necessary, heating the space is an additional \$375.00. Weather dependent, the heat fee also includes heating on the enclosed side patio, the Garden Terrace, and propane heaters and of course the fireplace is lit.

16. **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 before noon 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 as we cannot review your vows and related details. The farmhouse and ballroom is not available on your rehearsal day and we ask that your wedding party stay in the ceremony areas only.

17. **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.

18. **I'd like to use the 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 Wedding Suite Menu. 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/ champagne only in the changing rooms if all members of the wedding party are over 21 (bring ID) but please remember officiants cannot perform marriage ceremonies for impaired couples or wedding parties.

19. **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. We have some easels you may borrow. Any candles provided for centerpieces must have a substantial base and globe that prevents wax or spark from damaging the table linens. Only battery-operated candles can be placed on the floor (we have them available for rent). 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.



20. **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 and chalkboards, 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 have several items for rent. This includes a gold circle arch, a rustic Amish farmhouse table, votive candles at \$.50 each, cylinder vases in 3 heights at \$1.00 ea. with options for battery or flame candles

21. **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. Shuttle van or bus services may be hired, we have several on our preferred vendor list.

22. **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. We suggest that you hire a babysitter to provide that supervision and that after dinner the children use one of the changing suites as a playroom. RM has several high chairs for your use



23. **What is your smoking policy?** Smoking and vaping is prohibited everywhere indoors at RM and in the Pavilion, Garden Terrace patios and decks. It is very strictly limited to one designated outdoor area. Smoking is not permitted anywhere else including the lawns or in the parking lots. A deposit of \$250 is payable by credit card hold only that will be released promptly. If your guests comply with restricting their smoking to the designated area and there are no other damages the smoking deposit will be refunded within 10 days of the wedding. 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.

24. **Can we have a cigar bar?** Yes, but it must be in the designated smoking area and there is a \$100 clean-up fee.

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. **Rental Furniture, Photo Booths and Backdrops, Plate Chargers, Up lighting, Etc.** You or your vendors are welcome to provide these items however they will restrict the occupancy of the ballroom and pavilions and may limit the amount of guest seating per table. Plate Chargers and long head tables reduce the ballroom capacity to 160. Some rental items may require additional staff and RM cannot move or clean any rental item. RM reserves the final decision on the location of these items

28. **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!

29. **Can we leave things to be picked up after the wedding?** Sorry, but no. We have very limited indoor storage space. You and/or your vendors need to take everything at the end of your event. Client's possessions intentionally left after the event/reception may be stored outdoors with very limited protection from rain and the elements. Possessions accidentally left behind will be donated or discarded after 30 days. TS and RM are in no way responsible for any loss or damage of these items.