



DUE NORTH

The Great Lakes shoreline—and the views that come with it—is likely cause enough for your guests to head to northern Michigan or the U.P. for your wedding, but if not, these venues will really sweeten the deal.

BY LOUIS BARAGONA

CASTLE FARMS

CHARLEVOIX

COST from \$3,500

GUEST COUNT 350

ABOUT Though this century-old landmark sits near Loeb Bay, the courtyard, fountains and expansive gardens might leave guests feeling as though they've actually traveled back in time to the English countryside.



THE LEELANAU SCHOOL

GLEN ARBOR

COST from \$8,600

GUEST COUNT 200

ABOUT The Leelanau School—and, yes, it is an actual, operating school—allows you to make a weekend of your celebration in the summer months, including filling the entire beachside campus with your loved ones.



RED BARN WEDDINGS, LLC

SKANDIA

COST from \$2,200

GUEST COUNT 150

ABOUT This rural venue makes for an authentically rustic respite thanks to its location nestled in the forests of the Upper Peninsula—and, luckily, it has everything you'd need for a weekend-long party, including a whiskey barrel bar.

CHRISTA HITCHCOCK PHOTOGRAPHY; COST APPLIES TO A SATURDAY WEDDING IN FALL OR WINTER 2020; GUEST COUNT IS DEFINED AS THE MAXIMUM NUMBER THE VENUE CAN ACCOMMODATE FOR A PLATED DINNER AND DANCING.

NOMI NECESSITIES

Show off Michigan's finest by incorporating the below flavors, products and activities into your wedding weekend.

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BIG PLANS

fox + fern events: Meaghan Kenny

ON SCHEDULE “The most popular time to get married in northern Michigan is the late summer. The days are sunny and warm, but after the sun sets, it begins to cool down, which is ideal for packing the dance floor or staging a golden hour photo shoot.” **BE PREPARED** “Always have a plan B, especially if you’re having a tented wedding. It’s crucial that you rent sides to go with your tent. Also, if you’re getting married lakeside, there’s a good chance you’ll have some breeze. Keep the wind in mind when selecting décor. You don’t want anything blowing away.” **COLOR POP** “Couples often choose to embrace their surroundings and incorporate sage green or soft blue, but add colors like lavender and burnt orange.”



FRESH BITES

Epicure Catering & Cherry Basket Farm: Cammie Buehler

FAN FAVORITES “Northern Michigan is known for its whitefish, and it remains a popular dish for weddings—though, personally, we prefer walleye. Cherry pie is another regional specialty that’s also available all year.” **MENU MUSTS** “Every event we cater has a different menu because we collaborate with couples. We’ve catered everything from Italian to Indian.”



SWEET TALK

Third Coast Bakery: Heather Burson + Carla Okerhjelm

NATURE'S FLAVORS “Many couples like to nod to the region’s fruit orchards and lush vineyards by incorporating local flavors like cherries, apples, pumpkins, herbs and flowers into their desserts.” **CROWD PLEASERS** “Chocolate cake with homemade cherry pie filling and vanilla bean frosting is always a go-to. In the summer, our single most popular wedding cake is lemon lavender with wild blueberry filling and vanilla bean frosting. When fall comes, many of our couples choose pumpkin spice cake with maple frosting, which is rich with local maple syrup, or apple cardamom cake with cinnamon frosting.”



WEEKEND GETAWAYS

Travel Michigan: Dave Lorenz

OPTIONS APLENTY “Northern Michigan gives couples a unique blend of venue choices, ranging from historic hotels like the Grand Hotel to award-winning vineyards like Black Star Farms.” **FUN FINDS** “There are many local brands whose products you can give as favors or throw in welcome bags, including Cherry Republic, which makes cherry-flavored treats, and Petoskey and Pine, whose candles and soaps are inspired by nature.”

ON THE SHORE

Take in the lakeside views while also supporting the Sable Point Lighthouse Keepers Association.



ALL ABOUT STATIONERY



OUR PRO

Kristin Hussey, owner and lead designer of Sable & Gray, a custom stationery studio in Leland, Michigan

CLAIM TO FAME

Sable & Gray specializes in hand-painted watercolor artwork, which they use to personalize each couple's suite.

DISCOVER

sableandgray.com



@sableandgray

WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON MISTAKES COUPLES MAKE WITH THEIR STATIONERY?

Oh, USPS—the struggle is real. Before you order your stamps or pop your invitations in the mail, be sure to weigh your suite at the local post office. While you're there, ask if they have hand canceling, which means they'll mark each postage stamp instead of putting them through a machine, which could possibly damage your paper goods. If you don't get the answer you're looking for, head to another post office.

WHERE DO YOU FIND INSPIRATION WHEN DESIGNING FOR COUPLES?

I like to ask couples how they first met, what they enjoy doing together and what brings them the most joy. I also like to ask them what they want their wedding to feel like, and not just with colors or theme, but the overall vibe they're going for. I love to incorporate the details that make them unique as a couple. There's nothing better than a suite that's bursting with so much personality that your guests just know it was designed for you.

HOW CAN COUPLES HELP YOU PERSONALIZE THEIR SUITE'S DESIGN?

It's important for me to know how you want your guests to feel. Do you want them to be relaxed like they're at an intimate dinner party? Do you prefer for them to be wowed like they're attending a beautiful gala? I also love to see photos of the venue and the flowers. Those two details can really set the tone for the whole event.



ARE THERE ANY EASY WAYS FOR COUPLES TO MAKE THEIR INVITES THEIR OWN?

My favorite way to add personality to a suite—other than liners, stamps or artwork—is to play with unique shapes. Die-cut cards are underutilized and add so much personality to the paper goods. If you don't want to spend too much on die-cut, think outside the box with standard shapes. If your paper is a square, turn it on its side and voilà! It's a diamond.

LOOKING AHEAD, WHAT STATIONERY TRENDS ARE YOU PREDICTING NEXT YEAR?

I think couples are going to be bolder with their designs. 2019 was the year of refined, muted palettes in blush and dusty-blue tones. I think couples will be more confident in their aesthetics and push the boundaries. My favorite suites have come from those couples who've let me scootch them out of their comfort zones to create something unique.

PURE MICHIGAN

Kristin recommends these design tricks for a uniquely NoMi suite.

EMBRACE NATURE

Northern Michigan is rich with nature, which can influence the color palette of an invite.

GET COLORFUL

Kristin loves designing with soft blues and greens in honor of NoMi's coastal location.

TRY SHAPES

Express some of your High Five state pride with a Michigan-shaped die-cut card.

ILLUSTRATE IT

Custom illustrations of your venue or the surrounding landscape can serve as a one-of-a-kind nod to NoMi.