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INDUSTRY NEWS

A New Guest at the Wedding

Every once in a while, the wedding industry makes adjustments according to changing laws and shifting perceptions. The latest percolation: cannabis-friendly nuptials in states that have legalized marijuana. Some couples are requesting its presence (usually in the form of manned booths and bars) to calm nerves, enhance senses and offer something other than a glass of whatever to unwind. For interested couples, online database Love & Marij has begun logging cannabis-friendly vendors, including wedding photographers.

Bianca and Kyle of Oak and Iron Photography signed up for Love & Marij last year. "We understand the taboo that comes along with being cannabis-friendly vendors and think the benefits outweigh any negative feedback we may receive," the duo says. "We want the people who hire us to be completely comfortable with us, and if that means adding cannabis to the mix, whether chatting about it or involving it in a session, we are more than open to it."

Colorado photographer Ali Vagnini has been shooting cannabis weddings since 2014. She's seen buds incorporated into

boutonnieres, floral arrangements and bouquets as well. "I value staying open to new and different ideas," Vagnini says. "It sparks my creativity." She does make sure to know which participating guests may be new to cannabis so she doesn't overwhelm them with her camera: "It is no different than giving a guest extra space who may have had one too many cocktails."

Portland, Oregon-based photographer Jessica Hill likens the addition of cannabis to a cigar bar: "It's there for guests that want it and not for those who don't." She also notes the visual opportunities for photographers—the intriguing combination of smoke and light, for example—but all the same, Hill makes sure to get plenty of anonymous-looking photos so she can share them freely online.

The photographers agree on one thing: their role is still rooted in simply documenting the day. "Ultimately, it is not about the cannabis," Vagnini says. "I am there to showcase their story. If cannabis is a big part of their lives and they want to share that passion with their guests, I will be there to capture it in an honest way." —*Libby Peterson*