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strictly FOR CLIENTS get the most phatography

OUT OF YOUR



welcome

Hello and Welcome to the Adorlee Wedding Guide. I'm thrilled you're here! As you're planning your wedding, I'm sure your mind is racing with all that needs to be planned. It's all very exciting but it can also be somewhat overwhelming. You're planning the day that you've been anticipating your whole life and yet you only get one shot at it! By the time you get the hang of it, the planning is over! My goal as a wedding photographer is to make this one aspect of the planning process simple. Photography is more than just images, it's a huge part of your day. Your Wedding day is an important, intimate and extremely personal day and there's no doubt I'm going to be around you a lot. Not only do you deserve beautiful images, you also deserve an amazing photographic experience. The goal of this guide is to help you plan your wedding day in a way that will allow me to provide you with the BEST experience possible. This guide is written with my opinion and knowledge of what I have seen and based on my own experiences at more than 500 weddings.



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Now that you have picked a date, a photographer and a venue as well, you can celebrate! Those are some of the toughest decisions in wedding planning and you can cross them off your list! Woohoo!! Now on to the fun stuff.... have you decided to book an engagement session? I would say around a quarter of my clients opt for one and these couples are always so pleased that they had one, as it puts that thought of posing, how and where to look or put their arms to rest and makes them feel at ease, giving them one less thing to worry about. This can also really add to your Wedding Experience, giving you have the chance to get to know me, experience how I shoot and how I handle posing and lighting. Not that I need it, but it also gives me a heads up - I'll arrive on your wedding day already knowing how you two interact, what your best poses are and how to photograph you in a genuine way! You will feel like a pro on your big day because of the fab practice you had during your engagement session.

Your engagement session can be scheduled anytime before your wedding day. I normally suggest booking it at least 3-6 months in advance to avoid stress. Because my weekends are often filled with weddings, I tend to shoot engagements on weekday evenings, normally from 5-7pm depending on the light and the time of the year. In the winter months, 3-4pm is a normal time frame for an e-shoot!

As you plan for your engagement shoot, you will need to start brainstorming about some location ideas. A location that is special or sentimental to you is a lovely idea! If you can't think of anywhere specific that you would like to have your shoot, I can help you decide on a location - the majority of shoots take place local to me in Chichester - with the Goodwood woods, the beach or Cathedral gardens being popular choices. As long as the light is great, I can make ANY location look awesome!

the outfits

WHAT TO WEAR

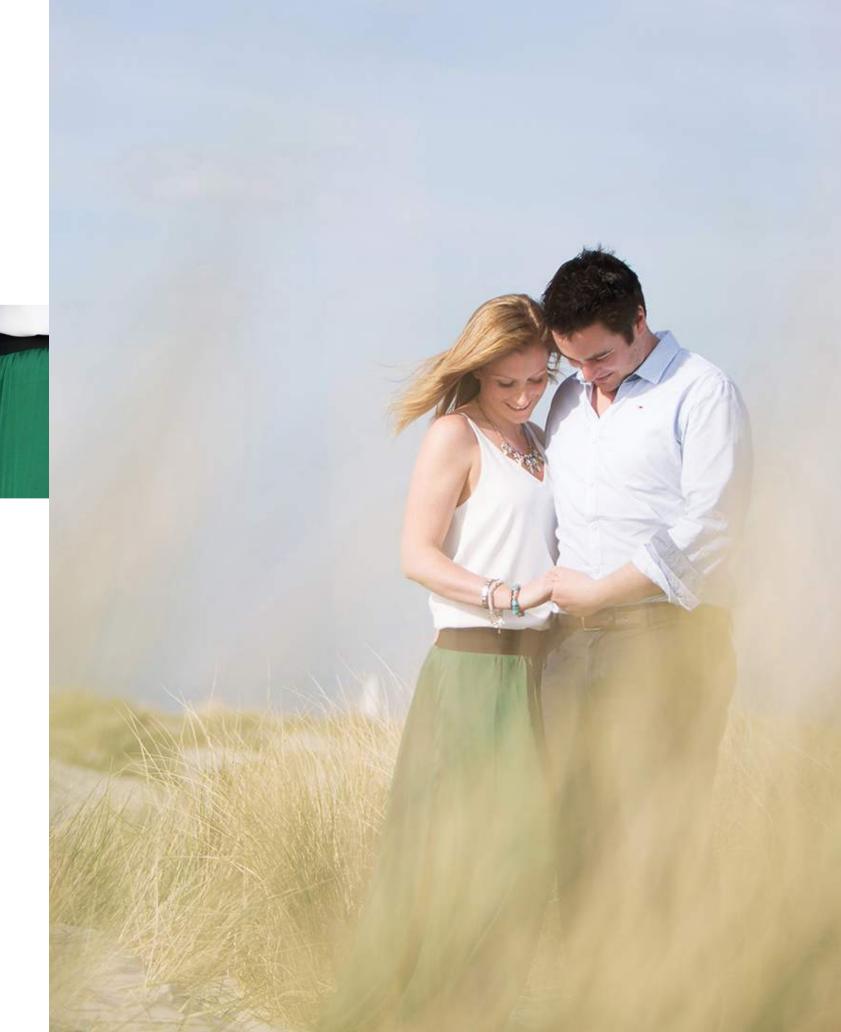
It's always a little intimidating to have your picture taken even if it's just a photo on an iphone that is taken by a friend, we still want to look nice, make sure nothing is in our teeth and that our hair is behaving - I, for one, hate seeing photos of myself! Here are some tips for outfits and accessories that will make the e-shoot preparation a little more managable!



- Don't try to MATCH...try to pick outfits and accesories that coordinate instead. If everyone wore the same exact color at their e-shoot, how boring would those images be?
- Don't be afraid to be BOLD. Accessorize and make your outfits your own. Scarves, bold necklaces and fun shoes are always welcomed!
- MOST PATTERNS are actually ok.... however, graphics are not favorable for portraits. If you're wearing a pattern, make sure it's not overwhelming and distracting.
- Be sure to check out my pinterest boards for more outfit inspiration if you're having trouble.

 adorleeweddings
- Empty your pockets! Literally. You don't want to have key chains or phones showing through your pockets (This is for the guys).

- Some couples like to have one casual, everyday outfit and then one outfit that is dressier. This will give your shoot two totally different "looks". I recommend beginning with the dressy outfit first.
- Make sure you're comfortable in what you're wearing. And ladies, if the top is super low cut, that will limit the amount of angles I can shoot from.
- BE ON TIME! The sun is only out for so long, the later you arrive, the less time we have to shoot, and nobody wants that
- Clean the ring! I love to shoot a few close-ups of your engagement ring. The cleaner the better.
- Relax! You don't have to be a pro at this. That's my job, and I'm going to help you along the way. Enjoy this time together and make a date out of it! Plan dinner afterwards and celebrate































YOUR timeline



Every bride loves having those beautiful shots of her bridal details. It's an important part of the story and I love having some time to shoot the dress, shoes, perfume, jewellery, invitations, etc. These shots allow me to get warmed up for the rest of the Wedding day. I normally like to allow around 30 minutes for this part of the day. While I'm shooting details, I'm also capturing some shots of the bride and her girls getting ready!

After the details have been photographed, I capture some behind the scenes of hair and make-up - these are always some of my favourite photos. Then, it's time for the bride to get into her dress! This is a big moment. It's a nice touch if the mother of the bride and all of the bridesmaids are dressed when the bride is ready to get into her dress. This ensures that everyone will look nice in those images. After the bride is in her gown, she can put on her jewellery, veil, shoes, etc and if time, I will shoot some additional bridal portraits.



11:00-12:45



If you have booked a second photographer then he/ she will use this time to capture some photographs of the groom and groomsmen getting ready, having a sneaky drink at the pub, final prep at the Church/ ceremony room, and finally welcoming your guests. Just ask me for more info.

Here's the page that can be somewhat intimidating - The TIMELINE! I know this isn't the most exciting aspect of the wedding day but this is the one thing that can make or break your photography. The next two pages will outline an ideal wedding day working off of a 1pm ceremony timeframe. Remember that all wedding days are different and your timeline may differ due to travel times and unique situations.

Ceremony 1:00-1:50



It's time to get married!! Most ceremonies are 30 minutes long. If your ceremony is longer than 30 mins (particularly Catholic or Hindu ceremonies), you'll need to make adjustments to your timeline. Your ceremony will pass by so quickly so I always allow extra time for those congratulations, hellos and a confetti throw.

If the reception is in the same location as the ceremony, I will use this time to shoot your reception details UNTOUCHED. If the ceremony and reception are in different locations, I recommend having a cocktail hour or two outside of the main reception area if possible so that I can grab some great shots of your reception room before the Wedding Breakfast begins.



Family formals normally take place immediately following the ceremony (once you've said your hellos and had a drink). It's best to capture the family formals soon after the ceremony because ALL family members will be present at that time. I'll need about 30 mintues for family formals and I shall require you to complete my questionnaire and photo list before the wedding, where you can list out the formal shots that you want. I recommend having



these portraits outdoors where possible and if weather permits so that they resemble more natural family portraits in the more flattering natural light, especially if the ceremony location is dark!

YOUR timeline continued





Now it's time for Bridal Party shots. During these portraits, I try to take some great shots of the guys and girls both separately AND together. These photos can be natural and relaxed, or formal or staged or fun and silly. We can discuss these in more detail in the lead up to your day.

As I request that my clients give me a maximum of 10 family formals, the happy couple should now have time to mingle, and this is when I can capture those favourite shots that everyone loves - the natural candid and unknown ones.



3:30-4:00

DETAILS



After the bride and groom take some time away from their guests, I will begin taking a few romantic portraits, I love having this time with the newlyweds to take afew "Just Married" portraits. I will find the locations for these shots as well. Remember, the LIGHT determines where we shoot and so I won't decide on exact portrait locations until the day-of. As we shoot these portraits, I will direct you to help with posing and positioning and where to look or put your hands

NB: Remember this is my job, if you are nervous about this and need some tips or help on the day, just ask.

WFDDING

4:30-6:4:

This is when the fun, laughter, tears, embarrassing speeches, emotion, andthe drinking happens.... this is where I capture some corkers - the natural, real, raw photos of you, your family and your friends full of emotion. In this time you will also sit to eat, relax, loosen a couple of buttons and catch up with your loved ones. During your meal, I will take my break and eat at the some time as you, so that I am ready for speeches.



NB: Please do let me know if you are planning on having your speeches before food.



When there's a gap, I will try to use this time to grab some romantic evening portraits. You'll be nice and relaxed at this point in your day too. Twilight starts around 45 minutes before sunset. It's usually the BEST time of day for those romantic portraits in the late spring, summer and early fall! This is when the sun is glowy and golden. In the Winter Months the Sun tends to set during or sometimes even before the Wedding breakfast - hehe I will drag the couple away if I see a sunset. If my coverage is due to end before sunset and you can have your heart set on sunset photos, you can always add coverage, just get in touch.

This timeline is based on a 9 hour coverage from getting ready to about 15-20 minutes after your first dance, so that I can be present for the main events of the reception and a bit of dancing. If you're interested in having your exit or evening photographed, you can add additional coverage or plan a faux exit with just your bridal party!



APROXIMATE TIMES:

DETAILS & PREP: 2.5 HOURS

PORTRAITS: 20-40 MINS

BRIDAL PARTY: 20-30 MINS

FAMILY FORMALS: 30 MINS

"EXTRA PORTRAIT TIME": AS MUCH TIME AS YOU'LL GIVE ME!





lighting

This is definitely top of the list. Even over location, good light really is a game changer when it comes to creating beautiful images. Consider this when choosing where you are getting ready (this applies to both of you if you've hired a second photographer to capture morning prep for both parties). A lot of natural light or even pockets of natural window light can make the world of difference. Where as some colours, dark mahogany wood, tungsten or candlelight, yellow or red walls, and even tapestries will create a lot of warmth and unflattering colour casts in your photos. I can work with anything BUT I'm advising so you can get the best possible and most flattering photos.



Emiling groups

Although my speciality is unposed documentary wedding photography, I highly recommend posed photographs with family and relatives. It is unrealistic to expect me to capture lists of significant people in your life in separare photos without intentionally posing them. Group photos are necessary because weddings have a secondary purpose as family reunions, and it is important to preserve those slices of life. For the sake of efficiency, I require all couples to provide a detailed shot list for only family/ friend group portraits and a dedicated person with a loud voice who you don't mind propelling their voice (this is usually preferred to a unknown photographer) to keep everyone organised and ready. When listing your groups you should ideally allow approximately 3 minutes per group photo (including rounding people up) and don't forget to allow time for photos of just the two of you (depending on your prefernce and the venue this can be from 25-45 minutes), therefore I recommend keeping your formals to a maximum of 8-10 groups shots.

mess and clutter

I'm not just talking piles of dirty washing in the background, but luggage, trainers that you or your bridesmaids arrived in. Just think about what you want in the background of your photos and try keeping the clutter to a minimum. Maybe allocate someone to just keep on top of this and to ensure there's not piles of coffee mugs left laying around and piling up.

Cation

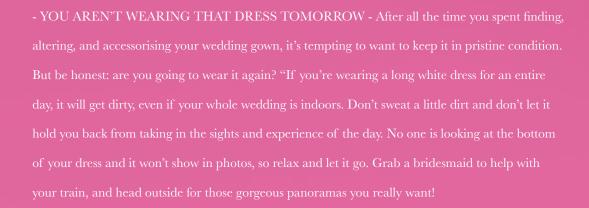
I'm not talking about your venue, you will have already chosen this. Location applies to a lot of other aspects, again relating to light - from where you sit to have your make-up applied and hair styled (highly recommend an area close to a window) to where you stand during your ceremony. For example, if you are having a ceremony in a beautiful wooden or stone barn, try taking a photo from all angles (even just on your phone), facing the window, back to the window, where you would be saying your vows, consider where I would be photographing from, do you have natural light on your face? do you have loads of fairy lights in front of your face and all natural light behind you? - obviously this wouldn't be flattering. I may advise that I photograph up the aisle for better light and more flattering photos, or some barns it can actually work to your nicely by changing the set up of your ceremony.

Marquee in a garden? Please consider where group photos and portraits will be if there's a downpour all day.





- TRUST IN THE PRO's sometimes I may suggest a specific backdrop for your group photos, please do let me know if you have a preference, although sometimes what I'm suggesting may be due to the fact that the prettiest backdrop could mean everyone squinting or people in light and shadows which would not be a good look! This is usually down to the weather on the day at that time.
- REMEMBER WHY YOU CHOSE ME most of my clients choose me for my documentary style, capturing those real raw moments, the true memories from your day, the natural photos. So if you're now writing a huge list of group photos, read my point above about family formals and remember why you chose to have me as your photographer, if I spend my day working through a list, I will be missing all of the many moments happening around me and you'll be missing out on why you really booked me.
- MAKING TIME FOR PORTRAITS I'm not being a twat when I ask you to come for some couple portraits just as your evening guests are arriving and you're trying to say hello... this is usually a time when I can see some stunning flattering light and I know it's going to help me create the most beautiful portraits of the day. This light doesn't last long and sometimes just by leaving it another 20 or even only ten minutes we can lose that golden light. This is the same if there's really unpredicatble weather on your wedding day and I spot a dry spell or some good light and decide it's good time to try grabbing those group photos you asked for. Again it's a case of trusting me and the one thing I do not want is you regretting not having had "those" photos on the day. Of course, I am not going to pressure you on YOUR wedding day so please tell me if you'd rather not and are happy to miss out on these photo opportunities.
- POCKET BULGE Avoiding tan lines may be more for the girls but when it comes to the guys they seem to like to carry everything around with them in their pockets. Keys, wallets and phones! Are they really needed on your wedding day? Do not let wedding photos get ruined by the pocket bulge. Ensure all guys have empty pockets, leave keys and wallets in a safe, at home or in the wives handbags even if it's just for the duration of teh ceremony and the group photos.



- FULL LENGTH MIRROR - honestly you'd think this sounds so obvious but you'd be amazed by the amount of brides and grooms shocked that there's no full length mirror in the property. Make sure you have one. NB: Pretty mirrors also make for some gorgeous reflection photos. - more about this later.

- DETAILS READY TO GO - Be sure to refer to my what to gather in the Pre-Ceremony section of this guide or the For the Guys and For the Dolls lists - both downloadable from the Client Website.

- MORNING OUTFIT - pretty dress, pretty short set, pretty gowns. Just avoid funky colours, strap marks and furry onesies!

- YOUR ENTRANCE - Please, keep your eyes up and walk slowly down the aisle. Too often, brides will look down at their feet while progressing down the aisle. Keep your eyes up and try to remember to smile, you don't want to look miserable in these photos. If you're nervous or your guests' attention is overwhelming, distract yourself by looking ahead at your partner, focus on the reason you're there and who you are about to marry. Otherwise, if you're not a nervous Bride then feel free to look around and make eye contact with your family and guests. But please, pretty, pretty, please, don't look at the floor!

- STAND CENTRAL IN THE AISLE - this is especially important if you have a second photographer, there's nothing worse than having that beautiful, grand "up the aisle" shot captured but you're off centre and standing at a funny angle where one of you is partially hidden by guests. Equally important is having someone (usually your chief bridesmaid) to lay the train of your dress or length of veil out in the aisle - I can show her how to do this perfectly on the morning of your wedding.



KEY hates CONTINUED

- THE TABLE PLAN all I will say here is whichever table is in front of the head table make sure the guests sat closest to yours are not the really tall people or liekly to be wearing a huge fascinator as they can be an obstruction when capturing speeches at a time when the main focus is on the head table.
- TABLE CENTRES now I would definitely not tell you what you should or shouldn't be having as your table centres or displays, this is your vision and what makes your style you. However, if you have chosen a relatively big table centre, please remember these block views of people during the speeches photos. I highly recommend just removing the one from the head table for the duration of the speeches, particularly anything tall, to ensure you I can capture your reactions and those of your closest most important loved ones on the head table. Also please remember to sit close to each other, this makes these reaction photos lush when you don't have a huge gap between you or have your bodies turned away from one another. The speaker sometimes stands behind the couple And couples will often turn their seats outward to sit back, look and listen only this often means they're no longer positioned next to each other and the photos will be of one or the other rather than both of your reactions together.
- OUTDOOR SPEECHES if you have the weather for it, consider having your speeches before/ after food outdoors, these are lovely in the summer, with everyone sat around getting longer outside enjoying the sun and laughing. With large outdoor areas it makes it so easy to move around and capture great photos as well as having the most flattering natural light.
- THE CAKE if the weather is nice and the cake photo is important to you then consider cutting your cake outside, or even moving it on to the dancefloor. When the cake is up against a wall it makes for a dull cake cutting photo.





THINGS TO Marise

I like to think, this will make things a little more fun, I mean practising things means spending more time together, laughing with/ at each other and also chatting about what will be one of the most special days of your lives.

- PUTTING ON THE RING... by placing your hand under your fiance's hand to slide the ring on their finger, rather than above, you'll notice this leaves the ring being slid on more visible to capture - obviously these photos are never guaranteed as sometimes registrars/ priests stand too close or step in the way or sometimes photographers are just not allowed to stand in specific areas but by doing this, it will increase your chances of the exchange of rings being captured.

- YOUR FIRST KISS - well, c'mon who wouldn't want to practise this?! You're welcome! Have you ever noticed which way you kiss? as in who turns their head which way? Most couples tend to turn their heads a specfic way that is more comfortable for them and what they become used to! By knowing this, I have more chance of capturing your first kiss. It's rare that I have a direct view of both of your profiles, and I'm often slightly to one side facing more toward the brides face (unless I'm shooting up the aisle) so in this instance if the groom turns his head toward me (away from your guests and the bride toward the guests, I will most likely capture the back of his head:

By knowing the way you usually turn your heads I can try positioning myself in the best place for your kiss. Also pleeeeeeeeeease don't just have a really quick peck? I'm not asking you to snog each others face off but just a gorgeous first kiss (longer than a peck). Although feel free to grab your loved ones face and go all in! haha.

- YOUR FIRST KISS - Different poses, this is mainly to see which you guys feel comfortable with, have fun and take some photos of each to see if you have a preferred angle/ side. If you're concerned about a double chin, practise putting your tongue on the roof of your mouth, and if you're conscious of your upper arms then practise pushing your elbows away from your body slightly.

wed wed wed wed welling

THERE'S A GUY
HERE TAKING
PICTURES...
WE ASKED HIM
TO COME.
WE SO PLEASE
REST YOUR COME.
CAMERAS
OUR CEREMONY
NEEDS ONLY ONE
HAMPING ONLY ONE
HAMPING OF TECHNOLOGY
REPROSE
Put your cameras

WELCOME TO OUR

y plugged

revemony)

ME WHITE YOU TO BE FULL PRESENT DIGHIETHE CERCHON

What does this mean? I hear you ask....

I am sure you really want to see your guests faces, not their devices. It's crazy the amount of photos I have during the ceremony with phones in the background, or beautiful up the aisle shots with phones or even iPads being held out into the aisle ruining the photo. Also during the confetti throw it makes all the difference to see happy, excited, smiling faces of your guests actually being present and throwing the confetti rather than looking at their phone.

You can ask your guests to be present, to take it all in and enjoy the moments. You've booked me to capture these moments and to ensure I capture everyones expressions and laughter rather than cameras blocking your loved ones faces or their faces watching you on their phone. You don't have to ban cameras completely for the day, this really wouldn't be reasonable, guests may have sick loved ones or children that are not at your wedding. But you can ask them to put their phones /tablets and cameras away for your ceremony, confetti throw and during any speeches.

Some couples have the officiant, maid of honour or best man make an announcement that asks all guests to refrain from photographing the ceremony because it will be captured by your wedding photographer.

That said, not having an unplugged wedding should be fine as long as everyone is on the same page about not being inconsiderate while taking photos. Unfortunately in my experience this is rarely the case.

*I've noted some poems and phrases often used when having an unplugged wedding.







pre-ceremony





let the day begin!

This portion of The Wedding Experience really sets the stage for the entire wedding day. Over the next few pages I share tips and tricks that will ensure a seamless morning of bridal preparation and beautiful portraits.



getting READY

It's the morning of your wedding! Hopefully all of the little details are taken care of and you're relaxing with your best friends while your hair is being done. If certain items haven't been checked off of the to-do list, it's time to hand them over to someone else. Delegation is a key part of a stress-free wedding day. I know it's hard to hand over the decorating duties and all of the last minute things that need to be done but it really is important to relax on the morning of your wedding. The rest of the day is going to be fast paced and filled with a lot of emotions! Take advantage of this down time. There are a few things to consider about the "getting ready" portion of the day. Do you want to share a "first look" with your dad or any other man that plays a huge role in your life?

Will you and your groom be exchanging gifts during this time? If so, who would you like to deliver them? Are there certain women in your life that would appreciate seeing you get into your gown? Some brides want very few people around for this moment. Other brides love having aunts and grandmas present! It's totally up to you. A few other things to consider.... as you get ready to put your dress on, refrain from putting any jewellery on. I love shooting all of those final steps when you're in your gown. Speaking of the gown, if your gown is on a plastic hanger, try to make a note to bring a wooden or pretty hanger along for picture sake.

Keep reading along for more "getting ready" tips to help you prepare.









details DETAILS Lefaily







he whole day begins with the DETAILS! This is one of my favorite parts of the wedding day because it allows me to prepare and get my creative side warmed up for the rest of the day. I photograph a bride's details in a way that matches and extenuates the style of the entire wedding day. So, in some ways, the details set the stage for the look of the whole wedding and I love having ample time to stylise and shoot everything from the dress to the jewellery to Nan's handker-chief. To the right you'll find a list of the most common details that I shoot. I ask brides to gather any details they have before I arrive so that I can walk in, say hello, give you a huge hug and then begin with all the goodies. (Please ensure your mum that I will take GREAT care of the dress, I promise - this si so that she is not hovering over me making me nervous about a job I've done hundreds of times).

NB: This doesn't just apply to the Bride, if you have booked a second photographer or if this is a same sex marriage and you're both being photographed then please still have all of your details ready.

what to gather

DRESS / SUIT

VEIL/HAIR PIECES/ HAT

BRIDESMAIDS DRESSES

FLOWERGIRL/ PAGEBOY ATTIRE

RINGS (ALL THREE)

SHOES

JEWELLERY / CUFFLINKS

PERFUME / AFTERSHAVE

INVITATIONS & STATIONARY

YOUR SOMETHING

BORROWED & BLUE

BOUQUETS & BOUTS

GARTER

detail TIPS







gather the GOODS

ex la ELEMENTS

If possible, collect all of your details before I arrive so that I can begin quickly and have more time for some "getting ready" shots of you and your girls/ boys.

Sometimes, depending on the theme and "look" of the wedding day, there may be some extra elements that you could include when you gather your details. For example, I recommend a thick silk ribbon or a chiffon ribbon in your chosen wedding colour, OR if you're having a country themed wedding, you could include a piece of burlap or lace. If you're having a rustic themed wedding that includes some wooden elements, maybe save a small piece of wood for me to use when I'm shooting your rings and jewellery. This REALLY makes for beautiful, consistent album spreads.

Reep the RINGS

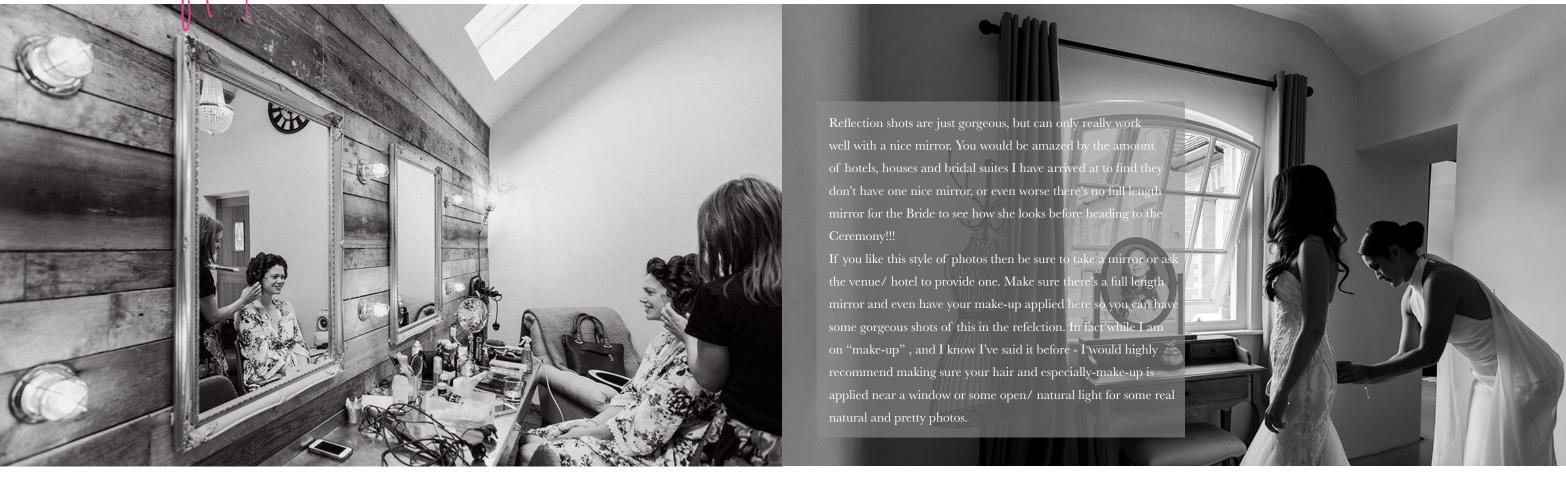
The most common detail missing when I arrive are the rings! Mums, officiants and planners will tell you to hand over the wedding rings to the best man before the day begins. However, it's actually better to hand it over when we first arrive to the ceremony, so that I can shoot some great ring shots in the AM! If you forget, no worries, I can always take the rings shot during your reception wedding breakfast, although this will mean you removing them.

bring the BOUQUET

Don't forget the Bouquet! Have the bouquets and bouts delivered to the bride in the morning so that I can snap some pics of it with your rings and jewellery. No worries, if it's hot, I'll be sure to keep it in water as much as possible before the ceremony.



IN THAT reflection

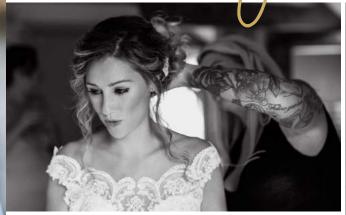


hen you're planning a wedding day timeline, the best advice I could give is to ADD CUSHION TIME! Sometimes the most simple things can take an extra 20 minutes and then all of a sudden, the whole morning is thrown off. I have seen "getting the bride in her dress" take almost 40 minutes because of a button malfunction. It's a smart idea to add in an extra ten minutes here and there so that we have some wiggle room to work with. This way, if one part of the day gets thrown off by 20 minutes, I can help you compensate that time in other areas. There are so many different things to think about when you're planning a wedding day and so here are some tips for the pre-ceremony timeline.

tips will apply to every wedding day schedule. Something else to consider is that not EVERYTHING will go as planned, and I promise you, that is completely normal.

I realise that every single wedding day is different and so not all of these











BOUQUET + BOUTS

You will need your Bouquet & Bouts! Have them delivered to the room where the bride is getting ready at least one hour before getting in the dress - the earlier the better.

HAIR + MAKEUP

You may prefer to have your base makeup done before I finish with your details so you don't have lots of shots without makeup on?! But don't panic, I'm a retoucher!

TRAVEL TIME

Be sure to think about the travel time and TRAFFIC to and from your getting ready location and your venue.

GROOMSMEN PREP

If you have booked my second shooter he/ she will capture the guys getting ready - suit, shoes, watch, last touches, getting dressed and guests arriving.

GETTING DRESSED

Plan a time to get into your dress close to a window and it would be fabulous to have your bridemaids dressed when you're getting in your gown.

CREATING A CUSHION

A 10 minute cushion every now and then is a GREAT idea! It's amazing how fast time slips away the day of!







have never confessed my deep love for "First Looks". There is a reason for this, they're "un-traditional" and so most couples write it off. They're AWESOME. However, not everyone is aware of how awesome they are because they get caught up in how "un-traditional". You may want a REACTION....wanted your husband-to-be to be so surprised and overcome with joy when you walk down the aisle that he bawls at the first sight of you! Isn't that EVERY girl's dream? Who doesn't want that reaction?... you can still share an intimate "First Look" moment on your wedding day AND he will still LOSE IT when you come down the aisle. You can even do a "NO" First Look where he is blindfolded but can touch you and speak to you. A chance to be alone and calm the nerves, whisper sweet nothings and he still won't "see" you until you walk up the aisle!

Here's what Carolyn, said of her first look:

After experiencing this at my own wedding... I've come to this conclusion. I REALLY wanted a REACTION from my groom when he saw me for the first time. Many think that by seeing each other beforehand, they will lose part of that reaction and that it will not be as emotional or as intimate as it would be if they were coming down the aisle. Yet with the whole day being focused on us, and needing to look our best, the need to be on time, my groom having no idea what side the boutonniere is supposed to go on etc... the tension grew. It's before the ceremony and the gravity of what is about to happen starts to sink in and we knew Andrew would be feeling a little anxious. We'd heard of that bit of time before the bride walking up the aisle feeling like FOREVER for both Brides and Grooms and then the him being hurried stand in position - with clammy hands and all! He then turns around to find anywhere from 80-300 people looking straight at his face... because everyone has expectations and anticipation about his first reaction. This is the farthest thing from a private, intimate moment, and really not what we wanted. We wanted to experience this alone, together, and we did. It was so incredible to have this captured by Nicci and only made the entrance to our ceremony even more special. Andrew was relaxed and we were both on cloud 9 having just had that moemnt together, there were still true emotions when I walked up the aisle, and he still bawled!

Sure, that walking up the ailse moment is SO powerful and SO wonderful. ... even magical!.... But how nice would it be for your Groom to not be a nervous wreck...he had spent the morning with you and your best friends, having photos done and dusted and the pressure was OFF. For most grooms, the nerves kick in before they see their bride because when they see her, everything becomes VERY real! So when the nerves start creeping up, instead of keeping the groom in a secluded space until his time to enter the ceremony, what if you took him to a private place... no people, no on-lookers, no distractions.... and you let his beautiful bride, the love of his life, walk up to him and gently tap his shoulder. He would turn around and finally get his first look at his stunning bride and not only would he get to see her... he could embrace her... cry with her.... kiss her... and ENJOY that moment with her for as LONG as they wanted. As she shows him her dress, twirls a few times and then asks him what he thinks... his nerves start to diminish. After all, she's the one that can make him most comfortable anyway, and while no one is around, this is the perfect opportunity for some private romantic portraits. It's just the two of you and me - your photographer..... This is your time to be TOGETHER...and to be ALONE. When does that happen on a wedding day? If (and only IF) planned well your bridal party can then join you and I can capture your bridal party portraits.

After portraits are done, the girls and guys separate and prepare for the ceremony. The guests begin to arrive and the ushers are in place. Pretty soon it's time for the processional music to begin. As the groom clasps his hands... they aren't clasped out of nervousness but excitement. The music builds, the mother of the bride stands and all of the guests follow her lead. The groom looks up and here comes the BRIDE!!! His best friend, his companion, his sweetheart.....she's stunning....

ABSOLUTELY stunning. The closer she gets, the bigger he smiles.







Now let me put a disclaimer on here before we continue...my clients are not required to do a First Look by any means! I sometimes feel bad for sharing this option with couples who were against it. I've obviosuly seen the benefits of a first look and equallya first touch with a door between them where they could just hold hands and chat before the ceremony, calm each down, so I only share this because I want the BEST for my couples!! It's totally ok if couples choose not to share a first look!

The reason First Looks are more popular in America is because they often have a much later ceremony than over here, hence why I think this suits Weddings where the ceremony takes place later in the day, this is to allow time for the photos and moments together. Many destination weddings start later in the day too which is why I think it's a perfect choice for these couples. Get in touch to discuss an option for your First Look.





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Here it is - The moment everyone has been waiting for! The music is playing and the guests have been seated. Ushers make their way to the back of the church and the co-ordinator is lining up the bridesmaids while giving the musicians a 5 minute warning. The bride is about to walk down the aisle to the love of her life..... and if she's like most girls, she's dreamed about this moment for a long time. Vows will be shared and promises will be made... this is what it's all about. In a world full of wedding blogs, Pinterest and bridal magazines, it's easy to be overwhelmed and consumed by the "prettiness" of the event. While details do matter and planning is necessary, it's important to never lose sight of the real purpose of this amazing day.







lighting

As mentioned earlier, lighting plays an important role on your wedding day and as we all know, especially in the UK, it is quite unpredictable. In recent years our weather has definitely improved. But what can we control?... Getting ready - make sure you have lots of natural light in the room, it means no need for flash leaving a more natural look and feel to your photos with a softer and more flattering light on your skin!

For an indoor ceremony, it is always best to have EVEN lighting - a soft, even light acorss the whole altar. Avoid rooms with tapestrys or if one of you has the sun beaming on your while the other is stood in shade, MOVE!!!

Do we need a sunset for romantic photos? The lower the sun, the more romantic the lighting and colours, but you'll be AMAZED what I can do just with a little under-exposure and a long narrow beam of flash!

order of service

I have seen so many couples do so many AMAZING things during their ceremony. I've photographed couples washing each other's feet, symbolising that they want to serve each other for the rest of their life. Some couples share in communion while some light a unity candle. I've seen ring ceremonies, rope ceremonies and the signing of the family bible. The options are limitless! As you plan your ceremony, make sure you design it to be exactly what the two of you envision it to be. This is your day. If you have the freedom to be creative, then by all means, be creative.

If you decide to be more traditional, be sure to choose readings and hymns / songs that mean something to you, be it a memory, the words or even ask someone special to choose one and read it for you (or sing!).

brograms and details

The BEST advice I have for the program making process is to remember that not EVERY guest needs a program! In fact a vast majority of weddings don't even have a program for the guests. Some, however, do opt for a program to be written up on a chalkboard.

Before ordering your programs/ order of service/ menu or any stationary, have SEVERAL people check it for spelling and grammatical errors. *if you're struggling to find a wedidng font for your stationary, check out the fonts,

Programs and the ceremony decor is something that the bride can plan in advance but then deligate the actual job of setting it up to a friend or co-ordinator. The last thing a bride needs to be doing the morning of her wedding is running around setting up final decor arrangements! This leads me into my next column...

coordination

Hiring either a full event planner or just a day-of co-ordinator is a fantastic idea! Brides realise very quickly that if they do not have someone in charge of the coordination of the day, that responsibility will automatically fall on the mother of the bride, the photographer or the BRIDE!

Stressful wedding situations are caused by a lack of organisation and coordination. It's so important to make this a priority.

If you need any recommendations on wedding coordination services check if your venue has their own co-ordinator who will take charge on the day knowing you can relax and enjoy your day. Do remember no wedding runs exactly to time, just take a breather, step back, take it all in and enjoy. This is your day, relax and leave any responsibilities to who you've allocated them



BRIDAL

Lets chat about your bridal party! This is when the fun REALLY begins! I know from experience that all brides want their closest friends to have an AMAZING time during their big day and I will make sure that happens. Bridal party portraits should be a ton of FUN! After your family formals, your bridal party will join us for portraits. If all goes well, we will be able to accomplish ALL of your bridal party protraits BE-FORE the Wedding Breakfast. This means that your guys and gals will be free to drink, mingle, relax at dinner and party the night away if they wish. If there are flower girls and pageboys involved, I capture these first before they get messy. The Bridal Party includes the Best man, Ushers, Maid of Honor, Bridesmaids, Flowergirls, Pageboys, and of course the Bride & Groom. Some couples choose to includes Fathers or brothers if wearing matching suits.



When the time comes to select bridal/ grooms party attire, my biggest piece of advice would be to shop around. Cad & the Dandy, Henry Herbert, Favourbrook are firm favourites of mine for the guys. Although if you're not looking to save some pounds then look at hiring from stores like Moss Bross. Ooooh and I must just mention one of my favourites - Mrs Bowtie for a gorgeous collection of bowties, pocket squares, neckties and cravats. For the girls I simply adore Joanna August, Vera Wang, Dylan Queen, BHLDN, Alfred Angelo, the Maya collection found on Asos, and also Monsoon and Needle & Thread. Ted Baker will always have options but recently, I have seen bridesmaids wear amazing dresses from everyday stores or online ones such as Jarlo, Mango, Coast, Etsy, Asos, and Nordstorm. Also, if you come across a sale, it can be more economical for the guys to buy suits rather than to rent one for one day!



54 5.









RECEPTION

The fun has begun! It's time to relax, dance and celebrate. Your reception should be a BLAST!

The last thing you need to be worrying about is your timeline. Your coordinator and DJ/ Band should take care of making sure that everything stays on schedule so that you can enjoy your night. Here are some helpful tips that will help your reception flow smoothly.

- Take your guests into consideration when planning your timeline. If you have a lot of elderly guests that will not be staying until the very end, make sure you schedule the cake cutting at a relatively early time so that they can be a part of it. Grandma's love seeing this sweet tradition!
- Keep it moving! Chat with your coordinator about how you can plan your reception in a way that will keep guests engaged and moving all night with no long "dragging" periods.
- Make it your own! If you want to have a special dance with your grandparents, do it. Make your reception a reflection of who you are and don't feel tied to traditions. Also, make sure you give your DJ or Band a "Do Not Play" list if there are some songs you really don't want to hear during your reception.
- Don't get too caught up in the formalities and the details. Sure, details are pretty and fun to photograph, but they can steal the joy of the day if you get too caught up in them. (Just speaking from experience of what I seen). Plan your centerpieces, welcome table, etc. well before the wedding date and teach your coordinator or family friend how to set them up so that you aren't even thinking about those things on the day of. *send pictures to your florist of the type of tablecentres and bouquets you like and are expecting
- Have you purchased enough coverage time for your photography to capture any partying? Also remember the guests that dance during the first hour will still be dancing in the third hour! One hour of dancing will be enough time to really capture the joy of your reception, unless you have later dance-off, fireworks, sparkler arch or a special exit planned.
- Lastly don't skimp on the band! An amazing band may cost more but will make a huge difference to the overall party, atmosphere, and everyones memories of the day. Trust me, this is what all your friends are talking about after what a great night they had and how awesome your band was! If I am to be completely and brutally honest, I see a much betetr atmosphere when there's a great band over an "ok" band or a DJ.



RECEPTION Sahwing









The party is here!! Receptions can be a blast, however, it's important to make sure that you have your event well thought out. This is the job of your wedding/venue coodinator and your DJ/Band. Your caterer will also play a big role in the design and set up of your event, so listen to their advice. Every aspect of your reception affects the overall outline of the evening. For example, if you're not having a plated meal, your reception will need to be set up in a way that allows movement. Guests will need to be able to find the food stations easily and there will be a mixture of dinner tables and hightop cocktail tables. This will encourage guests to mix and mingle. If you are having a plated dinner, you will more than likely need place cards, full place settings and space for all of your guests to be seated comfortably. Whatever the style of your event, make sure that you plan out all of the evening of the evening. Your coordinator and DJ/ Band can help you set up the evening so that guests won't leave early or experience long periods of wating for the next thing to happen.

Much like the ceremony, you have the freedom to make your reception your own! It's your party, it should be exactly how you want it to be. Here is a list of some key events that happen often at the evening reception:

- First Dance

- Welcome by Father of the Bride

- Daddy-Daughter Dance - Blessing

- Mother-Son Dance

- Cake Cutting

- Anniversary Dance

- Toasts and speeches

- Money Dance (Greek)

- Bouquet and Garter Toss

- Traditional Religious

- Large group portraits with friends (hens &

Dances

stags)

- Lots of dancing!

- The exit of the Bride and Groom



YOUR

YOUR

I DORTRAITS

If we're being honest, all of the wedding day images are important but the real favourites are almost always from my time with the Bride and Groom! These romantic portraits of just the two of you will be the images that you frame beside your bed, over your mantle and they will also be the images that will be those large feature photos in your album for generations to enjoy. These images are always my favorite, not only because of their beauty but because this is such a sweet portion of the day. For this brief moment in time, you will be alone with your groom - on your wedding day. You will have a chance to love on each other and really connect before the craziness begins! Romantic portraits are normally done either after the ceremony, or formal group photographs and then I LOVE shooting a few "twilight" portraits after the ceremony as well, this is when the light is low and golden. It's such a romantic time for bride and groom portraits and ultra flattering and pretty.

If you're having a first look, I will make the most of that opportunity to include most of your portraits saving time post ceremony.















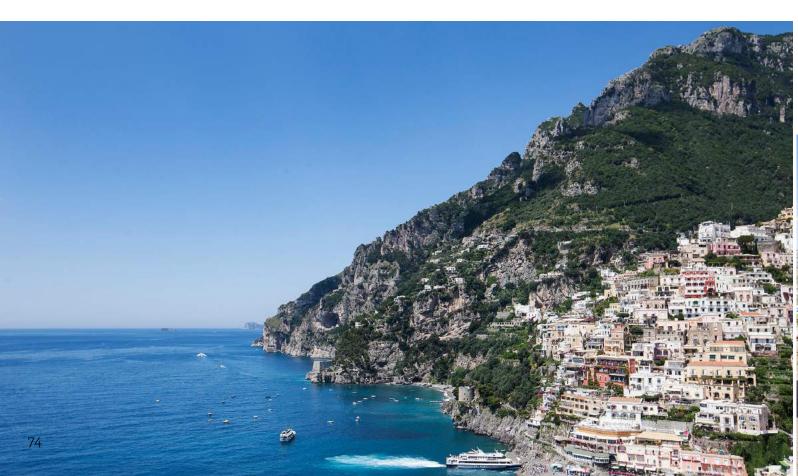
des ination WEDDINGS

If you are planning a destinaiton wedding, a lot of the details in this guide will not apply to you! Your details, your timeline and even your preparation for the big day will most likely be much simpler. However, it is a good idea to start thinking about a few key components of the day such as: your ceremony time and your ceremony/portrait locations (some desitnaiton weddings require some planning to find portrait locations without tourists in the background). I usually arrive a couple of days early so I can find some scenic backdrops for your photos. Be sure to check the sunset times in your wedding As your wedding day draws closer, we'll begin to chat about the timeline of the day and the travel arrangements. Get excited!! This is going to be amazing!!





positano bride







hatsaha's lips

- 1. Learn to do your own make up. No one knows your face better than you and you might not have the luxury of a trial session with a make-up artist at a destination wedding before you book them.

 I was travelling from Australia to Italy so a trial was not really an option.
- 2. Same with hair... Either go for a simple style that a good local can do that you know works in photos, or learn do do your own up do!

- 3. Be prepared to also be a travel agent/tour guide for all your guests.
- 4. Find a trusted photographer that you know can come up with the goods ... What's the point in having a destination wedding if you can't have the beautiful photos to prove it!
- 5. Take every moment as it comes and don't sweat the small stuff, the best fun happens from the unplanned.









tuscany bride

your research and ask how she can source what you need for your day.

ahha's lips

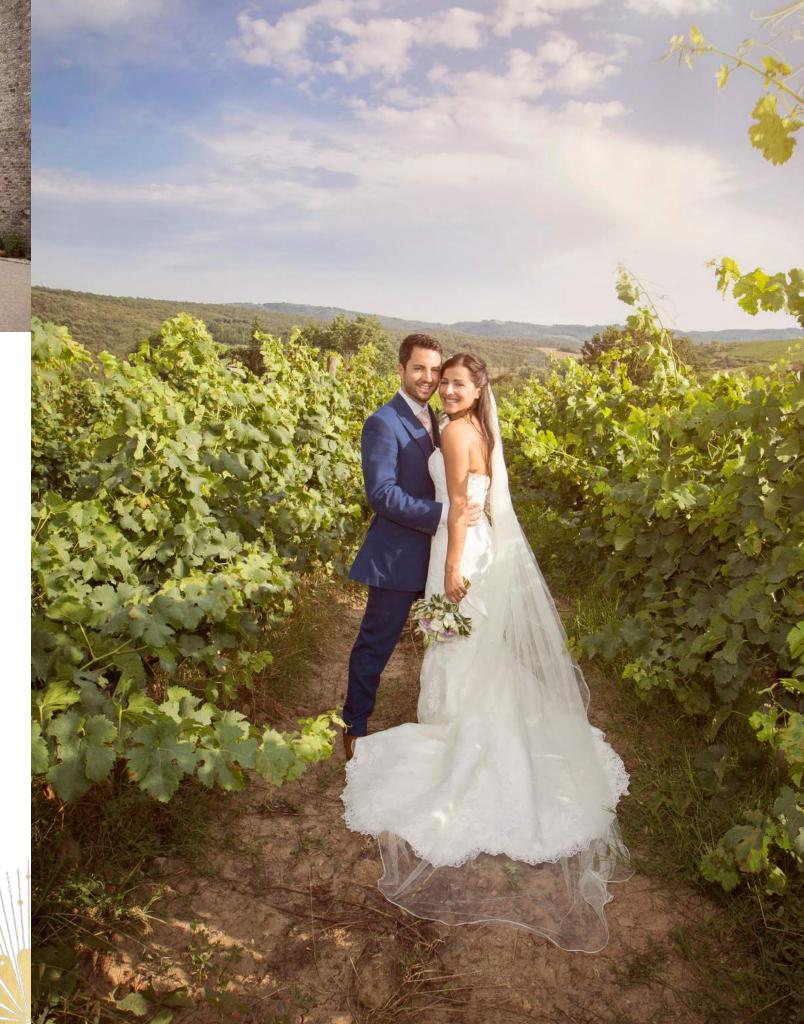
I photographed James + Anna's July wedding at Castello di Modanella in Tuscany, Italy. Anna's also a photographer so was a perfectionist when it came to the finer details of how everything should look. She hired the help of professional Tuscany wedding planner BeA at Alfresco Weddings. I asked Anna if she had any advice for my future destination wedding clients, if she would recommend it, what they should consider, and what the best or most helpful things she did to make her wedding a success:

Firstly I would definitely recommend finding a wedding planner, one who speaks English and lives in the area that you are planning to marry. We went to Tuscany in Italy to meet our planner once we had decided on a few venues to visit, we actually met 5 planners before we picked one. You can do this in 30 mins over coffee in one place. You know when you know, we chose BeA from Alfresco Weddings. Check this has been their full time occupation for a while and that he/ she knows what they're doing - many make out they are amazing but are not. Ask them to talk you through the process and make sure it matches up with

Having a planner will open up your chances of having what you want and for a smooth lead up and run of the day. Also check if he/she has an office or space you can have wedding accessories stored at (either whatever they buy for you or what you might buy and send over or bring

Another plus to having a planner is they can get those finer details that you want. Check they use Pinterest! And also (for Italy for example) they know teh complex rules for marrying abroad and all the contacts. They should stay with you on the day and not leave until the party is in full swing!

*Read on for lots more advice from Anna.









planner

Speak to your planner about things to do before/after your wedding - we did pizza night at the villa where pizza chefs came in with pizza ovens and cooked on site, then dinner out the day after the wedding and a trip to a local natural thermal spa! Also taxis - make sure your planner sorts this for you, and check with the venue about cake options, often you can pay more and have the cake included in the price and then serve it as a dessert!

Planners will usually have things you can use that they have from previous weddings. For example a seat plan board and stand. You can still make it your style but means you won't need to buy an easel or items like bird cages, wooden boards, table number card holders, candle holders, table cloths and other items to dress your card table.

BeA had loads of things we wanted or she bought it for our

wedding then kept it to add to her kit. Items like old Italian

détails & venues

books and vases to put lemons in was our vision but probably wouldn't have happened if we had had to buy and bring it ourselves! Ooh and don't forget hair and make up (your planner should know one!)

When visiting venues, make a list of 20 of your top questions and print multiple copies to take with you to the venue (just ask Nicci if you'd like to see a copy of ours).

And make sure you ask ALL these questions when visiting each venue. We saw 10 venues in 2 days (quite common to cram visit when planning a wedding abroad) and we would not have remembered everything if we hadn't noted the venue, taken photos of the place and asked the questions (and written down the answers!!) - things like how long can we party to (ie at least 4-5am for us), what are the pricing options including payment options, and are you allowed fireworks or is the table linen included in the price. My

the Ohurch

check list also included a question about wine and the veue charges to bring our own if allowed - corkage price.

We didn't need to bring our own in the end but it's worth asking in case. Same for the bar if you are planning on putting money behind the bar!

If getting married in Italy in a church you need to be Catholic and go to marriage classes and do a fair amount of paperwork. Similar to England but in Italy this starts about 8-12 months before your wedding date so sort this with your UK Catholic priest asap. Also the ceremony will need to be traditional with classical music (no modern favourites for walking down the aisle or out of the church) and most church's require musicians (€350-450 per musician) so this can be expensive but worth it as it was very moving. When visiting venues think of photography spots, and try and pick a church that's close by. I went to a wedding in Spain once that was 1.5 hours on a bus from the

location & laxis

church to the venue! Not fun! Hot and no alcohol! People usually want a glass in hand within 20 mins of leaving the church.

Ideal if you can walk from the church to the venue as if not, this will be another cost as you will need to get a bus to get your guests to your venue! You can't rely on everyone having hire cars or wanting to drive them to the venue and leave them there. Especially if taxis are not readily available the next day to collect cars. Italian cab drivers like 1-3 days notice for a job, and most venues there are remote so calling for a cab when you decide to go home isn't usually an option! And lastly, note that stationary can be heavy - either order from Italy or send from England to your planner before you go by recorded post - Parcel Monkey are fab.

Make the most of time with friends and family, it's an incredible experience. ENJOY!



BeA from Alfresco Weddings is a professional wedding planner based in Tuscany, Italy. She was Anna's wonderful planner and having met and worked with Bea myself, I asked if she could contribute just a few wise words for all you destination Brides & Grooms:

BeA has been kind enough to share her top tips and advice for planning a Wedding overseas, particularly in Tuscany.

Planning a destination wedding might seem crazy and stressfull, but it is better than it seems.

You have to plan it with a professionalist in this field, a destination wedding planner in the place you decide, so that you have all things under control to relieve you of any stress.

This way you need not worry about being away from your vendors, you don't have t meet them every weekend and instead can meet EVERYONE in one day!!!

Just come twice before the wedding; once to choose the venue, and secondly to meet al the vendors and to say "I do".

It is not complicated with the paperwork, even a catholic church wedding is possible - you need the same paperwork from your Church as you would in the UK.

"GO WHERE YOUR HEART TAKES YOU"

There are 4 huge advantages to having a destination wedding

- 1. You can save a lot of money as not all of your friends will come anyway!!!

 Instead of having a 200 guest wedding at home...people you have never meet.... you can have your loved ones.
- 2. You can stay 2/3/4 days all together and enjoy the time, the wine and food. It is a non-stop party!!!
- 3. It is an opportunity to present to your friends and family an experience for life
- 4. Your Wedding will stand out from the crowd:



TIPS FROM A REAL NICE



- "1. Try not to stress about the minor details too much, a lot of the time they go unnoticed and will reduce a lot of stress for the bride!
- 2. Try to sneak a bit of private time with each other away from the guests, to really take in the vows and promises you have made, but also to look over at everyone having a good time and to reflect on how your day has come together after all of your hard work planning it.
- 3. Ignore the little things that go wrong. It is bound to happen.
 All that matters is you and your guests being together and celebrating your special day.
- 4. On the morning of the wedding try and find a nice little number to wear that represents you and your day, especially if you are having photographs getting ready. It's a special touch.
- 5. Everyone has someone in their family that is going to try and push the boundaries on your wedding day. Do not let anyone take over your day. It is all about you both and what you want.

 Those who love and care for you will be happy for you no matter what."
- Krista married Andrew at Upwaltham Barns



- "1. For men, If choosing a bespoke suit then remember to book in for choosing fabric about 8 months before your wedding. Then once fabric, lining and style has been seen and prices shared, make an appointment for the first fitting with your groomsmen.
- 2. Remember ties! Dont leave this to the last minute as this takes longer than you think to get a perfect colour match.

 Well, if your bride-to-be is fussy and has that perfect vintage blush pink in mind, don't expect to find it in john Lewis or tie rack! OR see if your tailor offers a tie matching service.

 Ours didn't but I can recommend Gieves and Hawkes.
- 3. Don't forget to tell the groomsmen what colour shoes to get (if they are buying their own) then you can be sure for a smart finish to their outfits think photos!."
- 4. Keep your bride happy by participating in adding to your spreadsheet/google docs, even if it's just the odd song for the playlist, prices for the suit, band or DJ names, you'll get brownie points just for showing interest"
 - ames married Anna at Castello di Modanella in Tuscan





Last, but certainly not least, THANK YOU for trusting me with your special day. I am so honored to be the one capturing your memories and I cannot WAIT to celebrate alongside of you! Enjoy this season of planning but also remember that your MARRIAGE is more important than the wedding. The wedding will come and go in a matter of hours but your marriage needs to stand the test of time. Continue to make time for one another, even with all that needs to get done. As you continue to plan, please feel free to contact me with ANY questions you may have along the way. Depending on your date, my next step would be to finalise a pre-wedding catch up or if you have one booked, an engagement session date. About 6-8 weeks before your wedding, you'll receive a questionnaire that will provide me with everything we need to know for your big day!! I hope this guide has been helpful as you continue to plan and prepare for your wedding day!

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