catching up with a...planner

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try a new spin on traditions

We love it when a couple has a string quartet for their ceremony. But we love it even *more* when they have them play something unexpected and nontraditional for the processional. One of our brides walked down the aisle to "Here Comes the Sun," by the Beatles, and everyone loved it! Don't be scared to go out on a limb—even something as rock 'n' roll as the Red Hot Chili Peppers can sound soft and beautiful when played on strings.

take mental snapshots

You'll have beautiful photos to commemorate your wedding, but they can't capture all the smells, tastes and sounds of being a bride. It sounds like common sense, but make it a priority to pause and really appreciate each moment as it's happening. It all goes by so quickly! Use all five of your senses to take mental snapshots from the minute you wake up until the minute you fall asleep. This is, after all, the day you've been waiting for.

play with your food

Everybody loves interactive food displays, so take the "bar" concept to a whole new level. We've done everything from s'mores bars, hot chocolate bars and apple cider bars to ice cream sundae bars. It's a fun and delicious way for guests to customize their treats, and it gives them something to do when they're not burning up the dance floor.

it's his wedding too

It's easy to forget, but your wedding is also a big day for your groom. Remind yourself that this is a celebration of the love the two of you share, so don't assume your man isn't interested in making decisions. You don't know until you ask, and you might be surprised by what he has to say. »

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP Bright arrangements highlight the aisle of an outdoor ceremony; low, simple wooden boxes bursting with roses and craspedia work well in a no-fuss affair; moss-covered initials and hay bales are a quirky, personal touch for a barn wedding; a textured bouquet looks both rustic and chic.