

REPLAY STUDIO

2026 EDITION

— THE GUIDE —

Planning my *wedding* in Switzerland

A filmmaker's checklist & advice for expats

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A companion to navigate your Swiss wedding journey with confidence — with local specifics, up-to-date price ranges in CHF, and the advice of a professional who knows the field.

BY ANDREI — REPLAY STUDIO
REPLAYSTUDIO.CH

Welcome to your *adventure*

Hello, I'm Andrei, a wedding filmmaker at REPLAY Studio. Every year I have the privilege of filming dozens of weddings across Switzerland — many of them for expat couples like you, navigating a system that can feel quite different from home.

This guide is the companion I would have loved to have when I first learned how Swiss weddings work. It gathers what you need to know: the Swiss-specific procedures that often surprise newcomers, realistic price ranges in CHF, and practical advice drawn from hundreds of wedding days observed from the inside.

A few things to know upfront: in Switzerland, the civil ceremony is mandatory and must come before any religious or symbolic ceremony. The whole country uses a structured legal process — different from US-style "officiated" weddings but very predictable once you understand it.

Print this guide, tick the boxes as months go by, write notes in the margins, make it yours. Above all, this is your story being written.

Andrei

WEDDING FILMMAKER — REPLAY STUDIO

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

- ✦ *This guide is a reference — not a substitute for official information*
- ✦ *The costs shown are typical ranges observed in Switzerland*
- ✦ *Administrative requirements vary by canton — always verify locally*
- ✦ *Adapt the timeline to your circumstances and wedding date*

02 OVERVIEW

Understanding your *budget*

In Switzerland, the average wedding budget for 80 guests ranges between CHF 38,000 and CHF 50,000 (Comparis study). But every wedding is unique — here are the benchmarks to estimate yours.

BUDGET CATEGORY	RANGE CHF	YOUR BUDGET
Venue rental	500 — 15,000	_____ CHF
Meal (per guest)	100 — 250	_____ CHF
Drinks (per guest)	30 — 80	_____ CHF
Apéro / cocktail hour (per guest)	12 — 40	_____ CHF
Photographer	1,700 — 4,000	_____ CHF
Videographer	1,950 — 4,500	_____ CHF
DJ / Music	1,000 — 3,000	_____ CHF
Flowers & decoration	1,500 — 5,000	_____ CHF
Wedding dress	1,500 — 5,000	_____ CHF
Groom's suit	600 — 2,500	_____ CHF
Wedding rings	800 — 4,000	_____ CHF
Hair & makeup	400 — 1,000	_____ CHF
Stationery & invitations	200 — 800	_____ CHF
Transport	500 — 1,500	_____ CHF
Civil registry (varies by canton)	300 — 1,500	_____ CHF
Wedding planner (optional)	2,000 — 12,000	_____ CHF
Honeymoon	3,000 — 20,000	_____ CHF
Contingency buffer (10–15 %)	—	_____ CHF
Estimated total	—	_____ CHF

GOLDEN RULES

- Always set aside 10 to 15 % as a buffer for unforeseen costs and last-minute additions
- Set your budget BEFORE visiting venues — not after falling in love with one
- Guest count is the most powerful lever for adjusting your total budget

03 AT A GLANCE

Your timeline at a *glance*

The nine major stages of your preparation, from foundations to wedding day. This overview helps you visualise where you stand and what comes next.

<h3>D-18 months</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared vision as a couple • Budget & financing • Venue booking • Videographer & photographer • Date and witnesses 	<h3>D-12 months</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caterer • DJ or live band • Wedding planner • Florist & celebrant • Inspiration mood board 	<h3>D-9 months</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wedding dress fittings • Groom's suit • Wedding rings choice • Civil registry file • Save the date
<h3>D-6 months</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invitations (design) • Catering tasting • Decor & flowers • Hair & makeup trials • Guest accommodation 	<h3>D-4 months</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symbolic ceremony • Transport for guests • Hen & stag parties • Vow preparation • Honeymoon planning 	<h3>D-3 months</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send invitations • Draft seating plan • Detailed day timeline • Vaccinations & travel docs • Dance lessons
<h3>D-2 months</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written confirmations • Final seating plan • Dietary requirements • Last-minute shopping • Guest favours 	<h3>D-1 month</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ceremony rehearsal • Final fittings • Emergency kit prepared • Brief your witnesses • Vows finalised 	<h3>D-7 days</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rest & self-care • Day before: pack everything • Wedding day: delegate • Wedding day: enjoy • Live every moment

01

12 TO 18 MONTHS BEFORE

The foundations

This first phase sets the framework for your entire wedding. Take the time you need for these structural decisions — they shape everything that follows.

KEY PRIORITIES

- Align your vision as a couple before anything else
- Set a realistic budget and decide who finances what
- The most sought-after venues and creative suppliers in Switzerland book up 18 to 24 months in advance

TO DO	DEADLINE	INDICATIVE COST	✓
Define your shared vision (style, scale, atmosphere)	18 months	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Set overall budget and financing split	18 months	Ref. 40,000 / 80 guests	<input type="checkbox"/>
Draft a provisional guest list	18 months	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Set the wedding date	18 months	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Choose your two witnesses (must be over 18)	18 months	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Book the venue	18 months	500 — 15,000 CHF	<input type="checkbox"/>
Book the videographer	18 months	1,950 — 4,500 CHF	<input type="checkbox"/>
Book the photographer	18 months	1,700 — 4,000 CHF	<input type="checkbox"/>

YOUR CHOICES — TO COMPLETE

Venue	Deposit	CHF
Videographer	Deposit	CHF
Photographer	Deposit	CHF

YOUR NOTES

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A A WORD FROM THE FILMMAKER
 « A shared vision as a couple is the most important foundation. Without it, every subsequent decision becomes a source of tension. Take this time before anything else — it will save you many conflicts down the line. »
 — ANDREI

02

9 TO 12 MONTHS BEFORE

The pillars

The structural elements take shape: catering, entertainment, support team. It's also when you start building your visual world.

KEY PRIORITIES

- The caterer defines both the culinary quality and logistics of your day
- Good DJs and symbolic celebrants book early — don't wait
- Decide on a wedding planner now — their role adapts to your progress

TO DO	DEADLINE	INDICATIVE COST	✓
Book the caterer (if not included with venue)	12 months	100 — 250 / guest	<input type="checkbox"/>
Book DJ or live band	12 months	1,000 — 3,000 CHF	<input type="checkbox"/>
Decide on a wedding planner	12 months	2,000 — 12,000 CHF	<input type="checkbox"/>
Book the florist	12 months	1,500 — 5,000 CHF	<input type="checkbox"/>
Choose a symbolic ceremony celebrant (if applicable)	12 months	1,600 — 2,500 CHF	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reserve accommodation blocks for distant guests	12 months	On request	<input type="checkbox"/>
Create an inspiration mood board (Pinterest)	12 months	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Choose theme and colour palette	12 months	—	<input type="checkbox"/>

YOUR CHOICES — TO COMPLETE

Caterer	Per guest	CHF
DJ / Band	Deposit	CHF
Florist	Quote	CHF
Celebrant	Quote	CHF

YOUR NOTES

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A WORD FROM THE FILMMAKER

« During peak season from May to September, top videographers and photographers are booked 12 to 18 months in advance. If you're still hesitating on style, reach out early to your shortlisted suppliers. You can decide calmly — but without losing the best ones to other couples. »

— ANDREI

03 6 TO 9 MONTHS BEFORE

The *legal* formalities

The civil marriage in Switzerland follows a strict preparatory procedure, regulated federally but applied by cantonal registry offices. Anticipate well in advance — especially as expats, where additional documents are often required.

ESSENTIAL TO KNOW — FOR EXPATS

In Switzerland, civil marriage is mandatory and must occur **BEFORE** any religious or symbolic ceremony. Once the preparatory procedure is approved, the civil ceremony must be celebrated within 3 months. Document requirements vary by canton — always confirm with the registry office of your municipality of residence. Non-Swiss documents typically require legalisation and certified translation into German, French, or Italian.

CANTON	INDICATIVE COST	IMPORTANT SPECIFICS
Zurich	On request	Online registration available. External wedding locations possible.
Geneva	CHF 150 + 75	No weddings on Sundays or public holidays. 3-month validity.
Vaud	CHF 250 — 500	Premium location surcharge: CHF 1,500 additional.
Bern	On request	Wedding venues bookable up to 1 year in advance.
Basel-Stadt	On request	External venues available. Surcharges depending on weekday.
Fribourg	CHF 150 deposit	Online registration. Venue bookable up to 1 year ahead.
Zug, Lucerne	On request	Popular cantons for expats. Early booking strongly advised.

TO DO	DEADLINE	INDICATIVE COST	✓
Identify the registry office of your municipality	9 months	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Submit the marriage preparation file	6-9 months	150 — 500 CHF	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gather core documents (ID, residence, birth certificate)	6-9 months	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foreign documents: legalisation + certified translation	9 months	Variable	<input type="checkbox"/>
Certificate of capacity to marry (for foreign nationals)	9 months	Variable	<input type="checkbox"/>
Decide on surname after marriage	6 months	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Formally confirm your two adult witnesses	6 months	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Book civil ceremony date and venue	6 months	300 — 1,500 CHF	<input type="checkbox"/>

A

A WORD FROM THE FILMMAKER

« As an expat, give yourself extra time on paperwork. Document legalisation, apostilles and certified translations can take 2 to 4 months. Starting 9 to 12 months before the planned date is the safe approach — it prevents the administrative stress that can hijack the romantic excitement. »

— ANDREI

04

3 TO 6 MONTHS BEFORE

The details that *matter*

The aesthetic and logistical choices that give your day its personality. Everything begins to take shape.

KEY PRIORITIES

- A bespoke wedding dress requires 6 to 9 months — start fittings now
- Invitations should be sent 3 months before the wedding at minimum
- Book accommodation for distant or international guests before peak season

TO DO	DEADLINE	INDICATIVE COST	✓
Start wedding dress fittings	6 months	1,500 — 5,000 CHF	<input type="checkbox"/>
Choose the groom's suit	4-6 months	600 — 2,500 CHF	<input type="checkbox"/>
Design and order invitations	4-6 months	200 — 800 CHF	<input type="checkbox"/>
Catering tasting and final menu	6 months	Usually included	<input type="checkbox"/>
Decoration and floral choices	6 months	1,500 — 5,000 CHF	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair and makeup trial (bride)	6 months	200 — 500 CHF	<input type="checkbox"/>
Choose wedding rings	6 months	800 — 4,000 CHF	<input type="checkbox"/>
Book accommodation for distant guests	6 months	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dance lessons (if first-dance planned)	4 months	200 — 500 CHF	<input type="checkbox"/>

YOUR CHOICES

Wedding dress	Price	CHF
Suit	Price	CHF
Rings	Price	CHF

YOUR NOTES

A

A WORD FROM THE FILMMAKER

« Think about your venue's lighting now. A beautiful film depends enormously on available light. Ask your venue which ambient lighting options are possible — fairy lights, candles, warm LED uplights. It transforms the cinematic feel. »

— ANDREI

05 1 TO 3 MONTHS BEFORE

The *execution* phase

The puzzle pieces come together. It's time to coordinate everything and finalise the logistics of the day.

KEY PRIORITIES

- Send invitations at least 3 months ahead — earlier for international guests
- Schedule hen & stag parties here, not the week before — avoiding injuries and fatigue
- Finalise the detailed schedule and share it with every supplier

TO DO	DEADLINE	INDICATIVE COST	✓
Send out invitations	3 months	Included	<input type="checkbox"/>
Draft seating plan	3 months	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Detailed schedule of the day (timing)	3 months	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Finalise content of the symbolic ceremony	3 months	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Book transport for couple and guest shuttles	3 months	500 — 1,500 CHF	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organise hen and stag parties	2-3 months	Variable	<input type="checkbox"/>
Book honeymoon	3 months	3,000 — 20,000 CHF	<input type="checkbox"/>
Verify passports, vaccinations and travel documents	3 months	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Begin drafting your vows	2 months	—	<input type="checkbox"/>

YOUR CHOICES

Transport Price CHF
 Honeymoon Budget CHF

YOUR NOTES

A A WORD FROM THE FILMMAKER
 « Share your detailed schedule with your videographer and photographer at least one month ahead. The better we understand your day's flow, the better we anticipate the key moments. Also plan 30 to 45 minutes alone for the couple after the ceremony — a precious investment for the most romantic shots. »
 — ANDREI

06 1 MONTH BEFORE

The last *month*

The final straight. Confirmations, finalisation, last details. Leave nothing to chance.

KEY PRIORITIES

- Get ALL confirmations IN WRITING — timings, services, day-of contacts
- Finalise the seating plan and dietary requirements list
- Formally brief your witnesses on their roles (signatures, speeches, coordination)

TO DO	DEADLINE	INDICATIVE COST	✓
Written confirmation from all suppliers	1 month	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Final seating plan	1 month	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communicate dietary needs and allergies to caterer	1 month	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceremony rehearsal (if applicable)	1 month	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Finalise and rehearse your vows	1 month	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Final clothing fittings (adjustments)	1 month	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Detailed briefing for your witnesses	1 month	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prepare guest favours	1 month	3 — 10 / guest	<input type="checkbox"/>
Confirm transport and shuttles	1 month	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appoint a day-of coordinator	1 month	—	<input type="checkbox"/>

KEY CONTACTS FOR THE DAY

Coordinator Phone

Witness 1 Phone

Witness 2 Phone

A WORD FROM THE FILMMAKER



« Share your day-of coordinator's contact details with every supplier. That way, no one calls you directly during the day. You should be able to focus entirely on living your wedding — not on putting out small fires. »

— ANDREI

07 WEDDING WEEK & DAY

The big *day*

The final adjustments and the wedding day itself. By now, delegating is your greatest ally. Everything is in place — your only role is to live it fully.

TO DO	WHEN	INDICATIVE COST	✓
Final touches at the hairdresser	D-7	100 — 250 CHF	<input type="checkbox"/>
Manicure, pedicure and treatments	D-7	100 — 250 CHF	<input type="checkbox"/>
Confirm arrival of all suppliers	D-3	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pack everything (wedding day bag + honeymoon)	Day before	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Light dinner with family / loved ones	Day before	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Get an early night	Day before	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hearty breakfast	Wedding day	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delegate to witnesses and coordinator	Wedding day	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Witnesses sign after the ceremony	Wedding day	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enjoy every moment — this is the essential part	Wedding day	—	<input type="checkbox"/>

WEDDING DAY EMERGENCY KIT

- Blister plasters
- Deodorant and perfume
- Tissues (lots)
- Makeup touch-up kit
- Basic medications
- Documents: ID, rings, vows
- Phone chargers
- Needle, thread, safety pins
- Stain remover spray
- Hairbrush, hairspray
- Water and small snacks
- Emergency contact list

A A WORD FROM THE FILMMAKER
 « On the day, forget the checklist. Everything is in place, your suppliers are doing their work. The best memories I capture aren't the planned poses — they're the spontaneous glances, the uncalculated laughter, the unexpected tears. Trust the plan, and live the day. »
 — ANDREI

08

AFTER THE BIG DAY

And after?

A few simple tasks to gracefully close this beautiful adventure and keep your memories alive for years to come.

TO DO	TIMELINE	INDICATIVE COST	✓
Return rented clothing	1 week	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collect gifts and decorations	1 week	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enjoy the honeymoon	Per schedule	—	<input type="checkbox"/>
Send thank-you cards (with photos)	2-4 weeks	100 — 300 CHF	<input type="checkbox"/>
Receive professional photos and videos	4-12 weeks	Included	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialist cleaning of the wedding dress	1 month	150 — 400 CHF	<input type="checkbox"/>
Order photo album / coffee table book	2-6 months	200 — 800 CHF	<input type="checkbox"/>
Administrative changes (if surname changed)	1-3 months	—	<input type="checkbox"/>

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES IF YOU CHANGED YOUR SURNAME

- Swiss residency permit
- Passport (home country)
- Swiss driving licence
- Health insurance fund
- Doctor and dentist records
- Municipality of residence
- Bank (accounts, cards)
- Employer (HR, payroll)
- Insurance (health, liability, household)
- AVS/AHV & pension fund (2nd pillar)
- Subscriptions (SBB, gym, etc.)
- Social media accounts

A A WORD FROM THE FILMMAKER
 « A few weeks after the wedding, take time to watch your wedding film together, in a quiet moment. That's often when the emotions come back in full force — on the day itself, you were so in the moment that much of it barely registered. »
 — ANDREI

09 OUR SELECTION

Our recommended *suppliers*

Drawn from our field experience with dozens of weddings across Switzerland. A curated selection of trusted partners we have enjoyed collaborating with.

VENUES

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-
-

CATERERS

-
-
-

FLORISTS

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-
-

DJ & MUSICIANS

-
-
-

HAIR & MAKEUP

-
-
-

WEDDING PLANNERS

-
-
-

ENGLISH-SPEAKING CELEBRANTS

-
-
-

DRESSES & SUITS

-
-
-

GOOD TO KNOW

- The complete and regularly updated list is available online at replaystudio.ch
- This selection reflects our personal experience and is refreshed continuously
- Ask us for an introduction — we'll happily connect you with the right people

THE FINAL WORD

Your day deserves to be *told*

« Planning a wedding is an adventure that begins long before the day itself and continues long after. If you are looking for a filmmaker who can observe, adapt, and capture the essential without intruding — let's talk about your project. It would be an honour to transform your day into a film that lets you relive every emotion for years to come. »

— ANDREI —

REPLAY STUDIO

Wedding Filmmaker in Switzerland

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Book a discovery call

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