

## WEDDING RELATED FAQs

Please read first the FAQs section of our website which is providing a wealth of useful information : <http://chateaudevarences.net/moreinfo/faq/>

Other FAQs are listed below

### *1. Accommodation*

*- Do we have to book all the rooms when hiring the reception venue ?*

We give a discount for bulk booking of all the rooms but you can split bills with your guests (although it will be slightly more costly for them to account for the extra labour). Just let us know how you want to allocate the bedrooms (download and return the spreadsheet: <http://chateaudevarences.net/bedrooms/>) and our accountant will take care of the payment process with each guest. We accept cash, transfer and bank cards. Please note that split billing and payments with bank cards are applied an extra fee

*See Guest-FAQs for other questions*

### *2. Outdoors, activities, transport, weather (check Guest-FAQs for other questions)*

Please download our welcome book (password is varences) :  
<http://chateaudevarences.net/moreinfo/welcome-book/>

*- Can I get temporary heating for outdoor events in case the day is sunny but the night is more chilly ?*

Yes, we can hire portable heaters

*- What happens if it gets very hot on the wedding day ?*

Your bottles are chilled in our cold storage rooms and we also have a professional ice cube maker for chilling soft drinks.

*- Do you have aircon ?*

No need for aircon, the climate in our region is warm and dry but the heat rarely gets unbearable. We can put fans un every bedroom and the walls of the buildings are very thick which is a good protection against over-heating. Contrary to other hot countries, the heat is dry and it is cooler at night allowing everyone to get a rest. Our continental weather also allows us to have much less bugs than in Provence/Italy/Spain

*- What is the most easy way to travel to the property ?*

Travel information can be found here :

<http://chateaudevarences.net/moreinfo/transport/>

*- What about shuttling service for events ?*

As we are located in the countryside, there are no cabs driving in front of our gate all the time like in a big city but cabs or shuttling service can be arranged for your external

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guests. This service is to be booked in advance. Depending on number of guests, we usually book 1 or several drivers for 3 hours (but can be extended). You can hire a small cab (up to 4 passengers) a mini-van for 8 passengers. Then the drivers can do return trips to local hotels and your guests will pay the drivers directly as for a traditional cab ride.

You can also book a coach if you have big numbers (above 100 guests). It is a good option for inbound trip to the ceremony but for return trips to local hotels, guests will prefer the flexibility of small cabs and mini-vans rather than a timetable with a coach every hour. From our experience, guests prefer to do car-pooling or call a cab than having to wait for a coach therefore coaches are pretty empty half of the time !

### *3. Weddings and events*

*- What kind of functions do you cater for ?*

The property can be rented on an exclusive basis for weddings, holiday breaks and corporate events. There is no time limit for party

*- What is your max capacity ?*

250 guests can be seated in the Orangery (in a single room). The gardens have unlimited capacity for cocktails. We can also hire a tent for larger functions.

*- When is the Orangery available for decorating it ?*

If our in-house team is not managing the styling of your event, the Orangery is usually available the morning of the event. If you require an earlier check in time, please contact us.

*- Do you organize legally binding weddings ?*

Yes, it is possible under certain conditions. Please check our answer here : <http://chateauvarenn.es.net/weddings-2/wedding-ceremony/>

*- Do you have a baby sitting service ?*

Yes, it is possible to hire baby sitters and to pay them directly.

*- Can you recommend wedding vendors ?*

We can recommend reputable vendors (hair stylists, make up artists, djs, live bands, live musicians etc) who have already done a good job here but we do not impose anyone. Before selecting them, we make sure that they are good professionals and can do a good job for destination weddings (even if they do not speak English which happens frequently). Contrary to most French venues, we do not request any commissions nor kickbacks from vendors as we believe our clients deserve the best quality price ratio and a neutral advice.

*- What kind of celebrants are available for the ceremony ?*

If religious ceremony : you can hire our local Catholic priest or a vicar from Church of

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England or you can bring your own officiant

If non religious ceremony : we can recommend officiants for a non religious ceremony

*- Do you organize legally binding weddings ?*

A legally binding ceremony is called a civil wedding in France. This can be arranged for foreigners but paperwork can be quite painful and costly (for example for translating your official papers in French and in English or your local language). If you want to avoid French bureaucracy, we recommend you have a civil ceremony at your local registry office then a symbolic blessing or a religious ceremony in France. You can keep your civil ceremony confidential or inform your guests. In France, all the couples are doing the paperwork first (with only their parents and bridal party) and usually a few weeks later, all the other guests are invited to the actual ceremony (blessing of rings and exchange of vows) and wedding reception which is held in a wedding venue (usually a chateau). In France, it is similar as the process of buying a house : you sign the paperwork first and a few days or weeks later you throw a big housewarming party where everyone is invited. Doing the paperwork beforehand is allowing couples to make their "actual" ceremony more personal as civil weddings are quite dull in France (nothing can be customized while your religious or symbolic blessing can be fully personal from readings to songs or decor).

*- Can we bring our own wedding planners ?*

Yes, external planners are more than welcome as it is much less work for our internal team !

*- Is the pool open during events ?*

The pool will be open until the end of the cocktail hour (provided that you have baby sitters or parents to supervise small children). We have to close it after sunset to prevent any accident related to abuse of alcohol.

*- Can you suggest local specialties to offer to our guest ?*

Among the most popular options : macarons, blackcurrant liquors, jam jars, mustard jars etc

*- Do I need a special insurance for planning an event in France ?*

French residents do not need a special insurance as it is included in their household insurance coverage.

For foreigners, it is recommended to subscribe a special insurance even if the probability of using it is actually quite low. The cost of an insurance should be around €120-150 for a thorough coverage.

### *4. Catering*

*- Do you have sample menus*

Sample menus can be downloaded here but can be discussed with our chefs if you have

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other ideas : <http://chateaudevarenn.es.net/moreinfo/menus/>  
(password is chateau or varenn.es)

- *Are breakfasts included in the rental fees ?*

Catering is not included in the rental fees as each group has different needs  
You can request b&b or half boarding or full boarding. We can charge each guest so you do not have to foot their bills or manage financial matters with them.

- *What are the options for meals outside of the wedding reception ?*

Couples are usually hosting a welcome BBQ the night before the wedding and a farewell brunch the day after. Sample menus can be downloaded here but can be discussed with our chefs if you have other ideas : <http://chateaudevarenn.es.net/moreinfo/menus/>

Groups staying for more than a week-end will all book a full time chef service as it is a full time job to feed 15+ people for several days.

- *Are you flexible with dietary requirements ?*

Yes we are used to cater for all kinds of dietary requirements (gluten-free, fat-free, dairy-free, allergies etc)

- *Are you able to provide American or British specialties like wedding cakes, cupcakes, cake pops etc*

Yes, we have a specialist pastry chef and cake designer who was trained in France and in the UK. She was also trained to make gluten free desserts.

- *Can we have a French wedding cake ?*

Yes, fyi a French wedding cake is called croquembouche or "pièce montée"

- *Can you cater for non-Western meals ?*

Yes, we have already worked with Lebanese, Asian and Indian caterers

- *What are the options for children meals ?*

Menus at discounted rate are adapted for children depending on their age.  
Children are usually have their meals with baby sitters in the main building then they can play outdoors or sleep in the tv lounge.

- *What are the times for the meals ?*

For the wedding reception, we recommend the following timeline (it allows enough time for the preparations and the light will be good for photography after 4pm)

- Ceremony : 4pm
- Cocktail hour : from 5 to 7.30pm
- Dinner : from 7.30 to 10.30pm

For the other meals

- Breakfast : 8.30-10am
- Lunch : 12.30-2pm

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- Dinner : 8-10pm

Please contact us if you request another timeline

*- Do you have caterers from a different cultural background than France ?*

We have already worked with good external caterers from India, Italy, Lebanon & Madagascar and also Kosher caterers for Jewish receptions. Our chefs were trained in France and in the UK and we are always open to discover new cultures and traditions.

*- Do you have other suggestions ?*

Yes, we can provide things like a burger food truck, a pizza van, an ice-cream van or a popcorn bar. Always happy to discuss new and creative ideas

*- Can you recommend options for the midnight snacks (to be served during the dancing party) ? From cheapest to most pricey*

Savoury : crisps, cheese platters, paninis (cheese toasties), fries, mini-burgers

Sweet : candy jars, macaroons

*- Is self catering possible ?*

It is possible outside of the wedding reception but not recommended if you do not have a professional chef among your party. Managing food shopping and preparations for big numbers is a full time job and require time (do you really want to spend your holidays working or ask your guests to work) as well as some good skills ! In any case a cleaning service will be planned for as our previous experience showed us that guests were not willing to spend time cleaning after their self catered meals.

### *5. Wines and other beverages*

*- Do you have a wine list ?*

Yes mostly with Burgundy wines but we can also provide wines from other regions upon request. Burgundy production is very small compared to other regions therefore the wine list is often to be updated.

*- Can we bring our own bottles ?*

Yes but there is a cork fee for chilling, serving and disposing the alcohol bottles (and also the recycling tax)

*- Is it possible to have a cash bar ?*

Yes, this can be discussed.

*- Do you recommend vineyards ?*

If you are short of time, we recommend you go to the Cooperative Nuiton-Beaunoy in Beaune which will offer a wide selection of bottles at producer's price : [www.nuiton-beaunoy.com](http://www.nuiton-beaunoy.com)

Other options here : <http://chateaudevarenn.es.net/moreinfo/burgundy/wines/>

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- *Can you give an estimate of the amount of bottles to purchase*

Yes, see advice here : <http://chateaudevarences.net/moreinfo/burgundy/wines/>

- *How far in advance can we get our bottles delivered to the Chateau ?*

Wine bottles usually get delivered 3 days before your arrival (so they can rest before the event). In case your cellar wants to ship bottles in advance, please contact Aymeric to plan the logistics : [adetruchis@chateaudevarences.fr](mailto:adetruchis@chateaudevarences.fr)

- *Is it possible to get beer kegs ?*

Yes but we have to hire the machine. Please give your guest numbers for each meal and the list of beers you request then we will get a quote for you.

- *Do you provide soft drinks ?*

Yes, we usually provide soft drinks for the duration of your stay as it will waste your holiday time to go to the supermarket and transport hundreds of bottles for your stay (quotes are depending on the volume/number of guests/beverage list, we usually charge a flat fee on a per person basis)

## 6. Equipments and facilities

- *Can we invite external guests to enjoy the pool or attend our meals*

Yes, external guests can use the pool house to get a shower and get changed. They can also attend your meals provided that they or you pay for the bill.

- *What happens if a guest want to drink outside of the meal hours ?*

For soft drinks : there is a fridge for guest use in the pantry room and another one in the pool house. You can fill them with your own bottles or we can manage the provision of soft drinks.

For hot drinks : there is a traditional coffee maker and a kettle in the pantry room. The use of the traditional coffee maker is complimentary but the Nespresso pods are charged at the end of the stay.

- *What kind of equipment is provided for large events ?*

A description of the white package is available upon request

## 7. Lay out of the reception

- If standard lay-out

- Ceremony : in the Chapel or in the gardens by the statue
- Cocktail hour : on the Orangery terrace
- Dinner : in the banquet hall of the Orangery
- Dancing party : in the lounge area/dance floor area of the Orangery

A divider can be hired for splitting the banquet hall for more intimacy

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- If fully outdoor event

- Cocktail hour : on the Chateau terrace
- Dinner : on the Orangery terrace
- Dancing party : we can hire a wooden floor to be set up on the Orangery terrace. However local regulation only allows outdoor dancing until midnight

- For welcome BBQ and farewell brunch

We recommend to use the pool area !

- *Can we see pictures or videos of your previous events ?*

Please check our facebook page for recent pictures and films as well as press features

### *8. Wedding planning*

- *I have booked the venue, what is the next step now ?*

- First plan a viewing trip if you have booked the venue without seeing it
- This viewing trip can be combined with a wedding planning session

This wedding planning session is usually comprising the following appointments

- Food sampling is held at the chateau if your wedding breakfast is managed by our resident chef. Otherwise it will be at the caterer's restaurant
- Hair and make up trial
- Discussion around the logistics (lay out and timeline of the events)
- Styling the event
- Meeting with the florist, dj, photographer and other vendors if time allows

If it is not possible, skype sessions can be arranged.

Bear in mind that good photographers and videographers have to be booked early so you should short list (and possibly book) your preferred ones before the wedding planning session if it does not happen shortly after booking the venue.

- *What are the possible dates for wedding planning sessions ?*

As we are fully booked on week-ends and sometimes mid-weeks from mid-April to mid-October, wp sessions usually happen in low season. Please contact us for booking dates.

- *How much is a wedding planning session ?*

The b&b + food/wine samplings are charged at cost (please contact us for current costings)

- *Can we invite guests for wedding planning sessions ?*

Indeed you can invite your parents or siblings or bridesmaids/bridal party. Please note that their b&b and meals will also be charged.

- *Can we do things ourselves ?*

Yes, if you are crafty and have time to manage a diy project, you are welcome.

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### *9. Financial matters*

#### *- Who is in charge ?*

All finance related questions will be passed on Aymeric who is our finance manager  
We also have an accountant for processing invoices and receipts

#### *- What is the process for booking the venue ?*

\* For a direct booking : 33% deposit is required upon booking . Another payment of 33% will be required mid-way or 6 month before arrival and the balance is due two months before arrival. For split billing, we usually request 50% deposit upon room booking and the balance 1 month before arrival (more flexible terms can be agreed if necessary).  
Regarding catering : a 33% deposit is required upon booking the caterer, another 33% payment is required mid-way or 6 month before arrival, a 3rd deposit is required 2 months before arrival and the balance is usually settled before arrival to avoid having to manage financial issues during your stay with us (variable things like cork fee or bartenders hours will be charged the day after the wedding).

#### *- When are we expected to give final numbers ?*

Final numbers for all the meals and activities have to be provided 1 month before arrival and the final balance will be adjusted accordingly. Please note that the catering quote will be based on your estimate numbers and may change for example if numbers drop by more than 10%. We accept cash, transfers and credit/debit cards (the latter are subject to a bank charge if from foreign banks)

\* For a booking through an agent : their own payment terms apply for the rental fees but the wedding/catering related costs are always settled directly with the Chateau as per the above T&Cs. They may add their own billing charges on top of the rental fees, this is not something that we manage or have control upon.

#### *- Do we have to tip the chateau staff ?*

Tips are not compulsory but are always welcome to show your appreciation of the staff's efforts to make you happy. Most couples will leave €20-30 per staff member and €100-150 for the resident chef but a few of them are much more generous thus leaving a long lasting impression. The event planning team is generally receiving a 10% bonus on top of their regular compensation.

#### *- Do we have to tip vendors ?*

If you are happy of the vendors' work, it is common to show your appreciation by leaving a tip. Indicative amounts are given here :

<http://preciousoccasions.blogspot.fr/2013/08/tipping-your-event-vendors.html>

#### *- Do you have advice on how to optimize our wedding budget ?*

Indeed, we have many ideas based on guest feedback (what was priority for them and what was more minor details that you can skip easily). This can be discussed during your wedding preparations.