

MARRIAGE CEREMONY LOCATION IDEAS: THE SHORT LIST

Public Parks and Spaces: *If you invite twenty or more individuals, you must obtain the \$25 permit from the New York Parks' Department. Also, if you elope on a weekend or in a very popular location, I strongly advise securing the permit anyway. Central Park is extremely popular for weddings. The permit does not mean that security guards will appear and protect your turf. But it will signify your right to use the space and request that others vacate. Finally, make sure you know where you are going on your wedding day: Central Park consists of over eight hundred acres.*

Central Park (least muddy covered spaces): Bethesda Terrace arcade or underpass, gazebos at the Belvedere Castle Plaza, Ladies Pavilion

Central Park: Cop Cot (ideal when you invite 15-30 guests), Gapstow Bridge area, House of Dreaming/Dene Shelter, Poet's Walk/the Mall, Bethesda Terrace/Angel of Waters' Fountain, Alice in Wonderland Statue/Conservatory Waters, Wagner's Cove, Cherry Hill, Bow Bridge (extra busy), myriad quieter, shady spaces in the Ramble, Henshead Rocks (by the Pavilion), Shakespeare Garden, Turtle Pond, Summit Rock, Glen Span Arch

Other Fantastic Parks: High Line; Prospect Park, Brooklyn; Astoria Park, Queens; Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Queens; Kissena Park, Queens; Fort Tryon Park (my favorite park in Manhattan); Little Red Lighthouse, Fort Washington Park; Riverside Park; Battery Park; Bryant Park/New York Public Library; Brooklyn Bridge Park (new area next to Pier; older area is known as the Pebbles' Beach); City Hall Park; Madison Square Park; Tompkins Square Park; Washington Square Park; Brooklyn Bridge (very loud); Coney Island Park/Beach; Brighton Beach.

Indoor Spaces (free): Roosevelt Island Tram (*metro card*); Grand Central Terminal; Staten Island Ferry; your home!

Stealth Ceremonies: *If you plan an informal, relaxed elopement with fewer than four guests, eloping in a museum or landmark is a wonderful option. For the price of the entrance fee, you will have a grand setting! Be sure to choose a photographer that can keep equipment to a minimum.*

Your Hotel Lobby; Top of the Rock (less security than Empire State Building); Empire State Building, American Indian Museum; Metropolitan Museum of Art; Natural History Museum; St. Patrick's Cathedral; St. John the Divine; St. Bart's; The Cloisters; among others.

If you want to marry in a private space, especially indoors, you will have to pay for it. Many of my couples really do not want to pay \$300-\$1000 for the use of a space. I understand. But you are in New York. Tourists are not shy in public parks about asking brides for a photo. People will walk right through a ceremony. They will stop and stare and take videos. I encounter a very frequent comment: "oh my gawd; I did not realize the park would be so busy...." The High Line has serious congestion after half past ten o'clock in the morning in nice weather. And Grand Central Terminal during rush hour or the holidays is even worse. **Thus, if you are even a little shy, do not underestimate the value of an early morning wedding or paying the money for a private space.**

Private or Semi-Private Gardens: Conservatory Gardens, Central Park; 6BC Botanical Gardens; Creative Little Garden; Brooklyn Botanical Gardens; Queens Botanical Garden; New York Botanical Garden; Planting Fields, Long Island; 620 Loft and Garden

Chapels or Historic Site: Landmark on the Park/4th Unitarian Universalist Church; All Souls Church, Upper East Side; Merchant House Museum; Voekler Orth House, Queens; Onderdonk House, Queens; Old Stone House, Brooklyn; Brooklyn Music Academy

Hotels with roof-decks, great lobbies, or amazing suites: NoMad Hotel; Waldorf-Astoria; Crosby Hotel; The Plaza; New York Palace; Ink 48; Kimberly Hotel; Hotel Giraffe; Hudson Hotel; Surrey Hotel; Plaza Athene; Soho Grand; Library Hotel; Wales Hotel; Roosevelt Hotel; Wythe Hotel, Brooklyn; Ravel Hotel, Queens

Temperatures between December 1st – March 15th are usually COLD. Walking in the park is not the same as marrying in the park when icy winds blow through you and then your witnesses have to sign the license with fingers that froze even though they are wearing gloves. Forty-five degrees -Fahrenheit- is usually the threshold for true comfort. Likewise, July is HOT: bring water. That extra \$300+ is worthwhile for heat or air conditioning. For reasons of emotions and logistics, it is much easier to move a ceremony outside than inside. Private spaces are also much, much calmer.