



Casually Elegant Weddings

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CEREMONIES WITHIN YOUR CEREMONY

Wine Box Ceremony / Love Letter Ceremony

The Box Ceremony (*Wine Box or Letter Chest*) is designed to carry your wedding into future celebrations. Accessories for these ceremonies can be found on wedding supply websites.

On a particularly romantic day or evening before your wedding, use a private moment to write a letter to your partner. Write how wonderful he or she is, why you want to wed, and your hopes and dreams for the marriage you will share. Seal it. Then keep it with your wedding planning materials. Do not read what your partner has written. As part of your wedding ceremony you will each present your letter. There these will be placed alongside your vows in a box intended to remain sealed – opened only on your every fifth anniversary.

You can also include recordings of your favorite music, favorite pictures of you two together, and other mementos – making this box your own private love capsule. You can set aside future letters and memories, maintaining a collection just waiting for the next opportunity to be placed in your Love Box.

Keep the box and collection in a place of honor as a constant visual reminder of your love and commitment to each other. The box can be a life preserver if you hit a bumpy spot in your relationship – though our hope is that there will never be a reason to open the box except on each fifth anniversary!

In the years to come, each rare and special time your box is opened, take out the letter(s) you have written to your partner. In times of celebration, read your letter(s) to your partner aloud. In times of distress, go to separate rooms and quietly read the letter(s) to yourself. Remember all the reasons you choose your partner, and the vows you made. Share pictures and memories of all that has shaped the life you are creating together. Never take the blessings of your marriage for granted.

We usually include the Wine Box ceremony, when it is requested, after the Vows and before the Pronouncement of Marriage. It also presents another opportunity for a reading such as this:

Wedding Vows – (*Saying Bride's name*), your companionship is the part that makes me whole. I cherish the time, laughter, and silliness that we share together. I pledge as your soul mate to be there for you, to love you unconditionally, and to create beautiful memories together. You are the best thing that ever happened to me. I love you (*Saying Bride's name*).

(*Saying Groom's name*), today I call you husband, but the word means more than that. You will always be my partner and soul mate, my strength and my support,



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my touchstone and my one true love. Today I promise to you: my encouragement and inspiration, my laughter and my tears, and my unending love and affection. Today I swear to you my love will never falter. Through good times and bad, through triumph and failure, I will be by your side. All these things I give to you, my husband, today, tomorrow and all the days of our wonderfully weird life together.

from Letters to a Young Poet by Rainer Maria Rilke (read by Bride's sister):

“It is ... good to love: because love is difficult. For one human being to love another human being: that is perhaps the most difficult task that has been entrusted to us, the ultimate task, the final test and proof, the work for which all other work is merely preparation. ... Loving does not at first mean merging, surrendering, and uniting with another person ... it is a high inducement for the individual to ripen, to become something in himself, to become world, to become world in himself for the sake of another person; it is a great, demanding claim on him, something that chooses him and calls him to vast distances.”

[continuation of thought, spoken by the officiant] (Groom's name), (Bride's name) tells us that she wants to give you space to continue to nurture your friendships and to make new ones, which will in turn enrich the life you two will share together. (Bride's name), (Groom's name) tells us that he wants to encourage you to grow as a person, start new hobbies, pursue new businesses and be there for him when he feels that things are not going well. Both of you have said that you want to continue to write one another little notes whenever either of you goes on a trip, and to give one another letters on anniversaries that describe all the little things you've done together that previous year, so that your joys are never forgotten.

[addressing guests] (Saying Groom's name) and (Saying Bride's name) have chosen as a couple to perform a Love Letter & Wine Box ceremony.

This box contains a bottle of wine, two glasses, and a love letter from each to the other. The letters describe the good qualities they find in one another, the reasons they fell in love, and their reasons for choosing to marry. The letters are sealed in individual envelopes and they have not seen what the other has written. *(Saying Groom's name) and (Saying Bride's name), you have created your very own romantic time capsule to be opened on your 5th wedding anniversary.*

I recommend that you keep the box in a place of honor prominently displayed in your home as a constant reminder of your commitment to each other.

(Saying Groom's name) and (Saying Bride's name), you may now lock the box.