

Put It in the Bag

I love wedding bags. You know, those little gift bags that out-of-town guests get when they check into the hotel. It's that bag with a note that says, "Hey! Thanks for celebrating our love! Here's a weird candy bar!" It's the bag we singles hit up late at night when we're feeling self-reflective, over-emotional or have made the bold choice to order Pay-Per-View after midnight.

I've received dozens of bags. Some have been more memorable than others. To help you brides and grooms, I've compiled a list of the 13 things I want to see in my bag. Be kind and deliver.

1. Ample chocolate

If you're going to include chocolate in the bag (and you must, right?), don't make it mini. I don't want two bite-size Hershey bars. I want an entire Snickers bar. Assume that this candy bar will replace a meal.

2. A drink that tastes good warm

I hate dipping into the guest bag to find warm Pellegrino. Find a bottle of something that doesn't taste gross at room temperature. Perhaps one of those sealed Starbucks Frappuccino cans.

3. Coupon for the morning

Find a local cafe and ask the owners if your guests can have a 10 percent discount on coffee the morning after your wedding. The owner will probably say yes because you're guaranteeing them some extra business. Your guests will love you.

4. Sewing kit

Those tiny sewing kits are meant for wedding gift bags. Dozens of guests will wind up needing a safety pin, some help with a hem, or a tiny pair of scissors.

5. Hair ties

Include two bands and, if you're feeling generous, a small pack of bobby pins.

6. More alcohol

Sometimes there's an after-party after the after-party. Sometimes you just want a nice drink in your room but room service is shut down for the night. I once got back to a hotel room and was thrilled to remember that the bride and groom had put a bottle of local beer in our bag. The bottle was a cool souvenir, and the beer was, well, nice to have around.

7. Mints

Because you never know who's coming back to the room. And your breath is gross after the chocolate and that beer.

8. Pain killers

Include two small packets. One should be Ibuprofen, the other Acetaminophen. You should be able to buy these packets in bulk.

9. Water

One bottle of water, please. Your guests shouldn't have to take one from the mini-bar.

10. Map

An obvious item, but please put a star by the nearest coffee shop. Also circle the nearest convenience store. (Someone will have to make a run for forgotten underwear, a toothbrush, or tights.)

11. Honey Nut Cheerios

Include one of those travel breakfast servings. Trust me, it will be consumed. Not everyone wants to go to the brunch. Not everyone can even make it to the coffee shop before they head out of town.

12. Internet

Make sure I know how to get free internet. Especially if your wedding has taken me to the middle of nowhere. Print out a little sheet of paper with the internet code for the hotel or the nearest Wifi spot.

13. Entertainment

I want a book or a movie. Yes, I realize you just paid upwards of \$200 a plate so that I could celebrate your love. But when I get back to my room, I'm going to want to read or watch some good TV. Why not use my boredom as a way to express yourself as a couple? Order your favorite book in bulk and use it as the pièce de résistance of the bag. If you fell in love discussing *The Hunger Games*, throw it in. Write a note about why it meant so much to you as a couple. Give me something to do.