Historic Courthouse 1893 FAQ's

Q: *I am interested in touring the venue? What would be the next steps:*
A: We are thrilled to hear that you are interested in Historic Courthouse 1893 (HC1893)! We are excited to meet you and determine if our venue is the perfect fit for your special day. To request information about the venue, simply fill out the request form on the Contact Us page. You will immediately receive an automated email with our pricing information regarding the venue and food and beverage. Once you have reviewed the information, you can schedule a tour of our venue. Tours are available Tuesdays through Fridays from 10 am to 6 pm, based on availability. We can't wait to meet you in person and showcase all that our venue has to offer.

Q: *Can you hold our date?*
A: We do not hold dates. A signed contract and non-refundable date deposit will reserve your date and current pricing.

Q: What is included in my venue rental?
A: That is a great question! Rich in history and on the National register of Historic Places, Historic Courthouse 1893 is one of the area's premier venues. With 2 event levels and over 11,000 square feet of Romanesque architecture, our offerings go beyond the elegance you will find throughout the venue. Your venue rental includes the following:
Rental of the space for 5,6, or 7 hours. **Please see venue packet for pricing based on time and date of event.**
-2.5 hours of customer /vendor arrival
-.5 hour tear down time-events must conclude by 12 midnight (1 am for New Year's Eve)
-300-Gold Chivari Ballroom Chairs
-20-60" round tables
-10-72" round tables
-8-8ft rectangular banquet tables
-8-6ft rectangular banquet tables
-10-Cabaret bar tables & stools (no coverings required)
-House Centerpieces-we offer 3 different Soft Gold Candelabra centerpieces.
-2 main bars on our 2nd level (open during cocktail hour)
-1 main bar on our 3rd level (open for your reception)
-LED TV at each bar that can play up to 10 JPEG formatted pictures and Bar menus during your event.
-Turret Suite (Bridal Room) with a newly added makeup room
-The Vault (Grooms Room) complete with a poker area, darts and pool table
-Colorful LED Ceiling lighting
-Wi-Fi thru out the building
-Coat room and racks
-4 Highchairs and 4 Booster seats
-Full event coordination with an onsite manager.

Q: Where can guests park the day of the event?
A: At HC1893, we are fortunate to be in an area with ample free street parking, especially for a downtown venue. Within a 2-block radius, there are approximately 175 free parking spots available. Furthermore, there is a convenient free municipal lot located west of the venue with space for 45 cars. Also, for Friday and Saturday events, St. Matthias church conveniently located across the street kindly allows us to utilize their lot. It's important to note that overnight parking is not permitted. Overnight parking is permitted at the City of Waukesha parking garage situated 3 blocks from HC1893 on South Street. The parking garage has space for 480 cars and charges $3.00 per 24 hours. See the Directions page on the website for more information.

Q: *What hotels are available near the venue? Do they have a shuttle service?*
A: In the Waukesha/Pewaukee area, you will find a selection of five hotels: Milwaukee Marriott West, Clarke Hotel, Wildwood Lodge, Holiday Inn, and Hampton Inn. Out of these options, the Hampton Inn does have their own shuttle service.
All of these hotels are conveniently located near the interstate and in close proximity to various shops and restaurants. If you decide to provide transportation for your guests at the end of the night, there are several transportation companies available in Waukesha, such as limo buses, school buses, and Uber, among others.

Q: *Is the venue handicapped accessible?*
A: Yes. The venue was completely redone in 2018 and now includes three entrances, one of which is the accessible entry with ramp and elevator. This entry located at 101 W Main St has a driveway circle that you can pull into for dropoff. Outside vendors also use this entry for load in/out.

Pricing:

Q: *Do you charge any extra fees that we may not be expecting?*
A: There are some additional fees/costs to be aware of:

- Waukesha County sales tax will be added to all purchases and fees.
- Your venue rental fee covers use of the space for the contract date/times. The rental fee does not include catering, linen, and beverage service, which is required through Chef Jack's Catering.

Q: *Do you have a facility gratuity?*
A: No, we do not include a facility gratuity in addition to your rental fee. The rental fee covers all aspects related to the use of our facility. While it is not mandatory, if you choose to provide monetary tips to Historic Courthouse/Chef Jack's staff, it is always greatly appreciated.

Q: *What add on services do you offer?*
A: Outside of your venue rental and the items listed above we do offer the following add on services:
Ceremony & Rehearsal: **Please see ceremony section for details.**
Museum Rental: Located in the same complex as the venue, The Waukesha County Museum is available for rental during cocktail hour. Dependent on availability.
Additional Event Time: $300 per each additional hour mentioned in rental.
Additional Bride/Groom getting ready time: $150 per each additional hour above mentioned. Timing is continuous from included venue arrival time.

Food and Bar:

Q: *We'd like to hire an outside caterer. Is this allowed?*
A: No. Chef Jack's catering is the owner/operator of Historic Courthouse 1893 and provides all rentals, food and beverage for your event.

Q: *Can we bring in our own food for the bridal/ groom's suites such as lunch or snacks while getting ready?*
A: You are more than welcome to bring your own food for lunch or snacks during your event. However, please remember to bring any necessary utensils, plates, or napkins required for your items. If you have any leftover food that you would like to take home at the end of the night, please ensure that it is properly wrapped and sealed. Any food items left behind will be discarded at the conclusion of the event unless they have been packed up by you or your bridal party members.

Q: *Can we bring in our own candy for a candy bar?*
A: Yes! What a fun way to treat your guests. Our only requests are that candy be pre-packaged, store-bought, not homemade to ensure safety for your guests. Avoiding products with nuts or nut butters may be worth consideration given the increasing frequency and intensity of nut allergies these days, however we do not ban those sorts of candies. Please provide serving containers prefilled, utensils and take away containers necessary for the candy bar. We can place these items for you, but if you require a more intricate set up, we suggest having a trusted family member or friend assist in the set up this.

Q: *Can we have a late-night snack?*
A: Of course! Chef Jack's offers several late-night packages that are guaranteed to be a hit with any crowd as a delightful pick-me-up. For more details, please refer to page 16 of our dinner menu packet. Additionally, we do allow pizza as the only outside food source allowed. If you choose to go this route, it is your responsibility to pre-order and pay for the pizza prior to delivery. Once the pizza arrives, we will gladly place it out for you and ensure it stays stocked throughout the night. We will also provide the necessary plates and napkins, as well as handle the cleanup afterwards. If you need guidance on popular pizza places that have served our venue before, or assistance with determining the quantity and timing of the pizza delivery, please don't hesitate to ask. We are here to help in any way we can.

Q: *Are we able to have champagne toast?*
A: We are delighted to offer champagne as either a toast or a greet, depending on your preference. If you decide to have your ceremony on-site, we provide a complimentary champagne greet following the ceremony. As your guests make their way down to the 2nd level, our bar staff will have champagne flutes that have been elegantly poured and ready. If you opt for a champagne greet or toast and are hosting your ceremony off-site, this service is available for an additional cost.

Q: *How many bartenders will be staffed?*
A: We staff our bartenders at a ratio of 1:60, meaning that we will staff 1 bartender for every 60 guests.

Q: *Does Historic Courthouse 1893 allow shots? Are shots included in my bar package?*
A: We do not offer shot service. This is stated on your bar signs on our TV's during your event. This is for the safety and enjoyment of guests.

Q: *Will our beverages be served in glass or plastic?*
A: Bar beverages are served in glass during the duration of your event. Bottled beer is also provided.

Q: *My family has offered to bake our desserts. Will HC1893 staff be able to serve and clean-up?*
A: We are pleased to offer a complimentary service of cutting and plating your supplied dessert, whether it is prepared by a family member or a professional baker. This service is included in your package at no additional cost. However, if you opt for a dessert station that is not ordered through Chef Jack's, you will be responsible for the setup, including providing any necessary trays or display items. Rest assured that Chef Jack's will still assist in serving the desserts and handle the cleanup.

What We Provide/Allow:

Q: *Does your venue provide linens, dishes, or utensils?*
A: When choosing your packages through Chef Jack's you will choose a linen package to best fit your linen needs, Chef Jack's provides linen service. Additionally, your chosen dinner package includes China and flatware. The Chef Jack's/Historic Courthouse team takes care of ordering all the required linens and setting all the tables, including guest and service tables, with the necessary china, glassware, and flatware.

Q: *Can we use flower petals?*
A: Artificial flower petals may be used for your ceremony to scatter if you would like. We request that you limit real flower petals to table decorations only. Thank you.

Q: *What other décor do you allow/ not allow?*
A: All decorations must be approved prior to the event. This can be done at your final organizational meeting. Decorations are limited to tables only- please do not tie, tape, post or nail or otherwise attach items to the wall or ceiling. Items such as streamers, rice, balloons, confetti, feathers, real flower petals, glitter, bubble or smoke machines are not allowed. Real candles are allowed and must be in enclosed glass containers. We do not provide extension cords or ladders- if you need these items please plan accordingly.

Q: *Can we use sparklers?*
A: We absolutely adore the enchantment and photo-worthy moments that sparklers bring! To ensure safety, please remember that sparklers are allowed exclusively outdoors, on solid surfaces, and should be kept at least 10 feet away from any buildings. Kindly bring your own sand or water bucket for proper disposal after use. Please note that we reserve the right to decline the use of sparklers at any time and for any reason, as part of our safety measures.

Q: *Can we set off fireworks at the end of the night?*
A: Unfortunately, fireworks are not permitted in the city.

Q: *Do you allow cold sparks inside or outside?*
A: The use of cold sparks is only permitted through an approved DJ service. If you would like to utilize cold sparks, you must book that service through the DJ service.

Q: *We're having a ceremony and would like to line our aisle with décor. What is allowed for this?*
A: Stationary items that are sturdy and secure may be used to decorate the ceremony aisle as long as they do not block any row entry/exits. No loose décor is permitted anywhere on the floor as this is a tripping hazard. The only exception to this is artificial flower petals scattered by a flower girl. Any floral must be contained in a vase or florist piece and any greenery on the floor must be bundled as a garland and may not be loose. Prohibited items include, but are not limited to fabric, loose greenery/floral, petals that are not being scattered by a flower girl.

Q: *Can we use "real" candles as part of our décor?*
A: For safety reasons, candles with a flame are permitted exclusively on guest tables and the bar top tables. However, when it comes to floor or staircase decor, we require the use of LED or artificial candles. If you decide to use real candles on guest tables and the bar top tables, it is important to ensure that the flame never exceeds the height of the candle container.
To ensure compliance with our safety guidelines, we are more than happy to review and approve your choice of candles and containers before making a purchase. This step ensures that everything aligns with our safety standards. We strongly encourage you to unbox and test any new candles in their respective containers in advance. This will give you an opportunity to observe if the flame extends beyond the container and allow it to burn for a short while to reach an appropriate height. Additionally, unboxing beforehand allows you to remove any stickers and trim any long wicks, which will make the lighting process smoother on the day of the event.

Q: *Can our pet come too?*
A: Yes, we love when couples include pets in their big day! Pets may join for pictures and/or the ceremony. Historic Courthouse requires advanced notice if pets will be on site and reserves the right to deny any pet at any time. All pets must be attended to at all times and once their role in the big day is complete they must leave the premises - no later than the start of food service. Pets may not, under any circumstance, be left in a car in the parking lot.

Q: *Do we need to provide a sign for our bar?*
A: We provide a bar sign on our TVs located on each bar that will include your chosen bar package along with up to 10 JPG formatted pictures if you chose to provide for a slide show. This will play for the duration of your event. If you prefer to make your own that is fine as well. We will place those signs out on the bar tops in addition to above mentioned signs.

Q: *What does your staff take care leading up to the event/ day of?*
A: As part of your venue rental, we are pleased to offer the following services:

1. Full Event/Catering Coordination: Included in your package is a dedicated day-of coordinator and an assistant who will be present throughout your event, ensuring a seamless experience from start to finish.
2. Vendor Coordination: Our coordinator will collaborate with your DJ, photographer, florist, baker, officiant, and any other vendors you have on the day of the event. They will work together to follow the timeline and ensure smooth coordination among all parties involved.
3. Decor and Setup Assistance: Our team will assist in placing items such as favors, menu cards, and miscellaneous table items like memory tables and gift tables. To help us accurately recreate your vision, please provide a picture of your desired setup.
4. We are happy to place your customer supplied centerpieces, as long as they are pre-assembled and simply have to be set out.
5. Final Details Meeting: Approximately two-three months prior to your event, we will schedule a comprehensive meeting to finalize details such as the timeline, floor plan, menu specifics, linen choices, and vendor list. We will also address any ceremony-related requirements.
6. Customized Timeline and Floor Plan: Based on the information gathered during the final details meeting, we will create a master timeline and floor plan for your event. We will refine and adjust these documents as needed to ensure they accurately reflect your preferences.
7. Catering Services: On the day of your event, our staff will handle all aspects of the catering. This includes setting up tables for guests, desserts, coffee, and buffets. We will also oversee dinner service and manage the clean-up process. In the case of late-night food service, we will ensure that a designated table is prepared with all necessary items and take care of the cleanup throughout the evening.

Q: *Can we smoke on the premises?*
A: Smoking and vaping are only permitted in the designated smoking areas located out the front entrances and on the suite patios. No smoking or vaping is permitted inside the building. We have the right to ask any guest to leave who does not adhere to this rule.

Q: *Do you have coat storage?*
A: Yes, we offer coat storage in the entry way of the N East Ave Doors on the 2nd level.

Q: *Can we bring in our own alcohol in the morning to drink while we get ready?*
A: Carry-in alcohol is not permitted on premise at any time during your rental. This is WI state law and if we don't enforce it our liquor license could be suspended or revoked. As such, we do take it very seriously. We will provide your ordered beer and soft drinks in your mini refrigerators in both the bridal suite and grooms suite. In addition champagne and OJ is provided in bridal room.

Ceremony:

Q: *When can ceremonies start?*
A: For weddings at the Historic Courthouse 1893, we kindly request that ceremonies begin no earlier than 4:30pm on Fridays or Saturdays. It's important to consider that when your ceremony and reception are held in the same space, your guests won't need additional time to travel between the two. Scheduling the ceremony before 4:30pm may result in a rushed morning for the wedding party and a potentially lengthy wait for guests between the ceremony/cocktail hour and dinner. By starting at 4:30pm or later, we can ensure a more relaxed and enjoyable experience for everyone involved.

Q: *Do you charge a ceremony fee?*
A: Yes. Ceremonies are considered an add-on and are priced at $500 for a partial ballroom or $750 for a full ballroom. This pricing includes the following:
- Set-up and take-down of chairs for your ceremony of up to 300 guests
Coordination of the ceremony and turnover of dining room after
Additional 1 hour of event time (1.5 if full ballroom) before the ceremony (ie Guest arrival 4:00, Ceremony 4:30, 5:00 reception)

Q: *Is there a rehearsal?*
A: Yes, 1 hour is included in the ceremony fee and will be scheduled for the following times:
-Friday event: Thursday 4:00-5:00
-Saturday event: Thursday 5:30-6:30
-Sunday event: Day of-Additional hour added to event time (or available weekday).
* Please note Friday and Saturday events have the option of doing the rehearsal the same day as the event also, with an additional hour added to the event time.

Q: *How do we do the rehearsal?*
A: You will be provided a "Rehearsal Worksheet" which will help in planning your processional order during the rehearsal, one of our day-of coordinators will be present to ensure a smooth process and address any remaining details. The rehearsal holds great significance for the wedding attendants, allowing them to familiarize themselves with the processional, determine the pace of walking, and understand the optimal angles for photography. It is also important for your officiant to attend the rehearsal, as they can go over any necessary items and provide a brief run-through of the ceremony from start to finish. Following the rehearsal, it is common for wedding parties to arrange a separate rehearsal dinner at nearby restaurants for themselves and their attendees. Please note that the rehearsal dinner is not available at the venue.

Q: *Do you set up the ceremony?*
A: Absolutely! At HC 1893, our dedicated staff will take care of setting up the ceremony seating and seamlessly transitioning it to reception seating. If you have any specific decoration items intended for the ceremony, you can bring them to the venue during your rehearsal. Depending on the event schedule for that week, we can either arrange them in advance or securely store them until your event coordinator places them out on the day of the event.

Q: *Do you provide audio for the ceremony? If not, who would I contact for this?*
A: No, HC1893 does not offer any audio/visual equipment. Plan to have your DJ or music provider supply all audio needed for this part of your day as well as your reception.

Q: *Where do you set up for the ceremony?*
A: Our ballroom on the 3rd floor serves as the elegant setting for our ceremonies. We provide three different styles to choose from:

-Diagonal: Experience the magic of being married inside our enchanting turret, complete with seating for up to 165 guests.
-Window: Let the beauty of our tall windows serve as your stunning backdrop, accommodating seating for up to 225 guests.
-Long: For a grand entrance that will leave any bride beaming, we offer two options for our long ceremony setup. The Partial long ceremony can seat up to 225 guests (requiring a partial flip), while the Full long ceremony can accommodate up to 300 guests (requiring an additional 30 minutes for a full flip, priced at $750).
Choose the ceremony style that suits your vision and let us create a truly memorable experience for you and your guests.

Vendors:

Q: *Do you have a list of vendors that are required to be booked?*
A: To assist you in the planning of your event, we have compiled a list of preferred vendors as a helpful starting point- (please see page 6 of your venue packet or the Services web page). However, you are not limited to these options and are free to choose other licensed and insured vendors if you prefer. DJ's not on the list would have to be pre-approved. We are frequently asked about vendors who have excelled in providing services at HC1893, and our preferred vendor list consists of those with whom we have had positive experiences. If you have specific requirements or are seeking recommendations beyond the list, please feel free to reach out to our team. We are always delighted to share additional ideas and assist you further in creating your ideal event.

Q: *What time can our vendors arrive to set up? What about tear down as well?*
A:The venue allows vendors to access the space 2.5 hours prior to the start time of your event, at no additional charge. For instance, if your ceremony is scheduled for 4:30 PM, vendors can arrive at 2:00 PM. It is important to inform all your vendors, including bakers, DJs, florists, and others, about this setup time requirement.
Vendors are granted an additional 30 minutes after the event's conclusion to remove all their items. However, it is not permitted for vendors to leave items behind for pickup after the event. It is crucial to inform all outside vendors about the designated setup and cleanup time.

Q: *Are there any vendor restrictions?*
A: All vendors must be licensed and insured. At no time do we allow items to be left behind to be arranged to be picked up the next day- if it comes in that day, it must leave that day. These items include but are not limited to: floral items, centerpieces, speakers etc. All entertainment must be concluded by midnight. HC1893 and Chef Jack's is not responsible for personal belongings or lost property.

Sizing/Dimensions:

Q: *What are the dimensions of the venue?*
A: The Historic Courthouse consists of two levels spanning a combined area of 11,000 square feet. The second level features two bars where guests can enjoy the cocktail hour. As they proceed to the third level for the reception, they will find a single main bar available. The reception ballroom on the third level is approximately 46'x70'.

Q: *How big are your tables?*
A: We offer 2 size round tables for the main hall seating-60" and 72" and 2 sizes of rectangular table 8' x 30" and 6'x 30" for the head table, gift table, etc. These tables will require linens that are covered under your selected linen package. We also provide high cocktail tables that will not require linens.

Q: *How many attendants can be seated at the head table?*
A: Our head table space can accommodate a maximum of 26 people when seated on one side of the table. Larger wedding parties can be accommodated through other style seating options such as a king's table or a hybrid of a king's table and a head table.

Q: *Do you allow for the dance floor to be in the center of the floor?*
A: Certainly! We are more than happy to collaborate with you in designing a floor plan that brings your vision to reality. Since our entire ballroom floor is wood, we can locate the dance floor area anywhere. Also, if necessary, we can arrange for tables to be taken down during the event to create ample space for dancing and ensure comfortable spacing for your guests. Let's work together to create a floor plan that perfectly suits your needs and preferences.

Miscellaneous:

Q: *Do you have a timeline you suggest for our wedding day?*
A: We do! We would love to suggest a timeline that we know works well in our space.

4:00 PM-Guest Arrival
4:30 PM-Ceremony
5:00 PM-Cocktail Hour
6:00 PM-Guests Seated for Dinner
6:10 PM-Introductions/Grand March
6:15 PM-Cake Cutting
6:20 PM–Welcome words
6:25 PM-Blessing
6:30 PM-Dinner
6:45 PM-Speeches
8:00 PM-Specialty Dances
8:15 PM-Open Dance
9:30 PM-Late Night Snack
11:00 PM-Those assisting in the clean-up/loading car process may want to begin doing so at this time.
11:30 PM–Last Call
11:45 PM-Last Drink
12:00 AM - Music ends & lights on (While this must happen no later than 12:00a.m. some clients choose to end music earlier to pack-up and the end of the night)
12:30 AM- All items and guests out

Any other questions? Please do not hesitate to reach out and ask- we are happy to help!

Reserving Historic Courthouse 1893:

Q: *We have booked the Historic Courthouse 1893- what's next?*
A: Congratulations! We are truly honored to be a part of your special event and we look forward to collaborating with you. Once you have confirmed your event date and made a booking with Historic Courthouse 1893, we would like to extend an invitation for a complimentary tasting of Chef Jack's renowned cuisine.

Our tastings take place at our office located at 225 South Street, and we offer time slots on Tuesdays to Fridays at 12:00 PM, 2:30 PM, or 5:00 PM, accommodating up to 6 guests. You can schedule your tasting as soon as you reserve the space, or as late as three months prior to your event date. It's important to know that tastings are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis, and require a prearranged appointment as they are conducted on an individual basis rather than as a group tasting. We appreciate your understanding and patience when scheduling.

Approximately 2-3 months before your event, we will arrange a final details meeting. During this meeting, we will cover all aspects of your event to ensure its smooth execution. We will discuss any necessary menu changes, select linen colors, address vendor coordination, review ceremony details (if applicable), and create a customized timeline and floor plan tailored specifically to your event.