



Willow Oaks Plantation FAQs

What is the contingency plan in case of rain?

Willow Oaks is primarily an outdoor location, and there isn't an indoor space large enough to accommodate groups larger than 30 for a seated event or 50 for a standing event. So it is a good idea to reserve a tent in case weather doesn't cooperate. Our preferred provider is the Eden Party Plus by Grand Rental Station, 336.623.6380, grspartyplus@yahoo.com.

Where do my guests park?

We offer ample parking in the gravel lot in front of the Main House, and along the wide gravel drives connecting the Main House and Lodge. Signage is posted to direct guests. The gravel lot is big enough to accommodate full-sized tour busses if you are transporting large groups. The wooden bridge that you cross on the main drive when you enter the property is reinforced to handle large vehicles of up to 15 tons. You are also welcome to arrange valet parking with the provider of your choice. Valet services must submit proof of insurance and business license.

If you are interested in providing group transportation for your guests, we recommend that you contact Penny Noyes of Southern States Tours and Conventions, 800. 344.1541, southernstc@lexcominc.net.

Where are the restrooms?

There are five full restrooms located on the ground floor of the Lodge. Three can be accessed from the main hallways; two are accessed via the guestrooms. The Lodge is about 100 yards from the Main House.

The bride and her attendants have access to the Main House for three hours before the event start time. After that, the Main House is secured and only the bride has access for restroom use or changing. The Main House is not a viable option for guests who have mobility issues, as all entrances are accessed via several steps and there are no ramps. The reason the Main House is not handicapped accessible is that it is an historic structure and not a public facility.

If the distance to the Lodge poses a problem for your guests, we recommend allowing us to provide cart transportation between the Main House and the Lodge. Our cart service provides a six-seat golf cart and driver for up to 4 hours for \$350, with \$25 per hour for each additional full hour.

What is included in my facility rental fee?

The following amenities are included:

- One full day of exclusive access to the property between 9:00 am and midnight (this is the total access time provided, so events must end before midnight).
- One onsite attendant to be present for the duration of the event.
- Main house available to bridal party for dressing up to 3 hours before event start time.
- Lodge available for groomsmen up to 3 hours before event start time.
- If the event includes a wedding ceremony, one hour of rehearsal time is offered the day before the event, subject to availability.

We do not include tables, chairs, tenting or setup of these items. You can select the type and number of tables/chairs you need with the rental provider of your choice. Rental companies also give you the option of paying them to handle setup/breakdown of rental items, or doing it yourself. We recommend that you pay them for setup/breakdown service because it will be one less thing to on a very busy day, and then they are responsible for correctly preparing their property for usage and transport. We will need to know the time/date of rental item delivery/pickup in advance of your event.

Will my event be the only one happening?

Yes, you have exclusive access to the grounds surrounding the Main House and Lodge. We would not host any other event in that area for the duration of your access time. We do also host outdoor activities on the property—if any of these activities were taking place during your event, we would make sure that they happen far out of your view or hearing. Keep in mind that Willow Oaks Plantation sits on 1800 acres!

What is your alcohol policy?

We do allow alcohol on the property. Our exclusive provider is Danny Martin, of Martin's Professional Bartending Service, martinsbartending@gmail.com; 336.324.8627.

Can I choose my own caterer?

Yes. Danny Martin is also our in house caterer, and he is wonderful to work with. We highly recommend that you meet with him as you explore your options. You can view his sample menu [here](#).

We also have an approved caterer list. We charge our approved caterers a \$250 fee for use of our facility. This fee covers wear and tear and use of our equipment, and is usually passed along to the client. Non-preferred caterers are charged \$350 and are subject to prior approval from Willow Oaks Plantation management. All caterers must provide Willow Oaks Plantation with copies of current health rating, liability insurance and business license.

Is there outdoor electricity?

Yes, there is ample outdoor electricity available for lighting and sound (bands, DJs):

- North end of house (by generator): a 60-amp service with a 20-foot power cord that plugs into a 30-amp 4-wire dryer receptacle (plug). Cord has two 120-volt ground fault circuits. You can plug 4 cords into this. These are so guests can run this heavy cord out into yard on left side of patio to supply tent and all needs out there. You will need your own extension cords to run to whatever equipment you or your caterer/DJ are using.
- Dedicated receptacle on back porch with 20-amp, 120-volt circuit for band or other.
- Dedicated receptacle on back of house beside screen porch/bay window, same as above. Also, it has a long, heavy power cord so it can go out to a tent on that side of patio. Again, you'll need your own extension cords to run to whatever equipment you or your caterer/DJ are using.

Can I take engagement and bridal portraits on the property?

We welcome bridal photo sessions. We do charge fees for these because we have to have staff present. These fees are listed on the Weddings page of the web site.

Where is the ceremony and / or reception held?

There are several locations on the property which make good spots for ceremonies and receptions. The patio in back of the Main House provides the most expansive view. The front lawn provides the most room for seating. The best thing to do is to view the property for yourself and we can help you develop a good plan for the flow of your event.

Where does the caterer set up?

Caterers like to use the outdoor kitchen on the side of the Main House, which provides easy access to the indoor kitchen. Though food health and safety regulations require caterers to come with food prepared, our kitchen is available for warming and cooling foods as needed. There are additional refrigerators and prep tables available at the Lodge.

Do I rent my own linens?

Generally, your caterer provides linens, glassware, cutlery etc. You can rent these items directly from a rental company as well.

Can we have a fire in the fire pit? If so, who is responsible for lighting/managing?

We are happy to allow fires in the fire pit. We provide extra wood to keep the fire going. Please allow our onsite attendant to restock and relight the fire as needed.

Are confetti, rose petals, runners, and bird seed allowed?

Bird seed is allowed, but we cannot allow rose petals because they stain the slate patio and walkways. Rice is not allowed because it can damage the stomachs of many different kinds of birds on the property. We also do not allow confetti, glitter, or silly string (yes, we've been asked about this before!).

Are there accommodations in close proximity to WOP?

Yes, there is a Hampton Inn located in downtown Eden about 6.5 miles from Willow Oaks, or about a ten-minute drive. We also provide some select accommodations on-site. The Lodge can accommodate up to 20 guests, and the Bunkhouse can accommodate up to 6 guests. You can see pricing on the Weddings page.

Are we allowed to have tiki torches, candles, open flames?

Yes, all of these are allowed on the grounds.

Will there be sufficient lighting after sunset, or do I need to rent outdoor lighting?

There is ample exterior lighting mounted on the corners of the Main House and Lodge, on poles between the House and Lodge, and along the front walkway. You might want to add torches, portable lamps or light strings for softer, ambient light in the evening.

How many guests can fit in the ceremony patio?

The patio can seat about 160 guests theatre-style, and can accommodate over 200 standing. The patio makes a great dance floor after your ceremony. If you're using the patio for your ceremony, the chairs can be moved fairly quickly to other seating areas after the ceremony, while guests are taking pictures or getting refreshments, so that the patio is then cleared for dancing.