

PLANNING A YANKEE DOODLE WEDDING? MARITAL MUSTS INCLUDE CLAMBAKES, OCEAN VIEWS, AND PREPPY DECOR.



**LOCATIONS** Though northeastern states offer an abundance of scenic wedding locations, to be quint-essentially New England, "I do's" must take place within view of the Atlantic Ocean. (Bonus points for picking a celebration site that's also within eyeshot of a lighthouse.) Popular party places include oceanfront homes, hotels, and restaurants, as well as yachts, sailboats, and other varieties of watercraft. Couples who want the best of both worlds plan their nuptials on an island off the coast, allowing guests to ferry to the ceremony but keep their feet on solid ground during the wedding.

**FOOD AND DRINK** Since it's practically illegal to spend a night north of Connecticut without attending a clambake, incorporating one of these beachside feasts into your celebration is a necessity. Even couples who prefer a formal, seated meal during the reception book a bake for their rehearsal dinner. Speaking of dinner, it's rare to see that national fave, chicken, on the wedding menu. Instead, couples offer steak and seafood (scallops, striped bass, and tuna are catches of the day), as well as appetizers like lobster quesadillas and lobster-chowder smoothies. Cheese stations are huge here, with artisanal offerings from dairy-centric states like Vermont and Massachusetts. Drinks include hot and cold cider during apple-picking season, and cranberry cocktails—such as the Cape Cod (vodka and cranberry) and Nantucket red (champagne and cranberry)—all year long. Also on the bar menu: artisanal liquors and local microbrews, preferably poured by the brewer himself.

**MUSIC** New England couples tend to be conservative in their musical choices, so a DJ or wedding band is the top pick for receptions. Still, some inject a little island flavor into the festivities by having a Caribbean steel-drum band perform on a duneside deck. Others celebrate with bluegrass music imported from Appalachia, guaranteeing one rollicking reception.

**WEDDING PARTY** The unofficial wedding colors of New England? Navy and pink, preferably paired with dots and stripes. Most guys dress up in dark blue blazers, with khaki or Nantucket red (pinkish red) pants and matching Vineyard Vines ties or bow ties. Bridesmaids look classic in low-fuss strapless dresses in navy or blue, with gold or silver flats.

**OTHER DETAILS** Decor must be simple and understated, with plenty of preppy touches. Flower arrangements tend to be streamlined and unshowy (favorite bloom: hydrangeas). Frosted votives, which mimic the look of sea glass, rank high as a decorative touch. Favors are generally practical (lobster-motif wine corks) or edible (chocolate cranberries, maple-sugar candies, homemade candy apples). Everyone loves lawn games, so brides and grooms often stoke their guests' competitive spirits by offering bocce, lawn golf, or croquet tournaments.

**SOURCES** Stasia Anthony, Newport, Rhode Island; [exquisiteeventsofnewport.com](http://exquisiteeventsofnewport.com). Kate Parker, Somersworth, New Hampshire; [kateparkerweddings.com](http://kateparkerweddings.com). Nicole Whelden, Nantucket, Massachusetts; [unique.nantucket.com](http://unique.nantucket.com).

