



Welcome to our ranch!

We've been hosting weddings, events and vacation rental guests since 2014, and incredibly grateful to be caretakers and stewards of this magnificent property ... more than a 'venue', this is our home, and we love sharing the beauty of the land and her rich history (a little about about that below)

We realize that selecting the perfect wedding venue is a big decision, so we've compiled a \*lot\* of information - including preferred vendors, local accommodations, and FAQs - to help you imagine the possibilities, think through the logistics and assess budgets.

To visit our ranch, use this [LINK](#) to schedule a tour ... we'd love to show you around and give you an opportunity to get a sense of the 'vibe.'

Contact us anytime with any/all questions, and we hope to meet you soon!

Vivien & Michael Straus (siblings)  
[StrausHomeRanch@gmail.com](mailto:StrausHomeRanch@gmail.com)

## A little background about our ranch and family

If you've heard of Straus Family Creamery, the Marin Agricultural Land Trust, or the California Cheese Trail, all of their roots run deep here at our ranch.

Our parents, Bill and Ellen, were refugees from Nazi Europe ... Jewish city kids who became California dairy farmers - a magical twist of fate!

Mom and Pop fell in love with this farm and beautiful West Marin. Soon after they arrived, however, they were horrified to learn that developers wanted to convert the land from cows to condos. Indeed, in the early 1970s, all of Marin County's magnificent agricultural land was master-planned for housing and shopping malls. Mom and Pop became outspoken environmentalists and conservationists, and worked tirelessly to protect Marin from development.

In 1980, Mom co-founded the Marin Agricultural Land Trust ([MALT.org](https://malt.org)), the nation's very first organization dedicated to protecting agricultural land from development. Today, MALT has permanently protected more than 50% of all Marin's agricultural land, and has served as a model for dozens of similar conservation organizations around the country.

Saving the land was one battle. Surviving as a producer of commodity-priced milk was the next. In the late 1980s, in an effort to figure out how to save our own dairy, our older brother Albert had the idea to 'go' organic. A few years later, Straus Family Creamery opened - the first organic dairy west of the Mississippi. (and today, nearly all the region's remaining dairy farms have also gone organic). Our brother owns the creamery & dairy and, separately, the Home Ranch is owned by siblings Vivien, Miriam and Michael.

However, our ranch was slowly crumbling apart after decades of benign neglect (if you saw pre-2013 photos, you'd see what we mean!) ... so in 2014, the three of us decided to try to 'save the farm' (again!). It's been an amazing journey and a beautiful synchronicity: we get to share our home which we love so deeply with folks celebrating love. It's the very definition of a 'good energy' vortex / great vibe (or whatever you kids say these days)! ;)

In 2018, we completed a major renovation of our 1860s barn which until then had 'Danger!' signs clearly posted (it's much safer now). In this barn, Dad milked his first cows, kids made hay bale forts high up in the rafters, together we raised baby calves; and, in 2000, our parents celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.

In November 2024, we hosted our first LOVEfest ... inviting all the couples who got married here since 2014 ... 60+ couples attended, with their kids and / or parents, for an incredible celebration of celebrations. We hope to make this an annual tradition.

## Timing & Capacity

We host weddings from late April → early November, with a capacity of 160 (fewer in rain-prone months); we can explore all options together.

## Our customizable packages include

- *Weekend Buyout*
- *Mid-week 1-day / night event*
  
- **Venue:** Options include rehearsal dinner / gathering, wedding ceremony & reception, smaller late night gathering by the bonfire, next-day brunch.
- **Accommodations:** On-site for 10-12 guests, plus 4 AirBnbs within an easy walk for 20+ guests (and plenty more options within a quick drive).
- **Experience:** The ranch serves as a terrific gathering spot, allowing friends and family to connect in a beautiful, relaxed atmosphere, playing lawn games, taking a yoga class, kayaking on Tomales Bay, or simply soaking in the magnificent views.
- **Please share with us your vision**, and we can customize options.

## Ceremony & Reception Locations

**Eucalyptus Grove:** Grove of towering, 150+ year-old eucalyptus and cypress trees with stunning views of Tomales Bay. *(Ceremony)*

**Front Garden:** Overlooking Tomales Bay *(Rehearsal gatherings, welcome drinks, cocktail hour and/or next day brunch)*

**Event Barn & Adjacent Cocktail Area:** Dinner & dancing in our Hay Barn with an adjacent outdoor cocktail area, plus fire pit.

## Accommodations:

- **Main house:** Sleeps 8-10 (4 bedrooms upstairs, each with a queen bed), plus the downstairs den with pull-out queen bed.
- **The Calf House (cottage):** Sleeps 2 (1 queen bed)
- **Additional Accommodations:** Plenty of additional nearby housing.

### Included with every rental:

- **Event Barn:** Includes radiant heating
- **Ceremony seating:** Homemade wooden benches
- **Propane patio heaters:** We have 12 available (more than enough).
- **Restrooms:** New, fancy 3-stall VIP restroom trailer
- **Other items:** Lots of other useful items (see our [DropBox](#))
- **Deliveries:** Flexible rental drop & pickup times (reduces your costs).
- **Support:** On-site venue support throughout your stay.

### Hours:

- **Rehearsal gatherings:** Until 10pm.
- **Wedding Reception:** Amplified music until 10:30pm; events end at 11pm.
- **After Hours:** Low key gatherings (wedding night only) until 1am.

Guest Reviews: Check them out [here](#).

	Weekend Package	Mid-Week Package
Max # of Guests	160	120
Lodging up to 12: House (8-10), Calf House (2)	2 Nights*	1 Night (Tuesday or Wednesday)
Check In / Out:	Friday 3pm --> Sun Noon	10am --> Next day 11am
Party End-Time:	11:00 PM**	11:00 PM**
Facilities:		
Cocktail Hour	Front Garden or Barn Area	
Dinner / Reception	Hay Barn	
Fire Pit	Included	
Outdoor Lighting	Included	
Garbage & Recycling	Included	
Parking	Up to 45 cars (including vendors). Events with more than ~75 guest require shuttles to supplement on-site parking	
Restrooms:	Included: 3-Stall VIP Restroom Trailer ***	
Ceremony Sites:	Garden with Bay View (April & May) or Eucalyptus Grove with Bay View (June-Nov)	
Pricing (inclusive of taxes & cleaning):		
Venue	\$15,000   \$16,500   \$18,000	\$6,000   \$8,000   \$10,000
Number of Guests	Up to 80   81-120   121-160	Up to 40   41-80   81-120
Accommodations	\$3,950	\$2,290
Total:	\$18,950   \$20,450   \$21,950	\$8,290   \$10,290   \$12,290
Additional Venue Costs:		
+ Refundable Security Deposit:	\$1,000	
+ Wedding Coordinator / Planner - Required for >30 guests for any / all events (including rehearsal dinner and brunch; please select from our Preferred Vendors		
+ Shuttling - Required For All Groups >75 guests		
** After Hours gathering allowed - see below		
*** If hosting multiple events with a combined total of >200 guests, there may be an additional \$400 Restroom Trailer servicing fee required.		
* Please Note: All options are subject to availability and price changes until booked.		

	Weekend Package	Mid-Week Package	Elopement
Optional Add-Ons**			
Lodging	\$1,120 / each additional night (inclusive of taxes) - includes both the main house and ‘calf house’		
Venue: Rehearsal Dinner / Gathering (until 10p)	Up to 40 guests: \$1,000 >40 guests: \$1,500	n / a	
Early Check-In	\$1,000 (10am)	n / a	
Wedding After-Hours Gathering (11p-1a)	\$1,000 – Up to ~40 guests staying onsite, w/i walking distance, or shuttling home.	n / a	
Venue for Next Day Brunch, includes Late Check-out (2pm)	\$750	n / a	
Soft Serve Ice Cream ***	\$750		
Additional events or gatherings	Want to host additional parties or gatherings beyond rehearsal, wedding & brunch? Please inquire re. pricing.		
Rentals**			
Arbor or Chuppa	Included		
6’ benches - up to 60	Included		
Patio Heaters (incl. propane)	Included		
Furniture & Facilities	<a href="#">See our DropBox for photos of all available items</a>		
** Please reserve in advance /   *** See details below.			
* Please Note: All options are subject to availability and price changes until booked.			

## Budgeting Considerations:

### Overall Budget Planning

You should plan for all-in budgets (catering, shuttling, photographer, site fees, etc) ranging ~ \$600-\$1,200 per guest. To help assess your specific budget (based on your guest count, dining preferences and numerous other considerations), please consult with our wedding planners.

### Furniture & Rentals

We have in-house tables, chairs and benches suitable for rehearsal dinners. For all events, you'll rent dining tables, chairs, linens, place settings, etc. Your planner will assess options and costs.

### Shuttling & Parking

Events with more than ~75 guests will require shuttling (which is a good idea anyways, with these dark, windy, unfamiliar roads). Our planners can recommend options and estimate costs. We have on-site parking for ~ 45 vehicles, and is conveniently located while keeping cars out-of-sight of gatherings. For guests lodging within walking distance, we encourage folks to walk to the ranch.

### Staffing

You and your planner will be responsible for setup, breakdown and cleanup of all events, including rehearsal gathering and next day brunch.

### Local Accommodations

In addition to our ranch house & cottage, there are four AirBnBs within easy walking distance of the ranch (collectively sleeping up to 22 guests), plus more accommodations within a 5-10 minute drive.

### Alcohol Policy

Rehearsal dinner: beer and wine only. For your wedding day (cocktail hour and reception), we allow a full bar (mixed and signature drinks) but *no shots*. Professional bartenders (provided by your caterer or event staffing company) are required for your wedding day events, and possibly for your rehearsal dinner if a catering team is utilized. Last call no later than 9:30 pm on rehearsal night, and 10:30 pm on wedding night. Guests driving themselves home are required to have a designated driver. We don't supply alcohol.

### After-Hours Package

For Weekend weddings packages, host a quiet late-night bonfire with your core group until 1am. Up to ~30-40 guests who are not driving home afterwards (e.g. those staying at AirBnBs within walking distance of the ranch, or taking shuttle back to their hotel) . During these 'quiet hours', and out of respect for our neighbors, we keep the noise (voices and music) to a minimum, allowing low-volume acoustic and/or quietly-amplified music.

### Additional Events during your stay

If you'd like to host additional events or gatherings during your stay (e.g. a pre-wedding birthday party or other activity beyond the rehearsal / wedding / brunch), please coordinate with us in advance, as there may be additional fees.

### Site Visits

As many as you need (some venues restrict your access, but that's not the way we roll). It'll definitely help if you book in advance; we're also happy to try to accommodate last-minute visits.

### Wedding Planners - Our "A" list

Please select from our very carefully curated list of amazing planners & coordinators who know our ranch intimately, and who we know you'll love. A planner is required for all weddings, rehearsal dinners or gatherings with 20 or more guests. We recommend that you interview a few, to find the best match. Wedding planners are not required for <20 guest elopements.

### Preferred / Recommended Vendors

Over the years, we've worked with dozens of caterers, florists, photographers and other amazing folks, and we have plenty of recommendations - caterers and food trucks of all different styles and budget ranges, photographers and photo booths, DJs and bands, but you complete flexibility on who you select.

### Venue Manager

Michael lives on-site, and is available throughout your wedding weekend to help with everything from parking and managing the fire pit, to serving the soft serve ice cream and happily ensuring a stress-free and fun gathering!

### Heat - Indoor & Outdoor



The Barn has its own heating system. We also have plenty of patio heaters, which we'll set up and move around for both your rehearsal dinner and for your reception. This ends up saving money both on rental costs and staff time. During your wedding evening, we'll also set up the fire pit, provide the wood, light and maintain the fire throughout the evening. We also have plenty of blankets available, in case your guests get chilly.

### Indoor and Outdoor Lighting

There's plenty of outdoor and ambient lighting throughout the ranch. However, if you'd like to add special event lighting, stage lighting, disco balls, and atmospheric uplighting, we can recommend vendors.

### Catering Facilities

We've equipped our barn with refrigerators, freezers and other infrastructure that make life for your caterers much easier, and reduce your costs. We request that coffee urns, drink dispensers, large BBQ at the barn, as well as many items stored in the barn's catering area, to be used by your caterers only.

### Restroom Trailers

We provide a brand new, freshly-cleaned 3-stall restroom trailer for all events. For wheelchair accessible, in some cases, the downstairs bathroom in the main house works (for which we have a wheelchair ramp). To rent an ADA restroom, or additional supplemental restroom, please consult with your planner.

### Deliveries of Rentals

We are very flexible for rental deliveries and pickup times. We prefer that your wedding planner, or someone who's helping you, be present when rentals arrive, in order to confirm that all items have arrived. For mid-week weddings, delivery and pickup timing might be less flexible.

### Helpful Infrastructure and 'Extras' Included

We have lots of items here that will make your lives easier and also help save some money, including ladders, tables and benches, signage, coolers, ice tubs and lawn games. If you have specific needs, just ask! [DropBox](#) for details.

### Fun Add-Ons

Definitely the 'hottest' add-on is the coldest: Straus Family Creamery organic soft serve ice cream. Guaranteed, you've never seen so many adults get so excited about ice cream!

### Environmental Sustainability

We provide large dumpsters for garbage, recycling and compost. Please work with your planner to reduce waste wherever possible.

### Inclement Weather Planning

Climate change has been making the 'rainy' season slightly more unpredictable; your planner will help you create a back-up 'inclement weather' plan. If wedding day rains limit outdoor activities, it's possible to host all activities (ceremony, cocktail hour, reception) in the hay barn for up to (approximately) 100 guests (though it may require some juggling!). If event tents are needed, they'd be your responsibility / expense.

### Backup Generator

With PG&E power outages becoming more frequent, we've installed a large backup generator to power the entire farm.

### Placing a 'Soft Hold'

We are happy to place a 'soft hold' for a few days (without requiring any deposit). As our calendar starts booking up later in the year, however, soft holds become difficult, and you'll also want to have back-up dates in mind, in case your first choice isn't available. We'll also draft up a contract for you to review.

## Booking & Payments

Your booking will be confirmed after we receive a signed contract. The **Initial Payment** locks in the date, and is both non-refundable and non-transferable. The remaining payments are also non-refundable, but are transferable, in case you need to postpone / reschedule your wedding date.

**For bookings 6+ months in advance:** Payments: The *Initial Payment* of \$2,500 due upon booking; then four (more or less) equal payments spaced out over the remaining time before your wedding.. We'll invoice the security deposit separately.

**For bookings made less than 6 months in advance:** Three payments: Both the Initial Payment of \$2,500, as well as 50% of the remaining balance, are due upon signing; and the remaining 50% balance due two months prior to check-in. Plus security deposit.

**Elopements:** \$2,500 due upon booking, and the remaining balance (including security deposit) due one month prior to check-in.

Any additional 'add-ons' and/or rentals will be billed separately.

## After Booking

We'll send you a helpful checklist of information that we'll need (e.g. insurance), as well as a list of any new items we have available for your use. We also have barn layouts and schematics to help you plan seating.

## Working With Us

We try to make your planning process as easy and stress-free as possible, and we're always available to answer any / all questions (and try to answer all emails within minutes). Just let us know how we can be of assistance!

## Frequently Asked Questions

**How close is the ranch to Tomales Bay?** Tomales Bay is, literally, just across the street.

**Are there hidden charges?** Nope, though we offer some optional extras.

**Are your facilities wheelchair accessible?** Yes. The barn is wheelchair accessible. The main house via the backdoor with a removable wheelchair ramp, though as a 160+ year old farmhouse, it is not ADA.

**How many overnight guests can you accommodate?** Our main house sleeps 8-10: Upstairs: 4 bedrooms, each with a queen bed; and the downstairs den with queen sofa bed. Separately, our 'Calf House' cottage sleeps 2.

**Are there enough places for our guests to stay nearby?** There are many local accommodation options. Within an easy 5-minute walk of the ranch, there are three vacation rentals and a small B&B which, combined, can sleep about 22 guests. Other local accommodations include Nick's Cove, the Lodge at Marconi, the Tomales Hotel, Airbnbs, Dillon Beach Resort, Lodge at Bodega Bay, and hotels in Petaluma. More details in our Accommodations packet.

**Is a wedding planner required?** Yes, and we have great recommendations!

**Can my dog be part of the wedding?** Although we have a strict 'no pets' policy, we do make limited exceptions for the participation of a family dog in a wedding ceremony. In such cases, your dog may attend your ceremony on-leash, and then (immediately after the ceremony) will need to be taken off-site (e.g. to another vacation rental which allows pets) for the remainder of the rental period. Dogs are not allowed inside the house, must remain on-leash and under control at all times, and you're responsible for pooper scooping. :)

**Is camping allowed?** Possible, for a few tents, on a case-by-case basis.

**Can we have food trucks?** Yes, absolutely! Food trucks. Dessert trucks. Vintage Airstream cocktail bars. Photo booths. Go for it!

**What is your alcohol policy?** If you BYO alcohol, then you are personally liable in case any guest drinks too much and gets into an accident. If a licensed

caterer purchases and serves alcohol, they hold the liability. We allow mixed drinks; however, the serving of shots is not allowed.

[Do you have extra parking for our guests who are staying nearby?](#)

Since parking at the two nearby beach rentals is quite limited, we have some limited additional parking. Please ask us for details.

[Do you have ice and / or freezer space for ice available on-site?](#)

We have plenty of ice storage capacity, including a large chest freezer and large igloo coolers; however, you and/or your caterer should plan to BYO ice. Petaluma (30 minutes drive) is the most convenient town to purchase ice, with many large grocery stores; for smaller amounts of ice / last minute purchases, there's a market in Pt. Reyes Station (20 minutes) , and a smaller convenience store in Tomales (10 minutes).

[Are you on-site during our wedding?](#) Either Vivien or Michael are on-site for all events, discretely hanging out at our cottage and on-call as needed (to assist with parking, chauffeuring your guests to/from the ceremony site, setting up and tending the bonfire, etc.)

[Can I rent the venue but not stay in the house?](#) Generally, we rent the house and the venue together, but have some flexibility, so just let us know what you're imagining / planning, and we'll figure out possible options.

[Can we throw rose petals? Rice? Confetti?](#) Unfortunately, our organic certification doesn't allow such things. Similarly, balloons filled with metallic confetti or 'biodegradable' plastics (such as rice paper confetti) are not allowed. Perhaps, consider bubbles!

[Host gifts:](#) Ask us about our unique ranch merchandise.



*Now Serving ....*  
**Straus Family Creamery**  
**Soft Serve Organic Ice Cream!!**



**What's included:**

- Vanilla and Chocolate ice cream mix.
- 3.5 oz compostable palm leaf bowls & wooden spoons.
- For one 2-3 hour session/event.
- Dispenses vanilla, chocolate or combo/swirl!
- Not "self-serve." SHR or catering staff must operate.

**Location:**

The machine lives on the upper level of the Hay Barn.

**Cost:** \$750

**Add-Ons:**

- Toppings: BYO or ask your caterer

**To reserve:** Please reserve at least 2 weeks in advance of your event.



Straus Family Creamery Organic Vanilla and Dutch Ice Cream Mixes are made with simple organic ingredients, and no additives, preservatives, artificial ingredients or coloring.

Nutritionals: [Straus Family Creamery soft serve ice cream mix.](#)