

# dockside

THE BEST OF MUSKOKA

DOCKSIDE IS HAND DELIVERED TO EVERY DOCK ON MUSKOKA'S LARGEST LAKES

Lake Muskoka • Lake Joseph • Lake Rosseau • Kahshe Lake • Lake of Bays

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# A wedding for all SEASONS

## *The beauty and benefits of a fall or winter celebration* by Marilyn de Lang

**M**ost wedding photos feature the happy couple and their attendants posed on lush green lawns or bright gardens in full bloom. May through September is prime time for nuptials; but, according to wedding coordinator, Holly Carney, there are a lot of advantages to looking beyond spring and summer, especially for a Muskoka wedding.

On the purely aesthetic plane, Muskoka is stunningly beautiful in the fall and winter, with its spectacular autumn foliage and serene winter wonderland. Fashion choices can embrace more varied textures and also include some funky accessories — maybe mittens on strings for

the groomsmen or faux-fur shawls for the bridesmaids.

But there are also a number of practical reasons for choosing October through March to set the special date. Holly offers these ideas:

### **Easing the budget**

You can stretch your dollar in the ‘off-season’ to expand your guest list or add the ‘extras’ on your wish-list. Venues and caterers may be willing to offer special deals, and you might also save costs by tying in with your venue’s seasonal

décor. Many hotels reduce their prices, or waive the two-night minimum stay

that might be mandated in the high season. With lower accommodation rates, your guests needn’t dash up to Muskoka on a Saturday (assuming that they are lucky enough to book for just one night with an early check-in time), but can enjoy the luxury of a relaxing two-night stay.

### **Opportunities for romance**

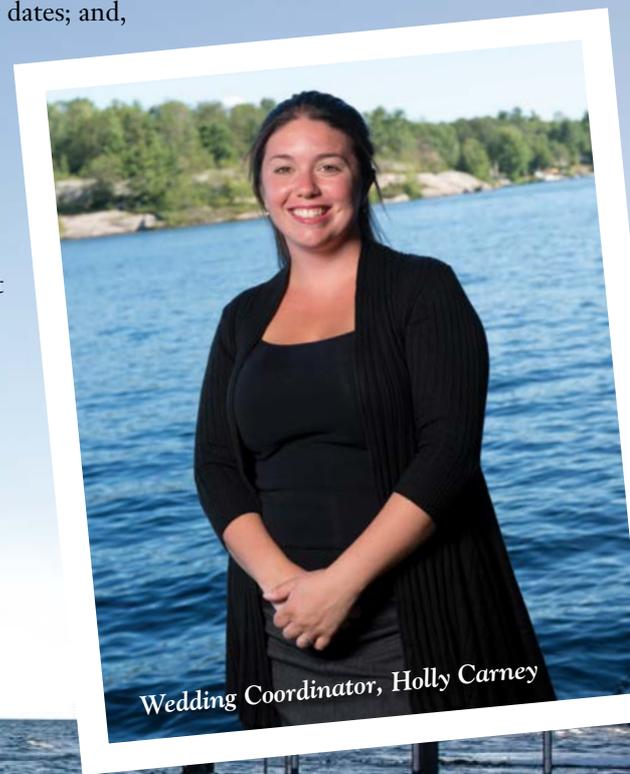
Far from being a ‘dead season’ in Muskoka, fall and winter are full of activities to enhance your ceremony or offer entertainment to your guests. Holly remembers a bride donning a pair of skates for a twirl on the ice, while another winter wedding included dog-sledding as a pre-dinner activity. Muskoka hosts outings for snowshoeing, ice-climbing, skijoring, or skiing,

with special events like the Cranberry or Winter Festivals. And what could be cozier than curling up in front of a blazing fire at the end of the evening? Or toasting s’mores at an outdoor bonfire, with hot chocolate stations on hand?

### **A more relaxed pace**

Booking venues and vendors is potentially less competitive for fall and winter dates; and, with fewer events to manage, the slower rhythm may allow them to devote more time and energy to your special day. Resorts aren’t at maximum capacity; photos at the lake won’t include a busy backdrop of boats, kayaks, and swimmers; and there is no rush of summer traffic heading north.

Holly is full of exciting ideas for novel activities, accessories, and favours for weddings that push the boundaries of the usual season. And there’s one more advantage, she adds with a laugh: you can be absolutely sure that Muskoka’s mosquitoes and blackflies won’t be joining you and your guests at the ceremony! **DS**



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