How To Say No To (Expensive) Wedding Invites

Description

Attending weddings can be a reallllllllly expensive affair. How do you politely decline when youâ??ve invited to an expensive wedding which you canâ??t afford to attend?



How much would you give if you were invited to this $140,000 wedding?

It is no secret that wedding costs are huge for the couple (Singaporean couples spend $40k â?? $60k on theirs), but thereâ??s lesser talk about how expensive it can be for the guests as well. With most couples getting married in their 20s to early 30s, this usually means that many of your peers will be sending you their wedding invitations when youâ??re fresh out of college with a huge student debt, or when youâ??re trying to save up for your own impending wedding or house.



How much should you put in your red packet?

If you're attending a Saturday night wedding dinner at these top-tier hotels, this is how much you should be putting in your red packet, per guest, to at least cover your meal.

Hotel	
Capella Singapore	$234
St Regis	$234
Ritz-Carlton Millenia	$220
Grand Hyatt	$210
W Singapore-Sentosa Cove	$205
Shangri-La	$198
Intercontinental	$186
The Fullerton	$186
Mandarin Oriental	$180
Raffles Hotel	$174
Pan Pacific	$168
Marriott Tang Plaza	$162
Marina Bay Sands	$162
Conrad Centennial	$155
The Regent	$148

NOTE: Prices are based on table prices from the hotel's Saturday wedding dinner package after 7 per cent GST and 10 per cent service charge, divided by the number of guests per table and rounded up.

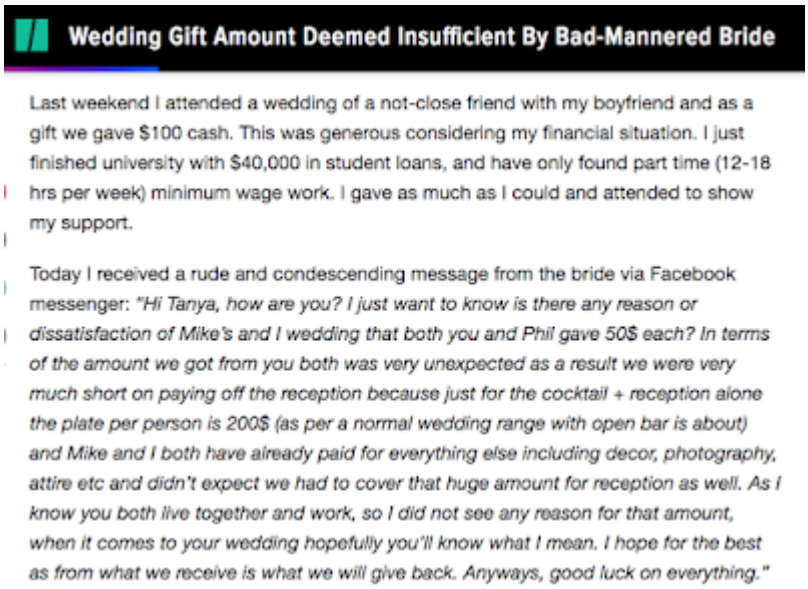
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Source: The Straits Times

Letâ??s leave out destination weddings for now, since the cost of your airfare and accommodation for such events will probably bust your budget even further, but shouldnâ??t happen too often anywayâ?¦unless the majority of your good friends donâ??t live in the same country as you. *Last year, I spent close to $1000 when I flew to attend a wedding of a close friend, as we were asked to stay in a five-star Sheraton beach resort where the 3-day affair was held in. (It made for a great memory, but I probably canâ??t afford to do something like that too often.)*

If youâ??re â??luckyâ?• enough to get invited to more than a few weddings within a single year, thatâ??s a lot of money given away in ang paos. In the worst case scenario, God forbid if you get scolded for giving too little (like what this guest experienced!)



Wedding Gift Amount Deemed Insufficient By Bad-Mannered Bride

Last weekend I attended a wedding of a not-close friend with my boyfriend and as a gift we gave $100 cash. This was generous considering my financial situation. I just finished university with $40,000 in student loans, and have only found part time (12-18 hrs per week) minimum wage work. I gave as much as I could and attended to show my support.

Today I received a rude and condescending message from the bride via Facebook messenger: *"Hi Tanya, how are you? I just want to know is there any reason or dissatisfaction of Mike's and I wedding that both you and Phil gave 50$ each? In terms of the amount we got from you both was very unexpected as a result we were very much short on paying off the reception because just for the cocktail + reception alone the plate per person is 200$ (as per a normal wedding range with open bar is about) and Mike and I both have already paid for everything else including decor, photography, attire etc and didn't expect we had to cover that huge amount for reception as well. As I know you both live together and work, so I did not see any reason for that amount, when it comes to your wedding hopefully you'll know what I mean. I hope for the best as from what we receive is what we will give back. Anyways, good luck on everything."*

Source: The Huffington Post

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More people are now complaining that modern brides of the 21st century are insisting on such lavish weddings that they fail to spare a thought for the guests, especially those who simply cannot afford to give generously. Many have also said theyâ??re now declining weddings because theyâ??ve become too expensive to attend.

Since when has attending weddings become all about the money?

How much should you give when you attend a wedding?

The general societal expectation is for guests to give how much you think it costs for the couple to have you there at their wedding. As some would argue, if the couple deems you important enough to invite, the ang bao should be a token of your appreciation and blessing. Itâ??ll be rude if you donâ??t at least cover the cost of your seat.

But why should couples expect their guests to foot their wedding bill in the first place?

If the couple chooses to hold their wedding at the Ritz-Carlton instead of opting for a cheaper venue, should the guests be penalized by having to fork out more?

My personal mantra is that it makes more sense to **give your ang paos based on how well you know the couple and also after factoring in your own personal financial situation**. Surely not everyone can afford a $200 ang pao for each wedding they attend.



Source: The Wedding Scoop

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What if I canâ??t afford it? How should I reject the coupleâ??s invitation?

Some folks take the easier route of lying that they will be overseas, or that they have another event / wedding to attend on that day. But I donâ??t advocate doing this, because if your friend finds out later on that youâ??ve lied to get out of their big day, it could lead to the end of your friendship.

Instead, why not just be completely honest?

You could say something like: *â??Sorry, Iâ??m still paying off my student loans, my lifestyle takes the bulk of my pay-check and I donâ??t want to cut down on my shopping just so I can afford to come. In other words, Iâ??m too broke to attend your five-star-hotel wedding.â?•*

Iâ??m just kidding. The best answer is to simply be frank and tell them that as much as youâ??d love to attend, you canâ??t afford to help cover the cost of your attendance. If your friend truly wants you there, they will probably tell you to just come and give whatever youâ??re comfortable with anyway.

You could try this: *â??Dear Jane, congrats and thanks for wanting me to be a part of your big day! But while Iâ??d love to be there, Iâ??ve been broke from paying off my housing mortgage and Iâ??m not sure if I should be attending since I canâ??t afford to give a $XXX ang pao at this point.â?•*

I had a few friends who told me something along those lines prior to attending my wedding, and I honestly couldnâ??t care less. My answer to them was to just come and not worry about the money. I told them to give whatever they were comfortable with because I cared more about them being there on the biggest day of my life than the value of their ang pao. Plus, my husband and I were already prepared to shoulder the cost of our wedding if not every guest gave enough to help cover the cost of their attendance.

And if the couple takes it badly, then at least youâ??ll know how much your presence is worth to them. Good luck with that!

Love,
Budget Babe

Category

1. Family

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