

Great Lakes Aquarium



Wedding and Event Guide



Select a Package



Full Facility

These evening events give guests free roam of the Aquarium's exhibit galleries and the opportunity to customize with SCUBA divers, animal encounters or touchpool experiences.

- **Seated Dinner Package**

Dine within the second floor exhibit galleries with seating for up to 160.

- **Strolling Event Package**

Ideal for parties of over 160, this option lets your guests explore with hors d'oeuvres. Inquire about cocktail table rentals to enhance the guest experience.

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Discovery Center

This blank-slate space offers flexibility for events at any time of day for up to 100 guests.

- **Dinner/Social Package**

Entertain your guests with the perfect atmosphere for socializing. Ideal for holiday parties and groom's dinners!

- **Meeting/Training Package**

Utilize the built-in projector and sound system or jot notes on a whiteboard with seating optimized for presentations or small-group networking.

- **Wedding Package**

Seat all your guests around a head table in an intimate space. After dinner, move to the lobby for dancing or a cocktail hour.

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Wedding Ceremony

Host a picturesque ceremony year-round. Add a wedding ceremony onto a full facility or Discovery Center rental to streamline the planning process!

- **Harborside Package**

An outdoor ceremony for up to 160 guests with inclement weather indoor alternatives.

- **Water Wall Package**

An indoor ceremony for up to 160 guests for evening weddings (after 7:00 p.m.).

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Full Facility Package

With 62,000 square feet of space, Great Lakes Aquarium is the perfect location for all events, from fundraisers to conference socials, seated banquets to strolling hors d'oeuvres receptions.

Main Level

Several distinct spaces create the perfect atmosphere for your event.

Lobby: A wide open space backed by a 24-foot lighted water wall. This area can be used for greeting and mingling or for more formal seating. When the lights are turned down and the music is turned up, the lobby becomes a festive place to celebrate - from first dance through last call.

Exhibit Galleries: A bar set up close to the Aquarium's largest exhibits is a stunning area for a cocktail hour. For a \$150 upgrade, divers will hand-feed sturgeon and trout as your guests look on. Benches are available for casual seating, and there is plenty of room to add cocktail tables for hors d'oeuvres.

The first floor also houses *Global Connections'* saltwater displays, *Amazing Amazon* and *Shipwrecks Alive!* galleries and *Unsalted Seas'* 9,000 gallon sturgeon touchpool (open until 10:30 p.m.)

Second Level

Upstairs galleries offer beautiful backdrops for seated meals.

Origins: This space - featuring ancient fossils and creatures from across the animal kingdom - accommodates the bulk of seating.

Exhibit Galleries: Additional seating (up to 160 total guests) can extend in front of the *St. Louis River* and *Wetlands* exhibits showcasing habitats of Northern Minnesota. A bank of floor-to-ceiling windows overlooks Duluth's Aerial Lift Bridge. In front of the *Baptism River*, a head table is in view of all the guests. *Critter Corner* provides the perfect location for a buffet.

Setup and Staging

To respect the views of our daily guests and ensure that everyone in your party has the best possible experience, set up may begin at 6:00 p.m. Your guests are welcome to arrive at 7:00 p.m. Final setup and dinner times will depend on arrangements with your caterer. Once the setup is complete, your guests are welcome to explore the galleries. Events must end no later than 12:00 a.m.

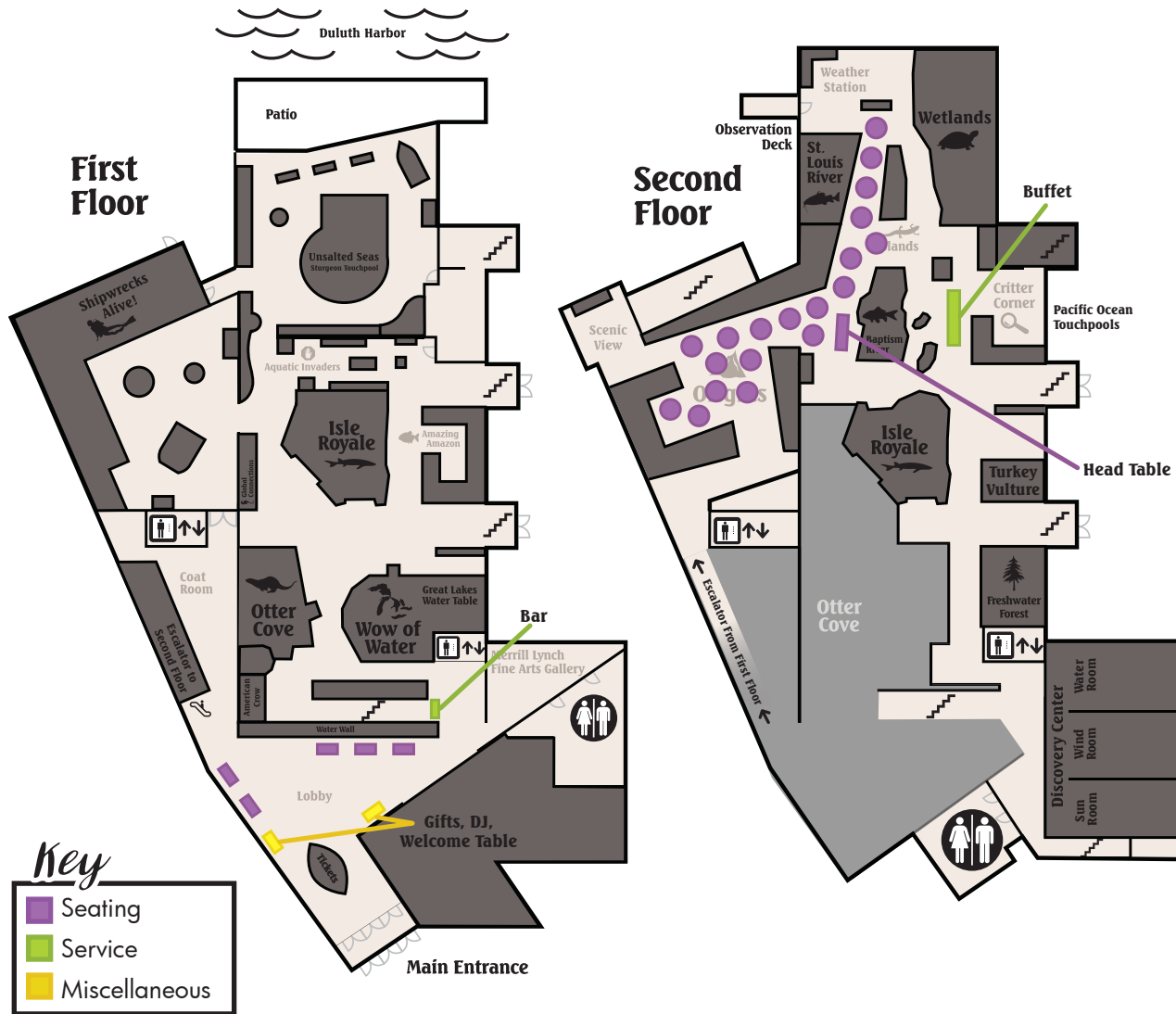
Tables and Chairs

Great Lakes Aquarium can provide up to 20 round tables (seats 6-8 each) and up to 120 basic black chairs. Additional furniture of different styles may be rented from a local company with the cost added to your rental agreement. The Aquarium can provide rectangular tables for DJ, cake, gifts, catering and a head table.

Great Lakes Aquarium does not provide the following items: tablecloths or linens, centerpieces, candles, theme props, special lighting, sound systems or coat check service. There is a coat room with hangers available for your use. We will be happy to assist with any other additional requests and will specify any additional costs in the written contract.

Full Exhibit Floor Event Layout

160-guest seated dinner



Discovery Center Package

As one grand space, the Discovery Center Banquet Hall can accommodate up to 104 seated guests for meetings, dinners or social hours. This second-floor space can be divided into three smaller rooms that each seat 20 - 40 depending on layout. Sweeping views of the Duluth Harbor and Bayfront Park provide a stunning backdrop for any event.

Rental Options

Daytime events include use of the space for up to four hours between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Evening events may run from 5:00 p.m. through midnight. *The event timeline will be noted in the rental agreement.*

Set Up

Deliveries can be made to the Aquarium during normal business hours (10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.) with prior knowledge and approval by Aquarium event staff. Discovery Center access can be made available after 10:00 a.m. the day of your event for decorating.

Aquarium staff can place centerpiece arrangements upon request. Your rental does not include the following: cocktail tables, tablecloths, linens, centerpieces, candles, theme props, special lighting, sound systems or coat check.

We will be happy to assist with additional requests and will specify additional costs in the written contract.

Seating

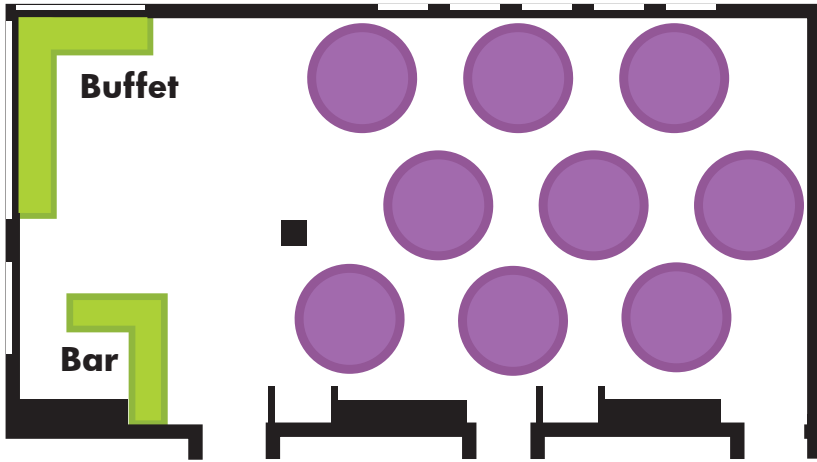
Round tables and basic black chairs can be provided for up to 104 guests. Arrangements for the rental of additional tables or different furniture styles may be added to your contract for an additional fee.

Lobby and Water Wall

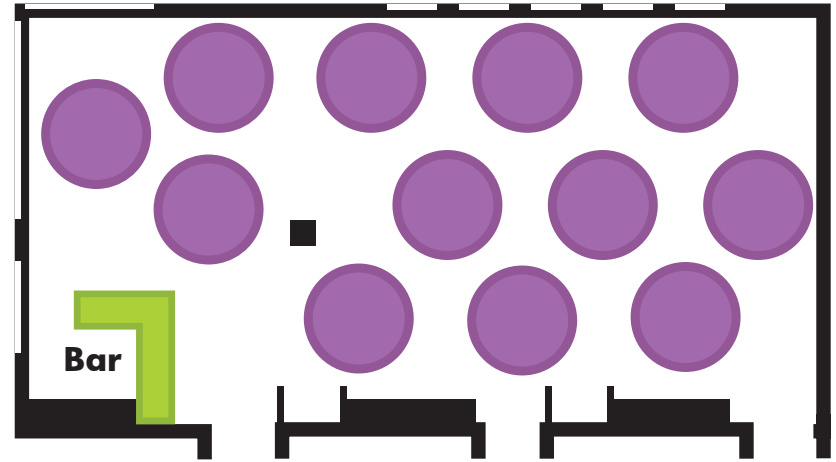
The lobby can be a dance floor or gathering space after 7:00 p.m. *Sound equipment may be set up no earlier than 6:00 p.m.*



Dinner for 72 Bring everyone together in one space with a harbor view from the buffet and bar.



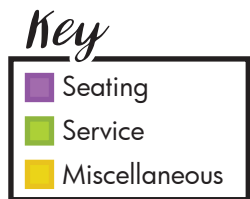
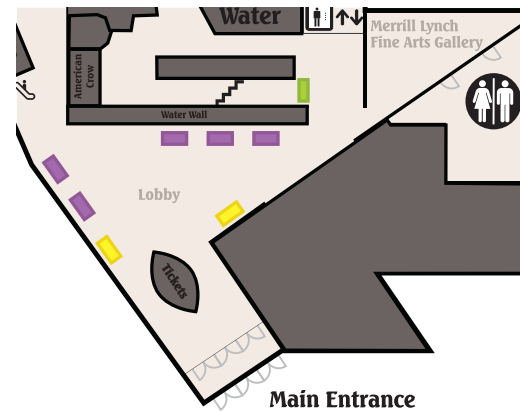
Dinner for 96 Maximize the number of guests by with the buffet on the balcony or a plated dinner. Move the bar to the lobby and make room to seat 104 guests.



Meetings and Trainings Minimize distractions with food on the balcony. A/V equipment available at no extra cost.



Add on the Lobby after 7p.m. at no extra cost. Choose a bar location - close to food in the Discovery Center or close to the dance floor in the lobby. Or, add on a wedding ceremony in the lobby for \$250.00 (see page 7).



Wedding Ceremonies



Celebrate in style with up to 160 guests either on the shore of the Duluth Harbor or indoors in front of the Aquarium lobby's water wall. All ceremonies are included in full facility event packages or can be added onto a Discovery Center event package for \$250.00.

Harborside Ceremony

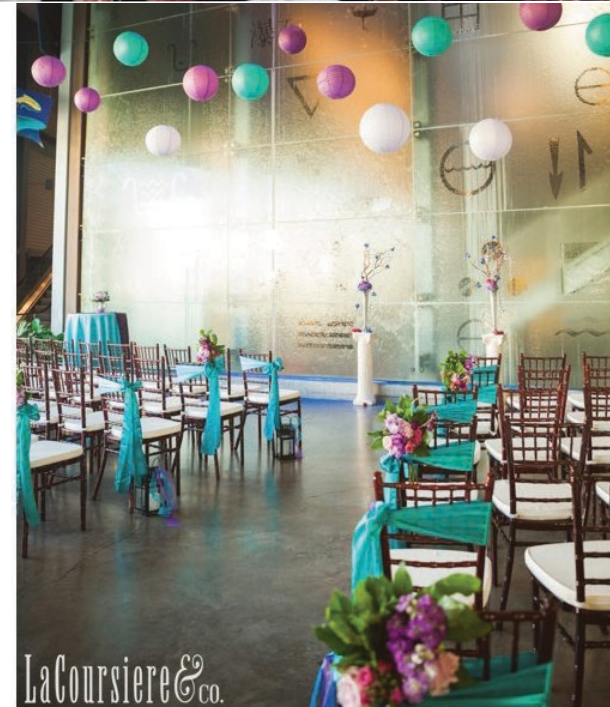
Enjoy stunning views of the Duluth Harbor without worrying about weather - the Discovery Center is available as a rainy day alternative. Set up in style with a private bridal party preparation area, and enjoy free Aquarium admission for all your guests following the ceremony.

Some dates may be unavailable due to music festivals next door at Bayfront Park.

Water Wall Ceremony

Exchange vows in front of the breathtaking 24-foot water wall. Enjoy the spacious lobby and the sound of water all year round! A private space will be available for bridal party preparation, and your guests will have the opportunity to explore the Aquarium exhibits throughout your event.

Water wall ceremonies may begin no earlier than 7:00 p.m., when the building closes to Aquarium visitors.



LaCoursiere & Co.



Food & Beverages

Catering

Our preferred caterers are Duluth Grill and Black Woods Banquet and Catering. Other licensed caterers can be approved by the Event Coordinator.

Black Woods: **Duluth Grill:**

E: banquets@blackwoods.com E: catering@duluthgrill.com
P: (218) 624 - 3454 P: (218) 726-1150
W: www.blackwoods.com W: www.duluthgrill.com

Catering is responsible for all food service, including clean up and removal of food service items (including but not limited to table service, serving items, garbage, recycling and compost. A fee will be assessed to the host for additional clean-up done by Great Lakes Aquarium staff.

Great Lakes Aquarium does not provide tablecloths or linens. Be sure to ask your catering company about providing them.

Bar Service

Great Lakes Aquarium provides exclusive bar service for on-site events and is committed to providing quality products and a flexible range of options. Bar service is \$200, which provides you with one of the following options:

Cash Bar: Guests are charged per drink. Select a few beverage options or offer our full list of products.

Drink Tickets + Cash Bar: Purchase tickets (\$5 each) and distribute them to your guests.

Hosted Bar: Let your guests enjoy an open bar! You will be charged per drink consumed. Select a few beverage options or offer our full list of products.

Champagne Toast: Service is charged per bottle (\$22 - \$95) and includes recyclable fluted glasses.

Drink Pricing:

Soda & Juice	\$2.00 (per drink)
Domestic Beer	\$4.00
Local Craft Beer.....	\$5.00
Wine	\$5.00
Mixed Drink	\$6.00

Typical pours are dependent on availability. Looking for something in particular? Make a request! (Some selections may require an extra fee).





Event Guidelines

Rental Rates

Rental rates include the use of the facility, Aquarium admission, parking, custodial staff, and onsite event staff. Prices vary by season and day of the week. *Rates listed on page 13.*

Reservations

Great Lakes Aquarium can place your event date on hold for up to one week without a deposit. After that time, the date will be released unless prior arrangements have been made.

To officially reserve the facility, a deposit of 50% of the rental fee along with a signed contract is required. The balance of the fee is due by 6 pm on the day of the event. A confirmed guest head count is due one week prior to the event.

Guarantee Policy

All prices for security, divers or additional services are subject to change and not guaranteed until specified on a signed contract.

Cancellation Policy

All cancellations will be effective from the date the Aquarium receives written notice from the booking party. In the event the contracted function is cancelled more than 180 days prior to the scheduled date, your deposit will be refunded. If an event is cancelled between 180 and 120 days prior to the scheduled date, 50% of your facility deposit will be refunded. If your event

is cancelled fewer than 120 days prior to your event date, the deposit will not be refunded.

Event End Time

The timeline of your event will be outlined in your contract. Events may end no later than midnight - or earlier, if specified in your contract. Last call for bar service is 11:00 p.m., and the last dance is 11:30 p.m. All guests, hosts and vendors must be out of the building by midnight. A \$500/hour fee will be assessed for events with guests in the building after that time.

Security

If your event will include alcohol, a security guard must be present. One guard is required for all events up to 150 people, and two or more guards are required for larger events. Security charges are \$150 per guard, and security will be arranged by Great Lakes Aquarium. Security will remain on-site until all guests have left the Aquarium grounds.

The placing of foreign objects into Aquarium exhibits is strictly prohibited. Any person attempting to place items in or entering an exhibit/tank will be escorted from the building by security.

Parking

When available, parking in the Aquarium parking lot is included in the facility rental. The lot has 120 spaces, but not all can be reserved for event guests. Once the lot fills, guests can pay to park across the street at the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center (DECC). Guests are responsible for DECC parking fees.

Decorations

We ask that you discuss decoration plans with the Event Coordinator prior to making arrangements. Small candles in glass containers high enough to protect the flame are acceptable. The use of live animals in centerpieces is not permitted.

Due to the nature of the facility, tapered candles, confetti and glitter as table scatter, water bead vase filler and balloons are prohibited. In addition, we do not allow tacks or tape on the walls or ceiling.

Exhibits/Lighting

Please note: some exhibits close or dim lights at sunset due to animal care needs. The sturgeon touchpool in Unsalted Seas closes at 10:30 p.m. You will be apprised of any changes in exhibits prior to your event. The Event Coordinator must approve any additional lighting requests.

Entertainment

All outside entertainment must be preapproved by the Great Lakes Aquarium Event Coordinator. For the protection of the exhibits and animals, the Aquarium reserves the right to monitor all events and to limit volume levels when necessary. The maximum volume level allowed is 98 decibels.

Photography

Flash photography is prohibited in some areas of the Aquarium, namely near all exhibits containing birds. Event staff will inform you of possibilities and restrictions prior to your event.

Lost or Stolen Items

The Aquarium is not responsible for the loss, theft or damage of any items in the Aquarium. Lost items include but are not limited to personal belongings, gifts, decorations and equipment.





Rental Rates

EVENT TYPE	TIMING & SEASON	COST
Full Facility Package	Peak Season* Sunday - Thursday	\$3,000
	Peak Season Friday & Saturday	\$3,500
	Off-Season Sunday - Thursday	\$2,500
	Off-Season Friday & Saturday	\$3,000
Discover Center Package - 1-40 Guests	Daytime	\$300 (\$500 with admission)
	Evening (at or after 5p.m.)	\$600
Discovery Center Package - 41 - 80 Guests	Daytime	\$600 (\$800 with admission)
	Evening (at or after 5p.m.)	\$1,100
Discovery Center Package - 81 - 100 Guests	Daytime	\$900 (\$1,100 with admission)
	Evening (at or after 5p.m.)	\$1,700
Ceremony Only Package - Up to 160 guests	Peak Season	\$750
	Off-Season	\$500
	Discovery Center (Add-On)	\$250

***Peak Season:** May - September.

Add-Ons

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	COST
SCUBA Divers	Two divers will hand-feed fish and pose for pictures in the Isle Royale habitat for up to half an hour. For an additional \$20, the divers will carry a customized laminated sign (i.e. "Just Married") to display underwater - and you can keep the sign!	\$150
Touchpools	Open up the Ancient Seas, Moon Jellies, or Pacific Tidepool touchpools for an hour (in addition to the included Sturgeon of the World touchpool), or split the hour rotating which touchpool is open.	\$90 / hour
Hanging Decorations	Aquarium staff will hang pre-assembled decorations in the lobby. Event hosts must provide hanging materials - i.e. fishing line and paper clips.	\$100
Animal Encounters	Your guests can meet a snake, a skunk, a turtle, an alligator, or one of a variety of invertebrates. Animal encounters are arranged on a case-by-case basis to provide the best fit for your event and for animal care needs - ask to learn more!	Price varies by species



