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caterers of distinction

Horniman Pavilion & Bandstand Frequently asked questions



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What does it cost to hire the Horniman Pavilion & Bandstand?

Costs vary according to the duration of hire and the specific requirements of your event. Please contact us to discuss the costs your event.

Email amanda@suzannejames.co.uk or telephone 020 8693 6331.

What is the maximum number of guests allowed?

We recommend no more than 50 guests for a ceremony in the Bandstand. In the Pavilion we can accommodate 60 guests for a seated dinner, including children and babies. It is possible to have 80 guests for a standing reception (this works best in the Summer when the bi-fold doors can be opened to the covered deck area.

Is the venue licenced for Civil Ceremonies?

Yes, both the Bandstand and the Pavilion are licenced to hold Civil Ceremonies.

When can the Horniman Pavilion or Bandstand be hired?

Both venues can be hired throughout the year from Thursday to Sunday inclusively, but please note that events cannot commence until 3.30pm on a Saturday due to the on site Farmers Market which takes place on the terrace around the Bandstand every week.

It may be possible to reserve both spaces at other times by special permission. Please contact Amanda or Sue at Suzanne James Ltd to check availability.

What does the venue hire fee include?

The venue hire fee covers the following;

- Exclusive use of the Bandstand or the Pavilion on the day of your booking
- Permission for deliveries by car/van between 8am and 10am on the day of your booking
- Set up time for all suppliers
- Heating & lighting (Pavilion only)
- Cleaning
- On site security

Plus a few little extras that make a BIG difference.....

At Suzanne James we know that it is the little things that can make a really big difference on this, the most important of days.

With over 7 years experience as the sole caterer at the Horniman Conservatory, and over 25 years in the events industry, we have a wealth of experience and knowledge we are happy to share with you.

Whilst some couples choose to use a wedding planner, we want you to be aware that we are much more than just your caterer, and offer many of the benefits of an event planner without the additional costs. We take great pride in helping you plan your wedding day, from providing a running order to liaising with your suppliers....it is our intention to remove the stress, and allow you to relax and enjoy the run up to your big day, as well as the day itself.

Because of this, here are some of the extras that we provide as part of our service;

Bespoke Wedding Planning Service – because that's what we do!

Toiletries Pack for ladies and gents (bookings of 6 hours or more)

After members of the public have left the museum at 5.30pm a selection of 'goodies' will be placed in each of the toilets to ensure guests will feel pampered and fully refreshed, ready to go on into the evening celebrations.

'Pashminas' for later in the evening (bookings of 6 hours or more)

There is nothing worse than feeling chilly, so we keep a selection of Pashminas to hand in assorted colours. If we notice a guest (or even a baby) who may be in need these will be offered free of charge.

Heel Protectors (bookings of 6 hours or more)

We keep a set of heel protectors at the ready for each bride so that, should she wish to venture into the gardens for photos there is no risk of her getting 'landlocked'!!

White Umbrellas (bookings of 6 hours or more)

Because, despite our best efforts, even we can't always guarantee the sun will shine. We have a stock of beautiful white wedding umbrellas to ensure you and your guests can get from A to B without getting wet for the duration of the event.

Can we hire the Horniman Pavilion or Bandstand for a Civil Ceremony only?

Yes, but please note the minimum hire periods as listed at the start of this document.

What additional costs are there?

On top of the venue hire there are a number of additional costs to factor in to your event. These will be shown in your quote from Suzanne James Ltd and will include;

- All crockery, glassware and cutlery etc.
- Tables and chairs if required (both venues have basic chairs that can be used if you are on a tight budget)
- Kitchen equipment as required – used by the catering staff
- Event & catering staff
- Food & beverages
- There is also a fee payable to the registrars for your civil ceremony

With the exclusion of the registrars all the above is organised exclusively by Suzanne James Ltd.

Do you have an outdoor space for hire?

Hire of the Horniman Pavilion includes the private deck area, and you are also allowed to take photographs within designated areas of the Horniman Gardens (and for bookings of 6 hours or more, on the Bandstand). Bandstand hire includes use of the venue and gardens for photographs. The gardens comprise of a unique 16 acre site of award-winning, beautifully maintained formal and natural landscapes, from delightful rose and sunken gardens, herbaceous borders, and ethno-botanical planting, to enchanting wild flower displays and a number of unique sundials. Your guests are welcome to explore the grounds up until 5.30pm, after which time they are required to stay within the hired venue.

Can we hire the Horniman Bandstand for photographs only?

If you have booked the Pavilion or Conservatory for your event for 6 hours or more then free use of the Bandstand for photographs is part of your hire. For shorter

events you may book the Bandstand for a period of 1 hour for the purpose of taking photographs at a rate of £200.00 plus VAT.

In all other circumstances a minimum 2 hour hire period applies for the Bandstand at a cost of £400.00 plus VAT.

How do we book the Horniman Pavilion and/or Bandstand?

Contact Amanda at Suzanne James Ltd and check whether the date you require is available. If it is, we will require some further details from you to allow us to prepare a detailed quotation. Once you are happy to proceed we will send you a contract for hire of the venue, along with an invoice for 50% of the venue hire fee. Six weeks prior to the event you will be required to pay the remainder of the venue hire fee, along with the facilities deposit, and catering costs.

How do I book our Civil Ceremony at the Horniman Pavilion or Bandstand?

You need to contact the registry office to check that your date is available and pay your registration fee. This should be done as soon as possible. Please ensure the correct venue is booked. There are 3 different wedding ceremony spaces on site and the correct venue must be listed on all paperwork for the big day!

Lewisham Registry Office

Email: register.office@lewisham.gov.uk

External Telephone: 020 8690 2128

Fax: 020 8314 1078

Opening hours: Mon - Fri 09.15am - 16.15pm

Address: 368 Lewisham High Street, Lewisham, London SE13

Your ceremony, by law, may not contain any music or additional wording/declarations that are religious in nature. However, with agreement from the registrar you may include non-religious music, readings or poetry for your wedding. Pre ceremony interviews with the registrar are conducted in the Horniman Library housed in the Centre for Understanding the Environment.

It is best to check with both Suzanne James Ltd and the registry office to ensure the date you want is available

Can a marquee or gazebo be erected on site?

No – unfortunately this is not possible.

What about privacy when the museum is open to the general public?

We have measures in place to provide as much privacy as possible for all events. However, due to its location members of the public may be in close proximity to the Bandstand. Our staff will always be on hand to advise that a private event is taking place and only invited guests are able to gain access.

Can we bring in our own caterers?

Suzanne James Ltd manages the venue and are the only caterers approved to operate on site.

Are there any other catering restrictions I should be aware of?

There is very limited refrigeration at the Pavilion and all food is brought along at the last minute in a refrigerated van. Therefore cream wedding cakes are not suitable.

Please also note that Suzanne James Ltd will not take responsibility for delivery or set up of wedding cakes.

BBQs are not allowed at the Horniman Pavilion. Please speak to Suzanne James Ltd about any catering queries you may have.

Can we bring in our own photographer, florist, DJ, band or other supplier?

Suzanne James Ltd will supply you with a list of pre-approved, recommended suppliers who are familiar with the Horniman Pavilion and have agreed to pay 6% commission to the venue on all bookings they receive. This commission funds the development of additional events and exhibition programmes run within the Horniman Museum. Many of the approved suppliers are small, independent companies that we feel have a similar ethos to both the Horniman Museum and ourselves. We would encourage you to support the local economy by considering these suppliers.

Should you wish to bring in your own supplier to work at the venue on the day of the wedding an administration fee of £100 plus VAT per supplier will be added to your final invoice which is payable prior to your event. Each of these suppliers will be required to provide a copy of their public liability insurance certificate to the value of £5 million, and PAT certificates for any electrical items that they will be using on site during your event. It is important to ensure the company can provide these, as they will not be allowed to work on site without them.

Can our photographer and guests take photographs anywhere within the Horniman Gardens?

There are designated photographic areas within the grounds (a map that details these areas is available upon request). You may like to visit the Horniman Gardens with your photographer in the run up to your wedding/party to select your preferred locations.

Is confetti allowed?

We have recently obtained approval for one particular type of confetti on site. This must be ordered through Suzanne James Ltd as we have responsibility for managing where it is thrown.

Can we supply our own beverages?

The Suzanne James wine list will be sent to you with your initial quotation, so that you may if you wish select wines to compliment your menu, taste and budget. It contains a selection of outstanding wines, including many which are ethical, sustainable, organic or Fair-trade. The majority of our beverages can be provided on a sale or return basis.

Should you decide to provide your own drinks then we would levy a handling fee of £10 per head for all guests aged 18 and over. This includes the cost of us taking delivery at the venue between 8am and 10am on the morning of your event, chilling and serving throughout and removing and recycling all empty bottles. Any unused beverages are taken back to our professional kitchen on Barry Road in East Dulwich for you to collect in the following days.

Are there any restrictions regarding decorations?

Freestanding decorations or stands are advised but please consult Suzanne James Ltd to discuss your requirements. Within the Pavilion helium balloons are allowed provided they have long strings enabling easy retrieval should they float up to the

ceiling. Only battery operated candles are permitted - Suzanne James has these available to hire for use at the venue if required.

When do our chosen suppliers have access to the site?

The Suzanne James Event Manager will be on site from 8am on the day of your wedding/party. All vehicular deliveries must take place between 9am and 10am. From 10am onwards deliveries can only be made on foot. Vehicles will be allowed back on site at the end of your event to remove any equipment. Please note that all vehicles must adhere to the strict 5mph speed limit, with hazard lights on at all times, and closing any gates behind them.

Can we deliver or set up the day before an event?

All set up, breakdown and deliveries must be on the day of your event with prior consent and according to the times laid out by Suzanne James Ltd. Please note the restricted times for vehicular deliveries as stated within the previous answer.

Can my event go on later than 11pm?

The Pavilion is allowed to extend its licence to midnight for a limited number of events each year. Please note that this is subject to an additional hire fee plus additional staffing costs. Because the venue is in a residential area there is no option of extending the licence beyond midnight.

Can we arrange to leave items overnight?

No, both venues must be left clean and empty at the end of your hire period. Neither the Horniman Museum nor Suzanne James Ltd can take any responsibility for items left at the venue.

Can we smoke inside the venue?

No, smoking is only permitted outside the venues.

Is there any parking on site?

On the day, there is 1 parking space available for the hirers of the venue plus disabled parking if required. Registration numbers for vehicles coming on site must be submitted 7 days prior to your event, and please note that there is a very strict speed limit of 5mph within the grounds. Please also note that all vehicles must leave the site at the end of the hire period, and cannot be left for collection the following day. For guests there is free parking on Wood Vale and Sydenham Rise, which is a walk of 10 minutes or less to the venues. There is also parking on Horniman Drive, but please note that the Horniman Drive Entrance Gate is locked from 5.30pm, and so guests returning to their cars would have a long walk via the London Road entrance after this time.

Where does the money raised from hire of the Pavilion & Bandstand go?

The hire of the Horniman Pavilion & Bandstand is an extremely important part of the Horniman Museum Trusts income. All proceeds go towards the conservation and upkeep of the Museum, and the development of the ongoing education, events and exhibition programmes.