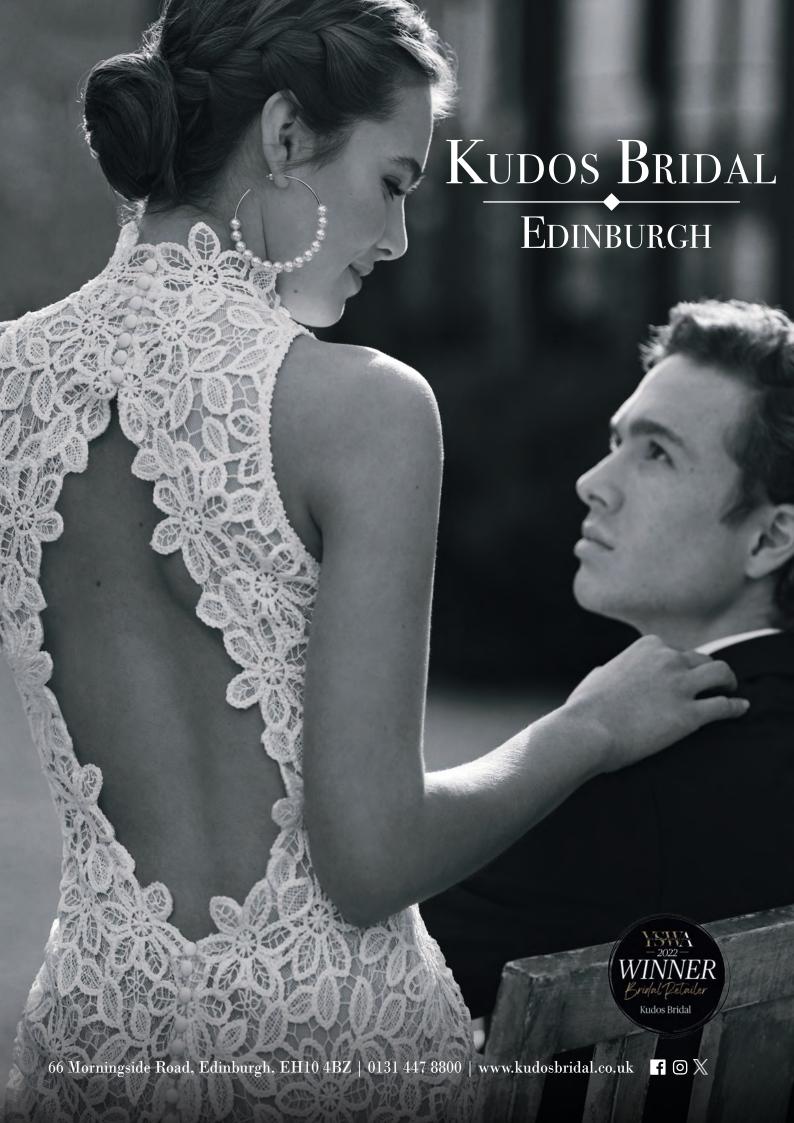


W W W . E L L I S B R I D A L S . C O . U K

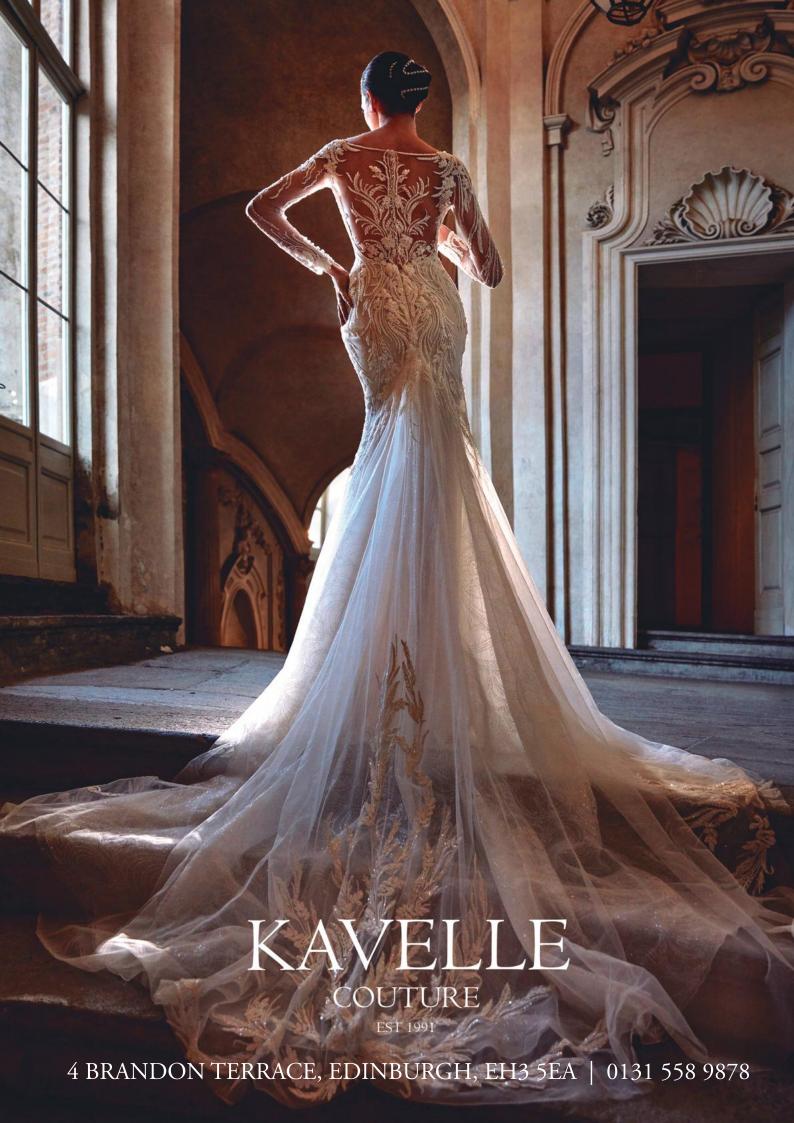


MIRKA

BRIDAL COUTURE

BRIDAL COLLECTIONS AND BESPOKE DRESSES HANDMADE AND DESIGNED IN SCOTLAND





WELCOME to Your Scottish Wedding



you know I think this must be the first year in at least 15 that I don't have a wedding in the calendar? Not one. My summer is stretching before me with no hen party, wedding or even an evening reception in sight.

Writing about weddings day in day out you may think I'd be glad of

a reprieve but I'm actually finding myself a little bit bereft and living vicariously through the couples we feature in *YSW*, especially those we follow from the engagement on. This issue then it's lovely we get to share the weddings of former 'I do' diary couples Amber and Keiron, and Nina and Richard. After months of following their progress it's a joy to see their plans come to fruition in two utterly unique celebrations. Just wait until you see Amber's second dress!

My days as a bridesmaid look to be done so it was a nice surprise when I got a call out of the blue from a bride-to-be ringing to pick my brains about how to pull off a micro-wedding with only three months to plan. Our phone call left me thinking of all the myriad aspects of wedding planning that can seem a complete mystery to the uninitiated and this issue we're going back to school with some handy guides. Read on to discover the wedding dress shopping pitfalls to avoid, just how to start sourcing your showstopper of a wedding cake (and when), and when we talk about "wedding music" just what do we mean? Because there are so many more options than just choosing a band or DJ to pack out the dance floor. Sax player anyone?

This issue it's also all about the mums and top stockists from across Scotland have selected their winning looks for stylish mothers-of-the-brides and grooms, plus they're imparting their pearls of wisdom on how to find the best look to make you feel amazing, whatever your shape. And speaking of mums, make sure you turn to page 156 to see bride Logan. She loved her dress shopping experience but in the end, nothing made her feel like a proper bride the same way as her mum's wedding gown from the 90s. So that's just what she wore - perfection. Enjoy!

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FRONT COVER IMAGE

'Alice' by Mirka Bridal Couture FLOWERS

Moss & Blossom Floral Studio GROOM'S OUTFIT McCalls Highlandwear HAIR & MAKE-UP

Caroline Stewart Makeup Artistry & Hair Styling MODELS

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STYLIST Euan Spiers TIARA

Pamela Jayne's Bridal **VENUE**

Virgin Hotels Edinburgh

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Katie Bletcher gets swept up in the romance of this historical mansion house on the outskirts of Edinburgh

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Kelly and Alex's wedding at Cambo Estate was a proper party from start to finish

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250 'TIL DEATH

'I do' diary couple Amber and Keiron said 'I do' in an atmospheric Halloween wedding at Boclair House

256 YSW ON TOUR - BRISBANE HOUSE

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268 TAKE ME AWAY

Just wait till you see Jamie and Mark's uber-chic micro-wedding at Monachyle Mhor



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W W W . K E L S E Y R O S E . C O . U K



YOUR 1000 COUNTDOWN

Let's get started

Before you get carried away with the finer details, decide on the where, when and how much

- ☐ Set your budget
- ☐ Check out potential venues with *Your Scottish Wedding* and visit your shortlisted venues
- ☐ Make your guest list
- ☐ Make sure you follow us on Facebook, Instagram and TikTok @yourscottishwedding for all the inspo you need
- ☐ Buy wedding insurance
- ☐ Listen to *YSW*'s *Let's Talk Weddings* podcast wherever you get your podcasts
- ☐ Join the *YSW* Wedding Chat Room
- ☐ Decide what type of ceremony you both want



While it may feel a bit awkward, chat to your parents as they may want to contribute to your budget





Over a year to go

This is the time to make the big bookings and secure the suppliers who will deliver your dream day

- ☐ Book your venue
- ☐ Book your celebrant
- ☐ Book your photographer
- □ Book your videographer
- ☐ Start the search for your outfits and those of your wedding party
- \square Send your Save the Dates
- ☐ Research caterers, if you need one
- ☐ Book your band, DJ, ceremony music and drinks reception entertainment
- ☐ Book hair and make-up trials

3 6-9 months to go

Start getting creative and fine-tuning the details of your theme or colour scheme

- ☐ Finalise your décor ideas do you need to hire a professional to bring it all together?
- ☐ Book your florist
- \square Order your wedding cake
- ☐ Buy your wedding rings
- ☐ Book your honeymoon
- ☐ Organise your outfit fittings
- □ Post invitations
- ☐ Book transport for the wedding party and guests if necessary
- ☐ Book accommodation for the wedding party if necessary
- ☐ Register for your wedding gift list





Last week to go!

The countdown is truly on now

- ☐ Collect your Marriage Schedule
- ☐ Pack for your honeymoon
- ☐ Decorate your venue the day before if possible
- ☐ Print name cards, seating plans and menus

1-3 months to go

This is where the fun really kicks in!

- ☐ Finalise your table plan
- ☐ Enjoy your stag, hen, sten or hag do!
- ☐ Submit Marriage Notice (M10) forms no later than 29 days before the wedding date
- \square Buy gifts for your wedding party
- ☐ Attend your menu tasting yum!





After the day...

The wedmin doesn't stop after you say 'I do'

- ☐ Return your Marriage Schedule within three days of the wedding
- ☐ Get your outfit dry cleaned
- ☐ Select images for your wedding album
- ☐ Send thank you cards

Did you know you can set up your very own Wedding Planner at *yourscottishwedding.co.uk*?



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SEPT 01	THE HAMPDEN WEDDING SHOW ☐ Hampden Stadium 11.30am - 4.00pm
SEPT 7&8	THE BIG DUNDEE WEDDING EXHIBITION ☐ The Caird Hall 11.30am - 4.00pm
SEPT 28&29	THE EDINBURGH WEDDING EXHIBITION ☐ Murrayfield Stadium 11.30am - 4.00pm
ост 06	THE ABERDEEN WEDDING EXHIBITION ☐ The Beach Ballroom 11.30am - 4.00pm
ост 13	TROON WEDDING FAYRE ☐ Troon Concert Hall 11.30am - 3.00pm
ост 27	PERTH WEDDING EXHIBITION ☐ Perth Racecourse 11.30am - 3.00pm

For more information: www.starkagency.co.uk







Opus Couture 23 Ritchie St, West Kilbride Ayrshire, KA23 9AL www.opuscouture.co.uk 01294 824838 @opus_couture



In bloom

If you're turning your attention to wedding flowers, then Glasgow-based Braw Blooms has a great offer you won't want to miss. *YSW* couples who book before August 31st 2024 will receive free buttonholes as part of their wedding florals package for weddings in 2025. All you have to do is quote "YSW Wedding" on enquiring!

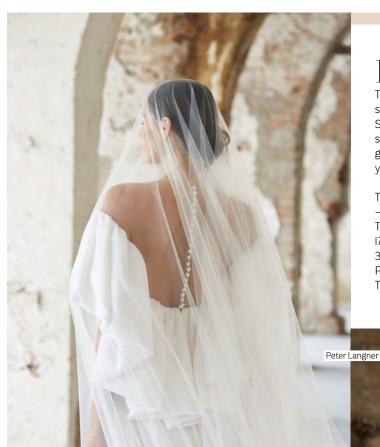
Louise Davies, owner of Braw Blooms, can't wait to bring your floral dreams to life using a gorgeous mixture of seasonal, imported and local blooms.

Ezra Studios

BRAWBLOOMS.CO.UK

Don't miss out on this special offer courtesy of Braw Blooms

CONDICI.COM / ISPIRATO.CO.UK



Dress dates

There are some unmissable shows coming up at Rachel Scott Couture so if you're all set to find your perfect dress, get these dates blocked out in your diary!

The Peter Langner Veil
Trunk Show runs from 2nd
– 18th May; next up is the
Temperley Trunk Show from
17th – 20th May. Then from
31st May – 8th June it's the
Peter Langner Evening Wear
Trunk Show. 26th June – 6th

July it's all about the Vivienne Westwood Trunk Show and finally between I7th July – I7th August, Peter Langner returns with the Bridal Trunk Show. Until now the boutique has only stocked veils by this esteemed Milan-based designer so we're very excited to see his gorgeous gowns instore. With so many amazing events coming up it's going to be a busy summer!

RACHELSCOTTCOUTURE.CO.UK

Super sax

The Scottish Jazz Collective is offering award-winning solo saxophonists for weddings with most performances taking place from the ceremony up to the first dance. Andrew Robb of SJC says, "We wanted to be able to offer couples something that would be suitable for evening entertainment as well, as there is nothing quite like a live saxophonist who can get the dance floor moving. The great thing about solo saxophonists is that they are incredibly versatile. They are capable of performing during poignant moments at the ceremony, providing subtle background music during the reception as well as club classics for dancing later in the evening." All of this is provided with one captivating performer, making it a great value option for entertainment throughout the day.

SCOTTISHJAZZCOLLECTIVE.COM



"There is nothing quite like a live saxophonist."

ANDREW ROBB, THE SCOTTISH
JAZZ COLLECTIVE

Beauty bolt-ons

Caroline Stewart Makeup Artistry and Hair Styling is offering bolt-on facials and massages for all her bridal parties in order to prep their skin for the big day. All products used will be Dermalogica. Check out the website for a selection of different bolt-on choices as well as a range of treatments for pamper parties that are ideal for hen dos. Sounds like the perfect pre-wedding girls day out!

CAROLINESTEWARTMAKEUPARTISTRY.CO.UK >>





Weddingready skin

Alchemé Beauty has some amazing products and offers for couples who are looking for that just-married glow! With bridal looks becoming more skin-focused, Alchemé wants to offer clients a complete experience from booking, all the way through to the big day. Owner Donna has trained with Medik8 in order to offer her brides a results-driven treatment and home care products - how good do beautiful signature facials and targeted facial peels sound? She regularly meets brides with problematic skin ranging from rosacea to acne and wants to help them feel more confident.

Also on offer is an option for brides on the morning of their big day called "Lux". This includes pre-make-up facial tailored to their skin, LED therapy light mask and a microcurrent machine. And finally, Alchemé has added a male glow-up service – we think that sounds lush!

Unmissable sales

For the entire month of May, Kudos Bridal will be offering 10% off of any accessories when purchasing your wedding dress at their Dunfermline boutique – perfect if you're looking to add any finishing touches to your look for the day.

They will also be extending this offer to any current Kudos brides who book in for an accessories appointment during May. With veils and hairpieces from Richard Designs, Ivory & Co and Grace & Goddess, the team can't wait for brides to see what's on offer!

Another date for your diary is the upcoming September Sample Sale. Following on from the amazing sample sale event at the start of the year, Kudos will be hosting a weekend-long sample sale to make some space for new collections due to arrive in October. Running from 26th – 27th September, there will be ex-sample gowns at rock-bottom prices – ideal for any bride looking to make a saving! No appointment is necessary as this will be

a walk-in only event. **KUDOSBRIDAL.CO.UK**



Glam squad goals

For the team at ARK Bridal, the wedding season is in full flow and they are having a blast meeting and working with all their summer 2024 brides. The 2024 wedding season is the team's busiest yet and they're all set for some exciting new things coming in the summer, including the launch of a new studio for all things bridal beauty. We can't wait! Watch this space and follow on Instagram at @arkbridal where you can keep up to date with all the tips and need to knows for your wedding morning from your expert glam squad.

ARKBRIDAL.CO.UK

Dapper tailoring

McCalls Highlandwear is excited to launch new herringbone tweed Crail jacket and waistcoat sets for 2024. Designed and made exclusively for McCalls, these have been created to go with their newest Pride of Scotland tartan – Weathered Pride – as well as perfectly complementing other weathered tartans in the hire range such as MacKenzie Weathered and Patriot Weathered.

Much like the weathered Pride tartan, the new brown Crail jacket and waistcoat set (pictured) is inspired by the earthy tones of the Scottish landscape and the warming colours of the country's whisky industries. The set retails from £425.

MCCALLS.CO.UK



Bring some 90s glamour with a simple spaghetti strap



This season, Mirka Bridal Couture in Kirkcaldy is embracing slow fashion, designing dresses that stand the test of time instead of following short trends. With this in mind, they've added some new gowns to their With Love, Mirka, sustainable collection as well as new Mirka Bridal gowns.

Mirka's modern gowns with their unique ties and spaghetti straps really breathe new life into bridal fashion. So if you're looking for something a bit different, now's the time to make an appointment!

MIRKABRIDAL.COM



have now rebranded to AMMazing Hair & Makeup Team with a new look website and lots of exciting developments on the horizon. Director of AMMazing Hair and Makeup Team, Anne Marie McElroy is an award-winning wedding hair specialist with over 16 years' experience in styling weddings all around the world. She has now launched a new company called You Are AMMazing as she qualifies as an intuitive psychology coach to coach clients with inner beauty and confidence building. Both brands will be tied in together with a message of internal and external beauty. Anne Marie has launched a coaching program for women who want to look, feel and become the best possible version of themselves to reach their highest potential.

AMMAZINGTEAM.CO.UK ≫



New designs

Starca Designs is excited to be launching new 3D invitations and signage with acrylic being a huge trend right now. Owner Nicola Mullen picked up the top gong for stationery at the 2023 Your Scottish Wedding Awards and it's easy to see why. Starca Designs has a wide variety of bespoke products, all of which can be designed specifically for your needs. The new products will include acrylic discs, drink stirrers, name places, invitations, post boxes, signage and more - so watch this space!

FACEBOOK.COM/STARCADESIGNS





Details, details!

Freja Designer Dressmaking in Edinburgh is working with beautiful embroidered tulle this season. With options such as very fine detailed floral patterns and more bold, naïve colourful options, they're ideal for the bride who wants to add a bit of colour to her dress.

They are also great for mother of the bride and groom options, when paired with colourful accessories.

FREJA-FASHION.CO.UK



Ivory sands

Cara Frew Photography

With the warmer months around the corner Kilts 4 U's new and exclusive Ivory Sands tartan is the perfect option. Designed in close consultation with their weavers, the outfit's fabric weight has been reduced by 25% without compromising on its quality. This lightweight outfit was created specifically with summer and weddings abroad in mind.

It is available to own as a bespoke made-to-measure outfit with matching accessories and also available to hire.

What's more, Ivory Sands is also available in Kilts 4 U's newly launched Lily's Couture range selling a ladies mini kilt, and matching bag – perfect for honeymoons. Turn to page 46 to see more.

KILTS-4-U.CO.UK

Moving on up

Big news from wedding planners extraordinaire All Wrapped Up Scotland – they're on the move to an even bigger warehouse, double the size of their old one! This 4,500 square foot space will enable the team to have their interactive showroom, Bridal Bootcamps, offices and workshops all under one roof!

To celebrate, All Wrapped Up are offering all new couples who book a planning or furniture/venue styling package a complimentary Bridal Bootcamp worth £225.

Another exciting development is the launch of brand new allinclusive packages which couples can pair up with their venues to create their best day, stressfree and sticking to their budget! These are popular with DIY couples as well as those booking hotels and catered venues. The team works with couples to create the package best suited to them and their guests and can plan as much or as little as they want in-house - some book everything!

ALLWRAPPEDUPSCOTLAND.CO.UK





Fashion for all

Ever catch yourself eyeing up a gorgeous wedding dress and then wondering if that gown that looks so effortlessly chic on the size zero model would translate to someone with a 'normal' figure? Yep, us too. Which is why we're delighted that Kavelle Couture has consciously focussed this season on dresses that normalise sizes and are for everyone, no matter what their shape. "We have focused on dresses that are stunning and sit alongside the likes of our Galia Lahav and Vera Wang gowns," Kavelle says.

At YSW we love these gorgeous new made to order gown from the Kavelle brand.

KAVELLE.COM



Expert eloping

Glasgow-based David Grant Simpson Photography has recently created a new page on its website called 'Everything You Need to Know About Eloping to Scotlan'.

It's a useful guide for couples that are thinking about eloping to Scotland written by an experienced elopement photographer. Questions ranging from "Where do we start?" to "What to wear?" and "Where to stay?" are all answered in detail! So, what are you waiting for?

DAVIDGRANTSIMPSON.COM/GUIDE-TO-SCOTTISH-ELOPEMENTS



Must-attend events

Opus Couture in West
Kilbride has lots of fabulous
dates for your diaries!
First up, from 3rd – 13th
May is the Berta Couture
designer event and the
dazzling '24-111' style will
be part of the collection – an
absolute must-try! Berta
prices range from £8,000 to
£11,500 and there is a 10%
discount during the event.

Next is the Pronovias designer weekend on 18th – 19th May with 10% off their Pronovias collection. Prices range from £2,000 to £4,500. The Berta Privée designer event runs from 21st – 28th June. Prices range from £5,500 to £8,500. Finally, the gowns under £1,000 weekend takes place 27th – 28th July and this is

27th – 28th July and this is a not-to-be-missed sample sale of some of the boutique's main collection of gowns.

OPUSCOUTURE.CO.UK■

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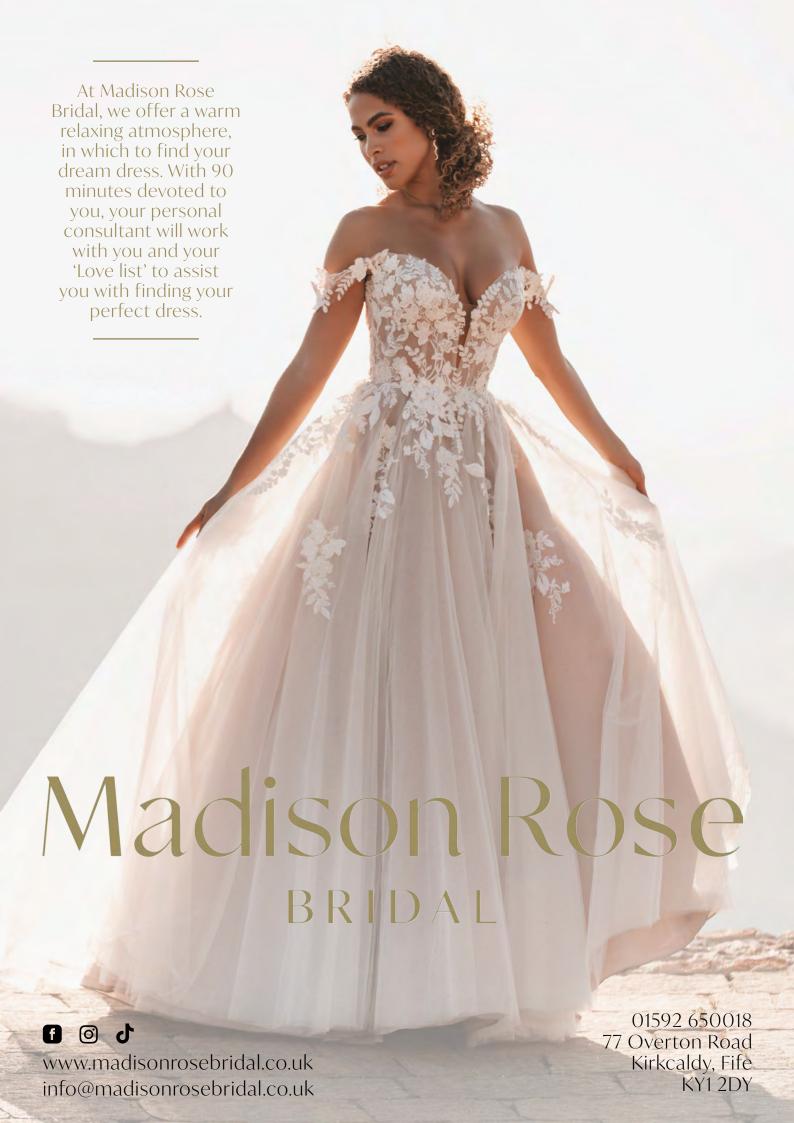
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Ido'DIARIES



Hayley & Saul

Wait until you find out who the special guest at this fun wedding at Silverwood will be! It's just as well it's rural



re've said it before but Hayley's former job as a wedding coordinator means she's been on it from day one, booking all the key suppliers she and fiancé Saul need to bring together their dream wedding at Silverwood this September. With most of their big suppliers secured Hayley was able to turn her attention to dress shopping, an experience she absolutely loved. "It's not every day you can just try loads of dresses on and feel like a proper princess," she tells us. "I'm not really a girly girl so for me it was a whole new experience but I loved every minute of it."

Like so many brides we talk to Hayley set out with an idea of what she thought she wanted and had even picked out 'The One'. But after a few weeks she started to have second thoughts and went back to Lori at Bibbidi Bobbidi Boo Bridal Boutique in East Kilbride. "She was absolutely amazing and took me right out of my comfort zone. I ended up picking something completely different I would never ever have picked out myself," Hayley recalls. "I don't want to give too much away but I definitely think our friends and family will be surprised."

Hayley made dress shopping a proper occasion, bringing her mum and bridesmaids. She says, "I wanted my girls to help me make this decision as I knew they would be honest and see things maybe I couldn't see when it came to

"I know it's going to be very emotional as Milly became a very big part of our family."

HAYLEY



trying different styles on." And Hayley admits there were tears when she found the perfect dress. "Like I said I'm just not a very girly girl so I was so shocked at my choice and it just really got me emotional when I started to think of how I'm going to look on our big day, especially because I went for something completely out of my comfort zone."

While Hayley is now organised, she jokes Saul is "very last minute" about sorting his outfit. However, he has seen a lot of colours and styles he likes, and he knows he and his groomsmen along with the couple's son Leo will be in a full kilt outfit. We're looking forward to seeing little Leo all dressed up!

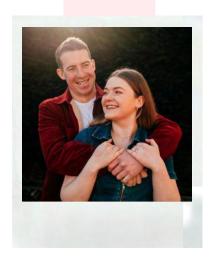
The couple know they want to include their wee one in the ceremony in some form but haven't quite decided what yet. "He will be just over two when the wedding day arrives so we will need to think about what he will be happy and comfortable doing," says Hayley.

Saul jokes that their "first born" will also be in on the action, Hayley's horse Milly! When the couple had Leo Hayley's friend Emma took on Milly as finding the time to look after a horse and newborn would have been difficult to say the least. But Hayley knew she wanted Milly to be there on her big day and Emma is bringing her all the way from Arran. "I know it's going to be very emotional for me as she became a very big part of our little family," smiles Hayley. "Emma was actually going to surprise me and not tell me she was bringing her but I ruined the surprise when I asked if she would." Great minds!

This issue we're hearing from Daniel and Jade who first spoke to us just after their 2021 engagement, and we're checking in with our other couples!

Vivienne & Greg

It's not long now until their big wedding with a "humongous guest list" so the planning has ramped up



vivienne and Greg didn't want a long engagement and with their date set for 20th July this summer at Kingsfield Barns in Linlithgow they've managed to plan the whole day in 12 months. When we last spoke to them, they'd found the perfect venue that was big enough for Vivienne's gigantic family and the rest of the guest list, had secured an interfaith minister and the talented photographer Sarah of Joy Story to capture their day. Since then, other big bookings have been added to their list.

The couple always knew they wanted someone to film all the special moments and have booked White Tree Wedding Films. "I have three big sisters who are all married and it is so lovely to see grandparents who are no longer with us cutting shapes on the dance floor!" she smiles. "That will be really special to



have later in life to look back on. I also have a habit of getting really emotional and swept up in the moment, so I just know that I'll forget half of the speeches as soon as they are over. I'd also like cold, hard evidence of Greg, my dad and our best man being nice to me and not making fun of me for once!"

The wedding look is also falling into place with the couple opting for a "rather colourful" scheme! "We love colour as a couple so I'd say the aesthetic is very us," explains Vivienne. "We are having orange and purple as our main colours but there will also be greens, pinks, and yellows throughout. All in all, just very bright and summery."

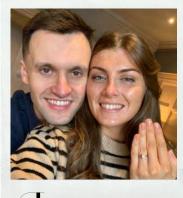
With the look of the décor set, the couple has also secured their own w-day outfits, though Vivienne admits dress shopping was a little stressful. "My bridesmaids all have little ones so it was going to be near enough impossible to get us all together for an appointment," she says. "My sister Colette, who is my maid of honour, came with me to the

"Being a designer, I think clothing can hold a lot of sentimental value."

VIVIENNE

first few appointments and at a later date I went to another appointment alone but I ended up getting my dress from the very first place we went, Aimee Bridal Couture." Vivienne says the staff were total experts at knowing what she would look good in and were really kind, patient and helpful. "I went back for a second appointment to show my mum and mother-in-law to-be," she says. "I said 'Yes to the dress' and we celebrated with cocktails at ABC's bar." That's our sort of shopping trip! Vivienne went to four shops in total but it quickly became apparent the style she was veering towards. "Without giving too much away, I knew I wanted something bridal, a little bit sexy with a touch of drama and I definitely got it!"

While Vivienne is going for "something new", Greg is opting for... "something old", wearing the kilt his parents gifted him when he was 21. "He really suits a kilt and the purple 'Scottish Thistle' tartan matches our colour scheme perfectly!" says Vivienne. "Being a designer, I think clothing can hold a lot of sentimental value and I think it's really special that one day he can look at his kilt and think of all the amazing celebrations we've been to with family and friends, our own wedding included." ≫



Lauren & Gavin

Our most recently engaged couple actually won the hire of their wedding venue The Dougarie Boathouse in a YSW competition!





auren and Gavin met at high school but as they didn't share many of the same classes they didn't know each other well. Then one summer they got chatting more at a few parties. However, it wasn't until late that October that they finally got together with Gavin putting his culinary skills (and his heart) on the line. "Gavin lived in a flat in Glasgow city centre at the time while he was still at university," Lauren says. "He cooked spaghetti carbonara from scratch and asked me to be his girlfriend!"

The couple had been together for almost seven years when Gavin popped the question, taking Lauren completely by surprise. "He proposed to me a week before our anniversary in The Scotsman Hotel in Edinburgh," she explains. "We had been to the hotel a year before, when Gavin had truly spoiled me and hired out the cinema just for us to watch an all-time favourite film of mine - The Greatest Showman. It was honestly the best thing! Back then, I thought he might have proposed with all the effort he had put in for a birthday weekend away."

Best feeling ever

When they returned to the same hotel a year later Gavin took a totally chilled approach. "He didn't have anything booked for during the day which was intentional to throw me off track," Lauren laughs. They arrived in Edinburgh early and headed to Cold Town House for drinks and sat on the roof terrace area, enjoying the view of the castle. "I always knew Gavin would never propose in public as that would be both of our worst nightmares," she adds. "When we got to the room it was gorgeous. That was when Gavin got down on one knee and asked me to marry him. I couldn't believe it. Even now we joke as I say, 'Did you ask me to marry you?' because it all seems such a blur and I can't remember what he said! I wish I could bottle that feeling from that day and even weeks after. It's the best feeling ever!"

The couple didn't have much time to come back down to earth before wedding planning began in earnest, "Now we are over the shock of winning we are delighted and just cannot wait to celebrate"

LAUREN

thanks to them winning our competition for the venue hire of the beautiful Dougarie Boathouse on Arran. They entered just before a four-week trip to Australia. Then on Lauren's first day back at work they discovered they had won! "I couldn't believe it at first," she says.

This truly was a case of happy coincidence as Lauren had already stumbled across The Dougarie Boathouse on Instagram and fallen for its old yet modern feel, complete with exposed beams and twinkling fairy lights – "not to mention the views on the water!" "Now we are over the shock of winning we are delighted and just cannot wait to celebrate with all of our close family and friends on such a beautiful island!"

With their date booked for the start of September they quickly swung into action making most of their other big bookings quickly. They've even gone for their menu tasting with Regis Banqueting, visited their florist to discuss ideas and found Lauren's dream dress. "The first week contacting all the different suppliers was full on," she admits. "However, now we have a few things secured we are just enjoying the process and looking forward to celebrating on the day and the days surrounding it!"



<mark>Jade</mark> & Daniel

This couple is tying the knot where it all began!



ade and Daneil appeared in the very first issue of Your Scottish Wedding, just weeks after their romantic engagement when Daniel got down on one knee on the stage of the Dundee Rep Theatre. Now they're back to tell us how their wedding is shaping up, and guess what? They're returning to the theatre to say, 'I do'! "Dundee Rep has always been a very special place for me," explains Jade. "It was the love, support, and kindness of the people there that got me through quite a hard time. Daniel and I met at the Rep when we were both ushers. We realised later that we had been dating without really realising it." An awkwardly timed Christmas show meant they both ended up having to wait up to half an hour for the bus home. Daniel started skipping his bus to wait with Jade and then they began nipping to a bar or going for food. Now in a full circle moment they will exchange their vows on 2nd November this year on the stage with one of Daniel's relatives officiating.

Following the main event guest will be ushered out of the auditorium for a reception which will echo what goes on on the press night of a new show. "We will have



a selection of delicious hot snacks you can eat while walking around," says Jade. "Definitely garlic and herb fries and if we do end up having a cake (it's currently not on the cards) then I'm leaning towards a lovely, iced ginger cake."

With their date set, the couple have opted for an autumnal colour scheme, inspired by Jade's bespoke red gold and orange sapphire engagement ring. It was made by Claire Allain Designs where they plan to get their wedding bands too. "Up until just last week the theme was Christmas as it's my favourite time of year but it was a struggle to bring Christmas and autumnal together so instead, we are going more spooky/autumnal," Jade says. "Halloween is my second favourite time of year and when I thought about it more it just made sense, and everything started falling into place."

One thing that will definitely fit the colour scheme is Jade's wedding dress and this bride has opted to veer away from white. She originally had her heart set on a "traditional" wedding dress inspired by Stevie Nicks. However, when she showed her bridesmaid another bespoke option in a vibrant orange by Dundee-based brand Isolated Heroes - Jade wanted to support a local business - she convinced her she had to go for it. "So now she will be in the Stevie Nicks-inspired look instead!" smiles Jade. She also wanted to have a dress she can wear "Dundee Rep has always been a very special place for me."

JADE



again and again. "Isolated Heroes will be able to take the dress and tailor it into a nice party dress and hopefully some other wee bits," she says. "Hopefully a panel of it can go onto the back of a denim jacket."

With the date, the bride's dress and the colour scheme set, Daniel is now starting the hunt for the perfect kilt. We're looking forward to seeing what he goes for!







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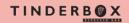




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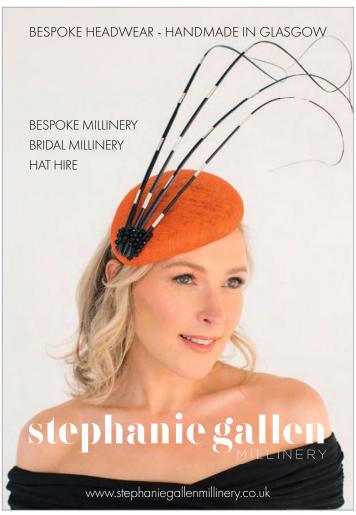




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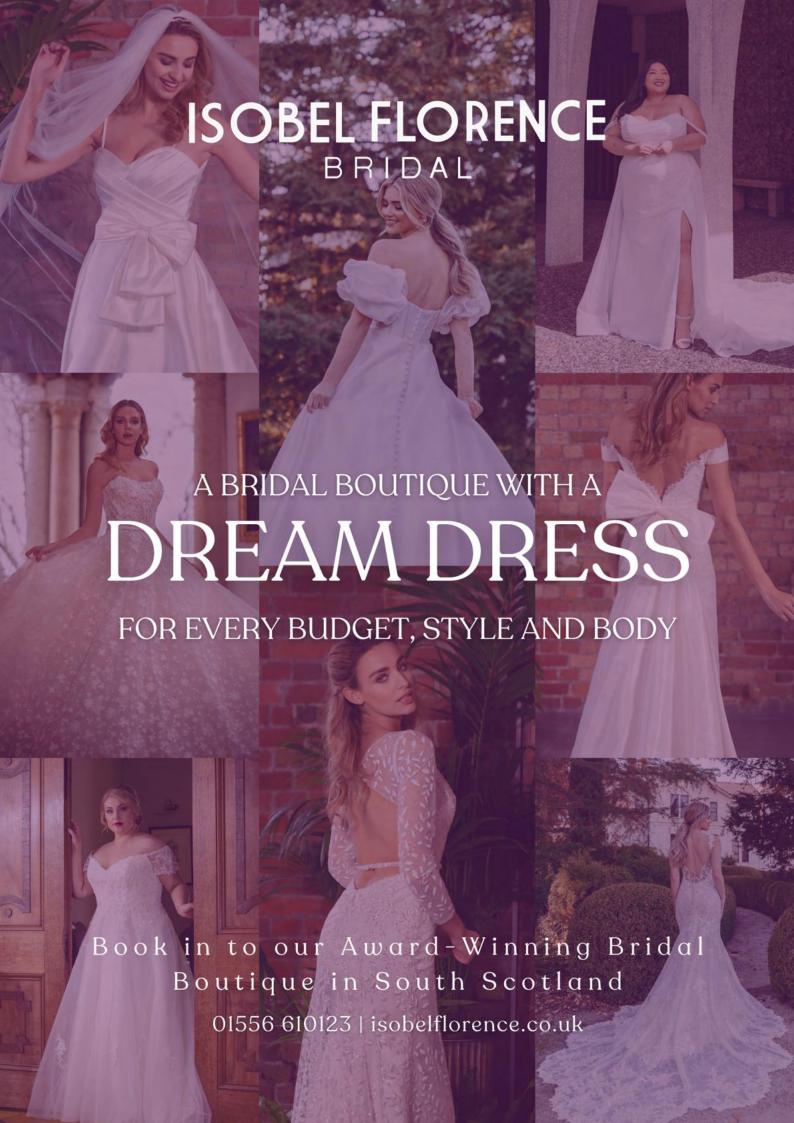
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FASHION

We've had our eyes firmly trained on all the fashion runways, both couture and bridal, over the last few months and we're super-excited about the new trends coming through. And we're not the only ones, so we've been catching up with top designers and Scottish boutiques on all the styles they're obsessed with right now...

THE TREND

Splits

Remember Taylor Swift's thigh-high split wearing Schiaparelli on the red carpet at the Grammys? Well if it's good enough for Ms S we're all in for the look, especially when she's clearly in her bridal glam era. And we're not the only ones obsessed with the style. "We love a split!" Susan from **Opus Couture** tells us. "For a fresh modern look don't be afraid to have a split in your wedding gown. You could have a subtle hint of leg showing in Pronovias 'Betsy' or go bold and be sexy in Berta '24-III'."

THE TREND

Clean, modern and feminine touches

If quiet luxury is more your vibe than all-out sparkle or lace this is the trend for you. Brigida at **Gwenne** advocates the oh-so-chic 'Gwinn' gown by Justin Alexander (above) to keep it understated and modern. She says it's "giving a clean and modern vibe through the dress with the silhouette and clean lines, showing its femininity with soft Charmeuse fabric allowing the dress to drape beautifully. With its versatile look, Gwinn can be styled exactly to the bride's style of wedding."

"For a fresh modern look don't be afraid to have a split."

SUSAN, OPUS COUTURE

THE TREND

Spaghetti straps

As children of the 90s the spaghetti strap holds a very dear place in our hearts so we are delighted with its recent revival thanks to the likes of Kim K, Kendal Jenner and Bella Hadid. So of course we are excited to see the delicate strap make its way into bridalwear too. "I predict that spaghetti straps are the newest trend in bridal fashion, embracing a

minimalist aesthetic," says Mirka, of Mirka Bridal Couture. "These delicate straps offer brides a chic and modern look while maintaining an air of elegance. My favourite use of spaghetti straps this season is offering a delicate look in the front, with soft neckline and tying into interesting designs at the back." We love Mirka's employment of the spaghetti strap in her 'Alice' and 'Elara' dresses.



Spaghetti straps embrace a minimalist aesthetic."

MIRKA, MIRKA BRIDAL COUTURE ≫



Dress overlays

The simplest of designs can be totally transformed and elevated with the addition of an overlay, something we saw a lot of at the Jean Paul Gaultier haute couture Paris show at the start of the year, and who could forget Kylie Jenner's appearance in the FROW. Dress overlays are a serious vibe. Mette of **Freja Designer Dressmaking** agrees. "Dress overlays, either a floral appliqué, sparkly or sheer colour overlaying a neutral colour fabric, will become one trend of SS24," she says. "This stunning dress was made with a cape detail and had a beautiful sparkly overlay that caught the light from every angle."





THE TREND

Detailing

You know the expression "The devil's in the detail". That really couldn't be truer for some of the gowns stealing our hearts this season. Whether you're looking for subtle highlights that can only be properly appreciated up close or the sort of out-there statement that prompts gasps of appreciation, you'll find something to suit your own comfort level. Rachel of Rachel Scott Couture cites Naeem Khan's 'Giulia' dress as of the detailing trend. "And we see it as detailing hitting both ends of the outlandish scale," she explains. "From the micro-detail in the hand-pleated folded ribbon through this Naeem Khan masterpiece, where you can't even comprehend how intricate true couture workmanship can be until you're really up close, to the gloriously uncompromising bold detail of the removable hood veil. Detailing with couture passion to perfectly fit both the introvert and the playful fashionista!"

THE TREND

All-out glam According to Naydene of

Sophia Grace Couture, "glam is back!" And having pored over all the gorgeous offerings from this year's awards season, we have to agree. "Whether it's gowns with sleeves, embellishment or detachable elements, brides can expect to see showstopping styles this season," Naydene says. "My particular favourite is 'Gloria' by Calla Blanche which can only be found at Sophia Grace Couture in Scotland. This gorgeous dress features intricate beaded lace which has just a hint of sparkle, the gown is backless and has a stunning dramatic train as well as the matching detachable lace choker."



Puff sleeves

Sleeves are never far from our She's in fashion trends but we're talking about a very specific type this issue, with short puff sleeves being the cut of the moment. Julia from Isobel Florence Bridal agrees. "With regency period bridal inspo being on the rise, we're loving seeing how designers are incorporating elements from this period of fashion into modern day looks," she says. "This sleeve type is gorgeous on both detailed and simple dresses, and perfect for brides getting married in luxurious stately homes or castles, as it really does offer a regal look!" Julia loves this 'Grace' gown by Patricia Barclay Bridals, which is exclusively available at Isobel Florence Bridal. And with the return of Bridgerton we can totally see brides being swept away with this trend!

THE TREND

Sparkle

Sparkle was all over the red carpets at the start of the year with the likes of Margot Robbie, Emma Stone, Natalie Portman and Elizabeth Debicki embracing the look. And it's translating to bridal too. "We just love the sparkly beaded dresses this season," says Pamela of Pamela Jayne's Bridal. "Our gorgeous brides can magically twinkle day and night, either walking down the aisle, in the glorious sunshine while getting their photos taken, or then dancing the night away with their partner

on the first day of married life."



3D floral appliqués

appliqués We adore how the silhouette of a seemingly simple gown can be transformed by the addition of appliqué detailing, a sentiment shared by Kudos Edinburgh. "Our favourite trend for 2024 has to be 3D floral appliqués, whether that's on the wedding dress itself, or incorporated into the accessories, including veils and headbands," says Michelle. "The loveliest example on our rail is Wendy Makin's 'Bella Rosa' gown, (pictured below), with her stylish neckline, little cap sleeves and romantic full skirt. The delicate embroidered flowers are concentrated on the bodice, and then scattered all the way down the skirt." And Michelle adores the 3D flowers on the veils and headbands from Richard Designs - "a great way to incorporate this trend into your look, especially when worn with a clean, simple gown." ≫



Pearls

Pearls are one of those classic looks, like lace, that never seem far from bridal fashion and this year they're coming in hot. "2024 is all about pearls!" agrees Megan from **Kudos** Dunfermline. "From veils and accessories to dresses themselves, we're seeing this trend everywhere. One of our stand-out styles is Maggie Sottero's 'Doritte'. We love her bodice which is covered in textued lace appliqués and delicate pearl details. She also combines one of our favourite trends for this year with her detachable sleeves."





YSW'S TREND WATCH

e've spent

the last few months travelling up and down the country, hunting out all the latest fashion snippets that make our sartorial hearts sing. Back in January we attended the opening of the brand new Rachel Scott Couture store on Queensferry Street in the heart of Edinburgh. As the RSC bridalwear boutique in Dundas Street marks its twentieth anniversary, Rachel and her team have opened the sister store with its carefully curated selection of eveningwear from the likes of Temperley London, Suzanne Neville and Vivienne Westwood, alongside bespoke jewellery and accessories. Just like at the bridal branch, the new store offers a completely made-to-measure service but this time with a concentration on eveningwear and formalwear. And it didn't escape our notice that this would be the perfect place for mothers of the bride or groom who wanted to treat themselves to something extra special for the big day. In fact Rachel says, "we were already doing bespoke pieces for our clients' mums or bridesmaids, if the bride was feeling very generous" and she's expecting to see some wedding party-related appointments here now. This is also the location to browse the beautiful handmade range of Rachel Scott Couture accessories with their intricate beading.

Heading west, we spent our time at The Scottish Wedding Show rooting out some brand new pieces that got us really excited. Like this stunning textured organza gown with its square neckline by Vancouver name Truvelle on The Bridal Courtyard stand. Designer Gaby's mum was a seamstress so she started sewing at the age of 12! Then we got super-excited at The School of Fashion and Textiles' stand where the students' latest project pieces were on display. They explained the brief was to take inspiration from the Bon Bridé brand and make their particular dress rewearable. Cue cutaway silhouettes, embellishment and ruching for the ultimate sustainable bridalwear.

The catwalk served highlights from across bridal, groomswear and MOB and MOG fashion and the women's mini kilts from Kilts 4 U really caught our eye. They're part of the company's new Lily's Couture luxury brand which specialises in designer kilts, matching handbags, lambswool tartan throws and scarves. Kilts 4 U's owner and designer Sally Carlton commissioned the collection in memory of her late mother. We reckon the kilts would be perfect for the days surrounding your wedding day. Just think of attending dinner the night before with your families looking super-stylish in one of these beauties. Yes please.

RACHEL SCOTT COUTURE



The BIG interview with

Sharon McPherson of Opus Couture

She may be a classically trained musician, but since switching to fashion there's been no holding **Sharon** back. Here she shares all about being at the helm of her beautiful West Kilbride boutique for 20 years.

Craig & Eva Sanders Photography

"Brides want to have confidence and feel secure in what they are wearing."



Florist/Decor | Jordana Events Hair | Pam Doc Hair Jewellery | Laings Make-up | Louise Ballantine Luury Bridal Makeup Model | Rebecca Donaldson Photography | Craig & Eva

Photography | Craig & Eva Sanders Photography Venue | Trump Turnberry Videography | Cherrytree Films Your Scottish Wedding: : How did you first get into design?

Sharon McPherson: I studied both Higher Art and Music at school and trained as a classical musician. I had been accepted by Queens University to study Music. However, after an illness which made practising difficult, I chose to do Art/Fashion instead. I went to university in Northern Ireland for my first degree, a BA in textiles fashion and embroidery. Then I went to Birmingham to do my Masters, specialising in embroidery.

YSW: Did you always know you wanted to work in bridalwear?

SM: No, not at all, but when you think about it, I trained in womenswear and embroidery. My first job after moving back to NI and getting married was as chief designer for couture bridal designer Isobel Love. And just like that, I knew I had found my passion. After all, my areas of expertise are fashion and embroidery, and I don't think there's a better fit.

YSW: Opus Couture celebrated its twentieth anniversary last year. How do you account for its ongoing popularity and success?

SM: We have just won an award for the 2024 best bridal retailer and over the years our brides have recommended us and our service, so word of mouth recommendation has always been a huge factor. I'm very proud of our team. I believe they give the best service and they have our brides' backs. They have a terrific knowledge of all things bridal.

We also have great designers on our rail so our product is on point as well. We have the best technical support right here on the premises, all under the one roof - all of which has taken years of hard work, training and planning to achieve. I have 40 years' experience in this industry and my team have that and more between them. Perfection takes time.

YSW: What are some of the biggest changes you've seen in what brides want from their dress?

SM: Things have changed a lot between 1984 and 2024. The world has changed, so fashion has changed, and quite dramatically too. I'm not sure which has driven which though. Brides now have so much more to deal with, large bridal parties, social media, so much more choice in every area. There are so many decisions and demands on brides and grooms now.

Essentially though brides still want to have confidence and feel secure in what they are wearing. So, in the end we may have new styles and more tools but nothing has changed actually. The truth is you want to be the best version of you possible. One you can look back on, and say, "Yes I looked and felt the best I've ever felt, on my wedding day."

YSW: How would you describe the Opus Couture bride?

SM: Classy and sassy. I can't do frumpy, it's not in my toolbox. An Opus bride is a strong woman who knows her own mind. She may not know the exact gown she wants to wear, but she definitely

"The Opus bride is classy and sassy. I can't do frumpy, it's not in my toolbox."

knows how she doesn't want to look on her wedding day. Once she has Team Opus standing with her, she will find her perfect look and be confident and secure to stand tall and enjoy her day.

YSW: How do you choose the designers you stock at Opus Couture?

SM: We have strong ongoing relationships with some of the best designers in the world. They need to be solid design houses who value our business and our input. We need to have trust in their process too and trust they are willing to work with us as much as they can. We look at all the collections from everyone out there and watch what's coming. We know our clients and what they are looking for and we travel all over the world to get our brides the best collections available.

YSW: How do you know what will work for your brides?

SM: We listen to our brides and their requests. We also test the market with trunk shows, designer days and special events. We do our research. Informed by our brides, we buy our collections with experience, expertise and research. Every season we look at design, fit, structure, cost and quality. We look at our nation's changing body shapes and the changing face of fashion at all levels. I also watch what's going on in other areas of the fashion world, by attending runway shows at local, national and international level in person and online.

YSW: Do you have a favourite gown in store right now?

SM: I have so many but every time I am asked this question I say the same thing - my favourite gown is the one that is right for the bride that is standing in front of me. But if you pushed me on my personal favourites, I love Berta's '2412'. It's just that classic Berta signature look. It's everything a modern gown with sleeves needs to be. It's got all the sass, just like Berta



herself. She is a beautiful lady, and we get along so well. However I would customise it with one of my signature overskirts. From our Opus Studio collection it's 'Skye'. This is a beautiful gown that's as delicate and strong as the island it's called after. It has a soft colour just like the beaches in Scotland and a beautiful fit with flattering godets on the skirt. This too can be worn with a tulle overskirt or shoulder wrap. And I love 'Zinaida' by Maggie Sottero in Mikado. I love the sleek clean design of this gown. The fabric has a beautiful pure colour and crispness that adds to its chic silhouette. I also love its current design twist on the bodice.

YSW: Talk us through the inspiration of creating your own label Opus Studio? Have you plans to design more for the collection?

SM: I've always designed couture gowns for individual clients but not a full collection. We live in one of the most beautiful countries of the world. I love the colours and textures of Scotland, and that totally inspired me. It's like the stars aligned and the time was right. Over time the collection will grow slowly and steadily. I'm in a research phase just now, looking at fabrics and structure.

YSW: What are your best tips for brides searching for their wedding dress?

SM: Keep an open mind, be open and honest with your stylist. Don't bring too many people with you, just one or two who give you good advice. Don't stress about it and have fun.



YSW: Who is the celebrity bride you wish you could design for? SM: Sophia Vergara. I love her sass and her shape is gorgeous. And Zendaya has a great sense of style and is beautifully young and classy. YSW: What's next for Opus Couture?

SM: Onwards and upwards. We may be 20 years old but we have a young team who are very much in touch with today's market. We have lots planned and great collaborations with great benefits for our brides. So don't miss out and keep an eye on our social media.

Bring the bling

"Bring your accessories to your fittings – that means jewellery, shoes, etc. Shoes will impact your posture so making sure you wear the exact pair in fittings means any alterations done won't shift and sit funny the moment you pop your shoes on. Want to make a piece of jewellery your statement piece? You may need to change areas of the dress to accentuate it."

METTE, FREJA DESIGNER DRESSMAKING

No photos please

"Be mindful of photography policies. Many bridal boutiques, including ours, maintain a nophotos rule, which is in place to honour the intricate work of our designers and safeguard the distinctive nature of each bride's special moment. Here, we meticulously design and create custom Kavelle Couture gowns,

so this policy is an extension of our commitment to preserving the uniqueness of every bride's cherished experience."

KAVELLE, KAVELLE COUTURE



thought and take heed of what Scotland's bridalwear experts

Newly engaged and ready to hit the bridal boutiques with your oirl oang? Hold that



Support squad "Bring those whose opinion

you consider the most important. But remember only you will know how you feel in the dress." BRIGIDA, GWENNE

Plan ahead

"Planning ahead is the key to finding your dream dress and Opus Couture emphasises the importance of starting wedding dress shopping at least a year in advance. This is because gowns generally take up to six months to arrive. Once it gets here, you'll need to book in a fitting and factor in time for potential alterations - if your weight has changed since your first try on or you've decided you'd like to add straps, for example. However, for those with a tighter timeline, some bridal boutiques have off-the-peg options. With us, Opus Couture's 'Ready to Wear' outlet collection offers beautiful dresses that are immediately available."

SUSAN, OPUS COUTURE

The right style
"Research shops that
align with your style.
You'll have a curated
selection to choose from,
and a more enjoyable

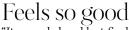
and focused experience."

MIRKA, MIRKA BRIDAL COUTURE



Take your time
"Never feel under pressure
with any aspect of your
shopping experience – but particularly
with timescales for decision-making
and deliveries. You're likely to be getting
a lot of new information from the
shops you visit and what one says won't
be the same as another. Take time to
check the facts before you commit. By
the way, our record is a matter of days
to have a fully couture designer dress
made so there are always options!"

RACHEL, RACHEL SCOTT COUTURE



Kudos Bridal

"It sounds hard but find a dress that makes you feel amazing as you are just now. Most brides come in with the idea that they'll shed some weight but what if you don't? You want to know you'll feel phenomenal regardless. Have an insecurity about your arms? Find a dress that makes you forget all about them. It's all about finding what makes you feel comfy and relaxed."

MEGAN, KUDOS BRIDAL

Trust the expert

Sophia Grace

Mirka Bridal

Couture

"Take advantage of the expertise at your fingertips when you visit a boutique. Bridal stylists know all the dresses they have available, plus which can be customised and which have a range of colour options. They can also give tips when it comes to styling your gown (from veils to shoes to hairstyles) and advice when it comes to potential alterations. So, build a relationship with your stylist if you can. Give them feedback about what you like and don't like about every dress you try. This will help them determine what's working for you and they'll pick out more options that incorporate the elements you love."

NAYDENE, SOPHIA GRACE COUTURE

It's all about the base "For your initial appointment wear a pair of nude seam-free undies. Nude is less likely to shine through different dress materials and you'll avoid pant lines. In terms of bras, go strapless if you can. Most gowns have in-built corsetry that can fight with your bra so it's handy to be able to remove it quickly - or keep it in place to protect your modesty while still having the option to play around with various necklines."

MEGAN, KUDOS BRIDAL

An open mind
"I always say to people

"I always say to people who are unsure of what they want 'Let's start with a blank canvas' and we paint your dream dress throughout the appointment."

PAMELA, PAMELA JAYNE'S BRIDAL ■



Ask the expert Rachel Scott Couture

As she delves into finding the perfect fit, **Rachel Scott Couture** asks does size really matter?

Effortless in

Temperley London

"You're much more than measurements." id you know there is no universal standard for clothing sizing, bridal or otherwise? Although numerous efforts have been made throughout history to standardise sizes, they have never really amounted to anything, other than confusion and confliction.

In women's clothing in particular, the changes throughout history have been dramatic. The corsetry of the 1800s completely skewed the female figure into a shape that was unrecognisable (and I suspect, uncomfortable). This was followed by years of fashion changes, a post-war economy, and up to the modern age where clothes are looser and body measurements are ever-increasing, before we even touch on the current trend for fitness and power lifting.

As women, we've grown up in a world where we judge ourselves by the size we wear so, when it comes to the most important day of your life, that pressure to fit or find a certain size can easily feel heightened.

Do bridal sizes come up small compared to the high street?

There's a widely accepted urban myth that all bridal sizes run two to three sizes smaller than high street sizing, but it simply isn't true. We can't generalise either group. There are so many factors that come into play when talking about sizing.

We all generally accept there is no universal standard 'high street' size. Each brand has created its own individual size chart that best suits their target customer. Marks & Spencer will do a very different size 12 to Reiss and their customers want different things.

Then consider where the brand's target market lives – sizing will be geared to fit that figure. In the UK we tend to have wonderful curves so British designers will generally design styling and size charts to match, while the French might have more slender lines. It makes sense then that you may find 'standard sizes' for French designers have smaller hip measurements and bust cup sizes than in the UK.

Other factors also affect how high street sizing works across brands so when it comes down to it, the only true

difference between high street sizing and bridal sizing is that when you're shopping for 'normal' clothes, you have the advantage of years of experience to establish exactly which brands fit you and which don't. With that in mind, it's feasible to compare brands but don't compare 'bridal' to 'high street'.

Plus size

This has always been a bone of contention for me. I really struggle with the idea that we should separate people into certain groups. Pigeonholing for any reason just doesn't sit well with me and certainly least of all on a set of measurements. You are a bride who needs a dress. You're much more than measurements. Why should your dress options be limited to a specific range? Why not have access to all? Let's get you the perfect dress for you as a person. In an age

"Be part of the process. It's your dress after all."



of inclusivity, let's include, not separate.

I appreciate that the level of couture designers we work with at Rachel Scott Couture means we're in the privileged position of not having to worry about sizing as we automatically have each client's dress fully made to measure no compromise. There's new pattern creation, fully bespoke design, and the perfect fit every time. But equally, I choose these designers specifically because of their flexibility and inclusive culture for styling, fit and sizing. I don't think any of us should have to compromise on our wedding day, and least of all because of a set of measurements. Get the best dress you can to fit your personality first and let us get you the perfect fit.

How shops size your dress

When we're measuring clients at Rachel Scott Couture, we're always doing it with the client and the dress they've chosen in mind and base sizing on getting the ideal fit. So, talk to your chosen bridal shop and



get them to chat you through things. Find out if there's the option for made to measure or even mixing two sizes? What about half sizes?

It's not always about "does it technically fit?" It's about "does it fit the way your styling wants it to?" With our Vivienne Westwood designs for example, two brides could have exactly the same measurements but one may want it super-tight and waist cinching while the other bride might want a softer fit. We make sure to fit to their personality and preference, not being strict on what the size chart says.

Talk to the bridal shop you've chosen and be part of the process. It's your dress after all.

When to get measured

Perhaps because I'm such a fanatic for a truly perfect fit, we tend to leave the technical measurements as late as possible – accuracy is everything. So even if you're ordering your dress with us 18 months before your wedding, we are unlikely to take your measurements until around four or five months before the big day. Sometimes even later if there are specific things to consider like if you're losing weight, body building, just had a baby or are recovering from surgery. In advance of that, we let the designer know what dress you're going for and your wedding date, so we're all prepared.

It's worth noting that the couture system for the specific designers we work with isn't necessarily the norm so always check with your wedding shop. And let the shop know if you think you're going to be different measurements. The more information we have the better choices we can give you. Don't feel you need to leave choosing your dress until you're the size you want to be on your wedding day.

Fittings

We always do our fittings in-house so we can ensure you have the perfect fit. It's a real skill adjusting a wedding dress and takes years to master the art. However, a lot of shops don't offer an alterations service so always check before you commit to an order. Final fittings can make or break how your dress will look so be sure you've got it covered.

Don't compromise on fit

Even with my seamstress' expertise and fit wizardry, some elements of design are nearly impossible to change after the dress is constructed – cup size and body length proportions being prime examples. If you're a bigger cup size or a petite body length, a standard size is never going to sit perfectly or give you the right support. It's never a case of buying in a bigger size then altering down.

In our normal lives, we're often already used to fudging the lines of fit by maybe buying a different size top to skirt, creatively adding a belt, or only buying dresses that don't have waist band seams. When you start exploring wedding dress options, it's going to be a different scenario. If you're going for a sculpted, tailored style then you're really going to notice any areas of poor fit so it's well worth focusing on fully made to measure options where the tailoring can start right from the pattern stage. There is nothing more fabulous than a truly perfect fit!

So, my advice – focus on finding your dream wedding dress because it makes you feel confident and ready to enjoy your special day. Let the experts work out the perfect fit. ■









Notesonfashion

Have you decided how you're dressing for your big day yet? We caught up with some stylish grooms to discover the inspiration behind the outfits they chose for their weddings

rom wearing a kilt as a nod to your Scottish heritage to opting for some stylish made-to-measure tartan trews for a gorgeous castle wedding, there are many ways in which our grooms put a personal spin on their outfit choices.

Much emphasis can be placed on the search for a wedding dress, but a groom's attire is equally important when it comes to feeling confident and happy on such an important day.

These grooms say you should go for what makes you feel good, try to see the outfits in person if you're able, take along a trusted friend or family member for a second opinion – and don't be scared to go a little out of your comfort zone for this momentous occasion!



Feeling good

Martin McGowan and his wife Mia married in the beautifully rustic setting of Bachilton Barn, Perthshire last May. As he prepared for the big day, Martin decided to hire a kilt and accessories from the McCalls Highlandwear branch in Tillicoultry. "I felt it only appropriate to keep things traditional and wear a kilt," he explains. "Up until my wedding I had never actually worn a kilt and after a certain age I always promised myself if I ever got married I would definitely wear one. I've always been a fan of how smart it looks - especially at formal events such as a wedding - but had always worn a suit in the past."

Martin went for the Silver Pride of Scotland tartan, accompanying it with a dark grey waistcoat and jacket. "I opted to include a plaid which, of course, matched the tartan. To break up the dark material I decided to choose a lighter grey sporran with a chrome cantle, which I felt tied in nicely with the kilt belt buckle, the plaid pin and the kilt pin. To finish the look I decided to wear a burgundy cravat which complemented the subtle red throughout the tartan and added a nice pop of colour when paired with the boutonniere. I decided to wear black brogues from the company Loake instead of kilt shoes as I personally felt they looked nicer with the outfit."

Martin and Mia's wedding didn't have a colour scheme, but it was inspired by Scottish wildflower meadows. Martin knew he wanted to wear a tartan that had some darker tones. Meanwhile the hints of burgundy running through his outfit tied in well with the rest of the

wedding colours and beautiful floral arrangements.

"I knew I wanted my groomsmen wearing similar attire as I feel it gives nice uniformity and they could be easily identified by our other guests. At the time I hired my kilt I made sure to hire groomsmen kilts in the same tartan. I also purchased neck ties in the same tartan for the dads and had a bandana especially made for my dog!"

Martin says he is a big believer in wearing what you like and what makes you feel comfortable. "Make sure that you feel good in what you are wearing before you commit and take someone you trust along with for a second and honest opinion," he explains, "Of course, it's a given to run it by your significant other as it is their big day too, and their opinion is important to you."





Traditional look

Gary Hughes tied the knot with partner Kirsty in October 2023 at Kinmount House, a stunning 19th century country house just outside Annan. He opted to wear full Highland dress, hired from Kilts 4 U. "I had always known I wanted to wear a kilt on my wedding day. I just hadn't decided on a specific tartan," Gary explains. "Suits are more popular these days and most of my friends who have been married in recent years chose suits, but I felt I wanted a more traditional look and opted for a kilt."

He chose Kilts 4 U after researching online and discovering they have one of the most extensive ranges of tartans – plus the tartan he went for was exclusive to the company.

"I chose The Spirit of Loch Tay tartan kilt with matching plaid," Gary goes on, "My jacket and waistcoat were both navy tweed with tiny subtle flecks of red, purple and green through it. The socks were also navy and were paired with matching tartan flashes and I wore black leather ghillie brogues. I also opted for a matching tartan tie to stand out from the rest of the bridal party who were wearing plain navy ties."

For his accessories, Gary opted for a navy sporran and standard

sgian dubh. "I also wore silver sleeve garters to keep my sleeves at the correct length under my jacket. My buttonhole was a thistle and dried flower arrangement prepared by Mabel's Yard Florist in Carlisle. Kirsty also bought me a Cartier watch and matching Cartier cufflinks to wear on the day."

Gary completed the look with his late grandad's necklace and wedding ring for a sentimental touch.

"There wasn't a particular colour scheme I was trying to adhere to. I just chose the tartan I liked best. I felt navy was slightly different from the more popular grey or charcoal colours worn with kilts these days," Gary says.

His dad, best man and groomsmen all wore the same outfit as him, but with plain navy ties that were purchased from River Island. Meanwhile, Kirsty's brothers and their nephews wore the same tartan but with grey tweed jackets and waistcoats.

Gary adds, "My only advice would be, if you're unsure about what you would like to wear, have a look online for inspiration to see what catches your eye. Also, going to see the outfits in person can help as I found some of the tartans looked a good bit different in person than they did online." ≫

The perfect blend

Nikolaus Hochstein Cox and Kirsten Scott were married at Dundas Castle, a stunning 15th century castle in South Queensferry. As an archaeologist and an opera singer, Nik and Kirsten have professions that take them round the world. The couple were living in Berlin while they planned their wedding and chose Scotland to honour Kirsten's family who, though American, are of Scottish descent. Kirsten's father Ron always proudly maintained his Scottish heritage and when he passed away suddenly, the idea of getting married in a Scottish castle became more important than ever.

Nik explains, "I do not have direct Scottish ancestry (the closest I get is English) and therefore did not feel comfortable wearing the kilt, which is such an iconic symbol of the Highlands and Scottish national identity. However, I was marrying into an ancestrally Scottish family."

Nik found the ideal balance in wearing tartan trews, which he thought were the perfect way to honour his wife-to-be's family. He had them custom made in Scott 'Green' Ancient tartan by Gordon Nicolson Kiltmakers after the Edinburgh-based company was recommended to him by Dundas Castle.

"I wore tartan military trews and a Prince Charlie jacket and waistcoat. Unlike a kilt, there are not all that many accessories that go with the trews – no sporran, kilt pin, or sgian dubh. I wore a simple "We can afford to be a bit playful too."

NIK HOCHSTEIN COX

black bow tie, wingtip collar shirt, and cufflinks with my college crest (Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge)." Nik's shoes were black brogues by Ecco.

Nik and Kirsten sent a swatch of their tartan to Garlands Florist, who designed bouquets and boutonnieres of Scottish wildflowers based on the colours of the material. "The colour scheme of the flower arrangements and table runners informed the theme and colours for the entire day," Nik explains.

He adds, "As a man, our wedding day outfits seem pretty fixed in the minds of many: a suit and tie, or maybe a dinner jacket and bowtie. I really wanted to have fun with my outfit, as much fun as Kirsten was having with hers, which was custom-made by La Sposa Berlinese, a designer in Berlin. I suspect men often think the most fun they can have with their wedding suit is maybe getting the jacket in a colour other than black. But this is not so. It is as important and special a day for the groom as it is for the bride, and we should allow ourselves to explore different styles and fashions - and we can afford to be a bit playful too." ■









In his WORDS

It's not long now until our columnist **Lee** and his fiancée **Louise's** Big Day at **Auchen Castle**

e've got to hand it to Lee and Louise. When it comes to wedding planning, this couple definitely put the effort in – so much so that last issue he told us how they'd actually gone panning for gold with The Museum of Lead Mining at Wanlockhead. Since we last caught up, they put that treasure to good use, visiting their jeweller Timothy J Sharp at his Dunoon workshop to watch him incorporate it into their wedding bands. "It's extra special to us that he is adding the Scottish gold we panned for hidden on the inside of the rings," says Lee. "We are over the moon with them. Tim goes above and beyond. We had as much input as we wanted whilst also seeking his expert guidance."

Booking in plenty of entertainment to keep

their guests amu

And that's not the only wedding-related excursion this pair have been on.
They're going with a his and hers approach to their wedding cakes, serving up a traditional cake by Sweets by Ola for Louise, while self-confessed "cheese fiend" Lee is opting for a cheese tower for his take on a wedding cake. "We visited a family farm, Errington Cheese,



based virtually on our doorstep in North Lanarkshire," says Lee. "Before sampling their award-winning cheese we had a tour of the farm where we got to meet the animals and learn the local history of each cheese. We then came to the conclusion that we'd put together a four-tier cheese cake composed of Corra Linn, Lanark Blue, Lanark White and topped with Blackmount."

Lee and Louise are putting their guests up at Auchen Castle so it's going to have a proper house party feel. And to add an extra special touch they've organised for wedding day newspapers to be delivered to their guests' rooms on the morning of the big day. "I found a company called Finishing Touch Prints that is going to make the newspapers," Lee explains. "I thought it would be a fun and practical thing and the papers will have a detailed schedule of events."

As you'd expect, that schedule is going to be jam-packed. "We already have an array of music such as a piper, ceilidh band and DJ but there were just a couple more bits we wanted," says the groom. "We visited Auchen Castle – again, we can't stay away! – as we heard they had a harpist coming to play during an afternoon tea. Once we listened we, decided that Philippa Smith Harpist would be perfect to provide the music for Louise walking down the aisle." However, Lee's keeping tight-lipped about their choice of tune for that.

With a two-and-a-half-hour gap between the wedding breakfast and the start of the evening reception the couple have booked some added extras to entertain. After meeting magician Cameron Young of *Britain's Got Talent* fame at a wedding show they secured him for a set, as well as The Kilted Caricaturist – "It will be nice for guests to have a funny memento to take away with them."

The final piece in the entertainment jigsaw is Philip Campbell who will be singing at the bar. The couple first spied him when they were out for a drink, and he was playing keyboard and singing Fleetwood Mac. "Anyone that knows me, knows they are my favourite band, and I was hooked," Lee recalls. We can't wait to hear what's on his playlist.

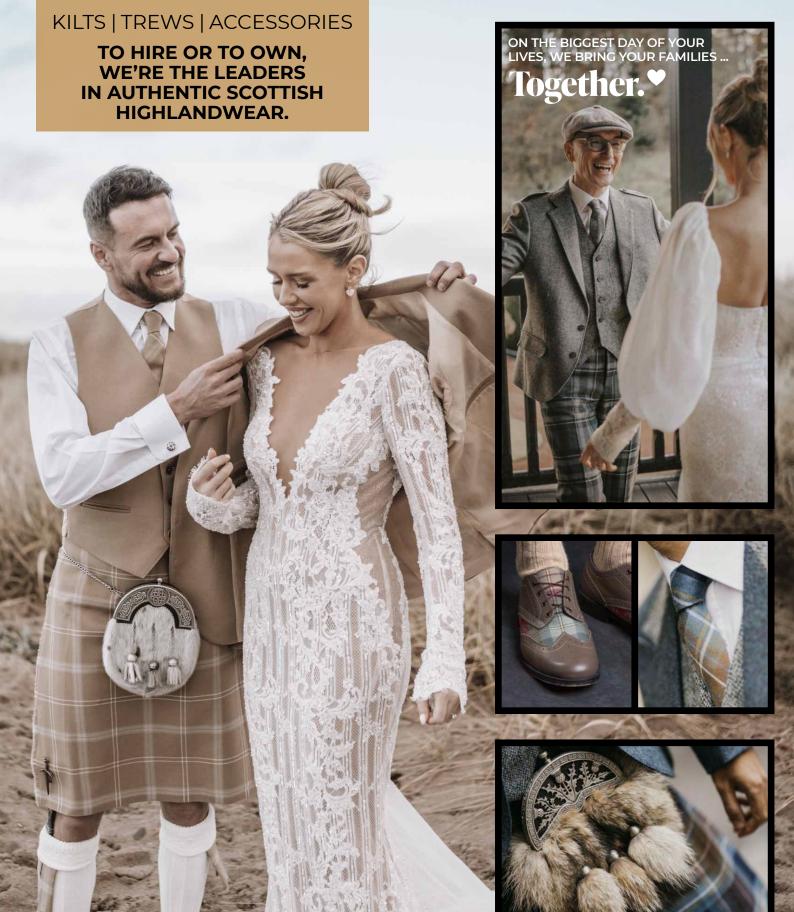
Look out for Lee's final column before the October wedding in the September issue of YSW

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Shaping When you're searching for that all important UD



When you're searching for that all important MOB or MOG outfit, nothing beats knowing which styles flatter your body and make you feel great inside – but how do you get to that point? Claire Muir finds out...

inding a look that's going to make you feel a million dollars on your son or daughter's big day isn't just about finding something with hanger (or website) appeal. The most important part is how it looks on you! And, of course, how it makes you feel. Every single woman in the world is unique; there's certainly no one-size-fits-all when it comes to occasionwear shopping – and it's arguably something that's far better done in person.

"For me, it's got to suit the woman's body and personality, which you can't tell from looking at photos in magazines or on the internet. It's all about the feeling. And when you know, you know," advises Louise Brown at Catwalk, Falkirk. "Finding 'The One' is a journey of trying a variety of styles, colours, fabrics, necklines and hemlines. We have an amazing selection here at Catwalk and lovely assistants more than happy to guide you, so we'd advise mums looking for an outfit to suit their shape to book an appointment at an occasionwear boutique."

But what if you don't know your shape?

Luckily, most Scottish bridal boutiques have their consultants trained to identify which category a customer falls into, says Natalie Rock at Frox of Falkirk. "An apple, for example, is a woman with slim legs and arms, and a wider torso. A woman with an ample bust and hips plus a smaller waist would be curvy/hourglass. Once we know your shape, we can advise on styles to best suit it. Finding out what flatters your body is a great help when starting to shop for a special outfit."

Once you have that box ticked, your consultant will be able to point you in the direction of the designers or styles most likely to work for you – and Georgea Scobie at Gina Smart reminds mums that different designers may have differing proportions. "Ispirato, for instance, has shorter body lengths so these designs often suit those who are 5ft 6 inches and under. Condici has standard sizing and Dressed-Up is specifically tailored for size 16 plus," she explains.

At Catwalk, Louise recommends more petite mums look at outfits by one of the boutique's most popular designers, John Charles. "The fit and fabric is superb, and these designs really work for ladies who are shorter from the shoulder to the waist," she says. "Catwalk stocks this collection in sizes six to 22. Meanwhile, we find styles by the designer Veni Infantino particularly suit a taller lady. They have some beautiful floaty prints, perfect for summer and destination weddings."

A rule to remember

At Freja Designer Dressmaking, Mette Baillie (a designer whose work is solely bespoke for her clients) uses the start/ stop or accentuate/distract rule as her first port of call when dressing mamas. "This is a great tool that can make a big impact in not only looking good in your outfit but in feeling good and confident in yourself," she says. "If you stop your skirt hem where the leg is at its biggest, for example, it can look very frumpy and almost like the leg is that heavy all the way. But dropping or lifting the hem a tiny bit, to finish at a narrower part of your leg, can have a huge impact. The same with jacket and blouse hems - if you stop them on your hip where you're at your widest it doesn't work well, especially for pear and hourglass shapes."

"Once you know your shape and where to start/stop, you can shop accordingly," she adds. "You will know which garments will flatter you the most and make you feel like the best version of yourself."



"I felt absolutely amazing on the day and so many of the wedding guests commented on how fabulous my outfit was."





Pop of colour

When Natalie Rock, née Godfrey, at Frox of Falkirk tied the knot, there was no doubt who'd be styling her mum Maureen for the big day!

"Natalie's 2023 wedding to Chris at Glenbervie House Hotel was going to be my last time being mother-of-the-bride so it was very important to find an outfit I loved. I knew I didn't suit certain necklines and I have a short upper body, so I wanted something with a nice length and a flare. I also knew light pastel shades aren't for me - and I wanted a different style and colour to what I'd worn when my first daughter got married in 2010 (a structured, fitted dress and jacket in fuchsia pink). We booked a double appointment for myself and Natalie's now mother-in-law, Karin, at Frox of Falkirk - although I'd already had a sneak peek as Natalie often asks me to come in and do some modelling! I was keen on a dipped hem so tried quite a few of those on but there was a

dress in my head that I'd modelled a while beforehand. It wasn't there anymore but they did have the same style in royal blue in my size. I tried it and knew it was right for me - only my heart was set on the teal and I was keen for shorter cap sleeves. Fortunately, the outfit I chose was by Teresa Ripoll and Fiona, who owns the boutique, can order bespoke from her any time. When it arrived a few months later, I chose my matching teal Sarah Crozier headpiece. I felt absolutely amazing on the day and so many of the wedding guests commented on how fabulous my outfit was. I'd say to other mums that although dresses on the hanger might not look like something you'd wear, it's best to try them on - you might be amazed at how good it looks with the shape of your body."≫

Casey Stewart Photography

Tailor-made

Mother-of-the-groom Stephanie-Anne Harris wanted a bright dress that would show off her legs and look great when dancing, so decided to design her own

"I know what suits me and what doesn't, and I really wanted a unique outfit for my son Alexander's wedding. I absolutely didn't want the traditional look which, in my head, was a dress with a jacket, shoes, hat and bag all matching. I don't really like clothes shopping in general but when I have to refresh my wardrobe I tend to use one of the larger stores' personal shopping experiences. I actually had my own wedding dress made and decided I'd do the same with my MOG outfit. I Googled 'dress makers in Edinburgh' and found Mette at Freja Designer Dressmaking who provided a great, stress-free experience. I showed

her photos of me in dresses I have that I like, as well as ones from magazines. We talked through what would suit my shape - something to show off my legs, something with sleeves and, of course, something that would 'swoosh' when dancing! Mette sent me through some drawings then I went back for a 'paper' fitting where she adjusted the waist height, neckline, sleeve length, etc. The next try-on was with fabric and I really got the sense of what my dress was going to be like. I think by the time we're lucky enough to be MOB or MOG, we know our body shape so go with an outfit you know will suit you, as well as the colours that suit you."





Petite **Sue Allison** had specific criteria for her MOB outfit and, thanks to her husband, she found the rainbow dress of dreams

"Embarking on the search for a dress for my daughter Clare's wedding that would be stylish and comfortable (especially to dance in) was so exciting but also somewhat daunting. At just 5 ft 2 inches I didn't want to look like I was drowning and knew a more traditional sleeveless shift or A-line style was not for me. Oh, and I wanted to make sure my outfit was different enough that none of the guests would be wearing the same! My husband helped me look online and came across a boutique south of the border called Suzannah London. After spotting 'the rainbow dress' and falling for it immediately I arranged a fitting to coincide with a trip we'd conveniently already booked. Having never been to a London atelier before I was a little nervous but Conny at

Suzannah London was welcoming and helpful, and completely put me at ease. My clothes shopping mantra has always been that if I feel like doing a little dance in the fitting room then it's for me... Well, on this occasion, I was twirling round the shop floor! All that remained was to choose the neckline and sleeves (having customisable elements was great for helping me dress to suit my shape) and place my order. The whole experience was just wonderful and I went back a few months later for a final fitting. That was when I added the little straw boater hat and completed the look with L K Bennett suede court shoes that felt like slippers, even when ceilidh dancing! I know choosing a dress from Suzannah London was very much a treat but I always consider the price per wear of an outfit. I'm delighted to say I've already re-worn my rainbow dress at the races and will continue to don it for special occasions for many years to come."



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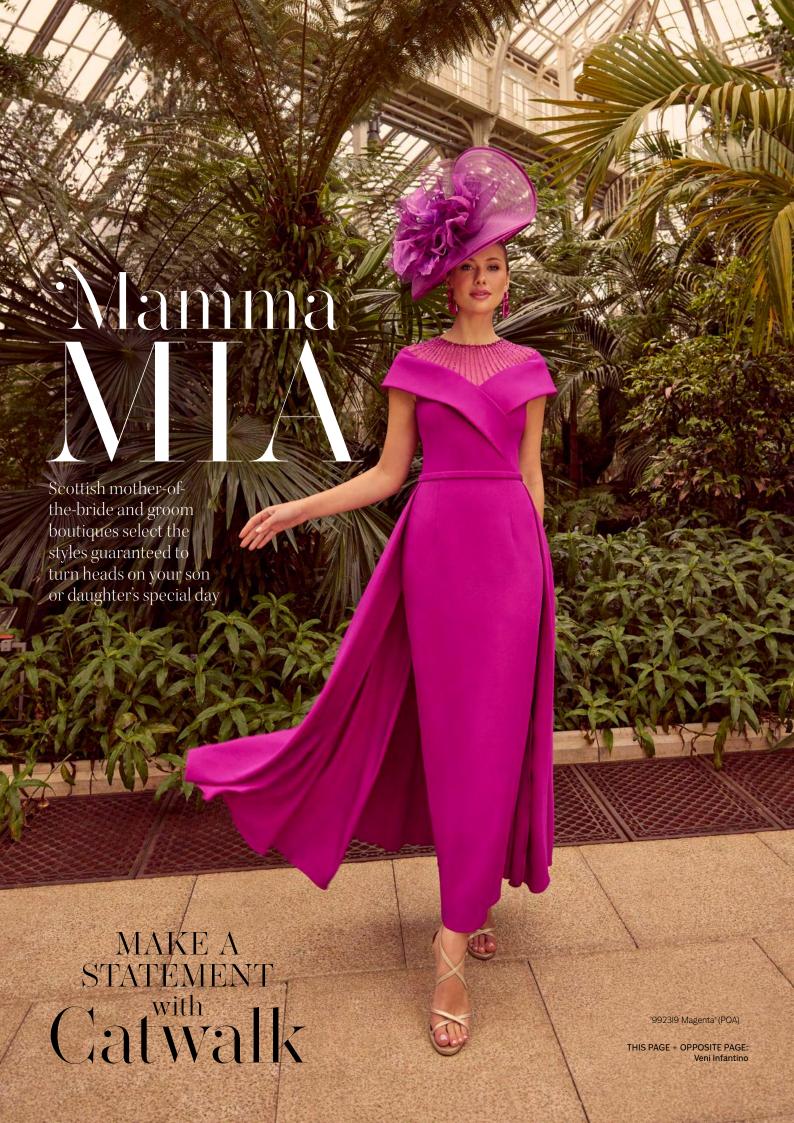




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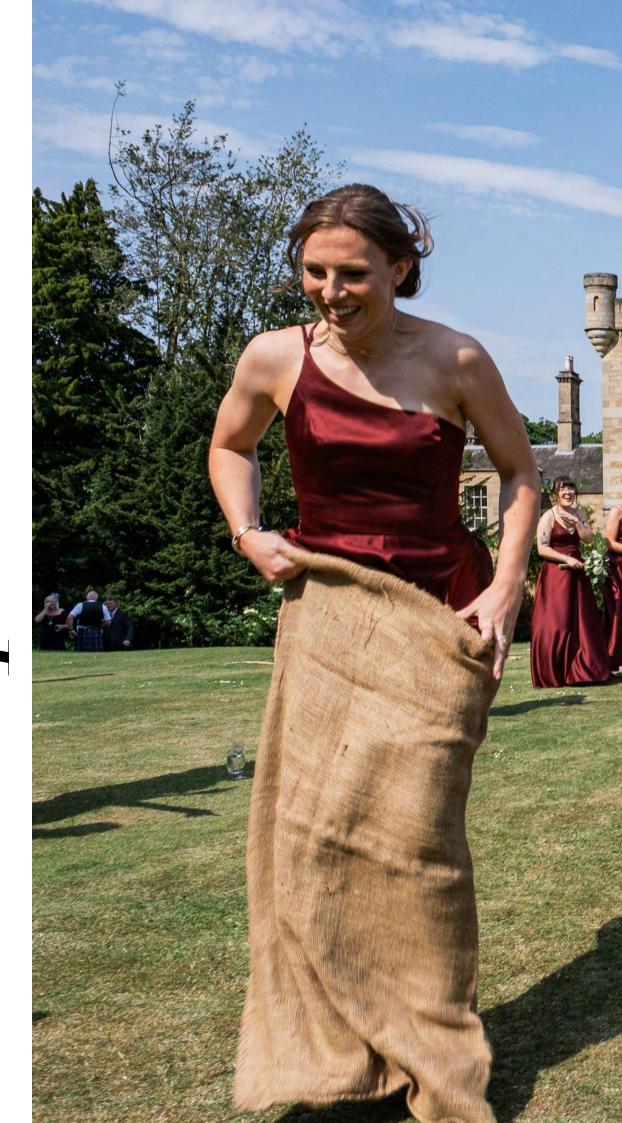




















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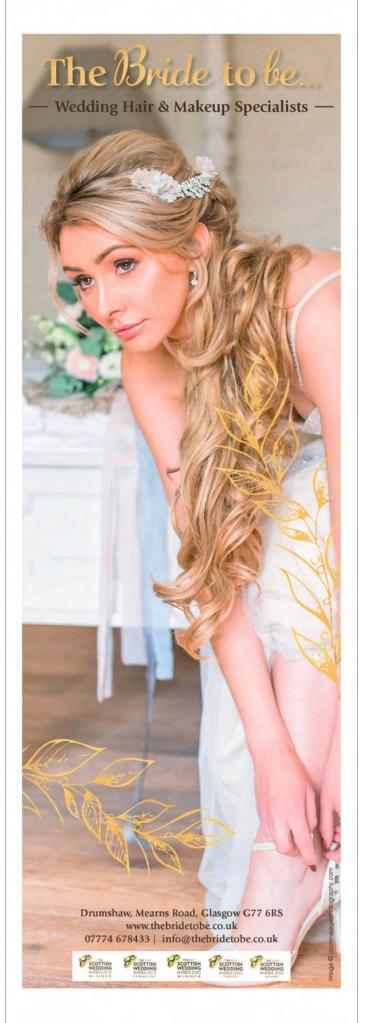
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A selection of Scottish celebrants share the ceremony traditions they love most

Scotland, unlike other countries, we're blessed with the opportunity to get married just about anywhere. But not only that - there are so many incredible, meaningful rituals that can be personalised to you as a couple and incorporated in your nuptials, whether you'll be saying 'I do' inside a chic city hotel, on the grounds of a luxe country manor or atop a totally dreamy snow-topped mountain. Get your notepads at the ready as it's inspo-galore from Scotland's celebrants...

Puppy love "Fur babies are often an

"Fur babies are often an important and integral part of family life so including your pet as ring bearer (or even 'best woof') is a great way to make memories. Many venues allow dogs during your ceremony and almost all will allow them for photographs, so if it's important to you let them know."

SUSAN DOUGLAS-SCOTT, CELEBRATE PEOPLE



Foods of life

"Offering bread and salt to one another is a European tradition. The bread symbolises the sweetness in life whilst the salt represents the challenges. Some also have their parents offering wine during or after the ceremony so the couple may never be thirsty. **CELEBRATE PEOPLE**

Cultural

gestures
"When one half of the couple is from a different culture they often bring gestures from their own culture. At one wedding the bride was Persian and the groom a Scot, and they did a Persian sugar rubbing gesture. Some of the special ladies in the bride's life spread a cloth of unity over the couple and two others (the pair's mums) rubbed sugar onto the cloth over them. In doing so, they are said to be spreading sweetness into the newlyweds' life and marriage."

SIMON HOUSTON, FUZE **CEREMONIES**

"I love using an oathing stone to set vows in stone. Before you pick it up, it's just a stone. One of thousands on that beach or in the woods. By choosing it, you give it meaning. Asking your small child to pick the stones as Caitlin (of Caitlin Wilder Photography) and Ste did is a lovely way to give your kids a special role [pictured]. I love that it gives you a physical memento of your ceremony.

I had a couple set their vows in stone last year using one from the beach where the groom's dad's ashes had been scattered. He was then physically a part of the ceremony which was just gorgeous."



Cloth of unity

Shades of love

"Colours can be symbolic. I conduct many weddings for Chinese people and they believe red is the colour of double happiness. We often have a red or red and gold handfasting

GERRIE DOUGLAS-SCOTT. **CELEBRATE PEOPLE** ≫





Wine, wine and more wine!

"Drinks are commonly used during wedding ceremonies and wine is always popular. For the time capsule ritual, the couple seal their favourite bottle of wine away in a box with a love letter to each other. The idea is to open it and read it at a future milestone anniversary. Wine blending is another favourite and we recently had a pair of wine connoisseurs who combined their individual favourite red wines together. They shared a sip during the ceremony as a gesture to recognise their new journey together and had the rest at the top table for the speeches and toasts."

YVONNE HANNAH, FUZE CEREMONIES

Sand blending

"The wedding sand blending ceremony has ancient roots dating back to Native American, Hawaiian and African traditions. They often used the concept of mixing different coloured sands to symbolise the merging of two lives. Over time, this beautiful practice has made its way into contemporary Western weddings, offering couples a chance to create a meaningful and memorable experience for themselves and their guests. We've had couples use sand from the beach where the proposal happened mixed with sand from the beach at their wedding venue (or a beach close by), which is a

beautiful idea."
GEORGE MCLEAN, FUZE CEREMONIES





"Tartan is most traditional but I've helped couples to tie their knot with all kinds of cords and fabrics most meaningful to them – from climbing ropes, stitched-together rugby shirts and artfully crafted Celtic knot macramé creations to locally woven tweeds and lace from mum's old wedding dress. Tradition with a twist can feel so special when you make it your own."

GEORGIA BROOKER, HUMANIST SOCIETY SCOTLAND

The ceremony

"Unless the couple and two witnesses are attending the Registrar's office to exchange vows and sign the paperwork, the ceremony itself is a ritual with common elements like telling the couple's story, speaking about love and marriage and exchanging rings. So, the question is how simple or elaborate; how personal and how formal do you want your ritual to be? I rarely meet couples who have a solid idea of what they definitely want but many have an idea of the tone or know they like the sound of certain elements. More have definite ideas of what they don't want! Your celebrant will try to gauge what kind of ceremony you want and bounce ideas off you without imposing their own preferences. Then we prepare a full script that can change and evolve with your feedback until it's just right."

CRAIG FLOWERS, INDEPENDENT

HUMANIST CEREMONIES

Water of life

"There are lots of metaphors for water. Sprinkling water (often some from each person's hometown) over joined hands symbolises being joined forever."

MO WATERSTON, CELEBRATE PEOPLE Turn to Your Wedding Day on page 154 to see how real couples have incorporated beautiful rituals into their ceremonies ■



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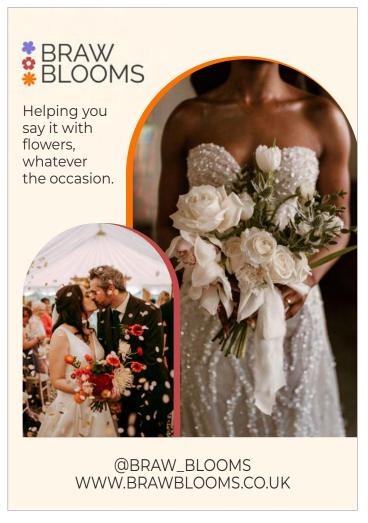
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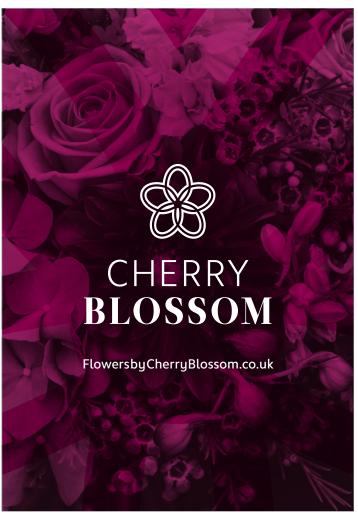
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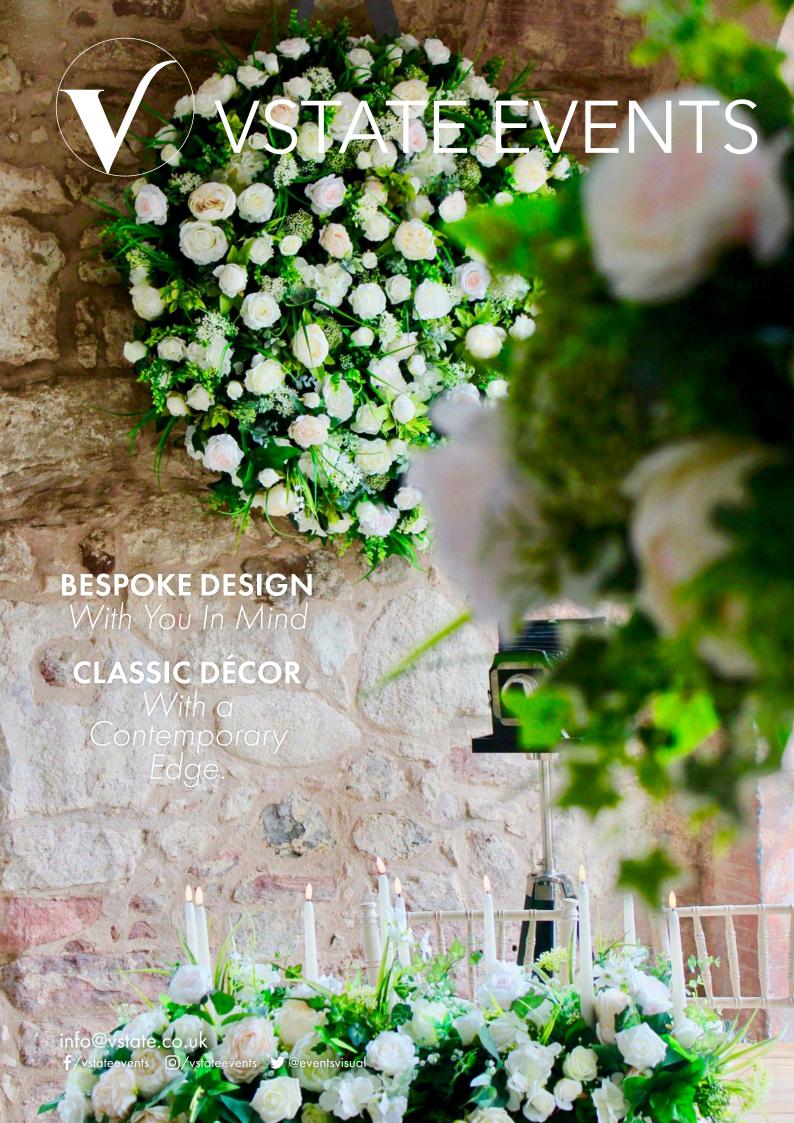












The Kitted Cake Company The Kitted Cake Compa

Ready for your wedding cake? We've asked our experts to share advice on what to do when starting out on this delicious journey

you're newly-engaged, chances are you'll feel like there's a tonne to do. Choosing your wedding cake supplier can be a big task as there are so many things to consider – style, flavours, size – you name it!

First up, some sage advice for couples – don't panic! Our cake designers say that any baker worth their salt (or, in this case, sugar) will guide you through the process step by step. All you need to do is gather some ideas about what you're after. "Google is your friend!" says Pippa Hutcheon of Philippa Rose Cake Design, "Look for cake makers in your area, look at their websites, follow them on social media and see if their work is something that you like the look of. Cake makers have different styles so it's good to look at different ideas and see what would match your wedding aesthetic."

All our designers say wedding shows are a great way to meet designers face to face and also to sample their wares! Kerrie Gourlay of Crumbdidilyumptious says, "Have a realistic budget and idea of styles of cake you like, or any elements you definitely want to include on your cake, like the pattern from your invitations or flowers from bouquets or even a model of your dog. Show us your Pinterest boards, pictures of bits you have saved. This gives a cake designer an idea of what you like. Once you have found your cake designer they should guide you through the process."

Ryan White Photography

Zara's Cakery

Alison McCabe from The Kilted Cake Company says while it's not necessary to know a definite cake design that you would like, "it is helpful to know or have an idea of the different cake finishes e.g. fondant, buttercream, semi-naked, naked cakes. Not everyone offers all the different mediums, we all have our preferred medium to work with. So that's the only thing that would be important to know when finalising who to work with."

However, Katherine Hunt from Katie's Cakes urges couples not to feel under pressure. "Couples need time to explore and consider all elements of their wedding, such as the bridesmaids' dresses, the groom's tartan, venue décor and wedding flowers, and these are usually reflected in the cake design," she says. "The cake designer will walk the couple through their wedding cake journey and will be on hand to answer any questions."

Eliza T Wedding Photography

Never too soon

As a rule, these designers are busy bees and all say their diaries can get booked up at least two years in advance when it comes to popular summer dates. So if you're thinking of a high season wedding, that's definitely something to keep in mind.

Alison advises, "As soon as you have your date and venue you should be looking to confirm a booking with the suppliers you would like to work with. Key summer dates can book one to two years in advance so you can never be too early." Kerrie also makes the point that knowing your venue and date is essential, as delivery distance will impact the cost.

Businesses will ask for a deposit to save your chosen date and, after your consultations, the cake design will be finalised a few months before the wedding.

Vary the style

Our experts say knowing guest numbers will help to calculate how big to make your cake. "Each tier feeds a certain number of people, so knowing how many guests are coming means we can provide the right number of tiers and design the cake to fit. You don't want loads of cake left over but you also don't want to under cater," Pippa explains. "We don't cater for everyone that you've invited as not everybody will have a bit of cake, I work on a guide of 80% of your total guest number. There's no point in paying for something that's going to get wasted!" Alison adds.

And while having tiers is fairly traditional, there are lots of ways to vary the style - or you can ditch them entirely! Pippa explains, "You can have as many tiers as you want because dummy tiers and cake separators can be used to add height and interest." Kerrie says, "A traditional tiered cake isn't your only option. I've done croquembouche, cupcakes, donuts, cinnamon rolls and brownie towers as alternatives with a cutting cake. You could have a macaron tower, a truffle tower or a tiered cookie 'cake'. I love different - so ask - I might just manage what you think is a crazy request."

Some couples opt for a complete dummy cake (cake-shaped faux layers decorated with icing) then have a less elaborate cutting cake to serve to guests. Our cake designers advise that a similar amount of work goes into decorating these dummy tiers, so it's often better value to take the cake itself.

"A traditional tiered cake isn't your only option."





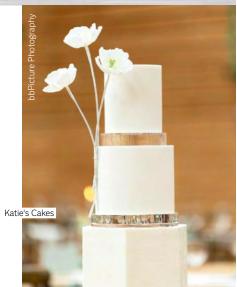
Add some flavour

When it comes to flavours, the sky really is the limit. You can sample them at wedding fairs and most designers create tasting boxes, too. While Pippa finds vanilla is still a firm favourite, Alison is noticing her couples becoming a bit more adventurous. "With my own flavour menu, white chocolate and raspberry is the new 'vanilla' and my couples really love cherry bakewell, sticky toffee, tablet and chocolate salted caramel to name a few," she explains. A traditional fruit cake is definitely not something she is asked for very much.

Katherine's popular flavours include lemon and elderflower, raspberry and white chocolate, and sticky toffee and caramel. Meanwhile Zara Emadi of Zara's Cakery says that along with white chocolate and raspberry, caramel, lemon and poppy seed, or lemon and blueberry are top picks. Alison adds. "A different flavour for each tier is an absolute must, there is so much choice now when it comes to cake flavours that you want to have options for your guests and also for yourselves!"

> "Cake makers have different styles." »
> PIPPA, PHILIPPA ROSE CAKE DESIGN





Zara's Cakery

Trend watch

Texture time

Zara says textures are going to be a big hit as we go through 2024 and beyond. "This could be from stencilling, using wafer paper, pearls, or any kind of edible mediums on the cake and not having a plain smooth finish," she says. "I am also seeing more silk ribbons. As some couples feel safer to keep their cake colour white, you can add that splash of colour to your cake with delicate silk ribbons!"

Original ideas

Both Kerrie and Katherine note that elaborately piped Lambeth-style cakes are on the rise. Katherine explains, "Couples are looking for more originality in their wedding cake and there are now lots of non-edible elements on the market that can be incorporated into the cake design and staging, such as cake spacers and separators or cake stands which are available in a variety of materials and finishes. Naked and seminaked cakes continue to be popular, too." Pippa adds, "Some of the cakes I have made include fillable acrylic tiers and I have put fresh or silk flowers, or fairy lights inside them. Others have side bars, which makes the cake on the top look like it's floating."

Edible art

Pippa's big piece of advice to couples is, "Show off your cake! It's an edible piece of art and should be displayed on something more than just a cake stand – and definitely not one of those silver plastic cake stands that so many venues have. Make a whole feature out of it and make sure it's got great lighting." Katherine adds, "Each cake, no matter the size, should provide a beautiful centrepiece for the couple's big day!"

Philippa Rose Cake Design













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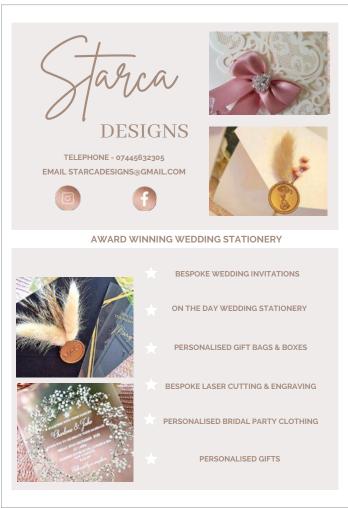
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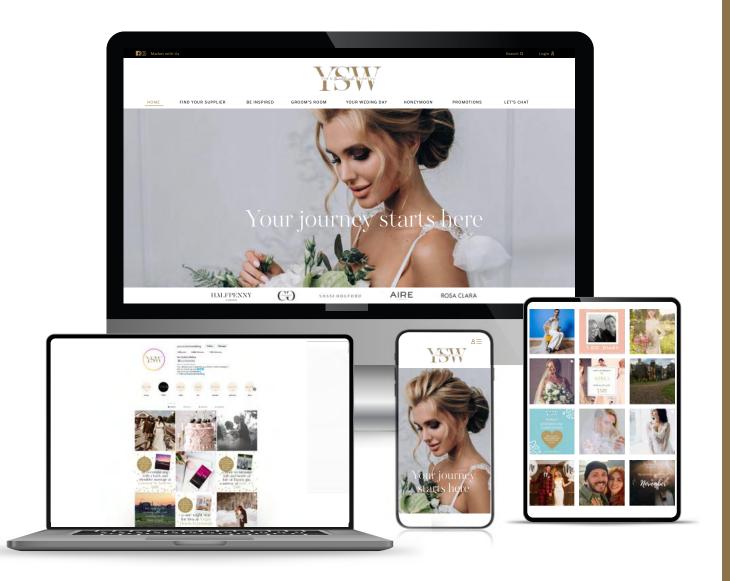
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Keep them HAP

Want to ensure your guests are entertained and not clock-watching their way through your wedding day? Consider these fun and memorable options, which come highly recommended from those in the know...





Strike a pose!

Let us introduce you to Blue Parrot Events Group's latest piece of wedding-ready tech – the 360! Bringing together the very best software with a whole new concept in capturing your best angles, guests (up to five at a time) simply hop onto the platform and the motorised arm rotates around them to capture the moment. Once they've shown their best poses, a stunning slow-motion video is created and can be shared by text or email right away. Blue Parrot's Stephanie Alexander recommends unveiling the 360 as the party is getting started and guests are ready to show off their moves.

One thing to be mindful of though is space, she says. "It would be best suited to a foyer area or to the side of a large reception area. You need approximately three metres squared to allow the 360 to spin freely without risk of obstacles."

End with a bang

Fireworks make an incredible end to your wedding – or can be an impressive time-filler during the band's break. And did you know they can be personalised? "Clients add elements like extra special finales or having the display choreographed to their favourite song," says Rachel

Dakers of event management, technical production, fireworks and pyrotechnics company 21CC Group. Make sure to check your venue allows fireworks and consider the time of year, adds Rachel. "In summer it gets dark later in the evening – displays have to start by 10.50pm to finish by 11pm."

A guest book with a difference

Going vintage? You'll adore this take on the traditional written guest book, which doubles up as a super-cool piece of retro décor! Who doesn't love a vintage pink telephone?! "Before your wedding, you can record some words for your guests to hear. And on the day, they just lift the receiver and speak after the beep. It's that simple," explains Stephanie at Blue Parrot, who also provide a funky neon 'Leave a Message' sign and personalised instructions. "After your wedding our team will send a file with all the messages captured, giving memories that can be cherished forever."





Pretty as a picture

If you want your guests to get a giggle and give them a unique wedding favour, how about hiring a professional caricaturist? This entertainment option won't take up much space (only a table and a couple of chairs) and can fit into any part of your day. "It could be right after the ceremony, during the drinks reception or part of the evening celebration. Whatever suits your schedule of events," explains Laura Manescau of Ladycaricature. "It takes me less than five minutes to create a good quality comic bookstyle caricature and my drawings aren't the typical 'same eyes, nose and mouth' for everyone! I've developed my own style with funny but soft shapes. I get great feedback - guests love to spend a couple of minutes chatting with me, having fun and getting the opportunity to keep a good memory of the day."

Digital photo booth

If your bridal party is a load of social media butterflies, they'll love a digital photo booth. This clever piece of kit (all it needs is a few metres of space and a nearby plug socket) will instantly capture memories as high-quality images, GIFs or Boomerangs you can send to your device instantly. At Blue Parrot Events, booths include a free tension backdrop of your choice and you can personalise to the max with a photo template that includes a custom border, your names and your wedding date.



Social networking Choose your experience

Visual delights

Have you thought about fountains and confetti cannons to mark significant moments? Fountains can be used indoors or outdoors as a stand-out background to the important parts of your wedding - we're thinking first kiss, first dance or cake cutting. "Firing the confetti is a great photo opportunity. You can choose the colour and most is biodegradable," advises Rachel at 21CC Group. "Alternatively, make your guests feel welcome from the minute they arrive with a projection of your initials on the side of the venue or inside the ceremony space." Another feast for the eyes! ≫







Surprise them, *Strictly*-style

How do you and your BFFs fancy surprising the rest of the guests with a flash mob dance when they least expect it? "Dancing is great fun and a brilliant laugh so why not hire a studio for a couple of hours and get the hens, stags or both together to learn a dance they can break out at the wedding to entertain everyone?" smiles Felicity Drever of Learn 2 Wedding Dance. "It's simple. The bridal party choose their song and I choreograph it to suit everyone (including how the bride will move in her attire), then teach you how to do it. Most groups film the moves on their phones so they can practice before the big day." You can sneak this surprise in at any point of the day, although after the first dance is a popular time. Alternatively, if you're likely to need time to get a few more fizzes down you, schedule it in for



after the buffet. That said, Felicity has also choreographed brides and their 'maids so they can blow their guests away as they "work it" down the aisle. "This is a memory guests will be talking about for a long time. And it's a real highlight for you too. Looking back at the photos from right after your flash mob, you'll see the connection you all had after keeping the secret, then letting loose on the wedding day."

Making heartfelt memories

Caitlin and Callum Phee tied the knot at The Corinthian Club in Glasgow and wanted their day to stand out

"We know what it's like to be at a wedding and feel like the day is too long in places, plus we knew how much good entertainment can improve an experience. So, we focused on creating something memorable for our guests and it worked - they loved it and said there was something to amuse them everywhere they turned. We had a photo booth full of silly props, Santa appeared ringing his bell after the speeches (the adults were just as excited as the children) and three feather-and glitter-clad burlesque dancers got everyone into the party mood. But that's not all - our parents surprised us with more! GeO Gospel Choir gave us a Love Actually moment post-ceremony and sang during the cocktail hour, Mickey and Minnie Mouse showed up for me, (I'm a Disney gal), magician Cameron Young kept people smiling before the ceremony and a surprise saxophonist worked with the venue's incredible DJ to keep the dance floor full. Our choices (and surprises) were close to our hearts. So, pick entertainment that suits you - not just something that's on-trend. Think about when there may be lulls - after the ceremony? After the evening buffet? Finally, have fun with it!"









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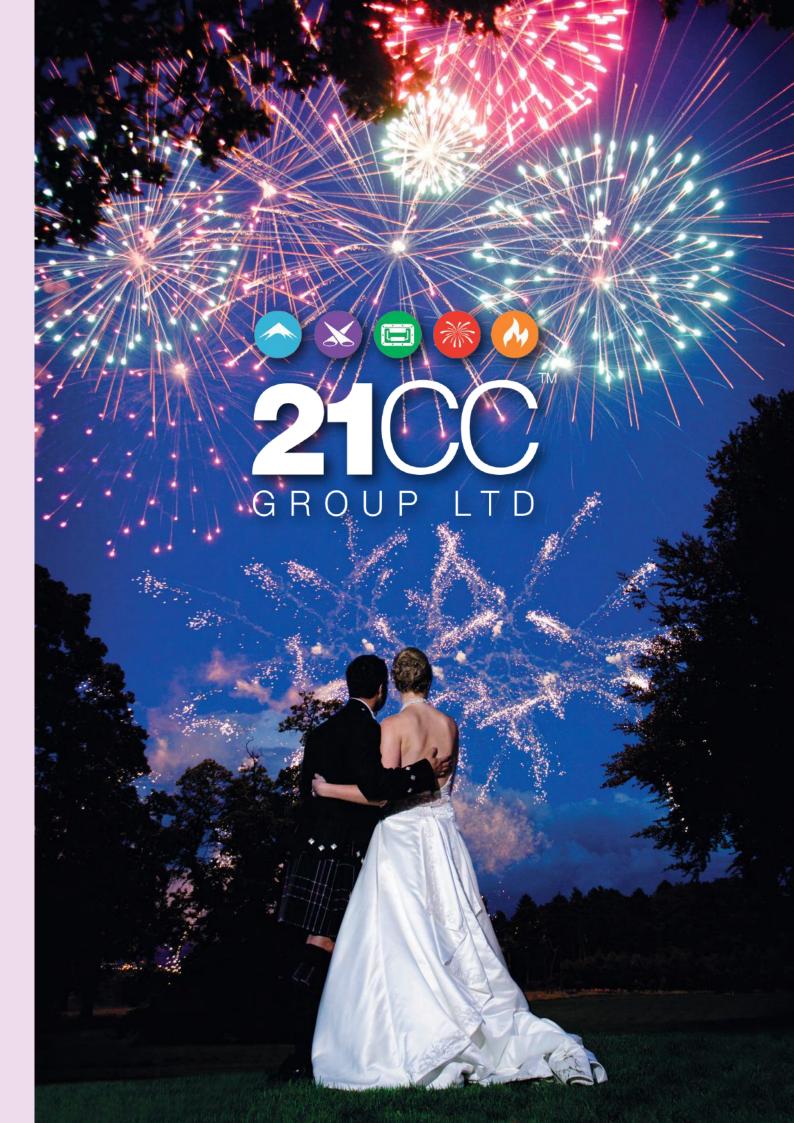


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Music to ?

our ears

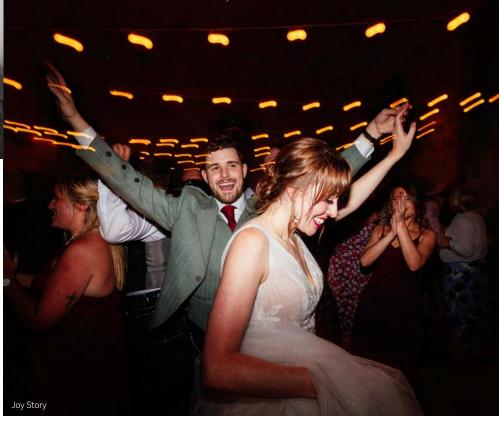
Music plays a big part in wedding celebrations so **Jennifer McLaren** gets tips from the experts on setting the right tone



ove music but don't know where to start when it comes to including it in your wedding day? First things first – when setting your budget, decide how much you wish to spend on live entertainment. There are many different points throughout the day where you might want to feature it. You could have a piper to play as guests arrive, an ensemble to perform during the ceremony, perhaps a gospel choir to sing, a sax player between the ceremony and reception and, last but not least, the evening festivities!

The evening reception will no doubt be high on this list, and a live band certainly brings an extra dimension to proceedings. "It's an essential part of any big day and the one that will have the greatest impact on the enjoyment of you and your guests," says Del Cotton, head of agents Hireaband. "A great band will appeal to everyone in the room. They'll know exactly what to play and when to play it to ensure a busy dance floor."

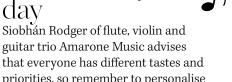
Del also makes the point that bands normally perform between 8pm and midnight with a short break. So if your wedding day starts at 1pm and finishes at midnight, the band will be responsible for well over a third of your day! "You'll



know when you've found the right band for you," he adds.

Having a piper is always a great option if you're getting married in Scotland. Some venues have their very own 'in-house' piper – so remember to enquire if you're interested! For those on the lookout for a piper, Iain Melvin of Piping Services Scotland can point you in the right direction. He says the pipes are a great focal point and create a sense of occasion. "If you can budget for pipes and something like this then absolutely do," says Iain. "Don't worry if not though. Background music does an excellent job too."

Personalise your A



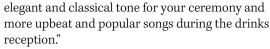
that everyone has different tastes and priorities, so remember to personalise these parts of the day. "Unlimited budgets can have it all: classical musicians, ensembles or harpists for ceremonies, DJ and sax to kick-start the party, before a live band in the evening," she explains. "But if you don't want to blow the budget on music then picking versatile options is a great idea. Amarone Music can provide a more











Andrew Robb of The Scottish Jazz Collective advises, "Think of the songs and pieces that you love the most, these are usually things that have some meaning or make you feel something when you hear them. As a couple, try to picture or visualise how you would feel hearing them at the wedding."

Musical influence

Music can really set the tone for different parts of your ceremony and Siobhán says there's a reason why it's all around us. "Nearly every memorable movie and TV scene has music playing in the background," she says. "Romantic, elegant, fun, alternative, all of the above - the most impactful way of creating a particular atmosphere is through your choice of music and musicians." She adds, "As you're picking every aspect of your day, think about how it all goes together and if each part complements what you have already chosen. Imagine yourself in your outfit, walking down the aisle; do your flowers, décor and music all go together? Can you picture it all coming together on the day?"



Del says a great band can be the difference between an ordinary wedding and a wonderful one - he also urges couples to put their faith in their chosen band, "Most will have played at dozens if not hundreds of weddings over the years. They'll know what to play and when to play it. Let them get on with it. You'll have a good idea of the style of music they play before you book them. The Hireaband website lists sample sets for all the bands we represent. Trust your band to do what you're paying them to do - fill your dance floor and make sure all of your guests get to hear something they like." ≫

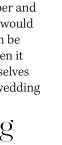


"It's an essential part of any big day and the one that will have the greatest impact on the enjoyment of you and your guests." DEL COTTON

Andrew adds: "The choice of music can have a big influence on the tone of a wedding, it's often something that couples and guests remember and is a memorable feature of most weddings. I would say that during the ceremony, the music can be quite poignant, romantic and reflective. Often it can be a small insight into the couple themselves and can give an indication of what kind of wedding the rest of the day will be."

A wonderful wedding

Music can also lift the spirits and Iain says a piper keeps the mood celebratory and upbeat, "If you want a Scottish wedding, we think the piper certainly helps get that message over from the start. If you have any guests from outside Scotland, the pipes are a bit of a treat!"









"It's amazing how a song can take you back."

An everlasting love

Kelly Doherty married husband Alex Dobbin at Cambo House, Kingsbarns, in July 2023.

She walked down the aisle to Natalie Cole's *This Will Be (An Everlasting Love)* which she describes as "the most romantic song I think of without being bittersweet or inauthentic."

Ever since she was small, Kelly knew this song would be part of her wedding day, so as soon as she and Alex became official she told him this was a nonnegotiable. Thankfully Alex loved it too – and there's more – the song was performed on the day by Alex's choir The Phoenix Soul & Gospel Choir. "Alex always knew he wanted to have his choir involved in the ceremony and it made sense they'd sing the main song," Kelly goes on. "It was extremely overwhelming. I was crying the whole way down and using every fibre of my being to not ugly cry. I'm not sure if I succeeded!"

She adds, "Don't pick your music during the ceremony to please anyone else. The reception is for your guests so consider them then. The ceremony is for you and your partner, so do what's right for you." Turn to page 236 to see more from their amazing wedding.



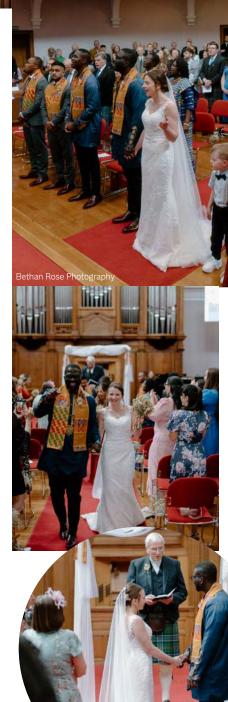
A personal touch

Bethany and Tease Otoo married at Broxmouth Courtyard in July 2023. Music played a key part in their day and one of the most special moments was when Bethany walked down the aisle at her childhood church while her talented friend Beth sang a song she had composed for them.

Bethany says, "When me and Tease were dating, Beth wrote this song and when we were engaged I asked if she would be happy to sing it while I walked down the aisle – which she was more than happy to do!"

The song doesn't officially have a name but it tied in the theme of love with both the couple's vows and some verses from the Bible.

"I think that moment was overwhelming in so many ways that it was difficult to fully absorb at the time, but I've loved going back and watching our wedding video to relive it." She adds, "Choose songs that are personal to you or will bring you good memories! It's amazing how a song can take you back to a specific moment so you want it to be a good one."







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EWINS Let's dance

Ever wondered how you're going to get through your first dance as newlyweds without tripping one another up? Felicity Drever of Learn 2 Wedding Dance and Edinburgh Dance School reveals all to Claire Muir...



'm sure I'm not alone when I cringe a little at the slow shuffle my new husband and I did at our wedding as we eagerly awaited the part of our song where the music picked up, knowing the bridal party would join in and take the heat off us. With that in mind, it's no surprise when dance teacher Felicity Drever tells me lots of her clients say learning to dance together is some of the best money they've spent on their wedding!

"They're transported to another world for an hour, flirting with one another and learning a unique dance that'll give them confidence to get on the dance floor and wow their guests," she explains. "You learn how to move together - and how to look like you like each other!"

What happens during a lesson?

Felicity assures couples that as soon as they arrive, she takes away the stress of getting up to dance by... yep, getting up to dance! "I learn about the couple as we start dancing and listening to their chosen song. I take into consideration everything from how restrictive their outfits are to how many sides guests are watching from. I show couples how to move in their outfits, and brides learn how to work their dress. When you're dancing, I'm a third pair of eyes that can tell you exactly what your dance needs. And usually less is more."

Felicity choreographs as she goes, which some couples can't quite believe. "No two clients are the same so I need us to all be together to see what works. I don't stick with particular styles of dance. Instead, I look at the couple's connection. Do they move fast or slow together? Then I speed up or slow down the steps to make them fit the lyrics."

Usually by the end of the first lesson Felicity and a couple will have choreographed the dance and she'll film their performance so they can refer to it when practising at home. Felicity recommends squeezing in some practice little and often and reports that even visualising dancing beautifully while enjoying time together can manifest a perfect performance.

After three to five lessons, she reckons you'll be able to hold each other properly and get around without standing on one another's feet - but bear in mind that the more lessons to-be-weds book, the more value for money you get.

Not only that, though, you're welcome to bring your bridal party along for no additional cost! So, if you're like me and hoping your besties will join you on the floor, this is an excellent opportunity for them to boost their confidence and brush up on their skills - plus have loads of fun!

"I show couples how to move in their outfits."

TOP• first dance songs

One of Felicity's couples enjoying

Murder on the Dancefloor - Sophie Ellis - Bextor

"Great for those who want an upbeat choice, especially with its recent revamp - a definite crowd-pleaser."

First Day of My Life - Bright Eves

"A couple came with this recently and I loved how jolly it made me feel. Choreographing it was an absolute joy."

Until I Found You - Stephen Sanchez

"This is the most traditional waltz rhythm for a first dance. Effortless, relaxed and all about smooth moves."









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a wedding coordinator?

Some couples thrive on planning and are happy to take charge of their own wedding organisation – or delegate jobs to the bridal party. But more and more to-be-weds are open to the idea of a wedding planner...

Reception set-up



we talk to newlyweds a lot and we must admit. one of the most popular topics for reflection is wedmin - whether that's chatting to a couple who can't thank their wedding planner enough for finding a niche venue/ saving the day/something else amazing, or catching up with a burned-out duo who DIY-ed the most beautiful celebration but found it ever-so-stressful and, actually, admit they could have done with an expert on side.



"We ask about their vision."

OSKAR, THE WEDDING GURU - OSKAR

Enter the wedding planner

"Deciding whether or not to hire a planner depends on the couple's situation," advises Emma Matthews of Timeless White, a company that helps organise luxurious destination weddings, intimate elopements and everything in between. "For tented weddings, for example, it's highly recommended due to the additional logistics, complexities and risks. Likewise, weddings with intricate set-ups can also greatly benefit to ensure everything runs smoothly. Sometimes family dynamics can add stress and a planner can help alleviate some of those concerns."

That said, there need not be a grand or specific reason for hiring help. It might just be that your busy life has no space for additional commitments or the thought of dealing with lots of vendors is your idea of a logistical nightmare. "We're here to liaise with suppliers on behalf of the couple and ensure everything runs to time and plan. We are a point of contact for the bridal party, guests and suppliers," confirms Roni Hyslop of event management company All Wrapped Up Events Scotland.

What's on offer?

All Wrapped Up offers a range of packages but Roni says that most couples create their own. "Our allinclusive packages cover everything from our in-house team - catering, bar, furniture, floristry, piper, ceilidh band... The list goes on! Meanwhile, DIY couples love our weekend coordination package where we assist in the set-up and derigging of furniture and décor. It means they don't have to worry about anything. There's no right or wrong time to get in touch and from your first consultation, you'll know whether hiring a coordinator is the right decision," explains Roni.

If it's a yes, you'll want to do a deep dive into the packages available but, well-versed in making life easier for to-be-weds, your potential coordinator will guide you. At The Wedding Guru - Oskar, this is taken care of during a commitment-free discovery call. "We ask a lot of questions about their vision, challenges thus far, dreams and desires as well as the non-negotiable and most important factors in the wedding," explains lead wedding planner Oskar Gilchrist-Grodnicki.

For time-poor couples he recommends Full Wedding Planning, which covers research, shortlisting and liaison on all aspects of your day. Part Wedding Planning is for those who want expertise, guidance and support while contributing creatively themselves. "We identify the areas that don't give them joy and they happily offload to us while taking care of the things they do enjoy. We catch up quarterly and continuously support through instant messenger." Meanwhile On-the-day Coordination gives you two wedding gurus from morning prep until first dance... Perfect if you want to do all the wedmin yourself, then really focus on enjoying the fruits of your labour stress-free!

Simply seeking some reassurance that the day will run smoothly? There's a package for that too - All Wrapped Up's bridal bootcamps. "They can be used at the beginning of planning; midway to assure you you're on the right track, or at the end to check your timelines and flag up any missed but vital details. We spend up to three hours chatting all things wedding - the time is yours and we go with the flow," says Roni.≫

"There's no right or wrong time to get in touch."

SCOTLAND

Fixing little details





Busting the myths

Tell someone vou're thinking of hiring a planner and the chances are they'll assume you're very fancy. As such, many couples don't look into it because they reckon it's too expensive. But actually it's quite the opposite - and value packed. At Timeless White, for example, Emma's team spends a massive 160 hours planning the average wedding! "Aside from catering, no other vendor puts in the same amount of time and effort," she confirms. "So, when you're making your decision it's worth comparing the cost of planning services with others who may allocate less time to your wedding and its follow-ups."

Not to mention, can you put a price on your peace of mind? Whether it's for supplier recommendations or having a go-to person for last-minute issues, a coordinator can take a massive load off you as you get wedding-ready. "They've spent years curating a list of trusted colleagues to ensure you have the best day possible," smiles Roni.

Considering a hotel venue?

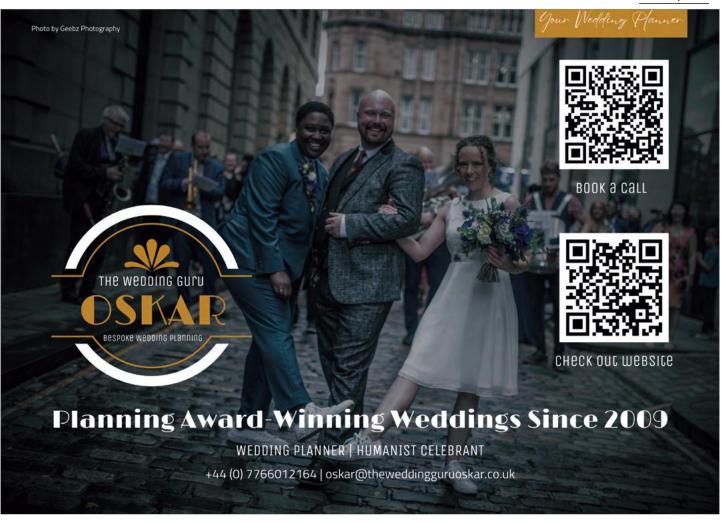
Spoiler alert: You'll probably get a wedding expert as part of your package! Kirsty Grant, senior wedding and events coordinator at Lochside House Hotel & Spa tells us how it works...

"We try our best to help with each wedding from the first show round to the celebration itself. We know our venue like the back of our hand so take stress and hassle away from to-be-weds – that means contacting suppliers, organising the running order, being the master of ceremonies and sometimes even dressing the

bride on the day! You get as much or as little help as you like. I'd never impose on a couple but always reassure them that we're here if they need anything. We keep in touch with meetings and guidance as standard through recommendations and a checklist. And for those who need more support, we're only a call or email away – you can even have a weekly meeting if you feel you need it. Our team builds great relationships and on the day our couples feel relaxed because they know us and have confidence that we'll make their wedding the best."



"We're only a call or email away." ■
KIRSTY, LOCHSIDE HOUSE HOTEL & SPA



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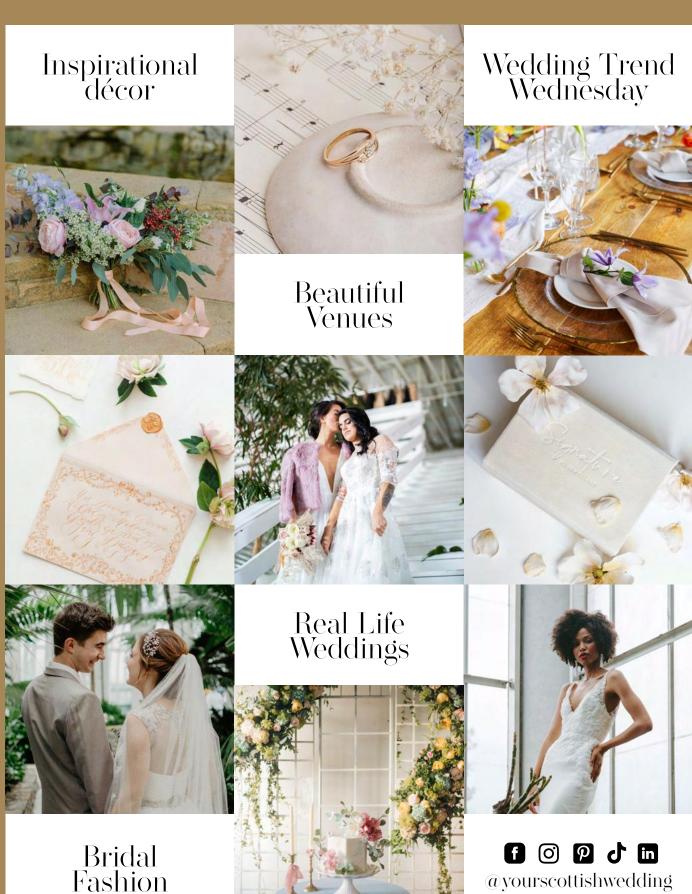


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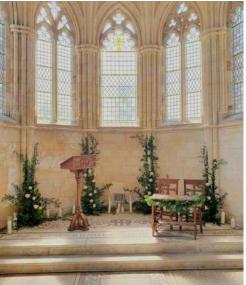
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Focal point

From stunning confetti throws to bouquets being held aloft, we asked some fabulous Scottish photographers to share their favourite celebratory exits

here's most definitely a sense of relief and elation when the official part of your ceremony concludes. And once you've said 'I do', it's finally time to take your first steps into the world as a married couple. Some of the best wedding exit photos can be completely unplanned and that's why you need an amazing photographer who knows just when to snap the shutter to capture that all-important moment.

Walking out amongst a shower of confetti is a great shot for your wedding album, and a bouquet held in the air gives a true sense of celebration. Meanwhile, impromptu kisses, perfectly-executed sparkler send-offs and moments of sheer surprise and joy are all memories you'll want to smile at as the years go by.





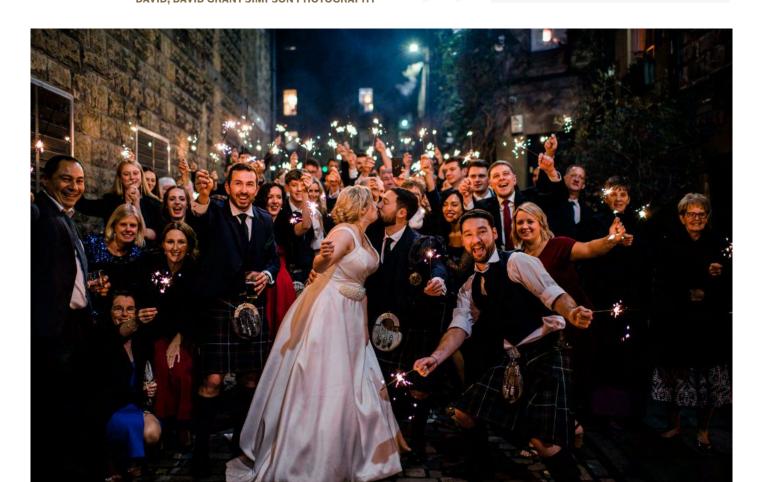
The newlyweds Meghan and Michael stepped out of their ceremony with beams of sunlight dancing amidst the fluttering confetti, creating a beautiful moment to photograph. Their friends and family, caught up in the moment, showered the pair with blessings, hugs and colourful dried flower confetti. Laughter and smiles filled the air and it was one of my favourite moments from the day to capture."

LAURA, LAURA A. TILIMAN PHOTOGRAPHY



➤ "This was a really fun moment to capture. It was mid-December at The Caves in Edinburgh. It was pretty cold, so I thought that it would be tough to persuade the guests to go outside after dinner. In the end, it wasn't an issue. Everyone was more than happy to embrace the fun and energy of Rebekah and Alasdair's awesome wedding. Sparkler shots can be challenging to capture. Trying to get all of the sparklers lit at the same time is tough. The trick is to stick the unlit sparklers against the already lit ones. After that, it's about getting everyone organised very quickly before they all start to go out."

≪"Imogen and Jonathan's wedding was full of happiness, fun and laughter the entire day. They had gathered everyone from around Scotland and brought them all back to Ullapool where Jonathan grew up. The weather was perfect for an outdoor wedding so they got married under the large tree in the garden. After the ceremony I arranged two lines of guests and the rest just came together. This is possibly the happiest moment of the whole day and what better photo to remember it by."≫ **MATT, FERN PHOTOGRAPHY**



≫ "Cody and Victoria had a beautiful ceremony and celebration at Spedlins Castle and they had been waiting for this moment for years. The couple knew the photographs in front of the tower were incredibly important after the ceremony and this couple is so in love that affection didn't fall short that day or fail to be photographed. In this photo Cody embraced his wife suddenly and gave her a passionate kiss! Everyone was full of smiles, laughter and tears of happiness, including the couple." REBECCA, REBECCAMARIE

PHOTOGRAPHY

*Confetti filled the air as Juliet and Aidan, surrounded by friends and family, were absolutely buzzing to become Mr and Mrs Montgomery Edwards!

At one point, they zoomed towards me so fast I had to put my hand up to motion to them to slow down, they almost knocked me over! Their happiness was infectious."

JENNIFER, JENNIFLOWER
PHOTOGRAPHY



≫ "Hannah and Shaun had planned their wedding in a dreamy village in Sicily but the pandemic stopped them in their tracks and left them scrambling to reorganise a wedding at home. With the help of Hannah's sister, they managed to put together a restriction compliant day at Cornhill Castle. They enjoyed a wonderful outdoor ceremony with panoramic views of Tinto Hill on the hottest day of the year. Ironically, in Italy, they were experiencing flash flooding and horrendous weather!" ALLAN, BIGGAR PICTURE PHOTOGRAPHY





A Precious thought his best man couldn't attend their tiny micro-wedding at Edinburgh City Chambers but when they exited their ceremony, he had jumped on an overnight bus and managed to make it to congratulate them. The utter joy on both Susan and Precious' faces is something I'll never forget! The smiles are just infectious." SARAH, JOY STORY ■

capturing joyful moments

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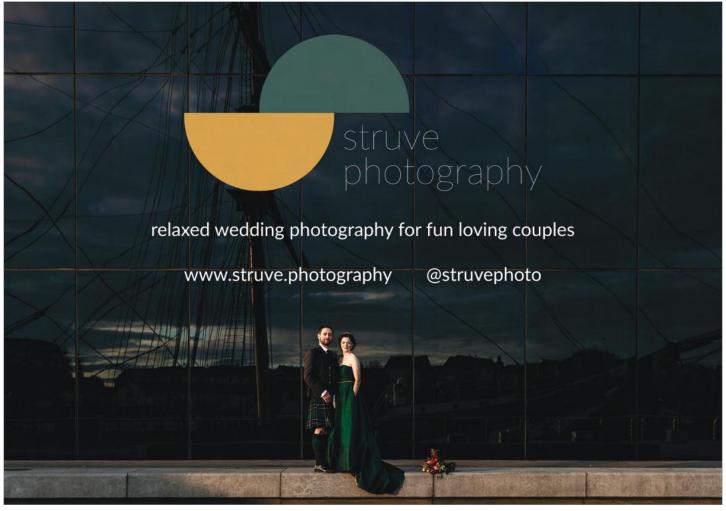
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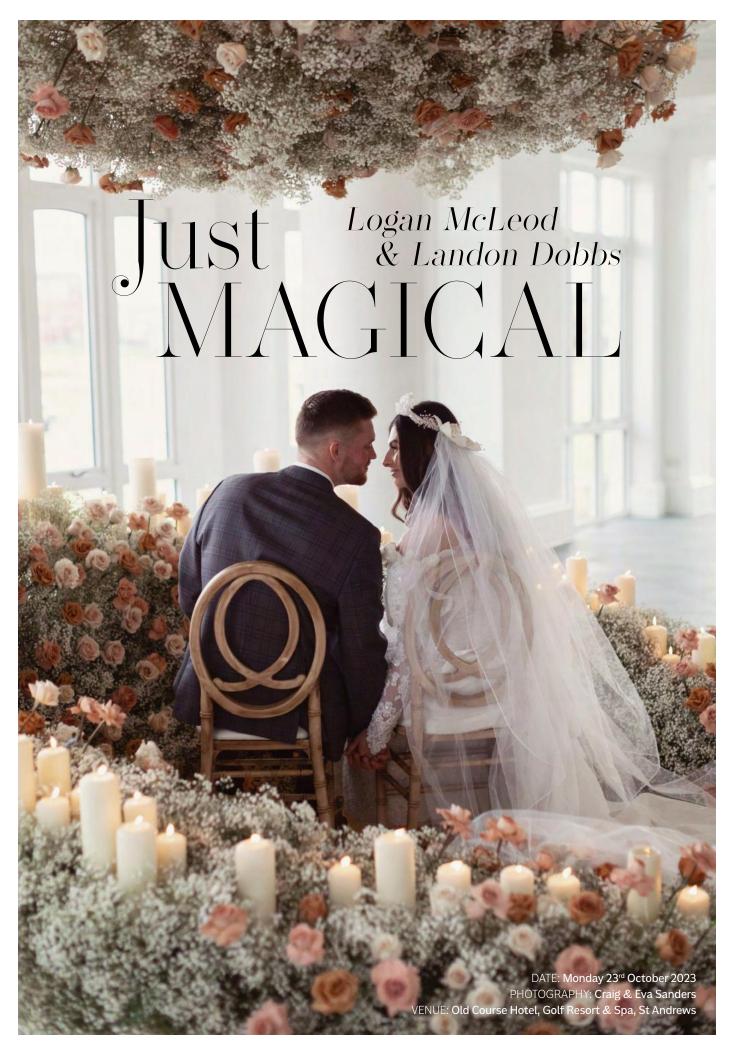
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American couple Logan and Landon celebrated her Scottish heritage and his love of golf with their destination wedding



"I feel like we are laying the groundwork for our future together."

was something of a happy accident during their first year of college. Although they went to different universities their mutual friends were dating. "It is a tradition for fraternities at southern universities in the United States to go on a weekend trip called Formal," she explains. When Landon's fraternity from Auburn University organised a trip to New Orleans he was meant to go with a girl from Logan's University of Alabama sorority but she cancelled on him and Logan's friend asked her to go instead. She agreed with the proviso that she could leave "if the guy was weird." Instead, she spent an eight-hour bus trip chatting away to Landon. "That weekend was one of our favourite memories, but we didn't start dating until New Year's of 2020 because we went to different schools."

ogan and Landon's first meeting

Two-and-a-half-years and a romantic proposal in the Bahamas later, the couple started thinking about the sort of wedding they wanted. Although their actual festivities were thankfully unaffected by the pandemic, it did focus Logan's mind. "Seeing pandemic weddings made me realise how much I enjoyed the intimacy of a smaller wedding compared to a traditionally large one," she explains.

They originally looked at venues in the US but nothing was quite right. Scotland had always been a bucket list trip for Logan, thanks to her McLeod maiden name and her family history, and Landon – who met his best man Garron Terrell playing in golf tournaments aged five – was excited to visit the home of golf. Deciding to marry abroad also meant they could keep their numbers to only their closest loved ones, their "ride or dies."

This wasn't wedding planning for the fainthearted however, as Logan and Landon only booked The Old Course in late August for their October wedding and they had to put their trust in suppliers they were only able to meet over Zoom. Logan is obsessed with autumnal colour schemes and Jordana Events & Weddings definitely delivered on the brief. "Jordana cultivated the entire ambiance of the ceremony and reception with the flowers, candles, stationery and table settings," she smiles. "I could only send inspiration photos. She took these and transformed them into something unique and extraordinarily one of a kind for us."

I got it from my mom

Logan loved the exciting experience of going dress shopping with her mom and maid of honour Abby but she ended up comparing everything she tried on to her mother's beloved wedding dress from 1994. Growing up she would dress up in it and when she tried on modern dresses in boutiques they just didn't have the same vintage flair she loved. So it was decided, she would wear her mom's gown with a minor adjustment to sit the puffed sleeves slightly off-the-shoulder. She even wore her mom's original veil.

Perfect celebration

Keeping her wedding intimate meant Logan spent the morning relaxing with just Abbey, their talented hair and make-up team, and photographer Eva. "I was more excited than a child on Christmas morning," she remembers.

The couple held their ceremony in The Old Course's conservatory and Logan's younger brother walked her down the aisle to an acoustic string version of *I Believe in Us* by Léon. "We have a very close relationship and »







every part of the day."

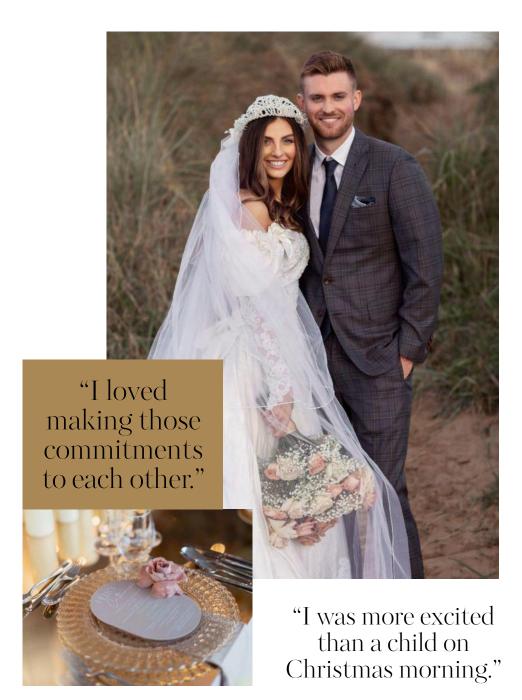
it was incredible to see him step up and into that role to give me away," she says. "All I could think was these are two of the most important men in my life."

For their religious ceremony they asked Bill Bufton, a friend of Landon's family, to officiate and he flew across the world at the age of 85 to perform the honours. It's a running joke that Landon can get very nervous at big events. He ran out of his high school graduation to be sick and had to take anti-nausea medicine before reading at his sister's wedding so Logan had said if he ran while he was waiting for her to walk down the aisle, he wasn't jumping ship. He was just off to the bathroom! But when it came to their ceremony all was well. Bill had asked them each to write him a letter explaining how they met and fell in love and what made the other person so different to anyone else. He then wove these stories into their ceremony. "I don't cry at sappy moments," explains Logan. "I'm the strong one and Landon is the softy. But hearing Bill read the letter Landon wrote triggered an overwhelming amount of tears. I loved making those commitments to each other because we were vocalising what this union meant to us in front of some of the most important people in our lives."

Pure indulgence

After the ceremony, the guests retired to the hotel's library for drinks and canapés before being welcomed back into the conservatory for a decadent eight-course meal. Both the best man and maid of honour gave "wonderful" speeches, outlining the couple's love story and the evening had the atmosphere of an extended dinner party, with band Ginny and the Tonic setting the perfect mood.

Looking back, Logan says, "I loved every part of the day because it didn't feel like we were putting on a show for anyone. And my favourite part about being married is that I feel we are laying the groundwork for our future together and each day we learn something new about one another.







BAND

Ginny and the Tonic
BRIDE'S EARRINGS

Mikimoto Akoya

BRIDE'S SHOES Badgley Mischka

CAKE

Liggy's Cakes

CEREMONY MUSIC

Capella String Quartet
DÉCOR, FLOWERS AND

STATIONERY Jordana Events & Weddings

GROOM'S SHOES

Magnanni Shoes

GROOM'S SUIT

Jessie Lancaster

HAIR

Pamela Docherty **MAKE-UP**

Stacey Toner

RINGS

Harlin Diamonds, Art Jewelers **VIDEOGRAPHY**

TLC Media Wedding Films



PHOTOGRAPHERS' CREDIT

"Not only were Logan and Landon so lovely to work with but they were drop dead gorgeous too. Logan wearing her mum's wedding dress was a lovely touch and Landon's love of golf meant that he and Craig hit it off immediately. Add some of the industry's top creative talents working together and you end up with a genuinely wonderful day! ■

CRAIG & EVA, CRAIG & EVA SANDERS PHOTOGRAPHY



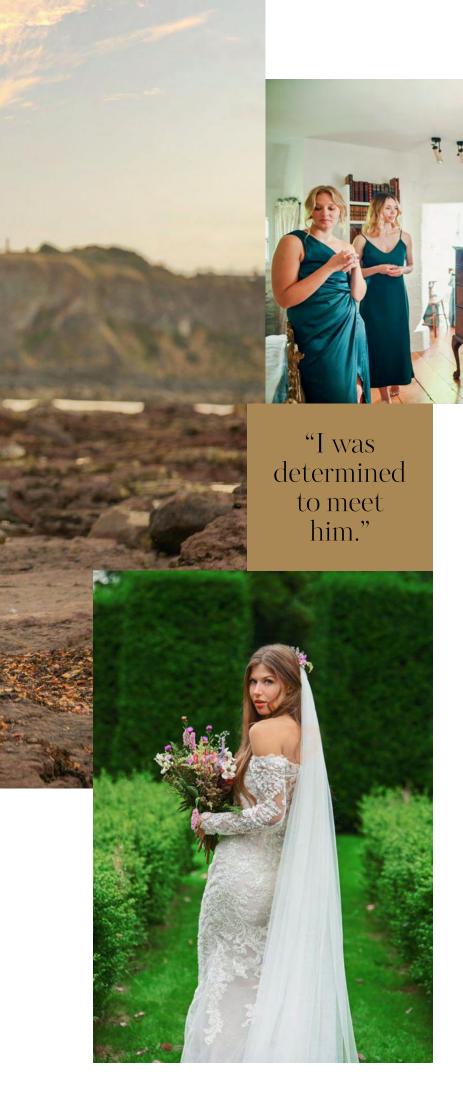
This beautiful
elopement
wedding at a
castle in the
Scottish Borders
was a dream come
true for Utahbased couple
Victoria and Cody

uch as it pains Victoria to admit, she asked future husband Cody out via Instagram – but it turned out to be the best decision she ever made! "I always saw him at the gym, then I moved to Dubai for a new job at the beginning of 2020. For months I was quarantined in my high-rise apartment because of the pandemic, with nothing to do but watch Netflix and bake. This is when I discovered the series *Outlander* – and I began to believe that the hot, buff redhead at the gym had to be the Jamie

Fraser actor," Victoria explains.

After moving back home to Utah, Victoria set out to find her mystery man! "I was determined to meet him so I went back to our gym, but I didn't see him there anymore (and, trust me, I went at all times of the day)! So it left me with no other choice but to ask him out on Instagram."

After just seven months together, Cody proposed on the beach in Costa Rica. Both knew they were destined to be together. When it came to planning, the couple decided to elope. "Our dream destination was Scotland - since we



both had family ties and a love for Scotland (and one of us a love for *Outlander!*) Making travel itineraries was part of the wedding planning. The first priority was a plane ticket and accommodation that could work as a venue too! Plus getting the right colour scheme together that matched the Scottish landscape and our family tartan was very important to me."

Simple things

With their hearts set on getting married at a castle, Victoria and Cody discovered Spedlins Castle on Airbnb: "I reached out to the hosts to see if they would allow a small wedding ceremony. Luckily they did! I was able to save a lot of money by not having to rent a venue on top of our accommodation for the week."

Due to pandemic travel restrictions, the couple had to push their plans back two years. But this meant they were able to have one extra guest – their gorgeous 20-month-old daughter, Stella, who was "the cutest little flower girl in the world".

Victoria wanted the colour scheme to be regal while complementing the surrounding scenery. "Deep emerald green was what my bridesmaids wore to go along with the rolling green hills. Then for the flowers and my flower girls I wanted to bring out the purple hues from the Scottish heather and thistles."

Cody's Campbell tartan had hints of emerald green and navy blue so the mothers, aunts and grandmothers wore navy, and the men who weren't wearing a kilt wore a tie with the matching tartan.

With much of the couple's budget going towards plane tickets, many of the other details were simplified or DIY. "I made all of my flower bouquets, crowns, corsages, buttonholes, (excluding my bouquet) out of silk flowers." One regret of Victoria's was not hiring a professional hairdresser (although >>>



we think she looked gorgeous on the day!) "Unfortunately my hot hair tools didn't work, even with my outlet adaptor," she explains.

For her stunning dress, Victoria worked with designer Barbie Anne Bridal, taking a dress from her collection and making some bespoke additions. "We went for a romantic off the shoulder dress that was fit for a castle," Victoria explains. "We made some changes to the sleeves, neckline and part of the bodice to make it a little more sexy."

Victoria also made the floral piece she wore with her veil, borrowed an antique ring from her Mom and even went barefoot – because there was no room in her suitcase for shoes!

Pure bliss

Victoria had six bridesmaids; two were her sisters and the others were friends from across the globe. Luckily one of her bridesmaids, Emily, was a florist and was able to forage everything fresh from the grounds of the castle on the morning of the ceremony to create Victoria's





bouquet and the groom's buttonhole. Family friend Jason led the ceremony, which featured handfasting.

Victoria admits that the morning of the wedding was a bit of a stress with a little one to look after. Thankfully having only 35 guests meant they could push the timings back a bit. "But by the time the ceremony began it was pure bliss and all that stress was behind me and we just got to enjoy the whole purpose of our travels. It was exactly as I hoped it would go – if not better."

Victoria walked down the aisle to *Shrike* by Hozier. "It was as I always dreamed it would be. I loved seeing my man get all choked up at the sight of me going down the aisle. The sun even came out during it all! And it was great to have my dad by my side."

The couple also wrote their own vows, mingling humour and laughter with some sentimental parts. Instead of a reception there were snacks available afterwards for everyone while they mingled.

Victoria adds, "The atmosphere of the ceremony was dreamy. It was out in the castle courtyard. There were beautiful tall hedges and lots of overgrown ivy on the stone walls. It was so green and lush, and the gardens in the grounds were in full bloom."





BRIDE'S DRESS

'The Emerson' from Barbie Anne

BRIDESMAID DRESSES

Jenny Yoo CELEBRANT

Jason Lunt **FLOWERS**

Thornberry Flowers by Emily Lucas **FLOWER GIRL DRESSES**

GROOM'S OUTFIT

Moffat Mill, Haberdasher Custom Tailored Clothing

RINGS

Belliston Jewlery, Utah



PHOTOGRAPHER'S CREDIT

"The wonderful part about the couple is that they were adventurous and flexible with my ideas in order to create photos they loved. They trusted the process and that made my job so much easier." ■

> REBECCAMARIE, REBECCAMARIE **PHOTOGRAPHY**





From the laid-back attitudes to the outfits that ooze style, this is wedding goals



"Ryan had two suit ideas in mind."

fter meeting on Tinder and spending five lovely years together, Ryan proposed to Hollie on an evening walk over the Forth Road Bridge with the couple's dog Hovis. "He howled at us for most of it because he was angry we'd stopped walking!" laughs the bride. Ryan had sourced the sparkler – a needle baguette with diagonal diamonds – from a jewellery maker called Artemer, who was discontinuing the design at the time. "Mine therefore has five thicker needles as opposed to the thinner eight needle design, which makes it feel more unique," explains Hollie.

In two minds about whether they wanted a big celebration or something small, guest numbers was where the pair had to start and they took a really laid-back, zero-rush approach. "We had a backlog of friends' weddings to attend due to the pandemic – we had 12 in 2022! – so our plan involved a lot of watching and learning."

Eventually, they decided to go large and invited 115 people, then a further 40 at night. Then they only went and picked their venue without having seen inside! "It was during the pandemic and once we knew our numbers, we knew we wanted somewhere flexible, helpful, beautiful and with space for people to stay. When we first spoke to Lil at Kippilaw, it felt like we were speaking to a friend who was letting us borrow their home. She clearly had a lot of experience and offered good guidance in terms of what we should plan. But she was also happy for our day to look however we wanted it. The venue provided the chairs, linen and

crockery, and cooked everything in-house. Being close to The Borders also provided hope that we'd have good weather! It was probably a bit knee-jerk on our part but it all worked out."

Set the scene

The couple went all in on a campfire theme, with the colour palettes used in Wes Anderson films (*Moonrise Kingdom* in particular) as their inspo. "Ryan had two suit ideas in mind so once he'd selected his copper velvet blazer and vintage tie, I based my bridesmaid colours on it. I didn't want things to be too uniformlooking or formal so I just gave them colour options and let them go wild."

When it came to her own look, Hollie knew exactly what she wanted... However, she just couldn't find it and, instead, made an appointment with Mette at Freja Designer Dressmaking. "I actually hated dress shopping," she laughs. "It was nothing to do with the boutiques, I think I just dislike shopping in general when I have an idea in my mind already. My bridesmaids and I tried a traditional say-yes-to-the-dress day and ended up in a wine bar after one shop! When I visited Mette, I instantly felt so much happier and more comfortable." The twosome worked together to create a more special version of what Hollie would usually wear, and made sure it wasn't stomach-hugging so that she didn't feel pressure to diet in the run up to the wedding. Looking for a bit of statement headwear, she added a flower crown and a bespoke feather-lined veil. "Emma Louise Bridal made my veil and she was an actual saint having to deal with me! Then I had our florist incorporate tiny feathers into the crown to pull it together." The to-be-weds didn't find wedding planning overly stressful although, like most couples, worried about the politics of their seating arrangements. "We were surprisingly relaxed about the big things but spent hours going back and forth on smaller bits," remembers Hollie. On that note, they lovingly added lots of DIY details, like table menus, table names and name cards, then sourced super-cool velvet banners and had a≫





OLLE MILEONE

RYAN MCGLONE

The threading of HOLLIE & RYAN

2016 May 2013

Regulater Houst, Multipart

F"K THE ITINERARY

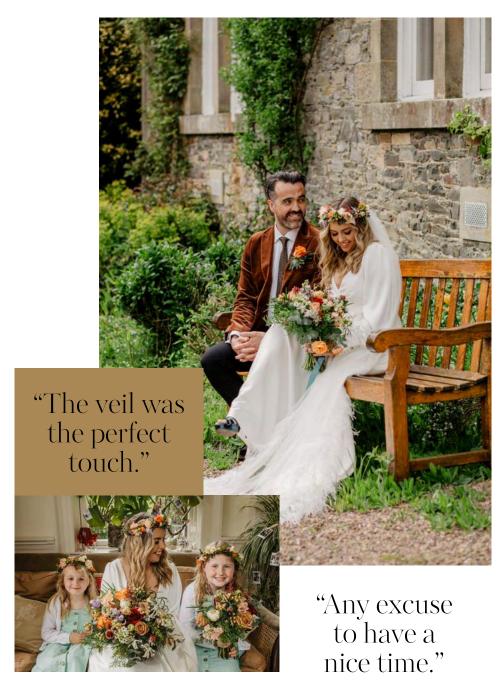
"The most chilled out wedding morning." wedding cake (or a series of cakes as it was!) made by the bride's mum and friends.

Taking full advantage of their home from home, the couple enjoyed food, drinks and a quiz the night before the wedding, then took their time getting ready on the big day. "I had such a relaxing morning. Every supplier said it was the most chilled out wedding morning they'd worked at! I really thought I'd be more stressed but everything was taken care of." This vibe continued as the ceremony began and everyone "essentially cheered" for each bridesmaid and the bride as they made their way down the aisle for the humanist ceremony. Keen for something personal and engaging, the bride and groom inserted their own little ways of doing things, like putting on their own rings and exchanging pleasantries instead - a result of Hollie's fear of holding other peoples' jewellery. The couple's celebrant Lenny Love sadly passed away earlier this year and the couple paid tribute to him. "He was lovely," remembers Hollie.

We said 'I do'

Beers and fizz were served in the sunshine to celebrate the newlyweds before everyone tucked into a vegetarian feast provided by the venue. "We had mixed platters to start, then sharing portions of moussaka followed by strawberry pavlova, which was the star of the show. The venue was so accommodating and even those with specific allergies were well catered for." The rest of the evening was full of fun and happiness, with an atmosphere that the bride admits felt a bit like a mosh pit! She'd been a little worried the dance floor wouldn't be busy because Kippilaw House offered so many other gorgeous rooms to hang out in but their band Manhattan made sure it was packed - in fact, guests are still talking about how good they were. "Our suppliers were all so amazing, especially Eve, our photographer," Hollie remembers. "I'm so awkward in pictures and the fact she managed to get so many good ones is a testament to her craft."

Looking back on their experience, the new Mr and Mrs reckon the most fun part of planning was making an event of anything and everything. "Table planning? Have a prosecco. Designing invites? Have a prosecco. We honestly used any excuse to have a nice time."







BAND

Manhattan

BANNERS

Onethreefourvintage **BRIDE'S DRESS**

Freja Designer Dressmaking BRIDE'S VEIL

Emma Louise Bridal BRIDE'S SHOES

Fsska

CELEBRANT

Lenny Love of Celebrate People **FLOWERS**

Poppy Floral Design HAIR

Hair by Charlotte @

hairbycharlottehind MAKE-UP

Jane Mac at Onyx

WEDDING PLANNER

Lavender Blue Alternative Wedding Coordination



PHOTOGRAPHER'S CREDIT

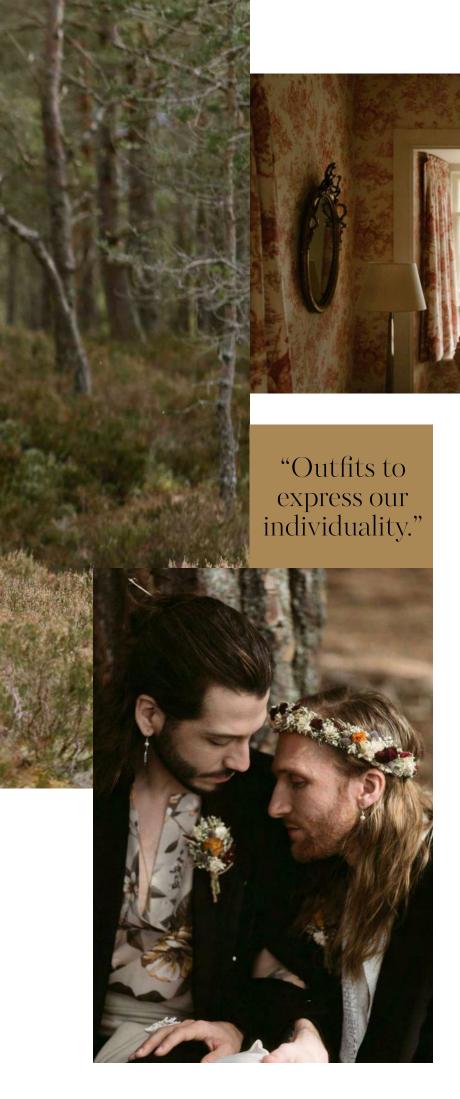
"Being friends with Hollie and Ryan meant I already knew this wedding would be beautiful, but the rich visuals they created through their location, styling, outfits and all round great vibes were even better than I could have imagined!" ■



A wonderful Highlands wedding with nods to nature, video games and – most of all – love fter meeting on Instagram in January 2019 when Iyan was living in Scotland and Gavin in the US (quickly bonding over *The Legend of Zelda* and haircare) the pair stayed in touch. Then Iyan moved to Portland, Oregon, during his PhD studies. "I met Iyan when he landed in Seattle in January 2020 and we both immediately knew we were in trouble," smiles Gavin. They knew they wanted a life together and just a year later, there were two romantic proposals. "We loved the idea of each getting to propose to one another so after I proposed in the forest in Oregon, Gavin took the

opportunity to repropose on Christmas Day in my family's living room," Iyan explains.

Wedding planning began and the biggest consideration was their loved ones – in other words, how could they get Iyan's Scottish entourage and Gavin's US side together in one location? Another must, though, was to marry surrounded by nature; a reminder of the vast Highland landscapes where Iyan grew up and the temperate rainforests of Washington state where Gavin is from. "We chose Old Milton in the Cairngorms National Park because Iyan's family are based nearby and it was a great base for our US guests to explore Scotland from."



Top teamwork

The nature (no pun intended!) of the venue meant the couple could plan everything themselves and include lots of thoughtful DIY details. "Our arch, for example, was made by Iyan's brother Kylle and our wedding knot came from strips of tweed fabric from Iyan's parents' shop, The Sutherland Sporting Tweed Company. Our friends and family did so much to help us bring everything together on the day, which was an amazing bonding experience." That said, the twosome admit they underestimated the work involved in doing everything by themselves. "We worked well as a team and wanted to keep things simple. But we still ended up investing a lot of time and energy into creating a love-filled environment for everyone."

The last piece of the puzzle was outfit shopping and here Iyan's love of nature played a part, as did Gavin's eye for ornate detail. They shopped for the majority online together, choosing meaningful brands like New York-based ORTTU which "spoke to our desire to build outfits that allowed us to express our individuality."

As the special day approached, friends and family began to arrive. Much of the wedding party spent the week around the main event staying at Old Milton, taking advantage of the opportunity to explore and enjoy Scotland. "The night before the wedding we went for dinner with all of our favourite people to McInnes House Hotel in Kingussie. After enjoying everyone's company, we definitely needed a good night's sleep to feel ready!" smiles Iyan.

Doing things differently Turning tradition on its head, the to-be-weds had

Turning tradition on its head, the to-be-weds had their couple photoshoot pre-ceremony after getting ready with their friends. "We knew we'd be getting some time together as a couple to help build into the ceremony, which helped ease any nerves. We drove to the beautiful Uath Lochans with Eve & Art and had a really lovely time." »

Your wedding day





The small and intimate outdoor ceremony began with one of the couple's favourite video game music tracks and some "really magical feeling rain" that started right beforehand and stopped immediately afterwards. "The whole week of our wedding we had perfect sunshine but, just for our ceremony, the sky got moody and it started to rain. It created an incredible atmosphere as we stood in the moss-carpeted forest around Old Milton," explains Gavin. "We were huddled under umbrellas, holding hands and walking down the aisle together. It felt so surreal and incredibly heartwarming to see all our loved ones there with us." Again, putting a personal spin on things, they'd shared their full vows in private right before the ceremony. So, celebrant (and friend of the couple) Molli Carriveau focused on an acknowledgement to the surrounding nature and a handfasting ceremony.

of pure magic."

Planned perfectly ahead of time, the newlyweds had created lots of styled spaces in the house for their 30 guests to enjoy after the formal part of the day was over. "We had a front room with crackling fireplaces and chillout music, a living room with lots of board games and video games, and a hall where everyone could dance and socialise. We also had lawn games and a firepit outside. It was wonderful seeing everyone milling around





and enjoying themselves," they remember. Meanwhile, catering company Hendersons provided a "delicious and nutritious vegan feast," which reflected the couple's passion for animals and the environment in everyday life.

"Ultimately, we found that we and our guests had the most incredible time just by us being ourselves and planning a wedding that was quintessentially us – filled with love, nature, good food, and lots of silliness," concludes Iyan. "It's incredible to be married and our ceremony was a little bubble of pure magic. It felt like another world where we were completely encapsulated in love and the most incredible nature. It was the perfect way to bind our lives together, to

reflect and plan for all the ways we will live in love together."

Thinking back to the planning process, they admit that trying to ensure they'd thought of everything was the trickiest part. But they combatted it by having multiple run-throughs of the day, trying to spot any little details that might have been missed. At the other end of the scale, the best bit was getting the opportunity to focus on the things that they love most about one another and considering what symbols of that love could be incorporated in their wedding. "It's easy to get caught up in thinking about what guests might want, need, like, or want to avoid. But focus on yourselves and what you love about one another."





CATERING

Hendersons

CELEBRANT

Molli Carriveau **DOUGHNUT TIER**

Considerit

FLOWERS

The Artisan Dried Flower Co

GROOMS' ACCESSORIES

Macabre Gadgets

GROOMS' JEWELLERY

Caroline Brook Jewellery **GROOMS' OUTFITS**

ORTTU

NAILS

Honorine Monteiro

RINGS

Capucinne

VIDEOGRAPHY

Eve & Art Stories

WEDDING KNOT FABRIC

Sutherland Sporting Tweed Company



PHOTOGRAPHERS' CREDIT

"Iyan and Gavin shared their moving and beautiful story of how they met, instantly forging a connection with us through their vision for their special day. Their ceremony, set amidst the enchanting woods, exuded intimacy and tranquility, infused with genuine emotions and warmth. It was an honor for us to capture and partake in such profoundly special moments."

EVE AND ARTUR,
EVE & ART STORIES



Dream cometrue

Edith Woobey Kumordzie & Benjamin Ikechukwu Anyanwu

"I loved it! It fitted perfectly." This couple opted to break with some traditions and in doing so created a joyful, personal celebration for family and friends in a simply gorgeous venue

dith first met
Benjamin when
they were
both working
as healthcare
assistants. "We worked
together most shifts for about
three months before he
changed jobs," Edith explains.
"It was just coincidence we
were paired up all the time to
work and we got along so well
– we laughed together all the

time." After two happy years together, Benjamin planned a romantic proposal. "We had gone out to dinner and we came home to a surprise set-up with roses and him going on his knee to propose to me!"

The couple decided they wanted to have an intimate, fun, classy and satisfying wedding ceremony and planned it all within around five months. Wanting to feel comfortable in their own space – and finding a lot of venues were already booked up – they chose the majestic surroundings of The Grant Room at Aberdeen's Marischal College Registration Office.

The former senate room has ornate wood panelling and access out on to the gorgeous quadrangle where couples can get some post-ceremony photographs – and Edith and Benjamin certainly took advantage of this, grabbing some amazing snaps outside together in the September sun.

Jumpsuit goals

Edith decided she didn't want to have a traditional wedding dress, instead opting for a classy white jumpsuit. She'd originally wanted one to be handmade but ended up going with plan B of purchasing online. "My shopping was a bit stressful as I did it online. One of my best mates was actually helping me select and I would send a screenshot and ask what she thought. You can never know if you are getting your actual size and if it would look exactly like what you saw, but I loved it! It fitted perfectly – just a tad long – but that was sorted out immediately."

Edith chose her 'Reema' jumpsuit from Club L London's wedding section. It had a classic bardot neckline with long puff sleeves and she thought it stood out as distinctive and









"I couldn't believe I was actually getting married!"



something a bit different from a normal bridal dress. She teamed it with some Zara heels, a necklace from her future mother-in-law and a fascinator that was handmade in Ghana.

Edith's sister Esperanza was her one and only bridesmaid. She also helped to create the couple's stationery and filmed the wedding – what an amazing person to have by her side every step of the way! "She picked out her own outfit from River Island," Edith says. "I just wanted her to be comfortable in whatever she wanted."

Benjamin, meanwhile, settled on a slick waistcoat and tailored trousers combo with a bow tie as he wasn't keen on the idea of a three-piece suit.

The night before the wedding was a busy one with family visiting, catching up until late. So when Edith woke in the morning early to prepare for the day ahead, she was feeling pretty tired. "I did enjoy the morning," she says. "Everyone was happy and I was so nervous I could not eat!"

But Edith didn't let those nerves get in the way of arriving at Marischal College to walk down the aisle towards Benjamin as *That Part* by Lauren Spencer Smith rang out. "I felt extremely happy and I couldn't believe I was actually getting married!"

They were married by assistant registrar Laura Edwards, who is now Edith's colleague as she began working as an assistant registrar too after she and Benjamin married. As they exchanged their vows, Edith says, "We were both grinning from ear to ear. It was a dream come true. We loved it and it meant a lot to us."

Our little bubble

Afterwards they headed back to their home to celebrate. "It was a really small reception with family and friends. We just wanted everyone to feel welcome and loved," smiles Edith. Their caterer created a banquet consisting of jollof rice, fried rice, peppered chicken, pepper soup, spring rolls, samosas, salad, nuts, crisps, crackers and cheese. Meanwhile the drinks were in full flow as celebrations got underway. Edith describes the evening as, "Filled with laughter, music, love and jokes."

Looking back on the planning process Edith says it wasn't too stressful – but definitely not something she would want to do every day! She reckons the hardest parts were finding an outfit and sorting out all the plans for the reception and the most fun was, "The thought of being together forever in our little bubble."

Her highlight of the day was the moment they were pronounced as husband and wife: "We both could not stop smiling!" She describes being married as "amazing" and advises readers planning their own wedding day to, "Make up your mind on what you want, who you want to be with you, be certain of everything you do and be intentional about decisions involving your partner."





BRIDE'S OUTFIT

'Reema' by Club L London BRIDE'S SHOES

BRIDE'S HEADWEAR

Xter Beads & Accessories

BRIDESMAID'S DRESS

River Island

CATERER, FAVOURS, FLOWERS

Roselyn Private Decorations

CAKE

Marks & Spencer **CELEBRANT**

Laura Edwards, assistant registrar

GROOM'S OUTFIT

Next

MAKE-UP

Bekah Cran Makeup Artist

RINGS

Aneta Gold





PHOTOGRAPHER'S CREDIT

"Edith and Ben are such a lovely couple and so easy to photograph, they look and pose like professional models! I felt so honoured being one of three to witness them get married. I absolutely love elopements, they feel so special, intimate and are all about the

couple." ■

EMILIE, PHOTOGRAPHY BY EMILIE



After 19 years together, Laura and Liam locked in their love at a truly historic venue aura and Liam's love story began on 1st August 2004 when they were both working at The Military Tattoo. And exactly a year later, after visiting the Edinburgh Tattoo together, Liam got down on one knee on the way home. "We were expecting our daughter, Katie, in November and I did wonder if I was going to go into early labour with all the excitement," laughs Laura.

The very next day she bought a bridal magazine and almost instantly fell in love with a dress; 'Oleaje' by Spanish designer Pronovias. Eager to see if it had as much appeal in real life as it did in print, she made an appointment with Kavelle Couture in Edinburgh, which stocked the style. "From the moment I arrived, it was a great atmosphere. I remember her mum and sister carrying the dress into the fitting room and Kavelle helping me into it. I walked out to my mum and happy tears were streaming down our faces. Kavelle asked if I'd like to try on others and although I looked through all the gorgeous gowns, my heart was set. I was already wearing my dream dress."

Meanwhile, they went venue-hunting and viewed lots of options around



Glasgow and Alloa, shortlisting some definite favourites. But after an accident at work Liam had to take some time off and the wedding was put on long-term hold whilst he recovered – and the couple brought up their daughter.

Fast forward to 2022 and on the way home from a trip to Manchester, Laura and Liam stopped off at Gretna Green. "We loved the surroundings and the idea that it could be all about us and those close to us. The Famous Blacksmiths' original marriage room had all the intimacy and special vibes we wanted and Smiths Hotel was spectacular, so we decided to book our special day at Gretna."

What about the dress?

After Liam's accident, Kavelle kindly cared for and stored Laura's outfit for a few years until 2008 when she decided to have it packaged up to keep at her mum's. "Kavelle's care, compassion and understanding at the time was outstanding. Fifteen years later I called her to say we'd set a date. It was like speaking to a long-lost friend and she was more than happy to alter the dress. It had been wrapped up since collection day back in 2008 and it was all happy tears again when we saw how perfect it still looked. What a feeling it was to get back into the dress! Kavelle assured me it was modern and timeless, looking like it could have been bought today."

Over the years they spent planning, Laura's theme evolved dramatically, ranging from royal blue and sky blue to big and glitzy to boho and rustic. But one thing was constant throughout and that was their desire to make everything as personal as possible, from the individual wedding party hoodies to the favours which, with a small but perfectly formed guest list of just nine, could be more elaborate. "We ordered mini-sambuca »



and tequila, a scratch card with a personalised holder, a diffuser with a bespoke label and a single ivory carnation in memory of Liam's mum. It was presented in a tote bag, hand-decorated with a bow and thank you tags."

Keen to make the venue their own, there was loads of on-theme décor, like the rustic, fairy-lit cake stand, wooden Mr and Mrs signs for their chairs that were hung with lace, lots of wooden hearts and flower-filled boxes, personalised drink stirrers and plenty of confetti, pearls and gems scattered on the table. And instead of a guest book, they asked guests to leave a message in a bottle.

Gretna-bound

The day before they were due to marry, Laura and Liam travelled to Gretna with well-loaded cars, then headed for dinner before the bride and her daughter popped back to decorate the reception venue. "We organised the bits and bobs then relaxed with a face mask on the balcony watching the stars," she remembers.



Laura spent some time relaxing there again in the morning before the hustle and bustle of bridal prep began, which she remembers as being "such a laugh and great vibes."

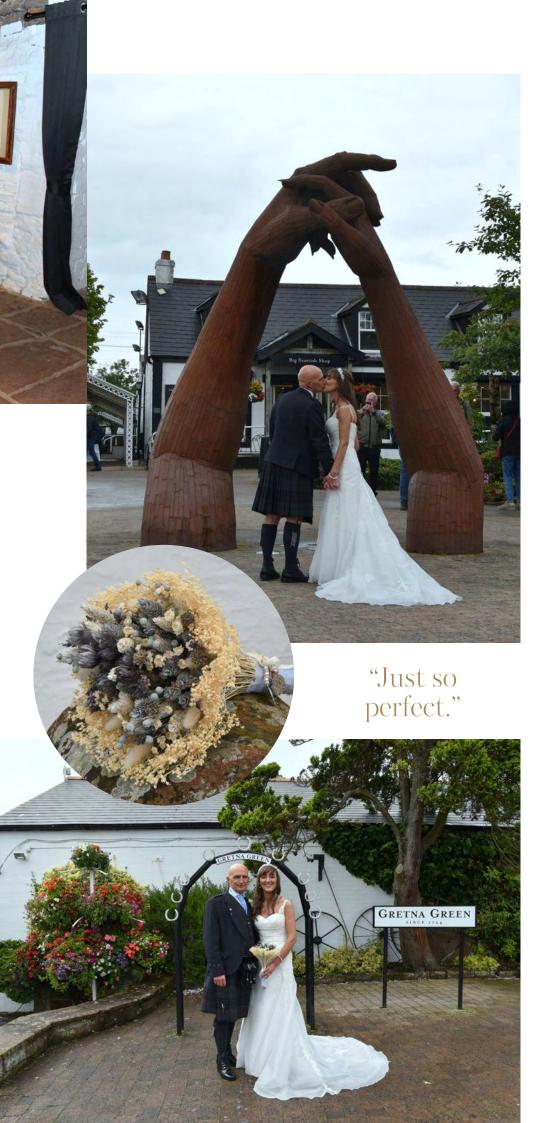
The bride headed towards her husband-to-be with Christina Perri's A Thousand Years playing and remembers it feeling "perfect, stunning and intimate". Registrar Lindsay MacPhee conducted the ceremony where, in true Gretna Green tradition, the pair's love was joined over the anvil (for those not in the know, blacksmiths historically would marry couples here and sealed the commitment by bringing their hammer down upon the anvil, one of the tools of the trade. The ringing sound it made would signify to the rest of the village that another couple had tied the knot). "One strike

with the hammer locked in our marriage and we were given a small solid silver anvil trinket as a keepsake," smiles Laura.

Private party

Afterwards, the newlyweds and their guests headed to the hotel's beautifully decorated private dining room and enjoyed dinner around one table. "There were no speeches as such but everyone shared stories and laughs about us and our time together – and how delighted they all were that we'd finally married, my mum and dad especially!"

They stayed put until the early hours of the morning, enjoying the selfie mirror, cocktail trees and karaoke. "It was just so perfect and such a wonderful atmosphere – the warmth, comfort, intimacy and privacy."





BRIDE'S DRESS, TIARA AND VEIL

Kavelle Couture BRIDE'S SHOES

JJ's House

BRIDE'S WATCH

Hugo Boss BRIDESMAID DRESSES

CAKE

Bayne's the Family Bakers

FLOWERS

Willow Cottage Flowers **GROOM'S OUTFIT**

Alloa Kilt Hire

HAIR AND MAKE-UP Bridal Hair and Beauty

Gretna Green

REGISTRAR

Lindsay MacPhee SEAMSTRESS

Shona Robinson **SELFIE MIRROR**

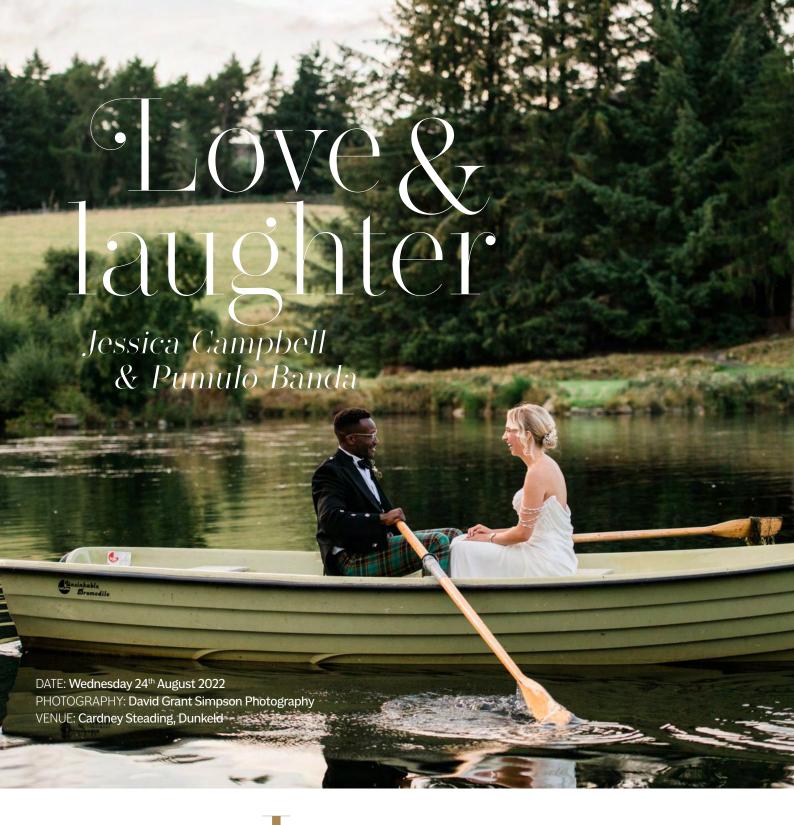
Northern Love Letters



PHOTOGRAPHER'S CREDIT

"Laura and Liam were a lovely couple to photograph, accompanied by friends and family who helped them celebrate their wedding day. I photograph a lot of weddings in and around Gretna Green and this one was just really fun to do!"■

BILL, BILL BLACK **PHOTOGRAPHY**



This wedding celebration was full of fun from beginning to end with the couple exchanging vows outside in the beautiful Highland Perthshire countryside

essica and Pumulo first met in
London thanks to dating app
Bumble. After five years together,
Pumulo proposed to Jessica in the
stunning setting of the Sherriffmuir
Hills, a mile away from her childhood home,
near Dunblane.

Together, they designed Jessica's 18-carat gold engagement ring with London-based independent jewellery designer Michelle Oh, coming up with a champagne diamond in the middle, and two white diamonds either side.

Their first priority was to find a venue with amazing scenery and a beautiful setting. "We

wanted to get married outside and Cardney Steading has the most wonderful rugged Scottish backdrop and a gorgeous woodland ceremony area," Jessica explains. The couple also wanted to tie their colour scheme in with the surrounding nature with lots of greens and pops of white and orange.

Felt like me

Jessica had her heart set on a particular Savannah Miller dress, but ended up falling in love with a different style by the same designer.

"I found my dress in the first wedding dress shop I went to (unexpectedly) in



Glasgow. I was with my mum, gran and one of my bridesmaids, Jenni. I loved it so much I decided to go for it and cancel my other appointments!"

The stunning dress from Anne Priscilla Bridal had pearl beading straps falling down at the shoulders, a slightly ruched silk bodice and a long plain train. "I loved the pearl detailing on the shoulders and felt like me in it!" Jessica adds.

She paired the dress with a cathedral-length veil decorated with tiny pearls and beading details, kept her jewellery simple and teamed it with some sleek nude strappy sandals.

Jessica's four bridesmaids were her oldest and best friends and for their dress inspiration she started with burnt orange, finding two different designs in similar colours to match their own style choices. "They all looked beautiful," she says.

Pumulo decided to have tartan trousers custom made in County Antrim tartan - he grew up in Ballymena, Co. Antrim - which he wore with a bow tie and Prince Charlie jacket. His best man was best friend, Charlie, and groomsmen were brother, Yamika, and friends Jack and Camille.

The night before, the couple booked out the Scottish Deli in Dunkeld for an evening of food and wine with guests before the big day. They both slept well, but woke early with excitement.

In the morning, the only big stress was the weather. "We'd committed to doing the ceremony outside and it rained heavily all morning until about noon (the ceremony started at two). Other than that, we each had lots of fun getting ready with our wedding parties," Jessica explains.

The bride felt "elated and full of love" as she walked down the aisle to *This Must Be the Place* by Talking Heads, performed by Arta String Quartet. \gg



They chose a humanist ceremony because they wanted their story and personalities to shine through and be the focus. "We wrote our own vows" Jessica remembers. "We felt emotional but incredibly happy."

The best day

After the ceremony, their 140 guests enjoyed margaritas and crémant. For the evening meal there were sharing platters for starter, a lamb or vegetable tagine main option, rounded off with a white chocolate and strawberry cheesecake dessert.

"Pumulo, my dad, and Charlie did fantastic speeches – they were all thoughtful, funny and uplifting. Pumulo's lasted a whopping thirty-eight minutes, but it flew by and had everyone laughing and crying!" Jessica smiles.

The dinner was followed by a ceilidh and disco, which is summed up in one word: "fun"! The couple even managed to celebrate the day with their beloved cockapoo, Dougal, and grabbed some lovely photos with him.

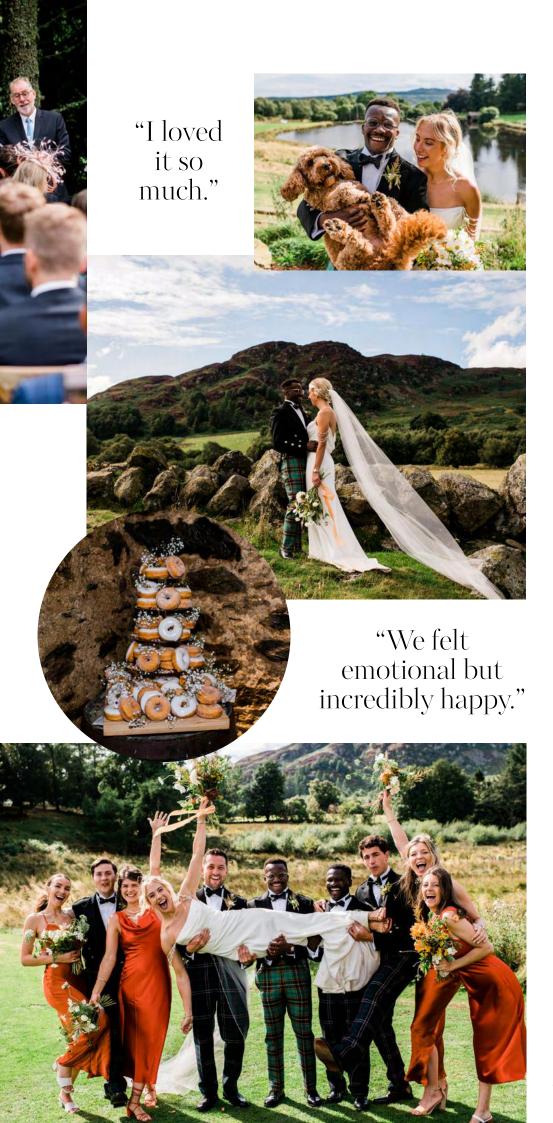
They didn't find the task of planning too stressful, saying they enjoyed it and tried to have fun throughout the process. For Jessica and



Pumulo, the most enjoyable thing about planning was viewing venues and doing a spot of menu tasting! When it comes to picking out the highlight of the day, Jessica reveals, "If I had to choose, the ceremony was incredibly special, but I also loved the speeches and the party afterwards."

Now that they've tied the knot, Jessica says not much has changed relationship-wise: "We're the same people as we were before, but it's nice to feel more of a family unit."

And when it comes to imparting words of advice to readers planning their own wedding, she says, "Enjoy the process – remember why you are doing it and don't let stress detract from that! It will be the best day, regardless of any minor imperfections."





BAND

The Big Papas

BRIDE'S DRESS

Savannah Miller at Anne Priscilla Bridal

BRIDE'S SHOES

Russell and Bromley

BRIDE'S VEIL

Anne Priscilla Bridal

BRIDESMAID DRESSES

Asos, Ted Baker CATERER

Season Catering

CAKE

Stephens Bakery

CELEBRANT

Neil Anderson of Humanist Society Scotland

FLOWERS

Nova Botanics **GROOM'S OUTFIT**

Slanj Kilts

HAIR

Mandy Hair Ups PIPER

Robbie Jones **RINGS**

Michelle Oh, Ammé London STRING QUARTET



PHOTOGRAPHER'S CREDIT

"Jess and Pumulo's wedding was honestly one of my favourites to date. It's always an absolute joy when everyone involved is so much fun and very welcoming. Cardney Steading is such an incredible venue and the weather was perfect so we could have an outdoor wedding ceremony... in Scotland!" ■

DAVID, DAVID GRANT **SIMPSON PHOTOGRAPHY**









weddings, do not need to fit into some pre-ordained idea of what you should do. Amanda Mckinlay, the wedding and honeymoon specialist at Thorne Travel agrees - "From the first contact we ask the question that will make sure you get the honeymoon you want, 'What do you like to do on holiday, and what would be your dream honeymoon?' You will be surprised how many couples have different ideas of what their honeymoon looks like. This is where a honeymoon specialist can find ideas that can suit both of you and even something you

have never considered."

Amanda says planning your honeymoon is an exciting time but the choice can be overwhelming. Whether you have your heart set on a blissful stay at a luxurious overwater bungalow in the Maldives, a musical journey through the Deep South, an exhilirating safari, or an adventure holiday full of cultural experiences, she urges couples to consult a travel agent specialising in honeymoon planning. That way they can find the best option. "Your honeymoon should be full of memorable moments and that is where Thorne Travel can help," adds Amanda. Imagine beginning married life with an oh-soromantic private dinner on the beach, a sunset cruise, or - if you're more adrenaline junkies - a bungee jump.

So when wedmin is getting you down just picture yourselves lying on that beach, coming face to face with that giraffe, or exploring that new city.



This moisture-charged mask brings an immediate surge of refreshment and cooling to revive the appearance of tired, lifeless complexions.



Isotonic Hydration Mask, (£40) lookfantastic.com and espaskincare.com

Travelling takes it out on your skin so revitalise with marine collagen supplements to promote deep hydration, elasticity and wrinkle reduction.

Perfect

pick-me-

up for

vour hair



Packed with native

Australian botanical extracts

the award-winning formula

not only sets your make-up

but its antioxidants add

hydration, moisture and a

Christophe Robin Instant Volumising Leave-In Mist with Rose Extract (£30) lookfantastic.com

CHRISTOPHE ROBIN

CHRISTOPHE TO Dack...

Raffia frame clutch (£90) dunelondon.com

Naked Sundays SPF 50 Hydrating Glow Mist 50ml (£18) sephora.co.uk

SUNDAYS

HYDRATING GLOW MIST

SPF 50+

TYALWONIC ACE

ANADU PILUM

ATTEMPLON RETTRACT



Compact yet powerful, the eye brightener uses LED technology to brighten dark circles and reduce undereye bags. A must for combating jet lag.

Adventure of a lifetime

If you're the type of couple that lives for the next adventure and immersing yourselves in new cultures and experiences we highly recommend the Treasures of the Incas Luxury Tour, as picked out by Thorne Travel. Amanda says, "Peru is an excellent destination for adventure-seekers, offering a diverse range of landscapes, from the Amazon rainforest to the Andes Mountains and the coastal desert."

The Inca trail to Machu Picchu is perhaps one of the most iconic adventures in Peru and the Treasures of the Incas itinerary starts and ends in Peru's capital city Lima, City of the Kings. It begins with a chance to explore top sites, including the cathedral, government palace, archbishop's palace and city hall. The day is rounded off with a VIP visit to the home and workshop of renowned sculptor and painter, Victor Delfin.

After Lima you'll travel on to the Sacred Valley and find out about the history and culture of traditional Peruvian Cusqueñan textile weavers before a local shaman welcomes you with a traditional blessing.





"Peru is excellent for adventureseekers."

For the travel to Machu Picchu itself you'll board the panoramic Vistadome train, pausing for a guided walk through an enchanting cloud forest before discovering a tea plantation or the world's largest private collection of indigenous orchids.

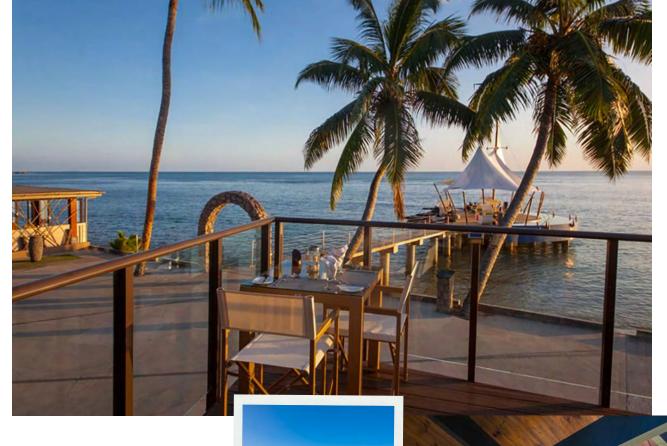
On day six you finally arrive at Machu Picchu where a local expert will share all the history and you'll feast on an Andean lunch. Later you could take part in a twilight walk through the cloud forest.

When you're done exploring Machu Picchu you still have days ahead of you, getting to know the historical city of Cusco, dining with the locals of the floating islands of Lake Titicaca, and taking a private cruise on the lake.

Of course, with this being a luxury tour you can expect fabulous hotels, and exceptional dining to make all that exploring and trekking that little bit easier. It is your honeymoon after all!

Prices for the tour start from £6,875pp in 2024, and £7,195pp in 2025.





Make it luxe

When it comes to your honeymoon the expression 'Go big or go home' definitely applies. Because guess what, after planning and paying for your dream wedding day you're allowed to kick off married life in style, and preferably in the lap of luxury. Which is why Amanda recommends honeymooning in the Seychelles and Dubai. This dual destination trip gives you the very best of both worlds, relaxing in paradise and exploring the breath-takingly beautiful Seychelles, before flying home via a three-night stop-over in Dubai where luxury is standard.

Think of your dream honeymoon destination and chances are the Seychelles rank high up on that list, promising stunning beaches, clear turquoise waters, lush landscapes and a romantic atmophere. And Amanda has picked out one example honeymoon which makes the most of it, starting with seven nights at Coco de Mer Hotel in the Seychelles on a half board basis.

Set against the backdrop of a tropical forest by the Indian Ocean, the modern Coco de Mer Hotel is situated in over 80 hectares of natural beauty on the south-west coast of Praslin Island.

But if you want to truly push the boat out – and remember it is your honeymoon – you could stay at Raffles Hotel where you'll enjoy your own villa and private pool. The Raffles retreat is scattered over 40 acres of hillside on Praslin Island, while you'll love the on-site spa with its 12 treatment rooms, sauna, Jacuzzi and experience shower, along with the outdoor pool and openair yoga pavilion. There's also a choice of restaurants serving exceptional worldwide cuisine.

If you can tear yourself away from either resort you'll fall in love with the Seychelles where you can indulge in sunset cruises, private beach picnics, snorkeling, hiking through jungles and exploring the picturesque villages. The luxury doesn't end when it's time to leave. Stopping off in Dubai's Dukes The Palm you'll be treated like royalty. Located in the exclusive Palm Jumeirah area, it boasts panoramic views of the sea and the city, along with a private beach, while being the perfect base from which to explore.

Seven nights at Coco de Mer and three nights at Dukes The Palm departing 4th September 2024 from £2,650pp.

Truly spoil yourself with options like Raffles, staying in your own villa and private pools from min £3,687 - £4,623pp. ■

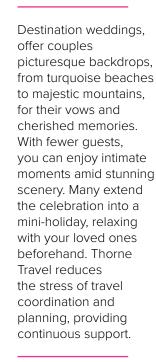
Destination Weddings



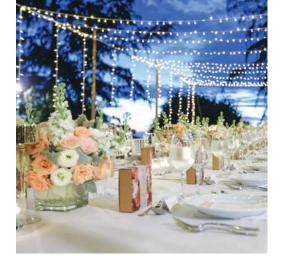
PLANNING YOUR DREAM DAY

Thorne Travel not only finds the perfect venue but also coordinates other wedding vendors like photographers, florists, and officiants, ensuring flawless execution on your big day. In 2024, we won "Honeymoon Planner of the Year" at the Scottish Wedding Awards, our other awards include "Top Scotland Agency" at the TTG Travel Awards, and the "Business of the Year Award" at the Scottish Women's Awards. Trust Thorne Travel to ease the stress of organizing your special day, whether it's an intimate affair or a larger gathering.



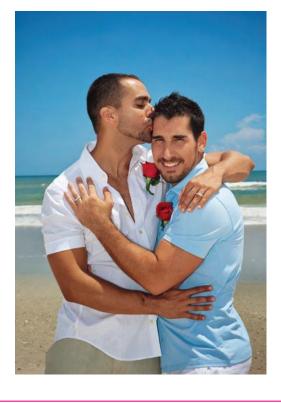












Experience all-inclusive wedding packages for a fully immersive celebration.

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Speak with your wedding expert today for the latest information.

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- We put your wedding first and book your travel arrangements around your confirmed wedding date.
- Our UK-based Wedding Specialists will help you find your perfect venue, then your In-Resort Coordinator will finalise your plans.

YOUR WEDDING IS PARAMOUNT TO US

- We customise travel around your date, with UK-based Wedding Specialists locating your ideal venue and In Resort Coordinators wrapping up plans for your special day.
- Collaborating with various suppliers large and small, We can provide you with an unparalleled wedding experience.
- As an independent travel agency, we include unique benefits such as restaurant reservations.
- Being ABTA members guarantees a thrilling and secure booking experience, allowing you to embark on your adventure with confidence!

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Staycation Of course, you could stay closer to home for a loved at home for a loved

Of course, you could stay closer to home for a loved up minimoon. We've found the ultimate romantic settings, and you don't even need your passport...

Uist Forest Retreat»

What could be more romantic than running off to a luxury treehouse with magnificent sea views, tucked away on the wild and beautiful North Uist in the Outer Hebrides? At Uist Forest Retreat you'll have a choice of three secluded forest cabins – Cailleach-oidhche (Owl), Damh (Stag) and Iolaire (Eagle), all of which boast a king size bed, a wood burning stove and a freestanding double-ended bath with a picture window to make the most of those views.

This is a nature-lover's paradise, and the forest is by the Committee Road, one of the most popular stops on the RSPB bird of prey trail. Keep an eye out for the white-tailed eagle, the short-eared owl, and many other raptors, while deer sometimes wander right past the cabins.

Whether you fancy exploring outdoors or just cuddling up by the stove and enjoying the view, you'll love your minimoon here.

uistforestretreat.co.uk







«The Hideaway Experience

Nestled in the Angus hills near Dundee, The Hideaway Experience claims to be "the ultimate adult-only 5-star romantic destination" and it's easy to see why. Choose from five secluded hideaway spaces with panoramic views, hot tubs, saunas and double baths, along with the option to add unforgettable experiences.

The Hideaway Experience specialise in honeymoon packages, which can include spa treatments in the comfort of your own hideaway, a concierge service (before and during your stay), and a wedding night chauffeur service. The Hideaway's honeymoon planning service will work with you to design a bespoke experience with all the indulgences of a 5-star hotel. Helicopter arrival perhaps? No problem. Or why not wake up to a decadent Champagne breakfast? We can think of worse ways to begin married life!

thehideawayexperience.co.uk





THE **HIDEAWAY**EXPERIENCE™



Whether it's a luxury 4 night honeymoon or short break minimoon. We have it all covered here in complete seclusion at the 5 star accredited Hideaway Experience.

Situated on a working farm in the Angus countryside just a stones throw from Dundee. Relaxation and indulgence are our core ingredients.





A minimoon is the perfect short break and way to relax after the busy time that leads up to the big day, allowing you to enjoy one another's company and recharge before your next adventure!

We have a special post-wedding packages: 4 night Honeymoon starting at £1400 3 night Minimoon starting from £999

Scottish





McEwan Photograph

Susie Olzen Photograph



Elope to Arran

If you're dreaming of tying the knot just the two of you, we suggest you take a look at The Dougarie Estate immediately! It's one of the most beautiful places on the Isle of Arran and the team has just launched a fabulous bespoke elopement package. It includes a personalised elopement planning service where you get all the assistance you need to tailor your dream day to perfection, plus transport to Loch Iorsa where your private ceremony will take place with a celebrant and a bottle of Champagne for toasting your love and future together. The package starts at just £1,500 for a couple and two witnesses. And, FYI, should the weather turn, there's a small boathouse at the loch for shelter. Set on Loch Iorsa amidst the majestic hills on the Dougarie Estate, this truly is a magical setting in which to exchange your vows and make memories for life.

DOUGARIEBOATHOUSE.CO.UK

Top craftsmanship at Winton Castle

Four centuries on from the royal craftsmen who built Winton Castle, the owners hired their successors (almost) to create two more historic bedrooms with en-suite facilities. They've been designed to look like the original tradesmen made them, with even an old garderobe loo exposed and brought to life! Launched at the end of March, the two new rooms increase the castle's overnight capacity to 20. Sir Francis Ogilvy, Winton's owner, says, "Located on the top floor of the castle, the views from these rooms are spectacular, reaching beyond the estate over to the Lammermuir hills. The new Wallace Room is named after William Wallace, not of Stirling Bridge fame but the Master Mason to King James VI." Wallace, an architect and stonemason, was commissioned by George Seton, third Earl of Winton, to rebuild Winton in I620 after it had been ruined in Henry VIII's Rough Wooing of I544. This work was finished in 1627 and involved the grand stone



twisted chimneys and carvings over windows that you can see from the new bedroom named after him. Likewise, the Paterson Room is so-called after an architect associated with the castle. John Paterson managed an architect's practice on Edinburgh's North Bridge from 1791 and was responsible for the neo-Gothic extension at Winton between 1800 and 1805. "From the skylights in this refurbished attic room, you can view the original tower house and I620 rebuilding, complete with a great view of the chimneys, alongside Paterson's 1800 addition," adds Francis.

WINTONCASTLE.CO.UK

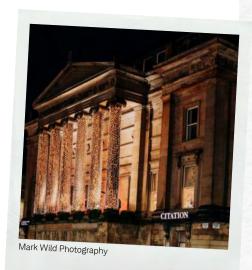
Al fresco 'I do' anyone?

Team YSW is excited to report that the Rosebery Estates' portfolio of venues is opening a stunning outdoor space for Scottish to-beweds - yay! Dalmeny Walled Garden, located in South Queensferry, will be available a few months a year (May to September) when the gardens are in full bloom and Scotland's sunshine is hopefully making an appearance. Couples

booking this romantic haven can invite up to 50 guests to witness their intimate nuptials, and you'll find Dalmeny is available for ceremonyonly or as a ceremony location before celebrating at Barnbougle Castle. Just a few moments' drive from the walled garden, the castle caters for up to 140 guests seated - and many more if you add a marquee. From the 60-foot-long Banqueting Hall to the grand Scottish Library with access to the sea-facing terraces, Barnbougle's rooms are versatile and inspiring.

ROSEBERYVENUES.CO.UK





Marry at dusk

Citation's Twilight Package went down a storm when it launched in 2023 and the Glasgow venue is set to continue delighting tobe-weds with its later-in-the-day option. Based on IOO guests, you'll get exclusive use hire, a personal wedding manager and master of ceremonies, a post-ceremony glass of fizz, a selection of chef's canapés, personalised stationery, in-house LED lighting, a full finger food buffet, a cake knife, table and stand, and an in-house DJ - all for just £6,000! (The package will be available in 2025 too for a cost of £6,600).

CITATION-GLASGOW.COM

Glow-up treatment

It's been a busy winter at the Largs seaside hotel Brisbane House after owners Manorview Group undertook an extensive refurbishment and added some very special touches to-be-weds will fall for. The venue is now exclusive use for weddings and comes complete with a ceremony and reception room overlooking the Clyde, a dedicated wedding prep room and a breathtaking duplex honeymoon suite. Book your wedding here and you'll have the run of the entire venue on your special day, with capacity for up to 130 day guests and up to 200 in the evening.

Brides and 'maids can kick off their wedding morning in the brand new Wallace Suite, the wedding prep room, which has stunning views, a bar area, three dressing tables and that allimportant natural light for your hair and make-up.

Modern lighting, plush fabrics and a glass front which opens onto your own private terrace overlooking Largs Bay will make you swoon over the newly upgraded ceremony and reception space. And to give you space to greet your guests after the vows, you'll love the Cochrane Suite with its bar and outdoor terrace. There are photo opportunities aplenty around the revamped hotel with a glittering chandelier, double staircase and a newly landscaped walkway.

But it's the brand new Caledonian honeymoon suite that's blown us away. Set over a two-floor space, the first floor features a king-size bed, en-suite bathroom and dressing room, while up the spiral staircase you'll find a steamroom shower, spa bath and bar area with complimentary cocktails. Why not unwind in the bath with a tipple at the end of your wedding day, gazing through the glass doors to your own private balcony? The honeymoon suite is included in all wedding packages but if you can't wait to return you'll love the news that it's also available to book up to three months in advance for special occasions. Turn to page 256 for editor Katie's review

MANORVIEWHOTELS.CO.UK/HOTELS/ BRISBANE ≫



Relax and rejuvenate
The perfect destination for restful

pre- and post-wedding celebrations, as well as hen and stag dos, Turnberry Spa has some relaxing and indulgent new wedding-focused treatments on offer. Located within the Trump Turnberry Resort in Ayr, the spa boasts highly trained therapists, top quality products and a treatment list featuring something for everyone. Pick your pamper from the Ultimate Wedding Glow package (a body wrap, facial, hot stone massage, pedicure and manicure lasting four hours and 45 minutes in total, priced at £475) and the Prepare to be Pampered package, which includes afternoon tea and two 25-minute treatments - choose from a back massage, express facial, salt and oil scrub, hand recovery, foot recovery and shirodhara. This one costs £150 during the week and £170 at the weekend. By the way, both treatments include full use of the luscious spa facilities. There's a 65-foot heated infinity pool with spectacular views, as well as a poolside bio-sauna with floor-to-ceiling vistas and a Relaxation Room that has a sensory shower, ice fountain, sauna and steam room. Book us in now, please! Turn to page 262 to read what Team YSW's Ashleigh thought of Trump Turnberry.

TRUMPHOTELS.COM/TURNBERRY





A new home from home

Let us introduce you to the newly refurbished South Lodge, an addition to Broxmouth Park Estate's self-catering accommodation... It's simply beautiful! Open from spring/summer 2024 and now available for couples to book as part of their wedding package, the historic pyramid-roofed gate lodge has three bedrooms (one with a classic freestanding bath behind the bed no less!), three bathrooms, a high-spec lounge/kitchen and a hot tub on the decked garden terrace - swoon! The addition of South Lodge means Broxmouth couples can now host 46 of their nearest and dearest on the estate during their celebration. But if you're keeping South Lodge for yourselves, your wedding party can take up residence in the three charming courtyard cottages located by the Broxmouth Courtyard venue, the spacious five-bedroom Bridge House, the quaint four-bed Head Gardener's Cottage or the dreamy Lodge on the Lake.

BROXMOUTH.COM

A special offer at Arniston

Due to postponements, Arniston House (the beautiful countryside retreat where the bright city lights of Edinburgh are within easy reach and yet you feel a million miles away) is offering a massive £2,000 discount on its Classic and Premiere venue hire packages for four very special 2024 dates. The team at Arniston has verified availability for each date with all its preferred and approved suppliers (those they've worked with for the last seven years, so come highly trusted and recommended).

At the time of writing, the following dates are available:

■ 29 June or 24 August – Classic or Premiere hire. Ceremony and dinner in the Orangery available for up to 50; groups of more than 50 will need the Orangery and a marquee from Greenfield Marquees (additional cost for marquee).

■7 September or 5 October – Classic or Premiere hire. Ceremony and dinner in the Orangery available for up to 50; groups of more than 50 will need the Orangery and a marquee from Greenfield Marquees or Shade Canvas sail cloth tents (additional cost for marquee).

ARNISTONHOUSE.COM



Say 'I do' to Fairmont St Andrews

Luxurious cliff-top venue Fairmont St Andrews has announced an exciting offer on its Bay Package - just £8,500 to host 50 adult day guests and a further 100 evening invitees at the stunning coastal venue. With limited availability remaining between October 2024 and March 2025, the very special offer includes a welcome drink for your guests' arrival in the beautiful Atrium, three canapés per person for your drinks reception, a private room for your meal and evening reception, a three-course set wedding breakfast, half a bottle of wine and a toast drink per guest, chair covers, table linen and a delicious evening buffet for 100 people. If you're hoping to tie the knot in a five-star setting that comes with lavish accommodation, glorious golf courses and a luxe spa, you're going to want to explore this offer, pronto!

FAIRMONT.COM/ST-ANDREWS.SCOTLAND

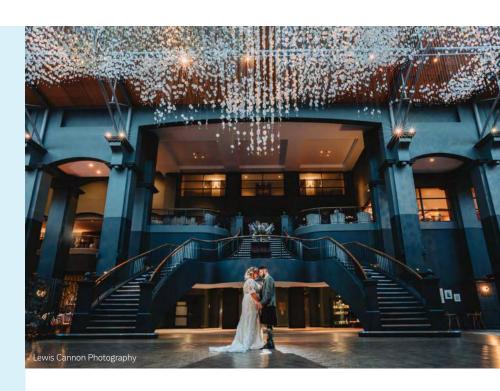


Introducing Jessica

As she begins her fourth year at the Old Course Hotel, Golf Resort & Spa, Jessica Paton has become a wedding coordinator. She started out in the Pro Shop before doing a work placement in the events department - and she's not looked back since. For Jess, the best bit about working in the wedding world is hearing all the couples' stories, from how they met to how the question was popped. "Whether

they're romantic, funny or embarrassing, I love hearing it all," she smiles. Her favourite wedding season is summer - "The days are longer, warmer and there's something magical about a summer evening when the sun begins to set," - and the Old Course's conservatory is her most-loved space in the venue. "It offers both natural daylight and a perfect entrance. On that note, my ninja skill is making sure the bride gets down the aisle on time... And that the groom has finished his round of golf in time to meet her at the bottom!" Finally, her top tip for to-be-weds is to make your wedding your own. Jess advises couples to create their own traditions, do what makes you happy and dance to songs you love.

OLDCOURSEHOTEL.CO.UK





Marvellous midweek

The team at Balbirnie House has revealed a new wedding package where the venue will be exclusively yours at no extra cost. This valuepacked offer applies to specially selected midweek dates in 2024 and, due to popular demand, it will be extended into the first few months of 2025. Recently named Scotland's Wedding Hotel of the Year for the fifteenth time in 17 years at the annual Scottish Hotel of the Year awards, Balbirnie has built its wedding reputation over three decades. The privately-owned house blends elements of stunning vintage

grandeur with chic, contemporary vibes to create a timeless wedding venue. Interested in numbers? To-be-weds will find it can accommodate up to 216 day guests and 250 evening guests. For more information about the new package, email leah@balbirnie.co.uk.

BALBIRNIE.CO.UK



Aday for You Made by Us

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With 9 stunning locations across Scotland, from the spectacular Highlands down to the glorious Borders, we have the perfect location for your wedding celebration.

Allow our expert wedding co-ordinators to bring your vision for your special day to life. They are experts, who can advise on all aspects of the big day. We understand how much planning goes into weddings and we have packages to suit all seasons, budgets and timelines. A day for you, made by us!

BRIDAL SPA PACKAGES

Indulge in some pampering before your dream wedding with a spa day, wedding party pampering or a selectionof soothing Elemis spa treatments. You deserve some relaxation before walking down the aisle.



QUALITY FOOD

Our talented chef teams select only the finest and freshest seasonal ingredients to prepare delicious wedding breakfasts and evening menus with your direction on which dishes you wish to serve guests on the day.



Wedby Water

There are so many amazing venues situated by the water in Scotland, so if your heart is set on a picturesque beach, loch or coastline, then we've rounded up some must-see spots ...



* Broxmouth Courtyard

Beautiful Broxmouth Courtyard, with its elegant finishes and rustic charm is a purpose-built, exclusive use venue located in the grounds of Broxmouth Park Estate. The venue provides a premium setting for weddings. With natural landscaping, access to private woodland and a secluded loch, there are plenty of amazing photo options. There is also a gorgeous lodge by the loch which has a hot tub and loch view! The perfect honeymoon getaway!

Broxmouth is situated on the outskirts of the historic fishing town of Dunbar, on the East Lothian coast so you'll have your pick of lovely beaches nearby,



including Belhaven Bay and White Sands. When it comes to your wedding celebrations, the Stables Gallery features a glazed wall, high ceiling and original stonework. This space was designed for wedding ceremonies and smaller gatherings. Meanwhile there are a plethora of luxury cuisines available for you to design your own bespoke menu for your reception in the Courtyard Dining Room.

BROXMOUTH.COM

♠ Winton Castle

Winton Castle near Edinburgh is a venue steeped in history, blending the grandeur of a palace and castle with the intimacy of a family home. This romantic Scottish Renaissance castle is a hidden gem surrounded by mature gardens, deep in the tranquil East Lothian countryside. And for those couples dreaming of some photos beside the water, Winton has its very own loch below the castle and terraced gardens, which makes the most beautiful backdrop.

More than 500 years old, the castle is still the family home of Sir Francis and Lady Ogilvy, and the loyal team has been hosting weddings for more than 20 years. By limiting the number of weddings held each year, it ensures the castle remains something of a well-kept secret. From a fully bespoke wedding with entertaining activities and accommodation for up to 50, to seasonal wedding packages, this beautiful venue can do it all.

WINTONCASTLE.CO.UK/ WEDDINGS/

⋆ The Dougarie Boathouse

What could be more romantic than getting married on a beautiful Scottish island? Located on the island of Arran, The Dougarie Boathouse is an exclusive-use venue boasting a unique curved roof, picturesque setting and undeniable allure. Originally built as the sporting lodge for the IIth Duke of Hamilton around I885, it's been lovingly transformed into a gorgeous wedding venue. Set on a secluded shoreline, you'll love the boathouse's fairy-lit

vaulted ceiling and original stained glass windows, while the modern sliding doors make the most of the views in this dreamy location.

Just think of all the stunning spots where you'll be able to pose for your wedding photos – you can even marry on the stone circle overlooking the water or on the sandy beach.

And remember, being on the west side of the island means you get to enjoy the most spectacular sunsets over the sea!

THEDOUGARIEBOATHOUSE.CO.UK





Situated on Scotland's "golf coast" in East Lothian, Marine North Berwick enjoys stunning views of the Firth of Forth and across to Bass Rock. The gorgeous coastal location provides endless opportunities for the most amazing wedding pictures, while the walled garden is the perfect spot for outdoor ceremonies which take advantage of that vista.

Indoor weddings are hosted in either the Fidra Suite – complete with a wrap-around balcony – or the atmospheric Library with its oak-panelled walls and impressive fireplace, both of which enjoy coastline views.

This venue is truly elegant, combining original Victorian features with contemporary amenities to ensure a superstylish wedding day. And the amazing team will be there every step of the way, from initial planning to ensuring seamless proceedings on the day.

MARINEANDLAWN.COM/ MARINENORTHBERWICK

» Macdonald Forest Hills Hotel & Resort

With stunning views over Loch Ard, Forest Hills Hotel & Resort is set in an area of incredible natural beauty within the spectacular Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park.

This means it is surrounded by sparkling lochs, rugged mountains and lush, wooded hills – a magical destination for lovers of the great outdoors. Under 20 minutes from Stirling, 40 minutes from Glasgow and less than an hour from Edinburgh, it's the perfect countryside location.

From intimate gatherings to lavish celebrations, Forest Hills offers a peaceful wedding venue. The stunning Garden Suite can host up to 100 guests and features breathtaking views, providing you with the most romantic of venues in the dramatic landscape.

Available for exclusive use, your wedding can be completely bespoke to you and your guests.

MACDONALDHOTELS.CO.UK/FOREST-HILLS

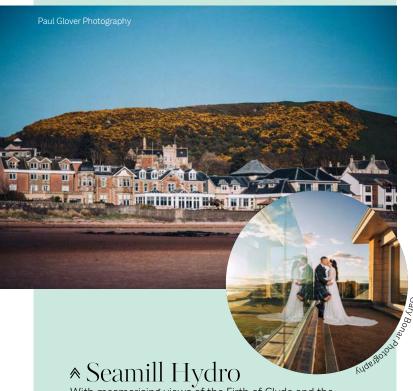


» Fyvie Castle

Located near Turriff in rural Aberdeenshire, Fyvie Castle is a gorgeous venue that's certain to impress, with its towers and turrets. Within the grounds of the Scottish baronial castle there is a picturesque lake and colourful walled garden, meaning there are a range of fantastic backdrops for photography. Fyvie Lake was created by General William Gordon to serve as a place of peace and tranquillity and a haven for wildlife and it's home to many, from nesting swans and migratory geese to the occasional osprey. Just imagine sharing your wedding photos with some winged friends!

The castle itself can host weddings for up to IIO guests and has self-catering accommodation for I6. Fyvie Castle is cared for by the National Trust for Scotland, a charity dedicated to protecting Scotland's exceptional nature, beauty and heritage. Income generated from weddings goes back into looking after this beautiful place.

NTS.ORG.UK/VISIT/PLACES/FYVIE-CASTLE



With mesmerising views of the Firth of Clyde and the majestic mountains of Arran, it's no wonder Seamill Hydro is one of Ayrshire's best loved hotels. Located only metres from the beach, this beautiful Victorian hotel perfectly blends grandeur with modern comforts.

The location by the sea offers some of the most romantic backdrops to your special day. From making your vows in the ceremony room which boasts gorgeous panoramic views, to enjoying your meal and first dance in the main Firth Suite, you can continue to appreciate the stunning scenery as you celebrate the different stages of your wedding day.

Guests can also enjoy the landscaped gardens, elevated terrace and direct access to the sandy beach, where you're bound to get some amazing wedding photos!

SEAMILLHYDRO.CO.UK





∗Trump Turnberry

Perched along the breathtaking West Coast of Scotland, Trump Turnberry offers an enchanting backdrop for your dream destination wedding. Celebrate your love under sparkling chandeliers in the Grand Ballroom, the largest in Scotland, with panoramic views over the glistening Firth of Clyde and the iconic Ailsa Craig. For a more intimate affair, couples can bask in the elegant splendour of The Caledonia Ballroom or The Ailsa Craig Suite, adorned with exquisite interiors and aweinspiring vistas.

For a truly extraordinary experience, exchange vows alongside loved ones at the iconic Turnberry Lighthouse. Standing 24 metres tall with sweeping views to the Isle of Arran, this historic landmark provides the ultimate coastal setting for your special day. Not only is the lighthouse a spectacular ceremony backdrop, it has also been transformed into a luxurious two-bedroom suite - a fitting place to begin your happily ever after.

Whatever you envision, the dedicated Turnberry wedding team will guide you every step of the way, ensuring your dream coastal wedding transcends all expectations.

TRUMPHOTELS.COM/TURNBERRY









Share your love with us,

and we will share your love with Scotland.

Whether your dream special day is a hillside elopement in the wild Scottish landscape, a micro wedding in a beautiful heritage garden, or a grand celebration at a castle, by choosing our venues you're also supporting our vital conservation work across the country.

Make your wedding a truly unique experience, and help our charity to protect these treasured places for generations to come.















A romantic Scottish castle wedding with just 14 guests, perfectly planned by the groom (mostly)! igh school sweethearts
Meg and Shawn were
introduced by mutual
friends and the rest was
history. Seventeen years
and two children later, Shawn decided to
make it official and proposed in February
2023 on a trip to Costa Rica – but that
wasn't all. Little did his bride know
wedding plans were already in motion
and, in just two months' time, the pair
would be happily married!

"The wedding was a surprise to me," smiles Meg. "He knew it would be important for me to have a ceremony in Scotland to include my relatives who wouldn't be able to attend a wedding in Canada, where we live together. So, he enlisted the help of my mum, my gran Jane and my aunty Jennie over in Scotland. Meanwhile, he got to work at home applying for a marriage visa for both of us – something that was quite a challenge to keep from me!"

Meg's gran had suggested Brodie Castle as the venue, not just because of its undeniable beauty but also the fact it's close to Nairn where the family lives. Shawn loved the classic Scottish backdrop and was sure he could picture saying 'I do' there.

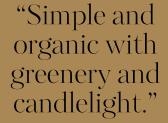


Little touches

Venue sorted, couple engaged and Meg now part of the process, they focused on the final details like personalising their rapidly approaching special day, which would be very small with no bridal party; only Meg's immediate family. "We wanted something simple and organic with greenery and candlelight to provide an intimate, romantic feel," remembers the bride. "We added a few DIY details, like the buttonholes made by my mum. She also made sandwiches and my gran made doilies for the reception table." Jennifer from Villagegreenery supplied the on-theme cake topper as well as Meg's bouquet and Shawn's buttonhole. "She also provided eucalyptus and gypsophila to line the aisle, then use as decoration for the reception."

Meg admits everything was pretty easy for her planning-wise with Shawn and her mum doing the bulk of the organising – "I just got to make the final decisions!" – so she could focus on finding something to wear within the tight timeline. "I originally wanted long sleeves and a low back and visited three shops on different occasions with my mum, mother-in-law and sister-in-law. I found 'The One' in the last shop and it was meant to be in every way, from the fit and style (my favourite part was the pockets) to the price and fact the alternations could be done in time. When I tried it on, it felt like me."

The bride had chosen her simple yet sophisticated shoes before dress shopping and was lucky enough to have her beautiful headwear made by her mum. She topped off her elegant look with her mum's pearl earrings and her paternal grandmother's engagement ring. \gg





The night before the big day involved Meg making afternoon tea sandwiches with her mum whilst Shawn headed out for a drink with her uncle and brother. Neither of the to-be-weds got much sleep that night – but as parents they know that feeling well! They were excited and full of anticipation in the morning; busy getting everyone ready, delivering the food and drinks to the venue and, of course, fitting in a glass or two of Champagne.

After being piped into Brodie Castle, Meg walked down the aisle to *A Thousand Years* by The Piano Guys and was filled with certainty; excited to exchange vows and start the new chapter of her life with her husband. Humanist celebrant Kirsty Harding did the honours and incorporated some traditional rituals – handfasting, drinking from the quaich and ring warming. "We felt the explanation of these traditions matched our values as a couple. We also wrote our own vows and were excited to express our love to each other in front of our family. Kirsty did an amazing job of sharing our story and including our children in the ceremony."





stables. It was perfect."

Reflecting on the short but sweet wedding planning journey, the couple admit it was a little tough to organise from afar, especially when it came to visas, and coordinating and collecting the marriage licence. However, the involvement of Shona Darnley at AyeDoEvents who was "instrumental in planning and executing the big day" made life a whole lot easier. And, of course, looking forward to the wedding and seeing it all come together in the end made the hard work worth it. "Now we're married, it feels like we've solidified our family," smiles Meg. "We'll be continuing the celebration for our first wedding anniversary back in Canada with the rest of our family and friends."







BRIDE'S DRESS

Best for Bride

BRIDE'S SHOES

Call it Spring

CELEBRANT

Kirsty Harding of Humanist Society Scotland

CAKE

Ramona's Cakes FLOWERS

Villagegreenery
HAIR & MAKE-UP

Revive Spa PIPER

Spud the Piper WEDDING COORDINATOR

AveDoEvents



PHOTOGRAPHER'S CREDIT

"This was my first time at beautiful Brodie castle and it didn't disappoint! A lot of the wedding was pulled together by Meg's mum and Shawn as the main man planned to propose shortly before their trip to the Highlands to visit family. The plan was in place to have a dream castle wedding whilst on their trip and boy did they pull it off! Great people, good craic and stunning surroundings! It was an absolute pleasure to play a small part in this cracking wee Highland wedding!"

JP AT ABRIGHTSIDE **PHOTOGRAPHY**





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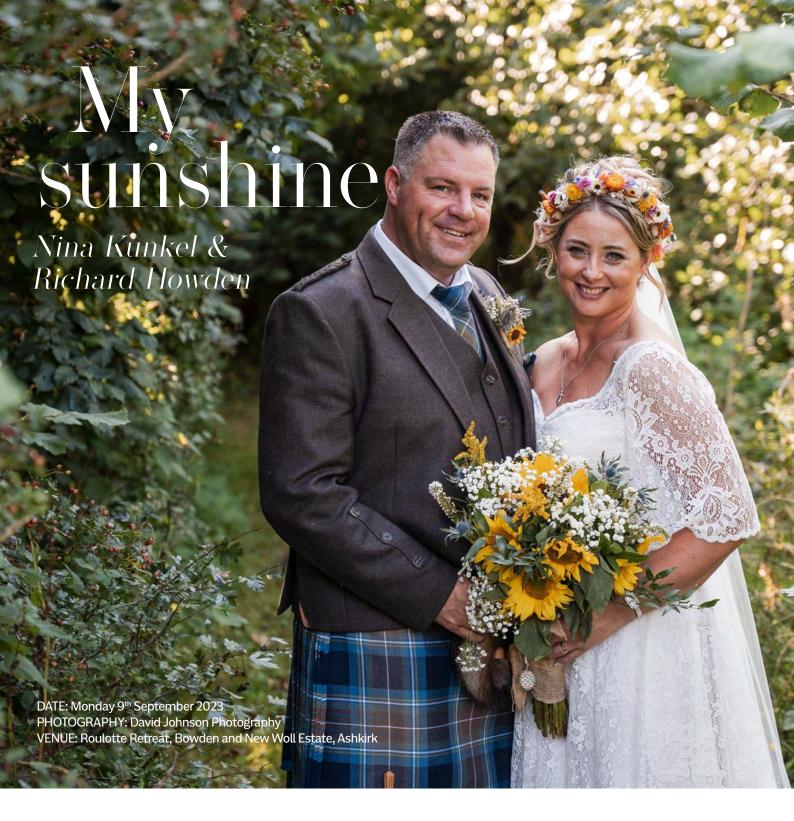
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After photographing countless weddings over the years, 'I do' diary couple Nina and Richard celebrated their own special day with a relaxed and intimate ceremony in the Borders

edding photographers Nina and Richard met on Tinder in October 2022. After a few hiccups - including Nina being hospitalised with Covid, delaying their first date - Richard proposed just over a year after they first met, following a romantic meal in Lauder.

Their engagement lasted two years and during this time they continued to build their wedding photography business Howden Photography, which Richard had started 12 years before. Searching for a venue, they were keen to find somewhere that reflected the relaxed and intimate atmosphere they

wished for the day, while still being able to accommodate their numbers. "As wedding photographers, we wanted somewhere that could make our wedding feel unique – not an easy task when we're at weddings together all the time!" Nina explains.

They had photographed so many different wedding venues in the Borders area but after Richard took Nina to see Roulotte Retreat, she fell in love again with this totally unique eco woodland and wildflower venue. "The roulotte accommodation was a unique experience for our guests and we spent our wedding night in the bowtop traditional gypsy caravan 'Ruby' where our ceremony had taken place," Nina



recalls. As it's such a small venue they kept their ceremony intimate before moving location for the reception, where they were joined by more guests.

Nina and Richard chose New Woll Estate Golf Club for their reception where they welcomed extra guests for the meal and then even more for the evening party. "It is a stunning venue with a barnstyle function room which hugely complemented our outdoor rustic wedding ceremony. The views and outdoor areas are stunning, the food is exceptional and their service in helping us create our perfect day was outstanding."

Nina's favourite flowers are sunflowers, "because I believe it's impossible not to feel happy and cheerful when you are surrounded by them." Having settled on a September date, they knew the flowers would be in bloom around this time. "I grew 200 sunflowers in my garden and all our friends and family grew sunflowers for us too," Nina says. "We were not hugely successful with our blooms as many bloomed too early, and some too late." So Nina and her chief bridesmaid, Brenda, went to local Clackmae Farm who were growing sunflowers to raise money for charity and hand-cut blooms to supplement the others.

A personal touch

The entire wedding was filled with DIY details, from all the stationery made by the bride and groom and a restored vintage bike decorated for the reception venue to centrepieces, signs and 200ft of bunting, not to mention the bouquets and flower displays made my Nina, her friends, and Richard's mother Dorothy. Everything was lovingly thought out and given a personal touch. Not only did it look amazing, the couple are also going to use it all for their new wedding and events hire business!

As a second-time bride in her forties, Nina admits she felt a little intimidated by the idea of wedding dress shopping. "I see stunning brides all the time and wished to look unique from any bride Rich has photographed before. I wanted something comfortable that wasn't too typically bridal that \gg



made me feel like a bride while still making me feel totally unique." After visiting different shops, Nina finally discovered the perfect dress – a lace gown with V-neck and lace waistband and detachable sheer lace flutter sleeves by White Rose Bridal. "I loved the option of sleeves for the ceremony that I could remove for the dancing," Nina recalls. "I loved it from the first moment I stepped into it."

She accessorised with an ankle-length veil featuring multicoloured hand-sewn and embroidered floral detailing and wore a dried flower crown made by Jennifer's Flower Studio.

Nina's four bridesmaids included her two close friends Brenda and Pam, her daughter Heidi and Richard's daughter Katie. She settled on a teal blue shade, and the bridesmaids each chose their own dress. Richard had his kilt made by Lochcarron of Scotland in Holyrood tartan and his four groomsmen included two close friends Paul and David, his son Jack and Nina's son Harry.

Their friend Julie Scott, a Scottish Borders registrar, conducted the ceremony. "It was so special to have our friend marry us. The ceremony was humorous and meaningful and hugely emotional. She did an amazing job helping us incorporate our children and our parents into our ceremony."

Special and meaningful

On the day, Nina's son Harry walked her down the aisle to *A Thousand Years* by Christina Perri. "It was a very special, meaningful moment as he has been the man of the house for some years and it was important to me that I acknowledged this. My father, who had walked me down the aisle some 20 years before, was very supportive of this role being given to his grandson," Nina says. "It wasn't an aisle as such but more of a clearing through the trees



and as I approached Rich, the sun broke through the clouds and shone through the trees down on me and a slight breeze blew and leaves showered down around me. It was a magical moment."

The couple describe their ceremony as "meaningful and emotional" and it included lighting a memorial candle, exchanging personal vows, Nina's daughter playing the flute, handfasting, a sand ceremony to represent the blending of their families, and, finally, jumping the broom.

Following the ceremony, Scottish Wedding Painter Victoria Grand captured an image of the couple and painted it throughout the day. "It was a fabulous addition to our day with guests checking on her progress," says Richard. "She is so talented." They also surprised their guests with a singing waiter during the meal. "It was so much fun," Nina smiles. "Our guests were swinging napkins, dancing in their seats and even formed an enormous conga line.

For their first dance, Nina and Richard choreographed a routine with the help of Richard from Dance Reflex to the song *Take my Hand* by Skerryvore. "Even though we were building our lives, our family, our home and our wedding photography business together, it feels so much more absolute and definite to be husband and wife," Nina reflects.





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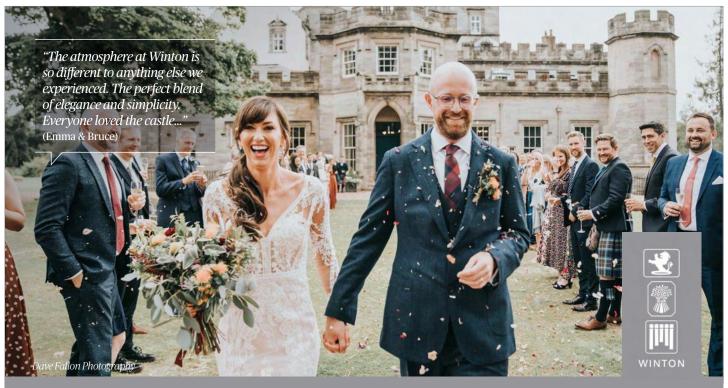
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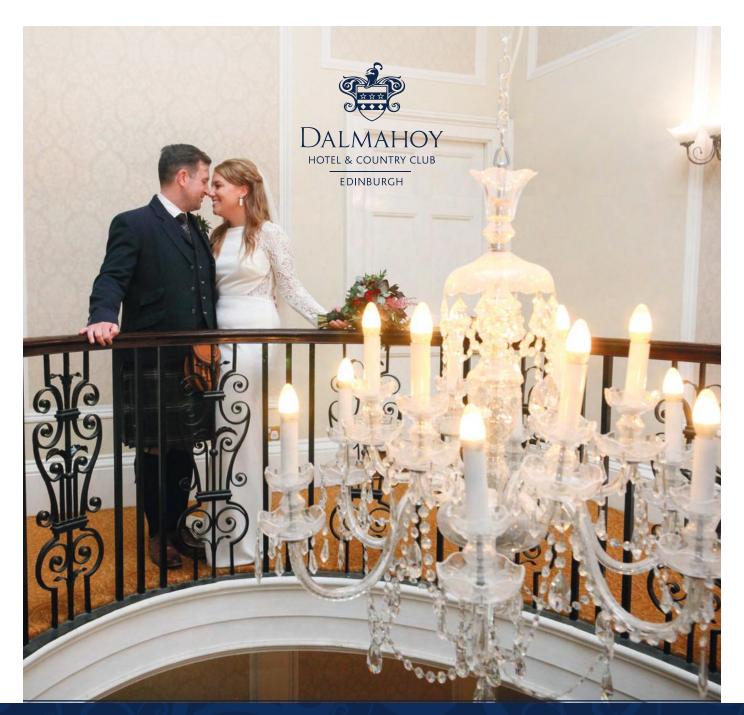
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Impressive tour Macdonald Houstoun House

Katie Bletcher

rediscovers all the charms of this historical venue

acdonald Houstoun House holds a special place for the YSW team as this was the location for our first ever photoshoot and returning now is a bit of a full circle moment. This time however, I get to stay over and sample a flavour of what wedding couples can expect. In fact, I'm staying in room 31, the elegant corner bedroom in the historical main tower building where brides typically spend their wedding morning. And it's easy to see why. Walking into the spacious double-aspect room I can imagine the happy buzz with a busy glam squad and all the bridesmaids.

The history graduate in me can't help but fall for the romance of Houstoun House, which dates back to 1551. Built for John Shairp, advocate to Mary Queen of Scots, the baronial mansion house played host to the ill-fated queen. Now a 73-bedroom hotel, it's no wonder so many couples choose to say 'I do' here. If you're looking for a traditional Scottish vibe with all modern comforts this is the place for you.

Dinner is served in the intimate wood-panelled Tower Restaurant where there's a heavy emphasis on locally-sourced produce. I opt for delicious slow cooked lamb shoulder with 'French style' peas followed by a wickedly rich dark chocolate tart before we head downstairs



to the Vaulted Bar for a fireside gin – just the tonic on a cold March evening.

Next morning we're up early for a steam and swim in the light-filled on-site spa before breakfast. Incidently, couples who marry at Houstoun House receive a three-month leisure membership to take whenever they choose. Talk about an added bonus.

Your wedding, your way speaking of bonuses, all wedding packages at Houstoun include room hire so there are no hidden fees. And then there's Charlotte Lambie, the weddings and events manager who will be by your side from your first enquiry until after your first dance. When we meet for a show-round, Charlotte's passion for her job is evident.

"Flexibility is key" she assures me as she outlines just some of the wedding set-ups they've had, from llamas and bouncy castles to fireworks displays – impeccably timed to fit around the nearby airport's flight paths.



The perfect package

At Houstoun House it's very much "Your day, your way" with couples free to include everything they wish for a uniquely personal celebration. However, the hotel has a range of wedding packages to make life easier, the most popular being the Houstoun package. It includes table linen, candelabras and uplighters, the honeymoon suite for the couple on the night, arrival red carpet, as well as optional on-the-day stationery. And Charlotte says you can add extras like a piper, the in-house DJ, and chair covers.

For those wanting to leave all planning elements to the experts, there's the Deluxe package, while the Whirlwind package is ideal for couples who can't wait to say 'I do', and I love the details of the Just the Two of Us package, which includes spa treatments and Champagne on arrival for elopements.

At Houstoun House there's a one wedding per day policy and you'll have all the privacy you could wish for. Marrying in the tastefully decorated Houstoun Suite you can exit through a confetti throw into the courtyard which has the feeling of your own wee village. Just picture your drinks reception here on a sunny day or in the adjacent Strathbrock Suite, (where smaller ceremonies are held), before dinner back in the Houstoun Suite, which can comfortably accommodate up to 150 day guests and 170 in the evening.

For those who wish to take full advantage of the backdrop of that magnificent white-washed tower building you can marry outdoors in the beautiful secluded gardens. And with Scottish weather being what it is, you can make the call on whether to exchange vows inside or out up to an hour and a half before. Remember I said flexibility is key!



Fancy saying 'I do' here in 2024? There is still some availability for mid-week and Sunday weddings.

Find out more about marrying at Houstoun House Email: guest.services@macdonald-hotels.co.uk Phone: 0344 879 9243

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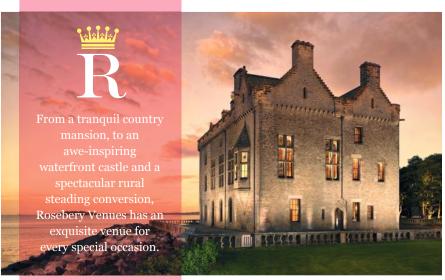




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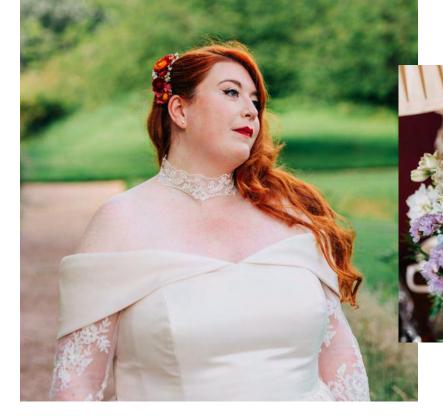


Fife & Tayside



Millearne Gardens, Crieff - Jenniflower Photography





This couple used Scotland's stunning wildflowers as the inspiration for their joyful summer wedding on a Fife country estate



"It's a nice nod to vintage silver screen dresses." elly and Alex first met at a mutual friend's party when they were teenagers. After eight years together, Alex proposed in the beautiful surroundings of contemporary sculpture park Jupiter Artland just outside Edinburgh.

When it came to embarking on their plans for the ceremony, one of the big priorities was finding a venue that had no curfew. And the couple discovered their perfect spot in Cambo Estate. "It was beautiful, with lots of flexibility, on-site accommodation, no curfews and stunning grounds to explore," Kelly explains.

And it turned out to be a wedding worth waiting for as they had to push the date back three years due to the pandemic. "We could have pushed it back two, but I didn't want to risk having any restrictions on the day. We were happy to wait longer to do it right," Kelly says.

The rich colour scheme was inspired by a palette created by Kelly from different Scottish wildflowers. She gave each of her four bridesmaids a different colour from the palette, being careful to choose the colours she knew they would vibe with the most. "I then let them each pick their dress. I wasn't fussed about them matching and wanted them to get something they'd wear again and feel comfortable in." Amazingly, three out of the four dresses ended up being vintage finds!

Meanwhile, Kelly wanted the flowers to be "huge and everywhere" and Cath from Blue

Poppy Florist made her dreams come true, using mostly locally-grown wildflowers. "I wanted it to look like an explosion of colour. I've been to a lot of weddings where the flowers were nice but you don't remember them afterwards. I wanted the flowers to be the main event."

Classic style

Kelly knew exactly what she wanted her wedding dress to look like - in fact, she'd known for years! Instead of dress shopping for 'The One' she had her dream gown made by Freja Designer Dressmaking in Edinburgh. "I went by myself to have the dress designed and then fitted. I only took people with me when it was the final fitting. I took two of my bridesmaids, my mum, my mother-in-law and a couple of other friends," she says. "It was an oyster silk dress with a full skirt and long train, a cinched waist with an off-the-shoulder neckline and long ivory lace sleeves. I chose this style because the shape of the dress was very flattering and classic. I also love anything off-the-shoulder, it's a nice nod to vintage silver screen dresses which I adore."

Kelly accessorised with an ivory lace choker purchased second-hand from Etsy, and she wore her grandmother's white gold diamond stud earrings from her own wedding day. She had her florist create a hair comb with dried red flowers in it and her shoes were a gorgeous pair of red velvet flats.

Alex wore a kilt of Ross Hunting tartan with ghillie brogues, white kilt socks, a white dress shirt, a musquash and brown leather sporran and a pressed heather kilt pin with a matching sgian dubh, all from Gordon Nicolson Kiltmakers in Edinburgh. He completed the look with a green velvet Prince Charlie-cut jacket and a purple scrunchie cravat from John Morrison Kiltmakers. His best man was their childhood friend Iain, and instead of having groomsmen, Alex opted for his fellow choir members from The Phoenix Soul & Gospel Choir.



"I wanted the flowers to be the main event."

a big murder mystery dinner party with immediate family and the bridal party. In the morning, there were lots of emotions flying around and for some added drama, Alex lost the rings! "That was stressful, but thankfully he found them after running around frantically," Kelly recalls. "Before leaving the bridal suite I nearly started crying, but my bridesmaids did an excellent job of distracting me."

As Kelly walked down the aisle she felt a little overwhelmed, with Alex's choir singing Natalie Coles' joyful This Will Be (An Everlasting Love). "It was the music that got me. I was a weeping mess but once I got to Alex I was able to relax a bit more," she says. "Since I was a small child, I knew if I ever got married it would be to that song, Alex didn't get a look in, but thankfully he has excellent taste and

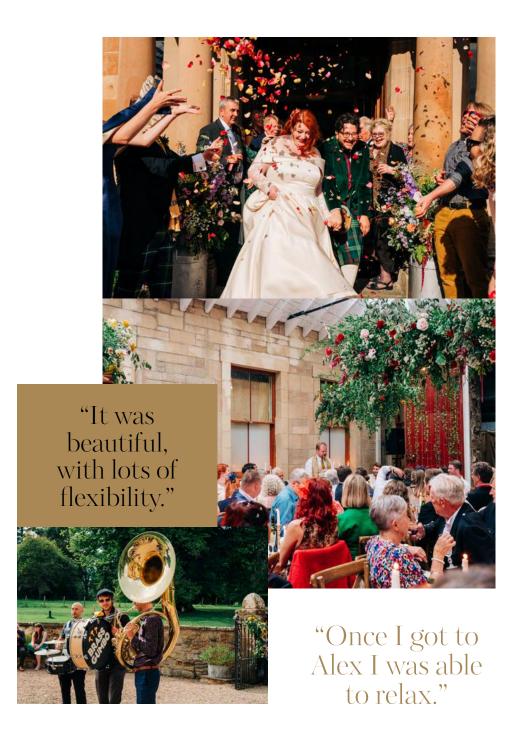
The couple chose a humanist ceremony and both wrote their own vows. "It was very sweet sharing them. They were fairly short and straight to the

Brass band Brass Gumbo serenaded them out of the ceremony room and continued to play while they went off to sign their documents. Afterwards there was prosecco followed by ice cream on the lawn for their 120 guests. A magician and a tarot card reader provided entertainment and their wedding photographers set up a film noir-style photoshoot in the billiards room where guests could have their photos taken.

More guests arrived for the evening reception that featured a ceilidh followed by a funk band.

"After they finished around midnight we went to the tents on the front lawn and played music and danced and chatted through the rest of the night. We went to bed at around 4am but the groom's sister and one of the bridesmaids were spotted at 10am still going strong!" Kelly smiles.

Farrice cream







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PHOTOGRAPHER'S CREDIT

"Kelly and Alex's wedding was extraordinary.

They styled the day to reflect their passions of friendship, film, food and music. Their idea to have an opportunity for guests to have a fun professional portrait was inspired."

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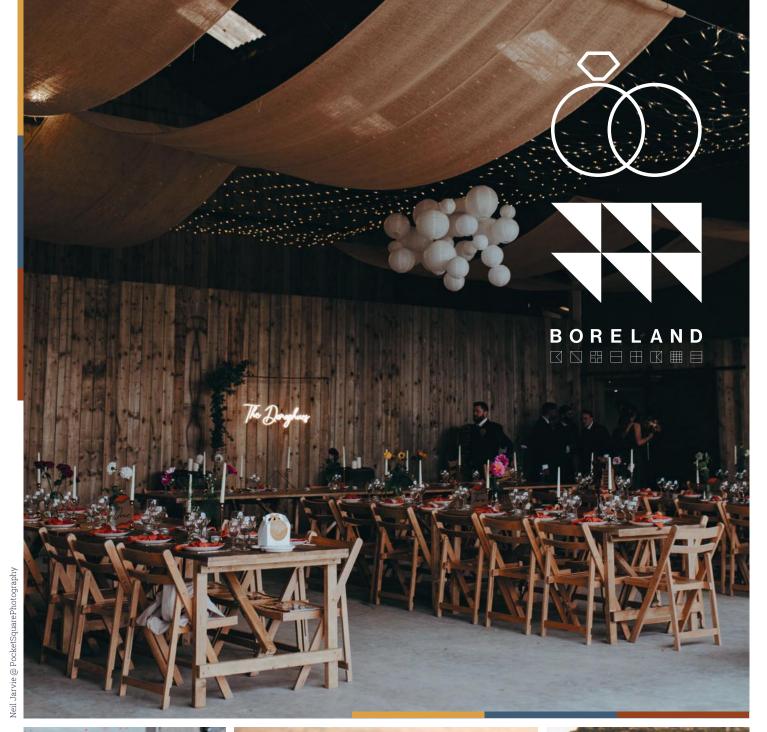
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Our 'I do' diary couple **Amber** and **Keiron** tied the knot the day before Halloween in a darkly romantic ceremony full of personal touches e have followed Amber and Keiron's journey since they became engaged on Christmas Day in 2021. After connecting through Instagram, they met up and instantly "clicked". Fast-forward just over a year and they'd been through lockdown and welcomed their beautiful baby daughter Daisy-May. "Keiron sat me down and asked Daisy-May to sit on my knee and gave me a present which was a babygrow with 'Mummy will you marry Daddy?' written on it," Amber explains.

They had originally planned to wed

in October 2024 but after finding their perfect venue – Boclair House Hotel – they decided they just couldn't wait, and chose to bring it forward a year to 30th October, which was as close to Halloween as they could get! "We knew we wanted a very dark, romantic theme but finding this in a wedding venue is harder than you'd think. We started off in Edinburgh, but after finding Boclair and visiting it we knew this was the one. When you get goosebumps and feel emotional you know it's something special," Amber says.

Boclair had the interior dark décor appeal the couple was seeking – plus the



lights could be changed to red at night for the perfect spooky vibe! They originally wanted to incorporate colours like black, gold and dark greens but Amber couldn't resist the idea of all shades of pink and red along with black and gold, "It just oozed romance but still kept with the theme!"

The majority of the décor was handmade, including a huge ornate gold frame decorated with flowers and a neon red 'Til Death' sign. Amber's sister Ashley also found a free coffin-shaped mirror which Amber upcycled.

And it was the icing on the cake when the couple's celebrant Carol Knight (who used to present the popular BBC home makeover TV programme *Changing Rooms*) said Amber's efforts would have been ideal for the show!

Two dresses

Amber originally thought she wanted a dress with Morticia Addams vibes, but after a bit of searching that's not what she opted for... At least for her daytime attire!

"My ivory dress was an A-line gown with a corset top. The bottom half was a heavy silk-like fabric and the top was detailed with pearls and beads. We ended up adding ostrich feathers and a huge bow to the back," she explains. In contrast, the evening dress – which she kept as a surprise for Keiron – was black, and Amber spotted it at David's Bridal while shopping for bridesmaid dresses. It was a similar style to her ivory dress and she added black ostrich feathers.

Since she's not too into jewellery, Amber wore only a diamante necklace with her new surname "Weston", and her mum helped to create a veil comb using ivory sparkly spider web fabric. Her bridesmaids were her sister and niece, Keira, who wore burgundy dresses in different styles from David's Bridal. >>>



"Appreciate, listen and understand."



The night before the wedding, Amber stayed at an apartment in Glasgow with Daisy-May, her parents, sister and niece. They had a chilled-out night and she slept well. Meanwhile, Keiron went to his parents' house for dinner.

Amber admits the morning was a bit of a stress, but once she was getting ready at Boclair, she was focused on getting down that aisle! "I was so buzzing, I just couldn't wait to get down and see Keiron! In that moment, I couldn't think about anything. When they opened the curtains our little girl shouted 'I love you, Mummy!' and that's a memory that I'll always cherish!"



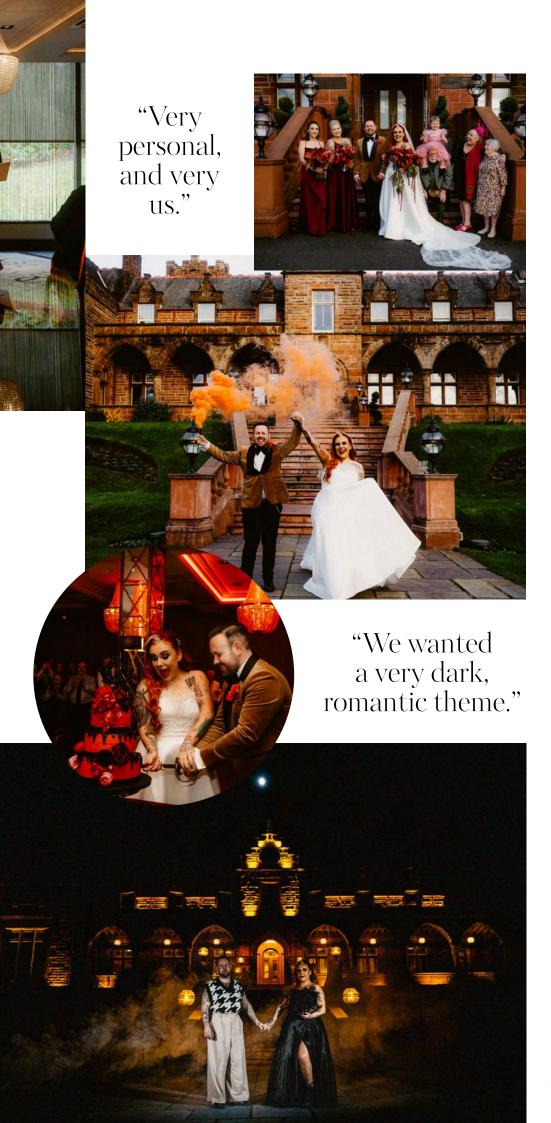


Amber walked down the aisle to a special piano medley of songs by her favourite band Don Bronco arranged by her talented pal Calum McFie. They chose a humanist ceremony and had handfasting and drinking from the quaich involving family members as well as a ring warming, which began with Amber's grandma. "I was so worried about saying vows as I'm known for saying things the wrong way round! But besides my mouth being drier than the Sahara and getting red lipstick all over Keiron (at the end!) it went beautifully. Keiron had Bob Dylan lyrics from a song he used to sing to Daisy-May and I used a couple of *Addams* Family quotes. Very personal, and very us."

Afterwards there were drinks and canapés for their 50 day guests,

followed by a delicious meal. A further 20 guests arrived at night for the evening reception which was full of dancing, a buffet and drinks aplenty! "We had requested everyone to send us a song so they were able to get up and have a boogie! It'll be a core memory dancing with Daisy-May and seeing her just have the best time," Amber smiles. "It was just joy and fun the whole day, and through the night. Forgetting the world and having love in the air!"

Amber's favourite part of wedding planning was arranging the décor and really putting their own stamp on the day. "Enjoy the journey, write lists – a list for each day if you need to," she advises to-be-weds. "Appreciate, listen and understand what each of you want and need for the wedding. Don't change your mind on something you love for anyone!"





BRIDE'S DRESSES

Bliss Studio, David's Bridal

BRIDE'S SHOES

Dr. Martens

BRIDESMAID DRESSES

David's Bridal

CAKE

Special Days Cakes

CELEBRANT

Carol Knight of Humanist Society Scotland

DRESS ALTERATIONS

Blue Cat Clothing

FAVOURS

Handmade By Daisy's Chain

FLOWERS

Marlene's Flowers

FLOWER GIRL DRESS

Shein

GROOM'S OUTFIT Moss Bros, Next

HAIR

That Rosie Glow

JEWELLERY Abbott Lyon

MAKE-UP

By Louise Makeup RINGS

Chisholm Hunter, Warren James



PHOTOGRAPHER'S CREDIT

"It was an absolute honour and a blast to capture Amber and Keiron's gothic wedding. From the DIY decorations to their multiple epic outfits, their day truly reflected the two of them. I even got to relive my grunge/ emo days with their incredible playlist!"■

GARY, ROGUES & QUEENS PHOTOGRAPHY

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Katie Bletcher experiences the last word in seaside luxury, staying in the dream honeymoon suite



escending the steep hill into Largs it's blowing a gale and as we turn off the windswept seafront the lights of Brisbane House are most welcome. I spent a lot of my childhood in the Ayrshire town but it's over 20 years since I was last here and a lot has changed, not least the hotel which has undergone a complete glow-up. Manorview Group took over Brisbane House in May 2022 and it was closed from November to March while the refurbishment was carried out. And you can tell. From the pergola-ed walkway at the front which screams 'wedding photo opp' and would be perfect for a sparkler send-off, to the freshly-laid paving and the reception with its stunning contemporary chandelier, it exudes luxury. And that's before we even reach our room!

All bedrooms are accessed via the double stairway, perfect for preceremony pictures with the bride on

ceremony pictures with the structor

one staircase and her bridesmaids on the other. Everything has been completed to the highest standard with subtle art deco nods in the glittering light fittings.

However, nothing quite prepares us for the brand new duplex honeymoon Caledonian Suite. It's honestly the last word in elegance. The bottom floor is dominated by the comflest bed, complete with a TV that rises up from the foot of the bed, and a beautiful bathroom. But as you climb the glass spiral staircase to the second floor this honeymoon suite hits next level luxury. A round spa bath occupies the middle of the room, looking out through glass bi-fold doors onto your own private balcony and the view over the water to Great Cumbrae and Bute behind. Don't fancy a bath? There's a separate shower and steam room, and I love the well-stocked bar. Besides the tasteful décor and tactile furnishings, it's all about the little touches here, from the complimentary cocktails in the suite, to the fact the staff ensure your bath is drawn and ready in time for your arrival at the end of your wedding. You won't want to leave!

The next morning I meet wedding events coordinator Rachel Stewart for a show-round of this stunning venue, which is now exclusive use for weddings and can accommodate weddings with up to 130 days guests, and a maximum of 200 in the evening. We meet in the main ceremony and reception Brisbane Suite and again, the luxurious upgrade is evident everywhere you look. Ceremonies are conducted against the glass bi-fold doors which open onto the terrace and take full advantage of that sea view, and the room is partitioned by heavy curtains, through which the bride makes her grand entrance down the aisle.

Following the ceremony, drinks are





served in the Cochrane suite while the newlyweds usually make their way down to the beach for their photos. Then it's back into the Brisbane Suite for dinner and dancing. You'll love the bar that runs the full length of the room as well as the colour-changing lights – perfect for when you hit the dance floor.

Perhaps my favourite space in the hotel (besides the Caledonian Suite) has to be the Wallace Suite, a dedicated bridal prep room that can be accessed from 8am. Again, the owners have thought of everything, with three hair and make-up stations, a gold bar from which to hang dresses, and a shower room. Plus there's a minibar for a wee glass of fizz as you get ready. I told you, they've covered everything.

Brisbane House still has some availability for Friday, Sunday and weekday weddings this year.

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There is an on-site wedding suite available for use throughout the day and your wedding night. Also included with the venue is a dedicated wedding planner who will advise and assist in the build up to your wedding and oversee the smooth running on the day, allowing you to relax and enjoy the most special of days.

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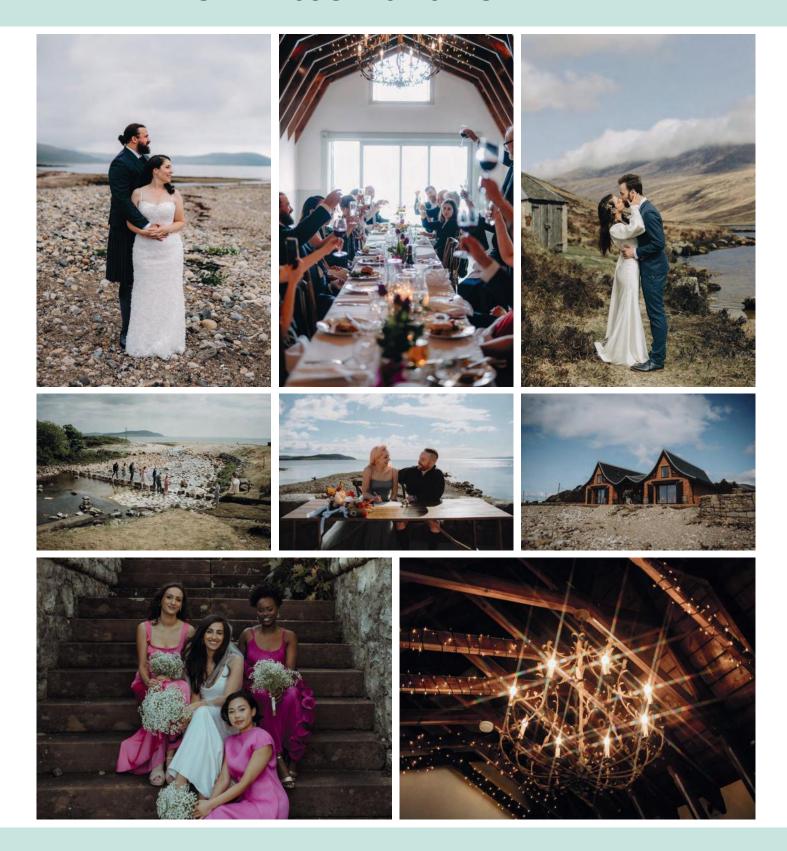
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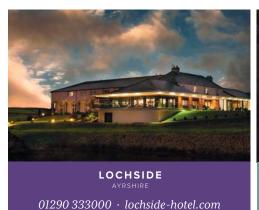






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YSWILUXURY on the COast

Ashleigh Dougall lives it up at opulent Trump Turnberry

erched on top of a cliff overlooking the Firth of Clyde, Trump Turnberry takes your breath away before you even set foot inside. As you ascend the drive towards the hotel, it's hard to not feel like you're in a Hollywood movie. The reception area sets the scene for the rest of the hotel, with its white marble pillars contrasting with the beautiful dark panelled walls. However, what really catches your eye are the sparkling chandeliers. A roaring fire is also there to greet you; a very welcome addition on a cold Scottish day!

On arrival, I was whisked off to the spa for a relaxing full body massage. This was 50 minutes of pure bliss. After the treatment, I was taken to the relaxation room where they provided me with a Kombucha shot, a glass of water and a lemon sorbet. Just one small example of how they go above and beyond for their guests! You can then continue your relaxation in their beautiful infinity pool.

While I was unwinding, my husband was being treated to a golf lesson with one of Trump Turnberry's PGA professionals. He loved it so much he booked himself in for another round of golf the next morning. This would be the perfect way to let off some steam the day before the wedding.

Before checking in, we were given a show-round of all the beautiful





venues Trump Turnberry has to offer wedding couples, who can choose from two packages. If you want to host a big showstopper of a wedding, the To Have and To Hold package is the one for you. It allows you to treat up to 500 guests for a grand affair in the magnificent Donald J. Trump Ballroom – although you also have the option to use the Crystal Ballroom next door for your ceremony and drinks reception. It is hard to put into words just how beautiful the Donald J. Trump Ballroom is. From the moment you walk through the doors, it takes your breath away. The first things you notice are the eight beautiful Swarovski crystal chandeliers, sparkling in the sunlight that streams through the floor-to-ceiling windows, which boast stunning views of Ailsa Craig.

Your wedding cuisine is all taken care of in-house, leaving you one less thing to worry about and from sampling a delicious three-course meal in the 1906 restaurant, I can assure you, your wedding breakfast meal will be one your guests will never forget.

Turnberry's other package – the Happily Ever After – is perfect if you're organising a wedding on a smaller scale, catering for up to 150 guests in the Caledonia Ballroom, where you can rest assured the team will treat you to the same outstanding service.

Craig & Eva Sanders Photography

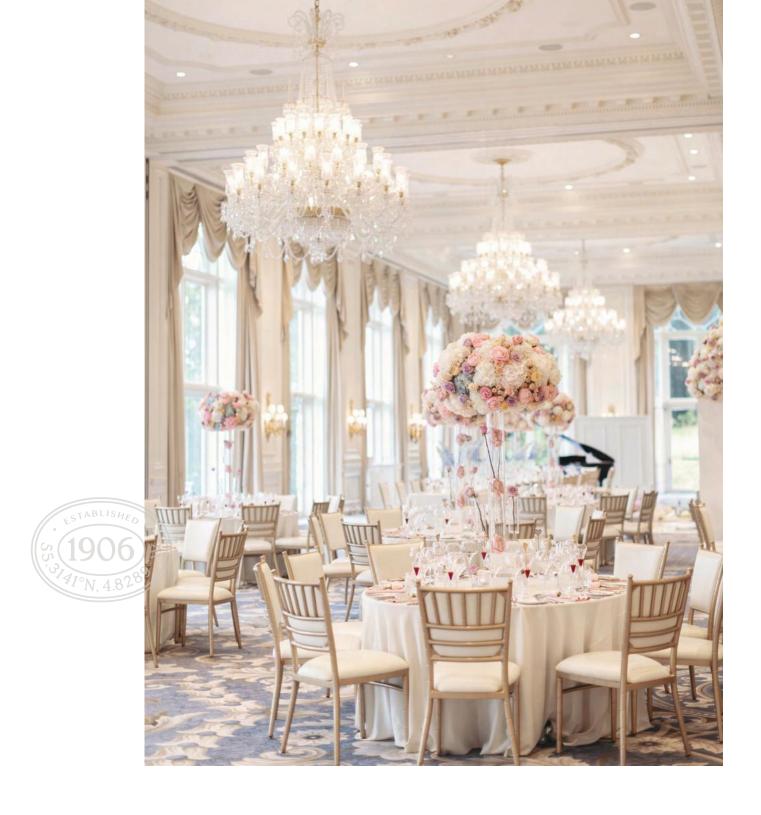
After touring the hotel's sumptuous ballrooms, it was time to check in and we were treated to the beautiful Deluxe Ocean View room, which is included in both of the wedding packages. The king sized bed is made from hand-carved mahogany and believe me, it's one of the comfiest I've ever slept in! My favourite feature of the room however had to be the sea view from the beautiful freestanding bath! We were lucky enough to enjoy a gorgeous sunset over Ailsa Craig.

I could wax lyrical about why you should get married at Trump Turnberry, but just know that if you decide to have your special day here, you and your guests will be treated like royalty!

Fancy finding out more about marrying at Trump Turnberry? Get in touch:

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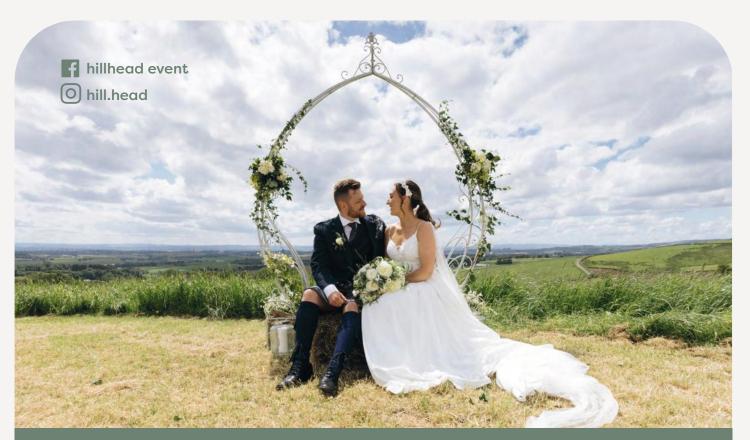
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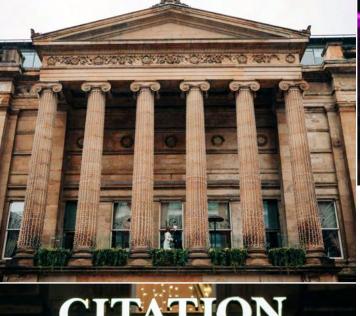




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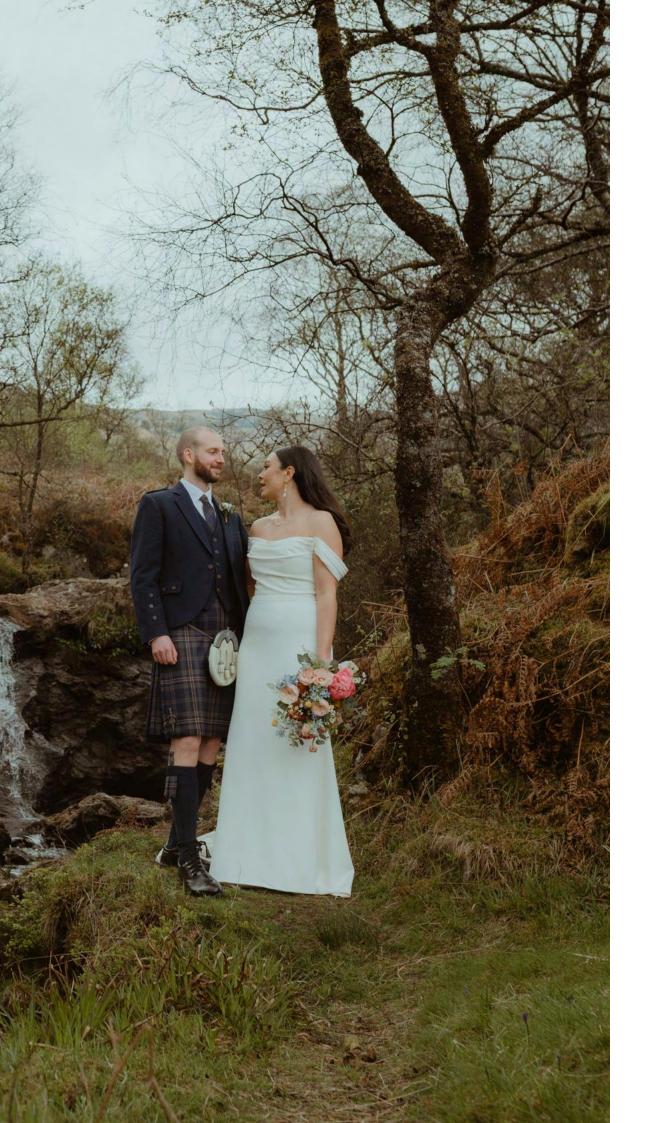
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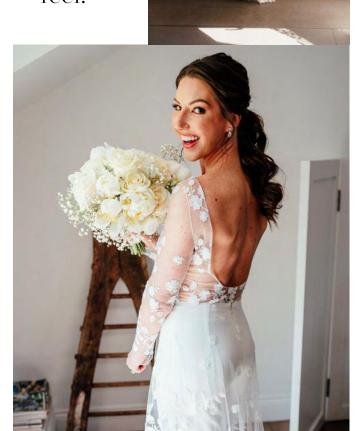








"I wanted something different but that still had a bridal feel."



This couple chose an intimate outdoor ceremony with close family on a stunning summer's day in Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park elieve it or not, Jamie and Mark's first date was actually a wedding! They met by chance at a business lunch at the Chester Hotel in Aberdeen and got chatting. Soon the conversation turned to weekend plans and Jamie revealed she was due to attend her cousin's

wedding that weekend – alone – because her plus-one had let her down at the last minute.

Once the lunch had finished and everyone returned to their respective offices, Mark realised that there was an opportunity to be had, and tried to call Jamie's office. On the first two occasions, his call was disconnected, but as fate would have it, lucky number three did the trick. Mark explained he had enjoyed meeting Jamie – and that he loved a wedding – so he asked if she would like him to come along as her plus-one!

Taken aback at first, lawyer-in-training Jamie gave a noncommittal response, but colleagues eventually persuaded her to call him back and accept his outrageous offer, despite the fact her family would all be at the wedding. The rest, as they say, is history!

Four years on – and after two years of lockdown – the couple decided to host a combined Christmas/New Year/30th birthday celebration with family and friends at Blencowe Hall, a stunning 14th century castle in Cumbria. Mark suggested going to walk the dog through the countryside where they came across a beautiful lake with swans. "Before I knew it, Mark was down on one knee! We then returned to the castle where we had the biggest and best celebration with everyone!" Jamie explains.

Intimate ceremony

Jamie and Mark wanted to have a very low-key intimate legal ceremony in Scotland as they were also planning a big celebration in Tuscany, Italy, with family and friends a couple of weeks later. "We initially considered getting married in a registry office but also loved the idea of getting married outdoors with our closest family. Once we settled on that idea, our priority was to book our venue and find a celebrant," Jamie says. "We are very active and »









"We loved the idea of getting married outdoors."



love being outdoors in the hills or swimming in lochs - we're also big foodies! The setting of Monachyle Mhor is so magical, surrounded by stunning mountains and lochs, plus the superb restaurant really made it the perfect location."

And while Jamie did go dress shopping for her Italian celebration, she decided to go for a different style completely for her Scottish ceremony, settling on the 'Patsy' jumpsuit by Rime Arodaky. She even hired it to keep things sustainable! "As I was saving my big wedding dress for our wedding in Italy, I wanted something different but that still had a bridal feel. The jumpsuit was perfect and ticked so many boxes from the white bodice, hand embroidered with lace flowers. to the detailed train," she explains. Mark wore a kilt in his family tartan - and it was the first time Jamie had seen him wear one.

Extra special

The night before the wedding, Jamie went out for dinner in Glasgow with her parents, ending the evening by sharing a few whiskies ahead of the big day. "I woke up super early and was just so excited! I had some time before I needed to get ready so I actually went out for a run to calm my nerves!" Both Jamie and Mark got ready at their respective parents' houses and Jamie says her hair and make-up girls did a great job of keeping her relaxed.

The couple opted for a humanist ceremony: "We chose our celebrant Jane Bechtel to marry us and couldn't have been happier - we met Jane quite a few times over coffee and she really got to know us."

They chose a gorgeous spot on the mountainside overlooking the lochs to exchange their vows and were blessed with beautiful weather. Mark's mum had picked

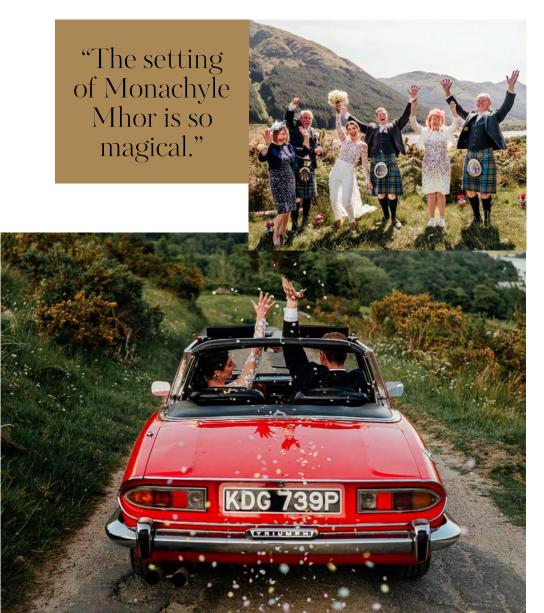
some summer flowers from her garden and these were put into holders and spread around the ceremony for a special touch. Jamie made her approach to Luke Burr's cover of Is This Love by Bob Marley.

"I was walked down the 'aisle' or 'up the hill' by both my mum and dad which made it extra special - the nerves were soon taken away when we all had to scramble up the mountainside to reach Mark who was waiting at the end of the aisle!" Jamie smiles. "The words and anecdotes Jane used in our ceremony were so heartfelt and personal to us. Jane also helped us come up with some of our vows which were full of emotion and we both shed a tear or two."

After the ceremony, they headed back down to the hotel and made the most of the sunny weather, delving into some delicious canapés provided by the hotel. Later, the newlyweds took the vintage red car Jamie had hired as a wedding gift for a spin, driving around the most beautiful location with the roof off, enjoying that "just married" feeling!

Jamie adds, "The highlight of our wedding was definitely our very intimate ceremony. Standing on the mountainside, surrounded by our parents with the sun beaming down felt magical. Jane, our celebrant, did an amazing job of making our ceremony so personal to us. We also ended the ceremony with an impromptu group hug which still makes us smile!"







BRIDE'S OUTFIT

Rime Arodaky from By Rotation **BRIDE'S SHOES**

Badgley Mischka

CELEBRANT

Jane Bechtel of Humanist Society Scotland

FLOWERS

Narcissus Wedding Flowers by Susan

GROOM'S OUTFIT

House of Henderson

HAIR

Katie McMahon

MAKE-UP

Alexandria McNairn

RINGS

Tom Wylie Jewellery

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PHOTOGRAPHER'S CREDIT

"I had so much fun with Jamie and Mark at their tiny legal Scottish ceremony - the vintage car, the epic jumpsuit, the sunset! Dream couple and absolutely lovely as well. Could not have asked for more really." ■

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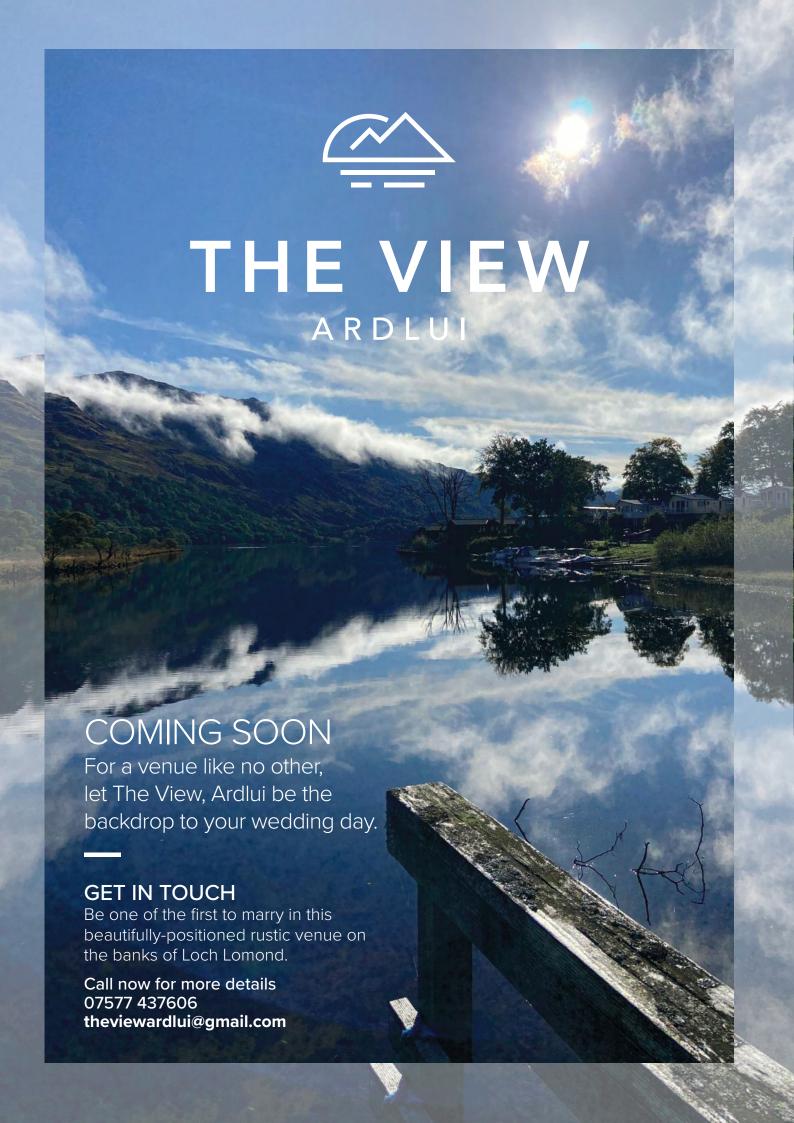






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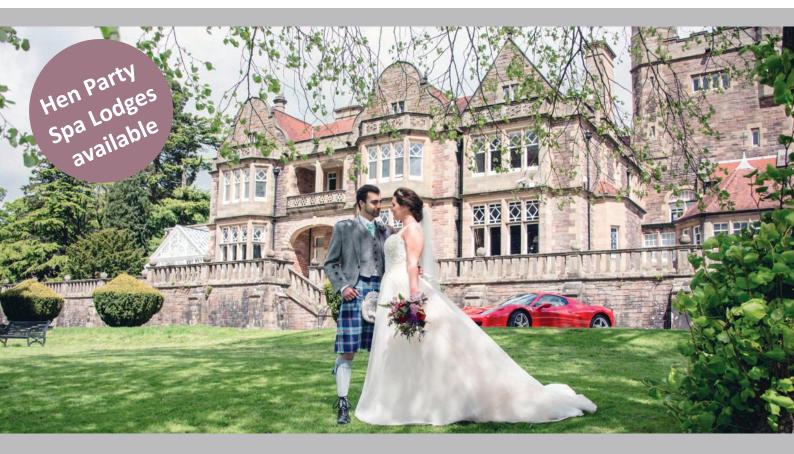






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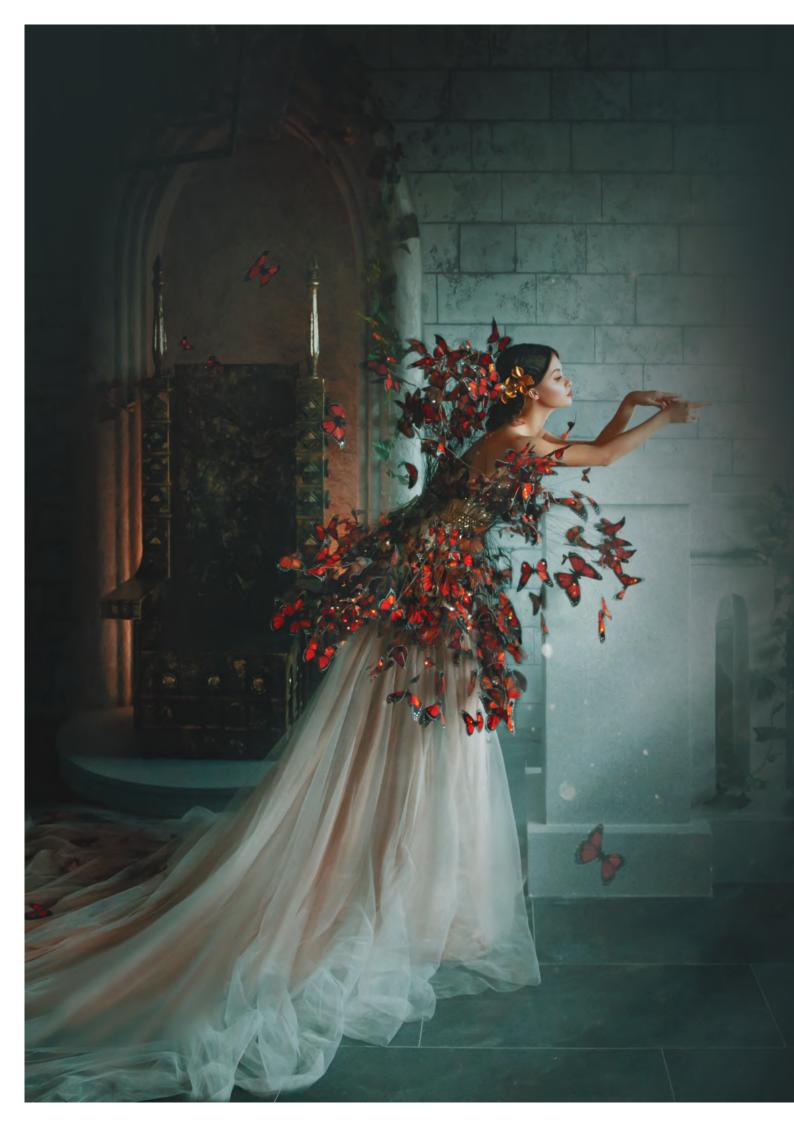
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