

UPDATED!

Reception Sites: Atlanta's Best Views

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We know the two of you will be gazing into each other's eyes on wedding day, but your guests may appreciate a gorgeous view to gawk at. Whether a panoramic sweep of the city, the shimmer of a quiet lake, or miles of open countryside, a beautiful backdrop can add magic to the moment and make your day even more memorable. Here are eight sites in and around Atlanta that get our vote for the top venues with views.

Brasstown Valley Resort

Edged by the Chattahoochee National Forest, this "environmentally correct" resort overlooks Three Sisters Mountain and Brasstown Bald -- the highest point in Georgia. Set your celebration outdoors in the Sunset Pavilion looking over the valley, or at their new Creekside Pavilion nestled in the woods. Either way, the Brasstown Valley Resort will accommodate any style of reception -- from a down-home southern barbecue to a formal black tie affair. You may want to consider having your ceremony in the Waterfall Courtyard -- a romantic spot with a breathtaking mountainscape. Maximum guest capacity: 200. Brasstown Valley Resort (706) 379-9900; 6321 U.S. Highway 76, Young Harris.

Four Seasons Hotel

Stars, diamonds, and gold -- sounds like Oscar night, but these are words that perfectly describe the ambiance at this luxurious hotel. This five-star, five-diamond property features a spectacular ballroom with an equally spectacular skyline view. And the gold? Look up -- 14-karat paint covers the ceiling of this opulent space. Perhaps begin the festivities with cocktails on the terrace and enjoy the gentle breezes while taking in a gorgeous view. Maximum guest capacity: 500. Four Seasons Hotel (404) 881-9898; 75 14th Street, Atlanta.

The Georgian Club

Located on the 17th floor of Tower 100, this club offers an exquisite view of the Atlanta skyline and Stone Mountain. Decorated in warm woods, rich fabrics, and upholstered dining chairs, the space is elegant, sophisticated, and perfect for a special occasion. Their own certified wedding consultant is available to make your planning pleasurable and painless. Maximum guest capacity: 250. The Georgian Club (770) 952-6000; 100 Galleria Parkway, 17th Floor, Atlanta.

Nikolai's Roof

Touted as one of Atlanta's best for special, romantic evenings, this Russian-Continental offers an excellent view of downtown from its 30th floor location. In existence for more than 20 years, the restaurant has traditional service down to a T. Begin the evening with cocktails in the lounge (aptly named "A Point of View"), and then enjoy an elegant buffet for larger parties, or formal sit-down for parties of 85 or less. Maximum guest capacity: 300. Nikolai's Roof (404) 221-6362; 255 Courtland Street, 30th Floor, Atlanta.

Rays on the River

The beautiful landscaping along the banks of the Chattahoochee River provide a lovely setting for your wedding reception. Whether inside or out, you'll capitalize on the relaxing river view, a perfect escape from the city. Maximum guest capacity: 400. Rays on the River (770) 955-1187; 6700 Powers Ferry Road, Atlanta.

Serenbe Bed and Breakfast

Situated on 800 acres, this turn-of-the-century farm offers views of rolling hills, winding streams, picturesque waterfalls, a shimmering lake, gorgeous gardens, and horses grazing in the pasture. Sound like paradise in the country? Choose between a garden or poolside setting for your celebration. There are also plenty of wonderful spots to set up party tents. You must bring in your own caterer. Maximum guest capacity: 400. Serenbe Bed and Breakfast (770) 463-2610; 10950 Hutcheson Ferry Road, Palmetto.

Sun Dial

Perched 723 feet above, this three-level revolving (yes, revolving) space offers a 360-degree view of the city below (and you don't have to move!). While there is no capacity for a dance floor, this restaurant/lounge/observatory high in the sky is perfect for a daytime celebration. You can begin the day with a cocktail reception on floor 72 for some munching and mingling while gawking at the view. Then move up to floor 73 for the cake cutting, and more gawking at the view. If you prefer a sit-down affair, try the 71st floor. Maximum guest capacity: 200 for floor 72; 250 for floor 73; 360 for floor 71. Sun Dial (404) 589-7506; 210 Peachtree Street, Atlanta.

The Vinings Club

This club, overlooking Atlanta and the Vinings area, is guaranteed to please. You must either be sponsored by a member or rent the space out yourself for a fee. For cocktails with a view, gather in the Living Room, a warm and inviting wood-paneled space filled with bookshelves, and its adjoining Terrace, offering an al fresco setting and impressive vista. The grill and the living room with terrace both provide an ideal setting for mingling. For a more intimate celebration, host a seated dinner in the glass-enclosed dining room. Maximum guest capacity: 350 for the whole club; 100 for the dining room; 48 for the grill. The Vinings Club (770) 431-9166; 2859 Paces Ferry Road, Atlanta.

-- Amy Gordon