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THE MUMS ISSUE

This season's hottest MOB and MOG trends

All the ways to involve your mum



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WELCOME to Your Scottish Wedding



Hi and welcome to the May issue of Your Scottish Wedding. Is it just me or

has the start of the year swept by in a flash? Here at *YSW* we've just celebrated our second birthday and since we launched there have been a lot of pinch me moments, from printing our first magazine and hosting our inaugural Your Scottish Wedding Awards, to providing you with even more of a wedding fix with the *Let's Talk Weddings* podcast!

It was only a matter of days ago that flakes of snow were drifting down in my garden - the joys of the unpredictable Scottish weather - yet spring is definitely here and as I write I'm looking out on daffodils and fresh shoots and looking forward to getting out into my happy place.

Spring of course means gearing up for another busy year of weddings and I know you'll be getting stuck into all things planning or on the final countdown to your own big day. In wedding dress world it also means boutique owners and suppliers have been travelling far and wide to select the designers and gowns they'll be stocking this year. To find out all the latest trends they'll be serving up in store turn to page 40. Maybe you'll spy The One!

But it's not all about the dress or outfit *you'll* be wearing on your wedding day. This issue's a bit of a mums special with plenty of inspiration to help your mum feel amazing on your big day. Back in April we headed to Kimpton Blysthswood Square Hotel for a styled photoshoot showcasing some of the hottest looks for MOBs and MOGs this year. Writer Claire Muir has also been seeking out the major mother of the bride (or groom) fashion trends that steer well-clear of the much-reviled "mumsy" territory, while I've been investigating all the ways you can keep your mum happy and involved during the countdown and on the wedding day itself.

On a more serious note, with the cost of living crisis never far from the headlines writer Iennifer McLaren has been drilling down on budgets (p26) and getting expert advice to keep your wedding account in the black. And our columnist, blogger Rachel Lawler of *Tender* Loving Style, is also sharing her budget-busting tips along with the other crucial things she's learned during her wedding planning journey, including a reminder to enjoy the experience. A sentiment I'll echo! Happy reading and see you next time,

Katie x

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Charlotte Mills

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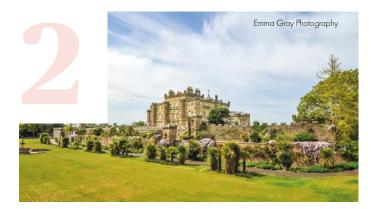
YOUR COUNTDOWN

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
- O Make sure you follow us on Facebook, Instagram and TikTok @yourscottishwedding for all the inspo you need
- Join the *YSW* Wedding Chat Room
- Make your guest list
- Buy wedding insurance
- O 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
- O Start the search for your wedding dress, bridesmaids dresses and groom and groomsmen's outfits
- Research caterers if you need one
- O Book your band, DJ, ceremony music and drinks reception entertainment
- Book hair and make-up trials



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

- O Finalise your décor ideas do you need to hire a professional to bring it all together?
- Book your florist
- Send your Save the Dates
- Order your wedding cake
- Buy your wedding rings
- Book your honeymoon
- Organise your dress fittings
- O 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
- $\, \odot \,$ Decorate your venue the day before if possible
- $\, \odot \,$ Print name cards, seating plans and menus

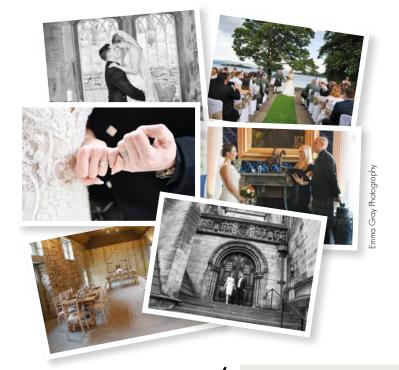


This is where the fun really kicks in!

- 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
- $\, \bigcirc \,$ Buy gifts for your wedding party
- \bigcirc Post invitations
- \bigcirc Menu tasting



The Gibsons



• 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 dress dry cleaned
- Select images for your wedding album
- $\odot~$ Send thank you cards

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



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The Big Dundee Wedding Exhibition Caird Hall

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The Hampden Wedding Show Hampden Stadium

Sunday 17th September 2023

11.30 am - 16.00 pm One of Scotland's largest wedding shows 75 wedding suppliers Entertainment lounge with four live bands Catwalks Tickets - www.glasgowweddingexhibition.co.uk

Lanarkshire Wedding Exhibition Hamilton Park Racecourse

Sunday 20th August 2023 Catwalks 50 wedding experts Come and join this great wedding show! Tickets - lanarkshirweddingexhibition.co.uk





Saturday 30th September

Join us for this exclusive wedding show. Over 50 wedding experts Live music Catwalks Tickets www.ayrshireweddingexhibition.co.uk



CLUSIVE

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EXHIBITION

Visit www.starkagency.co.uk for a calendar of events for the full year, with wedding shows in every area across Scotland and further. From Aberdeen right down to Old Trafford. Over 29 wedding shows every year!

In the know

For all the latest news from the Scottish wedding industry, we've got you covered

PEACE OF MIND

Peace silk is just one of the sustainable fabric options on offer to environmentally conscious customers at Freja Designer Dressmaking now. Peace silk, also known as 'non-violent silk' is an alternative way of making silk for those who disagree with the traditional method whereby the silkworms die. Designer Mette Baillie explains with peace silk the fibres, "come from empty cocoons meaning the silkworms have hatched after their transformation into a moth, or they are delicately removed before the stages that follow." The resulting silk is more expensive as the process takes an extra two weeks and the cocoons are partly eaten, affecting the yield.

Freja Designer Dressmaking also offers recycled tulle made from recycled yarns, which Mette calls, "an excellent choice for any princess dress dreamers", and recycled polyester woven into beautiful satin, taffeta, organza and many more fabrics in a wide selection of colours for all you brides, 'maids and MOBs and MOGs. Book an appointment to check out the choices. **freja-fashion.co.uk**





Photographs | Pretty Flamingo Weddings

NEW BEGINNINGS

After recently opening a fabulous showroom for venue styling and equipment hire at Unit 10, Fife Food & Business Centre in Glenrothes, All Wrapped Up Events Scotland has extended its stock even further with the addition of more furniture, props and accessories. You'll find more rustic tables, new gold Chiavari chairs, and new black ones. All Wrapped Up is also stocking three beautiful new moongates, new gold cutlery, coloured linen and more stunning glass charger plates. So whatever style of wedding you're planning, make sure you pay them a visit to pick out some gorgeous props and furniture.

allwrappedupscotland.co.uk



TO SLEEVE OR NOT TO SLEEVE?

Sleeves are definitely one of the biggest bridal trends right now. But what if you find the almostperfect-dream-dress and it's not got any? Mirka Bridal Couture launched their new With Love, Mirka collection at February's Scottish Wedding Show and designer Mirka Jankowska says it's the answer for all the sleeve-

loving brides! "It's one of the most popular things we get asked about!" she says. "Before the brides even decide on the style of dress they're looking for, most know if they want sleeves!" Ensuring this new collection has plenty of variety, Mirka has

extended the sleeve options with puffy sleeves, fitted, flowing, lace and tulle all up for consideration!



LIVE ACTION!

Choosing your wedding music is something you really have to experience. How else will you know if the band you opt for has the stage presence and x factor to get your guests up and keep them up dancing all night? Live showcases are a great way to sample sets from bands and get a real flavour of their sound. But if you can't make it along to one Hireaband has the perfect solution. The company has just released new music videos for their bands Glitz and The Trueloves. And to make it super simple we've got QRs for the vids here. Just scan and listen to your heart's content! hireaband.co.uk







GET THE BRIDAL GLOW

We say it all the time; beautiful bridal make-up starts with beautiful skin and Lesley McCormick at Pamper &Polish has launched an online course to help you achieve just that. The exclusive 'The Vibrant Bride... confidence with your skin and within' course is aimed at the brideto-be who wants to invest in her skin health in the lead up to her wedding, taking a holistic approach - though we reckon anyone would benefit!

The immersive course includes guided face massage tutorials and information on achieving skin health, skin appreciation and a more calm, balanced wellbeing in the countdown to your big day. Lesley says, "You will learn how to unlock the secrets to healthy glowing skin in preparation for that one time in your life where your skin does all the talking. You will transform your skin and achieve one of the highest forms of skin rejuvenation just in time for your wedding day. You'll love the results!" For more information get in touch with Lesley.

pamper-and-polish.co.uk

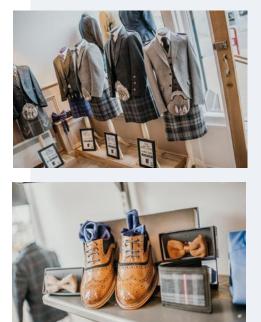
Suzanne Li Photography

WHET YOUR APPETIT

Want to hear just how seamlessly Red Hot Chilli Peppers and The Courteeners can blend with renditions of Shania Twain's *Man I Feel Like a Woman* and Girls Aloud's *Sound of the Underground*? Then check out wedding band Splendid Gentlemen's new video. Listen here youtu.be/ fhNCiGD4CiM and get a taste of just how good they could sound at your wedding.



Definitely a mix to keep your guests on their toes (and the dancefloor!) **splendidgentlemen.co.uk**



Photographs | Shutter Monkey

NEW IN TOWN

Double Your Scottish Wedding Awardwinning groomswear company Kilts 4 U has expanded its offering, recently opening a brand new store in Prestwick. You can expect the same great service as in the other Kilts 4 U stores, including the venue fitting service, whereby a member of staff will dress you and your party at your venue on the morning of the wedding, and Frank's Gold Room, where you can have a totally bespoke outfit made to your exact requirements. What's more, Kilts 4 U will plant a tree for every hire and 10 trees for every bespoke outfit. Make an appointment to see all the dapper options for your big day. kilts-4-u.com



'Comet' by Vivienne Westwood

Save the date!

Fans of Vivienne Westwood listen up! If you've been coveting a bridal creation by the iconic designer ever since you saw SJP glide down the steps in one in the SATC film then make sure you book an appointment for the Vivienne Westwood trunk show at Rachel Scott Couture 20th - 26th June. Remember this is the only Scottish VW stockist and you'll be able to try on a larger selection of the new season Vivienne Westwood dresses throughout the duration of the trunk show than would normally be in the boutique. rachelscottcouture.co.uk

In the *know*



CHOOSE YOUR PERFECT WEDDING BAND

John McKay Jewellers certainly know how to make you brides-to-be feel extra special, giving you the freedom to choose exactly how your wedding band looks and with what stones. And we're in love with their new range of women's wedding rings which you can check out in the vintage collection section of their website right now.

Because they manufacture every wedding ring to order, you can go to their online wedding ring builder and play around with different diamond weights and widths and different metals too. The renowned jeweller is offering all clients the option of lab grown diamonds as well as mined diamonds too.

SPECIAL OFFER!

Once you've shortlisted your gorgeous wedding ring take advantage of the special offer John McKay Jewellers is running for *YSW* readers. Before 31st August you will receive 20% off online and instore if you quote **YSW20%**. How's that for an amazing saving?! **johnmckayjewellers.com**



Have you ever had your make-up done professionally and come away thinking "If only I knew how to do this myself!" Luckily Leigh of Makeup by Leigh Blaney is now offering one-to-one lessons from her home studio where she will teach you invaluable skills. "This really suits elopement brides, destination weddings, or can be used for a present for the bride," she says. "It's a great activity for a hen celebration too. They can come along and learn loads of tricks and tips and leave with a shopping list of make-up to go and haul! And of course some glasses of fizz are included." Sign us up! **makeupbyleighblaney.co.uk**

IT'S SHOWTIME!

If you're starting out on your wedding planning journey attending a wedding fair or two is like a rite of passage, and it doesn't get bigger than The Scottish Wedding Show! Held twice a year at the SEC in Glasgow, The Scottish Wedding Show has announced dates for its next event, which will run 14th-15th October 2023 and with over 220 exhibitors covering all aspects of wedding planning it's a must for all the inspo you need. The show's popular features will be returning in October, including the famous catwalk show. Tickets will be on sale soon and you can sign up for early bird offers on the show's website. We'll be there too with the latest issue of *Your Scottish Wedding* magazine so make sure you stop by our stand to say hi and pick up your complimentary copy. See you there!

thescottishweddingshow.com

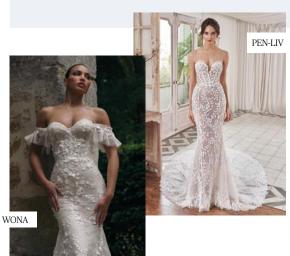


HEADTURNING DESIGNS

There's plenty of excitement at Sophia Grace Couture with not one but two new designer collections arriving. First up, the boutique is welcoming two collections by WONA, making Sophia Grace Couture one of only a handful of boutiques where you can find the gorgeous WONA Atelier collection. The collection has been created with beautiful and exclusive lace, combined with classic and on-trend designs.

Then new name PEN-LIV is joining Sophia Grace Couture. Launched in 2022 by the design team who created awardwinning gowns for Enzoani, PEN-LIV dresses are for brides who love modern couture with a youthful, sexy feel.

Once you've found your dream dress you can complete your look with an appointment at the boutique's styling suite or checking out the online sister store alwaysthebride.com to spy the new Badgley Mischka shoe styles. And with bows still being a major bridal trend this year we're a little bit in love with the 'Sophie' and 'Nessie' heels. Which is your fave? **sophiagracecouture.com** | **alwaysthebride.com**







AESTHETICALLY PLEASING



A lot has changed for Vikki Soloman Aesthetics since it was established in 2020. Starting out renting a room within

a salon in the Corstorphine area of Edinburgh along with monthly clinics in Colinton the business grew and Vikki has now opened her own salon in a dedicated garden room at her home in Corstorphine which provides a discreet entry for clients, plenty of light and air, and parking.

Now firmly established in her business' new home Vikki can offer a range of treatments including antiwrinkle treatments and dermal fillers. It's the special wedding packages for men and women which have caught our eye. Starting six, three or one month before the big day, they include anti-wrinkle treatments, skin boosters and facials to reduce fine lines and wrinkles, improve skin tone and texture and hydrate and replenish skin for an overall glow. What's more, you can add additional treatments if you fancy. vikkisolomanaesthetics.co.uk

PERSONALLY SPEAKING

Being able to put your own stamp on things is of the utmost importance for contemporary brides which is why Rainbow Club has expanded its range of intricate shoe accessories for the SS23 collection. From glamorous shoe clips to delicate exchangeable ankle straps, the dainty details are a flawless finishing touch. And their favourite pairing? The Rainbow Club team is loving the understated 'Joni' slingback with a crystal encrusted 'Astrid' clip, matching a sleek silhouette with a statement but timeless embelishment.

Prices for the shoe accessories start at £19 and you can check out the full collection on their website or at stockists throughout Scotland.

rainbowclub.co.uk

Turn to Pxx to enter our amazing Rainbow Club bridal package competition



Joni' shoe (£95)

with 'Astrid'

clip (£49)

'Joni' shoe (£95) with

Blair' clip (£19)



EFFORTLESS AND ELEGANT

We're big fans of bridal designer Rosa Clara so we're excited Kudos Bridal will be stocking gowns from their new Rosa Clara Couture collection this summer! How stunning are the 'Camir' and 'Connor' dresses from the current collection? Kudos love them so much they've selected new gowns that reflect their simple, luxurious elegance. You'll be able to get up close and personal and try on gowns from the new collection at Kudos Bridal this summer. Another designer name to look out for at the Kudos Edinburgh branch is Wendy Makin. The boutique will be holding a trunk show by the designer 12th-14th May so make sure you book an appointment now. kudosbridal.co.uk



TEAM EFFORT

Question: do you fancy a gorgeous barnstyle wedding with totally bespoke décor or an intimate castle celebration but don't know where to start? Well luckily Get Knotted wedding planning company has joined forces with Wedderburn Castle and Barns to offer couples stress-free décor options at special prices, building on their extensive knowledge of the venue and years' of experience dressing it. Speaking of the collaboration Cat at Wedderburn says, "Katie and the team at Get Knotted strike the perfect balance between creativity and calm. We see the Get Knotted team most weeks over wedding season, working on large barn parties as well as highly-specified intimate castle weddings. We know our clients love the flexibility of the Get Knotted service."

Whether you just want to rent a set of candlesticks, barrels or festoon lighting or want someone to help plan a decorative extravaganza while you stay on top of your busy life, they can help.

get-knotted.net | wedderburnbarns.co.uk

SHARE THE LOVE

Did you know that every couple that books their wedding with Fuze Ceremonies is actually helping support two amazing Scottish charities? The organisation's Fuze Foundation has named Beatson Cancer Charity and Alzheimer Scotland as the charities it is supporting until February 2024. When you choose to be married by Fuze Ceremonies a portion of your fee will be donated to support these causes. Morag Webster, trustee of the Fuze Foundation says, "Many households and families are affected by both cancer and dementia illnesses, so it means a lot to everyone at Fuze to be able to give back while doing something they love." **fuzeceremonies.co.uk**



the ultimate bridal bundle courtesy of Rainbow Club. Featuring ivory footwear, a bag, shoe clip set and veil.

worth up to £518

Rainbow Club launched in 1986 with their very first footwear collection consisting of three elegant footwear silhouettes that gained an instant fanbase amongst the bridal community.

Fast forward to today and they've been designing, making and colouring handmade satin wedding and occasion shoes for over 30 years. With 600 retailers across the UK, Rainbow Club has firmly established itself as the UK's leading occasion footwear and accessories brand, offering customers bridal shoes, handbags, shoe clips, children's shoes and veils.

Rainbow Club's SS23 collection is undoubtedly their most stylish and sartorially astute yet. The collection brings together an edit of timeless yet elevated silhouettes that will suit any bridal style, whether it's understated or statement-making.

In keeping with their classic yet lavish design signature, glamour is in abundance. Think luxe crystal embellishments, delicate appliqué and iridescent pearl detailing. For the bride opting for a minimalist look, there are plenty of understated styles that still offer an equal measure of opulence.

Rainbow Club understand how important personalisation is for the contemporary bride. That's why for SS23 they have expanded their range of luxe footwear accessories, elegant bags and intricate veils which have been designed to elevate any look and act as the perfect finishing touch.

COMPETITION



What's included?

One lucky winner will get their hands on the ultimate Bridal bundle from Rainbow Club's SS23 Collection.

The prize includes:

One pair of Rainbow Club's ivory satin shoes

A bag from the SS23 collection

An intricate bridal veil - length of your choosing

A set of shoe clips or interchangeable ankle straps

All of the winner's choosing.

How to enter

Simply answer the following question:

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MONEY talks

From venues to attire and stationery to flowers, the to do list for planning a wedding can be lengthy and costly. **Jennifer McLaren** asks Scottish wedding planners how to make a budget and stick to it

Starting to organise your wedding is the beginning of an exciting journey - but no adventurer should set forth without doing some planning first. The cost of an average wedding in the UK is around £20k, but that doesn't account for other spends such as honeymoons or hen and stag nights. Once you add those in, it could creep closer to £30k.

Starting out by listing everything you need - and how much it's likely to cost - will help to reveal your initial budget. Oskar Gilchrist-Grodnicki, the wedding planner behind The Wedding Guru Oskar, believes budgeting should be a couple's first piece of wedding planning - but sadly it can be overlooked from the outset. "Understanding how much savings each of you is willing to contribute towards the big day before you start and how much you're hoping to save in the lead up to your big day is super important," he explains. "Write it all down before doing any research. You can then go ahead and start placing your enquiries and feel a lot more in control of the process. Identifying your non-negotiables and things you're not fussed about will also help in decision-making." Katie Hart of Get Knotted says her clients are generally pretty switched on to knowing what they want. "Be realistic and consider very carefully what your wedding means to you both so you can focus your budget on the important stuff," she advises.

"Identifying your non-negotiables and things you're not fussed about will help in decision-making." Oskar Gilchrist-Grodnicki

Do... Make decisions together

Katie says tackling the budget together will help you to stay on track. "Seeking advice from family and friends is a good place to start and then some soul searching about what is most important to you as a couple. You may learn you both want very different things from your wedding day, and reaching a compromise might be a good way to harness the expenditure."



Don't... Take on too much financial pressure

Oskar advises that if you are noticing the cost of living crisis significantly impacting your home finances, then take this into account when planning. "Your biggest saving will always be guest numbers, because when you consider your statistical guest costing in the region of £150+ each, the more guests you invite, the more unachievable the rest of the plan might be for you."

Both Oskar and Katie say that while shopping around for the best deal is a sensible thing to do, beware of cheap quotes and offers that seem too good to be true. "Be guided by your venue on their favoured suppliers, choose local suppliers who know the venue well," Katie explains. "There is a false economy on finding a super cheap caterer that is travelling from miles away only to discover they haven't scoped out the kitchen properly and can't deliver the standard of food you expect." "One thing to look out for is that you understand all the offers presented to you and that you're comparing them like for like or in order of value and quality," Oskar adds.

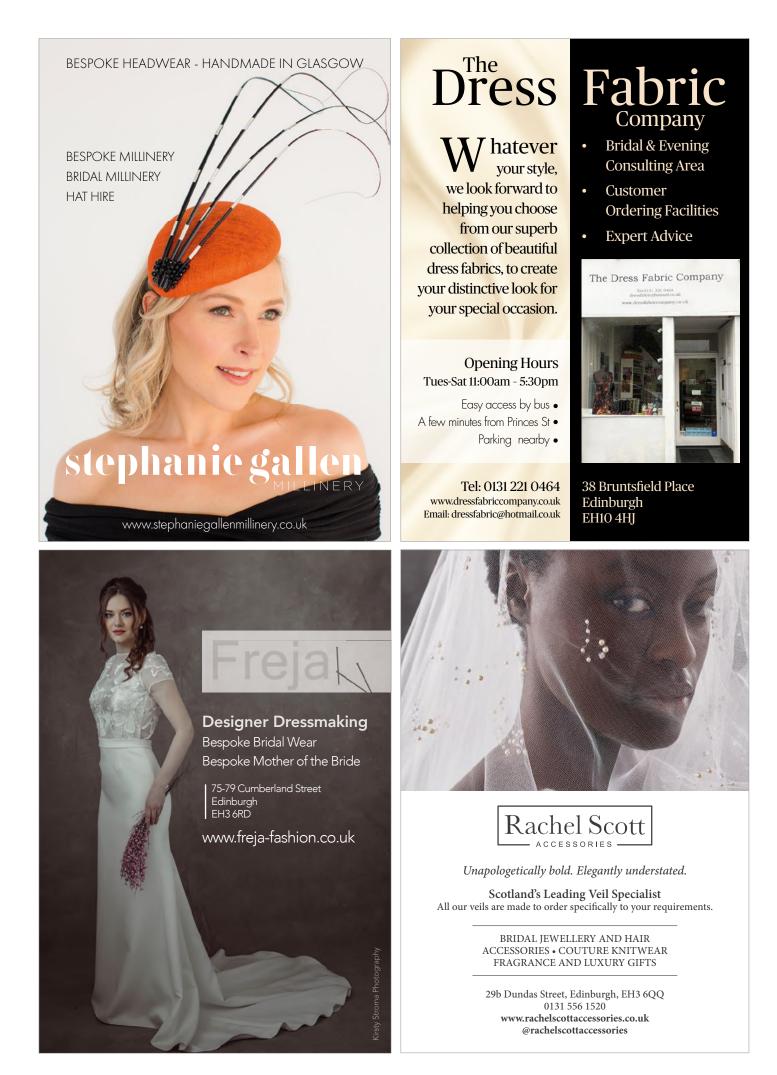
If you're on a tight budget and looking to add in some DIY details, be realistic about what you can achieve - and be prepared to put in the work. "There are lots of canny ways to multi-purpose different elements throughout the day and with clever planning and styling you can achieve wow factor without 'wow' costs," Katie says. "You must be prepared to work hard and put a lot of your spare time in," Oskar adds. "Are you prepared to give up your time to make your own decorations? Do you think you are gifted enough with arts and crafts to give it justice? And have you got the room to prepare and store things you plan to make yourself? These are some of the questions you will need to ask yourself."

Do Keep track of your expenditure

Hidden costs can be dangerous, warns Oskar. "So is buying on emotional impulse, which is why having a list or a spreadsheet for your wedding necessities and budget is so important to hold vourself accountable." Watch out for extras such as ensuring all quotes have VAT added, additional equipment you might need to hire for your venue, wedding day gifts for loved ones and wedding insurance.

Don't... Lose sight of your original plans







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'I do' DIARIES



Amber and Keiron

This couple completely changed their minds on their wedding location since we last caught up

We first spoke to Amber Hollinger and Keiron Weston after a very romantic Christmas proposal - (read the full story at yourscottishwedding.co.uk). This couple first caught each other's eye on instagram and after only two dates Amber knew he was the one. Proposing Christmas 2021 with the help of their daughter Daisy-May, Keiron sealed the deal with a gorgeous ring, shaped like a daisy.

> "Yup, this is it, this is the one."

At the time, the couple were set on an Edinburgh wedding, thinking they'd have no problem finding a venue with the gothicstyle architecture they both love. Fast forward a year though and all plans have changed. "Nothing was screaming at us in Edinburgh," explains Amber. "After feeling a bit underwhelmed we decided to start looking at Glasgow venues. We searched "Gothic Venues Glasgow" and the first one that came up was Boclair House Hotel." Amber admits they needed a bit of persuading to visit and see if they would get that dark gothic vibe they were after but from the minute they arrived it felt right. "After just walking through the door Keiron said, 'Yup, this is it, this is the one.' Everything about Boclair is perfect; the dark walls, the beautiful staircase, all the black and gold accents - it's just ideal. Our theme colours are different shades of red, burgundy, black, dark purples, gold and a little hint of blush pink to break it all up."

A SPOOKY VIBE

A change of location isn't the only major move though. They initially had their hearts set on an October 2024 wedding and indeed, they first booked Boclair for then. "After a couple of weeks we decided we couldn't wait that long so ended up rebooking for 30th October 2023, the closest to Halloween we could get."

For a couple that loves all things gothic it's perfect and while Boclair already looks stunning, they're having fun looking for decorations to add that spooky Halloween vibe. "Our welcome sign is actually a coffin shaped mirror, which definitely gets some weird looks when I tell people," says Amber. Their wedding package already includes big items like the DJ, catering and flowers and they've almost decided on a black cake - "which isn't a surprise!"

U-TURN

Amber was convinced she wanted a Morticia Addams-style wedding dress in white or ivory and initially tried on about eight fabulous fit and flare gowns. "They were all stunning but I'm not a glitz and glam type of gal so I just couldn't say yes to something that wasn't me."



Then she completely surprised herself, opting for something completely different from Bliss Studio in Edinburgh, a boutique that specialises in pre-loved and sample dresses. "It was something I never would have thought I would like and it was the only dress I saw my mum get emotional about so I knew it was the right one." Amber is full of praise for Stephanie at Bliss who she says "really understood me and what my goal was." Amber's remaining tight-lipped about her One but she has let us know it has pockets and there's an option to add something different.

With the bride sorted, Keiron now has to find the perfect suit and, of course, Daisy-May needs a special outfit too. We're looking forward to seeing all the cuteness! Our engaged couples have been busy planning away since we last caught up with them with lots of lovely updates to share...

Rachel and Nicola

It's full steam ahead for this couple's March 2024 wedding



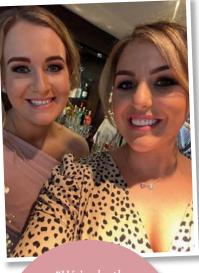
The weather was dreich when Rachel proposed to Nicola on a romantic weekend away to Loch Lomond and Kenmore. But with a surprise engagement that was "beyond perfect" the pouring rain did nothing to dampen their spirits and they spent the weekend spending quality time together and toasting their happy news with plenty of Champagne.

Once the dust settled the brides-tobe lost no time booking their big day at Bowfield Hotel and Country Club for 2nd March 2024 and with less than a year to go now it's been all systems go, making a priority of shopping for a stunning engagement ring for Rachel. After all, Nicola already had an absolute beaut! They returned to Chisholm Hunter where Nicola got hers and toasted the occasion with more bubbles!

CHECKLIST

Luckily, the couple's wedding package at Bowfield includes their cake - from Special Days Cakes - and flowers, from Marlene's Flowers, and they've chosen Make Believe Events to bring their vision for a rustic theme to life. "There will be lots of greenery, candles and fairy lights," says Nicola.

Another major booking under their belt is their celebrant. "We've booked Claire the Humanist," adds Nicola. "We had a FaceTime with her and knew straight away we loved her. We didn't stop laughing the whole call, but she also has a good balance and takes things very seriously. She makes everything so personal and makes sure everything will be how we want it which is fab!"



"We're both getting dresses from Bijoux Bridal in Hamilton. The girls are lovely. They make it such an amazing experience."

DECISIONS, DECISIONS

Now that they're under the one-year countdown the women have just about made up their minds for that all-important decision - the dresses! "Rachel has actually picked her dress and will be ordering soon (I think) and I'm sure I have too but I'm going back next week," says Nicola. "We're both getting dresses from Bijoux Bridal in Hamilton. The girls are lovely. They make it such an amazing experience." But that's all the detail we're getting as Nicola and Rachel aren't telling each other anything about the dresses at all!

They've also got their glam booked with hair being taken care of by Niche Salon in Paisley and make-up by Katie Hellier.

IF MUSIC BE THE FOOD OF LOVE

One way to imbue your wedding day with special meaning is to involve family and friends and the couple's friend Laura Murray is actually going to sing for their ceremony and reception - "she is amazing!" Laura lives in America but was over visiting recently so Nicola and Rachel made the most of their time and took her to the venue for a meeting to go over the music.

The couple are still on a hunt for a DJ to provide the entertainment for their evening reception but sounds like Nicola and Rachel have everything under control!



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Ten<mark>der Lov</mark>ing Wedding Style



There are so many amazing suppliers out there that it's so easy to go full steam ahead and book everything, but unless you have the bank book everything, but unless you

account of Kim K there have to be some sacrifices. It's really hard I feel to set a budget at the beginning when you don't even have a ballpark figure of what everything costs. The first thing I did was write a list of priorities: what did we really want at our wedding? At the top of the list, alongside the right venue, was making sure we had so many memories from our big day with pictures and videos of everything on the day. Instead of things like massive centrepieces or elaborate wedding stationery, we decided to set aside a larger portion of the budget to make sure we get the perfect pictures and videos. Along with our amazing photographer and videographer, I've also hired social content creator Lauren from Social Brides Club (@ socialbridesclub) to capture all the candid behind the scenes on the day. Lauren gets all those Insta-worthy shots then sends you a direct link to a Dropbox folder the very next day and even creates reels and TikToks for you to share. I seriously can't wait to be able to look through all our wedding memories so quickly!

Make your budget

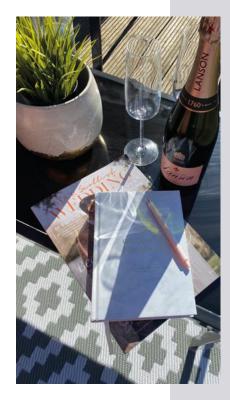
Five things I've learned while planning my wedding

With her September wedding fast approaching, top Scottish style blogger Rachel Lawler of *Tender Loving Style* shares her pearls of wisdom

It's my second last column before my big day; where has the time gone?! Even with a Covid postponement adding a whole extra two years of planning time, I can't quite believe my wedding date is almost here.

Here's five things I've learned along the way...





Keep on top of the wedmin

Who knew wedding planning would involve so many contracts, terms and conditions and payment dates? I've become much better at the wedmin side of things and it's made planning a lot easier. I've been fully utilising Google Sheets and Google Docs to keep all of our contracts and outstanding payment details in one place. It's totally free to use, you just need a Gmail email address which is also free to set up. Within this, I've also added a Google Sheet with all of our suppliers, their contact details and the exact product or service we have booked with them so it's easy to find on the day too. Additionally, I don't think you can beat old school paper copies of everything so I've picked up a folder to keep all the printed contracts and details safe too.



and to your style and budget."

Don't spend too much time comparing

If comparison is the thief of joy in normal circumstances, we should multiply that by one million when it comes to wedding planning comparison. There's nothing quite like the panic booking between a group of brides within a wedding-specific Facebook group. Should you also be getting those blossom trees? Will your guests judge you for not having that 360 degree photobooth another bride posted to the group? Should you be having a wishing tree?! The wedding community online can be great to get some helpful advice about your venue or suppliers, but try not to let yourself fall down a spiral of feeling like you should be booking more or that what you're doing isn't right. It's your day so do it your way - and to your style and budget.



Take time for you and your OH

In a whirlwind of wedding planning, work, family, friends and the general goings on of life, I'm not going to lie; we had become a little bit lazy at planning proper date nights. I'm going to partly blame pandemic life for getting us so used to being at home, but the thought of getting dressed up and out just seemed such an effort! Over the past few months, though, we've made sure to incorporate at least one proper date day or night per month. It gives us a chance to properly catch up and, as the wedding gets closer, discuss all the finer details. One of my favourite date activities was booking a pre-wedding 'earlymoon' at our venue, Cornhill Castle (you can read more about our stay over at yourscottishwedding.co.uk).







"Whatever sparks joy for you, embrace it and savour every second!"

Enjoy the experience as much as you can

I think there's a lot of talk about 'wedding planning stress' quite early on; it's almost as if you're expected to be a crazy, stressed-out bride (or groom) from the start. Of course there can be stressful parts (I'm looking at you, table plan), but I've also really tried to treasure and enjoy the planning experience as much as possible. Go to those wedding shows, get excited by your Pinterest board, embrace an all-white wardrobe for your pre-wedding events. Whatever sparks joy for you, embrace it and savour every second!"

My planning hero

Okay, this might seem a strange one to list but I feel **TikTok** is the most authentic wedding planning platform. From hen do hauls to wedding DIYs, it's got so much inspiration and I love how supportive fellow brides are. Follow me for lots more wedding chat @rachellawler

And follow Your Scottish Wedding on TikTok @yourscottishwedding

11.



She's in FASHION

Rock your pick of this season's sought after bridal trends and sashay down the aisle in one of these beauties

It's your wedding day and the fashion stakes have never been higher. Top bridal designers and Scottish stockists share the must-see trends and the dresses that'll ensure you nail the look!

Bead-azzled

Harking back to the 1920s and 30s, vintage-inspired beadwork is everything this season. Want a bridal look that's totally on-trend this year but won't date? Look no further than some subtle beading.



Sheer delight Sheer fabrics help achieve a delicate and

Sheer fabrics help achieve a delicate and effortless look, perfect for all whimsical bridesto-be. Want to inject a touch of glam? Just add some subtle glitter. This is a look that Mette at Freja Designer Dressmaking is definitely getting behind this season, combining it with other crowd pleasers.

"We are doing sheer materials, sometimes with subtle glitter or crystals, but done in a very subtle way. We are going crazy with bows; little ones, big ones. We also work with a-symmetry on necklines, and one-sleeve dresses and oversized bows or flowers or other embellishments added in an a-symmetrical way."

Mette, Freja Designer Dressmaking

Delicate, hand beaded detailing is so on trend this season. Inspired by the allure of vintage designs, our signature beadwork is woven throughout the collections. Based in Art Deco designs with a fluid, modern twist, these elements give our dresses the iconic True Bride touch. 'Zadie' showcases this attentive detailing with timeless elements of its style juxtaposed with modern cuts and silhouettes of the design to create a dress that will never go out of style." Georgia, **True Bride**

Dare to split? Fancy having your very own

Fancy having your very own Angelina Jolie moment on your wedding day? No, we're not advocating getting your kids to doodle on your gown, but we are all for the leg split - a sure-fire way to toughen up and modernise the most understated of cuts.

Switch *it up*

Sure, one look for your entire wedding day is nice and all that but what if you could play about with it throughout the day? Versatility reigns this season with so many ways to add to or take away from the same dress to create different silhouettes.

"A big trend this season is to have two or more looks in one gown. Whether it's an overskirt that can be removed for the reception, detachable straps or sleeves, brides love the fact that their bridal style can be transformed in an instant.

We love this stunning gown from Wona Concept which has recently arrived in the boutique, featuring a detachable matching overskirt that ensures that brides can mix up their bridal style." Naydene, **Sophia Grace Couture**





Pop of colour

If you're planning the traditional white dress then look away now because colour is everything this season! And we're not just talking muted blush tones. Go daring with rich and sumptuous shades and then dial it up with some sparkle for the ultimate head turner.

This season, it's all about colour! And nobody does it better than Temperley London, who goes a step further, telling a story through embroidery and embellishment of playful stylised botanical motifs." Rachel, **Rachel Scott Couture**

"2023 has seen a definite shift back to more understated styles with plainer satins and crepes featuring heavily across our in-store collections. The main trend that we've been loving, however, has been the introduction of legsplits to add a more modern twist to these classic designs!

Essense of Australia's D3631 is one of our stand-out examples of this. From the simplicity of the matte mikado fabric to the daring side split, this gown showcases everything that we've been loving recently. With a detachable off-shoulder cape detail and bow, this is the perfect style to add versatility to a bride's day!" Megan, **Kudos Bridal**



What a scoop!

This season there's a new trending neckline. Enter the scoop. Either wear it plain and simple or pair it with some statement sleeves or delicate straps.

"The trend we're excited about is this soft scooped neckline; a modern and super-flattering alternative to traditional or plunging sweetheart necklines that we are used to seeing on strapless gowns. The Trianon dress from Élysée Bridal illustrates this trend perfectly, pairing it with ruching to sculpt the waist and create an amazing silhouette. We love the elegant pointed design which keeps it contemporary and gives brides the opportunity to customise by adding detachable off-shoulder sleeves or even dainty spaghetti straps to their dress." Liliana, La Novia





Modern romance

Get ready to swoon over soft floaty tulles, romantic sleeves and subtle style details that make for super-feminine gowns this season. Perfect for playing the leading lady in your love story.

"We are loving the soft feminine romantic styling that's very on trend at the moment; whimsical dream tulle flowing skirts, soft delicate blooming floral appliqués and beading and also removable balloon style tulle sleeves to create some bridal drama!! 'Petal' from our SS23 Casablanca collection is the perfect example of this look and she has just arrived in store!" Hollie, **June Brides Glasgow**

YSW's trend to watch gloves!

Whether you go sleek and understated like these gorgeous Morilee opera gloves or use the of-themoment accessory to show off the fun side of your personality - à la the sheer and adorned Halfpenny 'Josephine' gloves - they're definitely a bridal trend we can get behind this year!



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The **BIG** INTERVIEW

with Demetrios' Demetrios James Elias

With more than 40 years since he established the Demetrios brand in New York City, Greekborn Demetrios James Elias is a global bridal icon. Here he shares how it all began, his advice to brides-to-be and his love of taking a fashion risk

Your Scottish Wedding: How did you first start working in bridalwear? Was there a particular moment when you knew you wanted to do this as a career?

Demetrios: My family emigrated from Athens to the United States. My mother had wedding shops in Ohio before I became a designer. The brides would always want matching veils with their gowns. Therefore, I would order appliqué from their selected gowns and create one of a kind veils that matched perfectly with their wedding looks. This is where my love for design really began to grow. The more I worked with brides the more I knew this was what I was meant to do so I will always be very grateful to my mother for this.

YSW: When did you launch the

'Style 1185', Demetrios collection

Demetrios brand? Did you work with any other designer before embarking on your own brand?

Demetrios: In 1980 I decided to make my dream of becoming a bridal designer and creating my own brand come true. I moved to New York City and established the Demetrios brand. And in 1995 we opened up our European headquarters in Milan. We have now been in business for more than 40 years and our brand is sold in more than 80 countries worldwide. All brides have that one thing in common; finding the dress. It is one of the most important days of their life and this will be reflected in their choice of gown. I am fully aware of the importance of this and strive every season to create the most beautiful, eclectic and breathtaking dresses.







'Style 8121', Cosmobella by Demetrios

YSW: What is your favourite Demetrios gown of all time?

Demetrios: It's impossible to choose! However, when I started designing in the 1980s the trend was extravagant and embellished ball gowns with fabulous sleeves and covered necklines. However, I decided to create a fitted, mermaid gown with a sweetheart, strapless neckline. It was definitely a risk for the time, but the reception to the gown was great. I really enjoyed taking a risk like that and it is something I do quite often now in my designs annually.

YSW: How would you describe the Demetrios bride? Is there a certain woman who opts for one of your designs?

Demetrios: Strong, confident and passionate – and they know exactly what they want. They celebrate their style and individuality with the choice of gown and the wedding they have. We love that brides today want to put their unique touch on their gowns and as a company we are known for working with our stores to make these customizations come to life.

What is your best tip for brides when looking for their wedding dress?

Demetrios: Stay true to yourself, but always keep an open mind. You never know which dress will be the one!

YSW: Who is the one celebrity you wish you could design for and why?

Demetrios: Zendaya would be a dream style icon for us to dress. She knows how to take risks while staying true to herself.

YSW: What's next for Demetrios?

Demetrios: Our focus will continue to be creating beautiful designs, providing superb quality and making bridal luxury accessible to all.



Style DR365 and 'Style DR366', Destination Romance by Demetrios

YSW: What is the inspiration behind the latest collection?

Demetrios: The designs of Demetrios are inspired by our love for mixing the romantic with the modern. Each and every one of our designs embodies this essence. The aura of contemporary fashions composed harmoniously with a timeless dream factor.

YSW: What is your favourite gown from the new collection and why?

Demetrios: The Nora gown is a show stopper and became a favourite early on. It is the most enchanting long sleeved, gown with cascading 3D petals throughout the design but then has an amazing surprise - a thigh high slit. The Nora is so romantic, but this slit adds a modern and sexy edge and it is perfection!



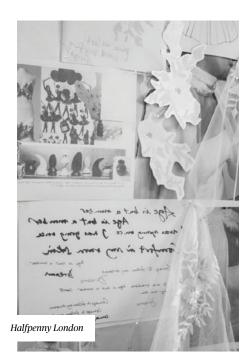


Ask the expert

Pachel Scott Conture

explains bridal sizing and just why it's important to dismiss your "normal" high street size

"Buying your wedding dress is entirely different to normal clothes shopping. It's all very new, with lots to learn on things you've never explored before, including how the sizing works for designers you've never experienced before. However, by the end of the wedding dress shopping experience you might end up knowing the exact measurements and sizing of



your specific wedding dress designer!

If you go down the standard size route (as opposed to made to measure - more on that later) there are a few things to consider. It's a natural reaction to focus on the size number but you'll only be basing that on the size charts of the specific high street shops you already know. We've all got a lifetime's worth of experience shopping that way, so getting our heads around shopping for a wedding dress from a completely different angle can take some serious getting used to. However, it's crucial not to use your normal buying patterns as a basis for choosing your wedding dress size as you'll never be comparing like for like.

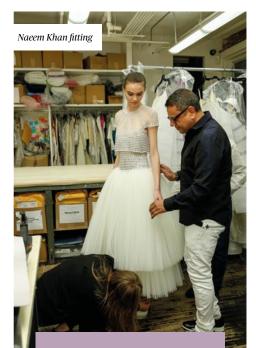
SIZE MATTERS?

To understand our existing conceptions of sizing and what we all take to be "our size" it's helpful to know where these high street fashion sizes first came from. Historically there were no set sizes or even patterns, just a tailor making an outfit specifically for you. Then, with the development of cheaper fabrics and garment production methods, the introduction of graded paper patterns allowed a wider mass audience to tailor their own clothing. But it wasn't until 1957 that each of these 'grades' was given a size name we would recognise today, even if the measurements associated with them are now unrecognisable! That size chart was used until the early 1980s when it was replaced by the official sounding British Standard ISO 3635 Size Designation of Clothes.

However, that "standard" sizing isn't actually standard because neither of those size charts are compulsory. Each designer and retailer can decide to make up their own sizes to fit as many people as possible in as few steps as possible. Designers will therefore create size charts based on their own target market.

SO DO BRIDAL SIZES RUN SMALL COMPARED TO THE HIGH STREET?

Simply put, no. This is a common misconception. They are just based on different designers working to different size charts, in exactly the same way high street fashion designers do. So, the only way to truly get the right size for your wedding dress? Entirely ignore the size label!



"So, the only way to truly get the right size for your wedding dress? Entirely ignore the size label!"

HOW DO BRIDAL SHOPS DECIDE WHAT DRESS SIZE TO ORDER YOU?

If we're able to do the full made to measure service (as we always default to at Rachel Scott Couture) we can be entirely specific with every single measurement.

In general though, the dress shape and styling can be a big deciding factor when looking at what size to order for you from the designer. Whether it's a fishtail shape, has sleeves or stretchy fabric will all influence the size.

Some styles you can 'fudge' the lines of what standard size you choose. A line or ballgown skirts for example we might not need to worry about the hip measurement so much since there's plenty of room in the skirt, whereas with a fishtail we need to really pay attention to the proportions of waist and hip measurements.

Then there are certain measurements like body length proportions - whether tall or petite - and cup size where you just can't make it look like it fits if it really doesn't. Most standard sizes will allow for a B/C cup but if you're larger it's always worth exploring having your dress made to measure so it can be sculpted under the bust around the ribs, pinching in at the waist.

SAMPLE THIS

When you're trying on wedding dresses, you'll be trying on dresses that don't fit. Shops are likely to only have one size of each style for you to try - a sample size. Then once you've chosen, a new dress is made in your exact measurements or in the closest 'standard' size.

Brides often worry they'll not be able to imagine how their own dress will look since the shop sample isn't fitting but I'm a great believer that if you're truly in the right dress then you'll be able to see past the sample sizing. I know it's a cliché but when you know it's the one, you really do know, (even if you still have to try on a few other dresses to feel you have enough information to know it was the one!)



Halfpenny London atelier

"I know it's a cliché

I promise you don't need a good imagination. If it's not feeling 100% right, I can guarantee it's not. You're not being overly picky or difficult, or that it's not the right size - there's just something missing. Don't try to justify it. Just recognise it's not quite right and move on to the next one.

WHEN DO YOU TAKE **MEASUREMENTS?**

Depending on how you order your dress, you might delay the measurements until a later date. We regularly do that at Rachel Scott Couture, especially if we know there's a real potential for measurement changes - whether that's for medical reasons, recovery after giving birth or you're wanting to tone up, gain or lose weight. We make a plan to take them as late as possible.

With a full made to measure service we can offer a toile fitting stage. This is a practice version of your dress, made in off-cut fabric before your final fabric is cut, made up in your own measurements. So if you've tried the shop sample and loved the dress but perhaps the bodice was too long or the back too low cut, doing a toile fitting allows you to see the final shape fitting perfectly but at an early enough stage to still make changes.

If you're not going full made to measure but ordering a standard wedding dress size you'll need to allow for confirming sizing or measurements further in advance. Talk to your chosen retailer and be honest and realistic and focus on the measurements only, not the dress size.

WHAT IF MY MEASUREMENTS CHANGE **BEFORE THE WEDDING?**

Talk to your bridal shop. The more information they have, the more options they can give for the best outcome. And don't assume we're just talking about weight loss here. With the great strides we're all taking in promoting body positivity, I'm seeing a fabulous shift from brides just shedding pounds because 'that's what brides do', in favour of being healthier and fitter both physically and mentally.

Consider also, other factors entirely away from wanting to actively lose or gain weight. Are you on medication, fertility treatment, training for a marathon? We often have clients on hormone medication or undergoing fertility treatment who worry they'll not know what size they are further down the line. If the bridal shop knows what's

happening or what might happen in the future they can help.

HOW MUCH CAN A DRESS **BE ALTERED?**

As a general guide, dresses can be taken down one size (normally about two inches) without worry, and often a lot more, but if you're adjusting further than that you need to take into account the shape and construction.

DON'T GET HUNG UP ON A NUMBER

Bodies come in all shapes and sizes and I love that. You can even have two people with exactly the same measurements technically who will look entirely different in the same outfit. Remember that measurements bear absolutely no relation to weight, or to the size 'name' you'd buy from your favourite high street retailer. So ditch any preconceived idea of sizing. What's important is your dress is a perfect fit on the day and you feel amazing in it."

> "So ditch any preconceived idea of sizing. What's important fit on the day and you



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'There's no better way to plan your wedding day!'

Age means nothing: individual wedding style

is everything

Claire Muir finds out how two showstopping 'older' brides chose their perfect wedding outfit - and gets top tips from the retailers you could be visiting on the search for your ideal outfit

Oscar Lili SHANNON Photo Tina Sorensen





"We encourage them to focus on their best features and find aspects of styles they love to create a bridal look that's individual to them.'

want. I'm getting older myself, and I love the part of it that I don't care what other people say and think. I want to do what I want. If you were advising your girlfriends, you'd say: 'Go for it!'"

"Bridal shopping should be an exciting and special experience whether you're 25 or 55," declares Natalie Hellevik at La Novia, an award-winning bridal studio in the heart of the capital. "Age means nothing when it comes to finding your wedding dress. But when looking online for initial inspiration, every style is worn by young models with unrealistic body shapes. This can make it difficult for older brides to visualise themselves in anything similar."

At La Novia, those strutting up the aisle at a later stage in life are encouraged to have fun and explore styles that reflect their personality rather than settling for something they assume is 'age appropriate' or having

Martin Venherm Photographer

to plump for a motherof-the-bride-style outfit. "Our older brides feel like they need to follow certain rules, which shouldn't be the case. We encourage them to focus on their best features and find aspects of styles they love to create a bridal look that's individual to them."

At Freja Designer Dressmaking, owner Mette Baillie regularly works with mature brides to create bespoke outfits. "These brides are wonderful to work with. Most of the time, they've had enough trials and errors in the dressing department to know a bit about what suits them and what they like. So, I tell them to listen to what they



"We worked with a bride recently [Moira, pictured above] who said she wanted to look amazing... Obviously," continues Mette. "I asked what it meant to her and she said she wanted to look like a bride - but a bride at her age. For her, it was about sophisticated, tactile materials and not being too revealing - yet not ending up with a mother-ofthe-bride outfit as she'd already worn that to her children's weddings.

"We made her a simple dress in geometric lace with a subtle shine of sequins, semi-sheer long sleeves and a boat neckline. We added a deep cowl neck collar in beautiful silk satin on the back, which gave an exquisite sensual feel. She looked beautiful."

Much like this bride, many tying the knot later in life tend to go for a "sophisticated, stylish and exquisitely made red carpet-style dress" as opposed to bridalwear fashion, according to Mette.

Natalie agrees - at La Novia, the keywords are elegant, modern and comfortable. She often suggests a sheath or soft silhouette, which is not too full nor too restrictive. "The perfect fit and fabric are important to accentuate your best features and make you feel incredible. Bridal separates are also great for mature brides looking for a unique, understated look."

When it comes to hitting the shops, Natalie advises bringing only one or two of your favourite people - "It's important to take the time to find out what you love without too many opinions," she says - then exploring unexpected styles and, of course, enjoying the process.



"It's important to take the time to find out what you love without too many opinions."

Paul Gavin Photography



Paul Gavin Photography



Moira Mackay married David Martin at Edinburgh's Norton House Hotel wearing a classy, twinkly dress designed by Mette at Freja Designer Dressmaking. She looked simply stunning...

"David wanted a fairly big wedding so I wanted a 'proper' wedding dress. But it had to be a bit different and suitable for my age. I didn't feel any pressure to go for a certain type of outfit, though. I visited Mette clutching a picture from a magazine and she was like my fairy godmother. I wanted an off-white colour and a material like lace, but not lace. What she created was so beautiful and fitted so well - I didn't even have to think about support underwear! It was Mette's stunning, subtly sparkly material that simply made the dress but she also suggested a draped back, which was pure class. I had my headdress made by a milliner so everything I wore was my choice and I

knew no one else would have the same outfit. On the day, I felt amazing and David was blown away. I'd say to other brides not to worry if it's hard finding an off-the-peg dress as a more mature lady. If it's not happening, find a good dressmaker, share your vision and let them advise you."

> "Find a good dressmaker, share your vision and let them advise you." Moira

<complex-block>

Martin Venherm Photographer

Julie Geddes married Gordon Bond at Carrbridge Village Hall surrounded by love, laughter and loads of autumnal vibes. Julie talks us through her striking outfit...



What look did you have in mind?

For me, age has brought selfconfidence and as a plus-size woman I wanted to embrace my curviness. Comfort was also very important (I didn't want to squeeze myself into a size I'm not) and so was a little bit of individualised sass. This was my first wedding and hopefully my last, so I wanted no regrets!

What did you choose, and most importantly - how did you feel in it?

The perfect dress for me - a sugarpink fitted sweetheart top and a tulle dress that finished halfway down my calf. I originally wanted puffball but my dress designer, Maggie McAllister, suggested a fabulous cape and I asked her to add bows so that my upper arms wouldn't be too exposed. It was glorious. It promoted my comfort and made me look amazing. I added a white and blush pink headpiece and frilly ankle socks. Then Gordon gave me personalised Converse, which brought everything together.

What was your biggest challenge?

Second guessing myself. My advice is to go with your gut, even when you doubt it.

Any other advice?

Age and size are merely numbers. They don't define you and shouldn't be something you measure yourself against. I didn't do conventional and I had the most relaxed, fun wedding - I wouldn't change it for the world! So be bold, be brave and have no regrets. No-one is there to judge you so wear what you wish without limitations.

The LENGTHS you'll go to

Whether a veil has always been an essential element of your dream bridal look or you're a bit unsure, **Katie Bletcher** reveals everything you need to know to help you decide

One of my early primary school memories involves playing dress-up with our teacher's old wedding dress, artificial bouquets and that all-important veil. If it wasn't your turn to wear the coveted headwear you could always content yourself with a net curtain from the wendy house. However, we never once questioned that the bride would sport a veil.



Purity pearl hair pins set (£32), Sophia Grace Couture and alwaysthebride.com





Leaf head band (£500), Rachel Scott Accessories



Magnolia hair comb (£75) and purity drop earrings (£52), both Sophia Grace Couture and alwaysthebride.com Fast forward from childish role play though and the picture is not so clear. You may be one who has never deviated from the veil-wearing plan but for all who are swithering there are plenty of stylish alternatives. "The veil is a traditional element of wedding styling, but today many women replace it with other decorations," explains Mirka Jankowska of Mirka Bridal Couture. "There are plenty of possibilities but it is worth remembering that the decoration must be stylistically matched to the bride's wedding dress and style of wedding."

Stephanie Lyon at Rachel Scott Accessories - the sister store of Rachel Scott Couture - agrees that it's ok to not wear a veil. "It doesn't make you any less of a bride," she assures us and says you can always play around with other elements such as a statement hair band, cape, bridal gloves or a massive bow! "It can be as bold a choice as a veil but in a totally different way," she says. "As Rachel hand makes all our pieces, we can be very specific with size, shape and colour and create something totally bespoke, to translate your personality as much as a veil would!"

Peter Langner veil available at Rachel Scott Accessories

Keep an open mind

Before you rule a veil out though, it's definitely worth trying some on. "We encourage brides who are swithering to try a veil and if it's not for them then there are other accessory alternatives," says Naydene Commins of Sophia Grace Couture. The boutique boasts a dedicated Styling Suite and they offer their brides a complimentary accessory



Hair vine (£400), Rachel Scott Accessories

appointment there once their own dress arrives in store. This is when their stylist can try veils and other accessories with their dress to help them hone in on their complete bridal look and incidentally, brides who purchase their dress elsewhere can still bring their own gown for a Styling Suite appointment.

Great lengths

When we talk about veils we are of course talking about a whole host of lengths and styles and different veils that can completely transform your wedding look. Rainbow Club's collection of Italian tulle veils are available in a variety of lengths starting at 77cm - designed to sit elegantly at waist height - and going up to 290cm to reach the floor for a more traditional look.



'Coralbells' full lenath lace-edaed veil (from £225) brings all the

At Sophia Grace Couture they offer waist, fingertip, chapel and cathedral length veils and the designers they work with can customise veil lengths for their brides. If you are opting for a longer one Naydene recommends going longer than your gown to show off the veil in "all its glory". "We have had instances where a bride loves her dress but feels the train length is just not long enough," she adds. "This is where you can add veil drama and add that little bit extra length." Stephanie also advises going at least five inches past the dress train so there is separation between the two and they don't blend into one.

At Mirka Bridal Couture, their short veils - maximum 50cm - work perfectly with almost any cut but Mirka suggests different lengths for different dress styles. "We usually advise half-length veils for brides who have chosen an A-shaped dress and a long veil is perfect for richly decorated dresses," she says. "Church veils should be a little longer than the train of the dress and

cathedral veils are characteristic of royal weddings."

The golden rule with these longer styles though is to remember the space of your aisle. It's all very well wanting to make a dramatic entrance but if you can't actually fit down the aisle or manage all that fabric you're going to be in difficulties.

Going traditional?

As with everything bridal, Stephanie says, it comes down to personal preference. "When a bride comes in to Rachel Scott Accessories the first question I always ask is, do you want to wear the veil over your face? If yes, you will be looking at a two-tiered veil. Traditionally, the blusher (the shorter of the two layers) is worn over your face before you walk down the aisle. If the answer is no, then we would most likely look at single-tiered. I would never rule out two-tiered however until the bride has tried one on. You can choose to have this extra layer behind your head instead. It is a great way to add extra volume around your shoulders."



Everlasting pearl tiara (£150)

Sophia Grace Couture and alwaysthebride.com



'Dawn' dress paired with 'Delilah' veil (POA), Mirka Bridal Couture

Toscall' veil (from £60), Rainbow Club

The finer details

Mirka always advises brides to match their veil to the shade of their dress and ensure any decoration complements their gown. "Long lace trimmed veils complement dresses also made of lace and in this case it is worth making sure the lace pattern on the veil and dress match. The amount of lace, appliqués, pearls or other decorations on the veil are best perfectly matched to the amount of detail on your dress. For example, you'd not want to take away from or cover up a very detailed illusion back."

All veils at Rachel Scott Accessories are made to order so they can be very specific about the length and trim you require. Stephanie says, "We are able to make bespoke veils from scratch, add hand embroidery and match appliqués that may be on your dress; we have many creative solutions to help find your dream veil!"

Remember your stylist will always be there to help guide you through so embrace the process and even if you've never dreamed of wearing that frothy veil give it a go! You may surprise yourself.





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WOVEN in tradition

In Scotland tartan is quite literally a part of the furniture. Jennifer McLaren speaks to the kilt experts about its continued appeal and how you can make it work for you on your wedding

V&A Dundee's new Tartan exhibition aims to shed new light on one of the world's bestknown textiles and, according to assistant curator James Wylie, the fabric's journey from clan battles, to appearing on the catwalk, and being worn at wedding ceremonies is all about its ability to reinvent itself. "For a long time,

people thought the idea of Highland dress and tartans was an invented tradition, but instead it was a reinvention of a living tradition. It was a tradition that continuously evolved to meet the needs of the day," he explains. "That's where we are now with wearing kilts and Highland

dress in Scotland as a ceremonial thing for weddings, graduations and other occasions. We now have tartans that are designed to be worn at weddings, are devoid of any clan association and have a clean aesthetic." James goes on to say that in the 1950s and 60s small numbers of people would wear Highland dress to events such as weddings as a ceremonial function to express their Scottishness, then gradually the tradition began to grow in popularity. "It was around the 1970s and 1980s it began to pick up and we

"You get a lot of attention when you wear a kilt!" James Wylie, V&A Dundee started to see kilt hire businesses. Then, in the 1990s, it became the naturally given thing to wear a kilt to a Scottish wedding and it's an expression of your Scottish credentials more so than your clan," he goes on. "People also want to have an excuse to wear their Sunday best and a wedding is the perfect place for that."

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And whether or not you have Scottish heritage, wearing a kilt is always a special experience. "You get a lot of attention when you wear a kilt!" James adds. McCalls will expand their exclusive Pride of Scotland offering when they launch their brand new Weathered Pride of Scotland tartan in June. The beautiful new tartan was previewed on the

was previewed on the runway at the Scottish Wedding Show and we're looking forward to seeing the first grooms don it on their wedding day.

V&A Dundee is presenting the first major exhibition to be held in Scotland in 30 years focused solely on tartan. The show runs until 14th January 2024 and takes a radical new look at the country's historic textile. Objects include high fashion from Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen to Jackie Stewart's racing helmet. **vam.ac.uk/dundee**

Adidas X Grace Wales Bonner tartan tracksuit, Spring/ Summer 2021 Edwards



With so much choice, just how do you select the perfect tartan for your big day? We put it to the experts...

Exclusive Midnight Pride of Scotland Kilt, navy contemporary jacket and waistcoat, Pride of Scotland sporran, matching silver silk straight tie, navy hose and Pride of Scotland black ghillie brogues (hire from $\pounds 110$ or buy from $\pounds 1,449$), **McCalls**



McCalls

Simone M. Waters of McCalls in Aberdeen says that by choosing a clan tartan, contemporary wearers might feel connected to their heritage when they embark on a new adventure as a married couple. "It can also be an opportunity to keep that strong sense of identity that Scotland has long since been very proud of," she explains.

And while some customers wish to wear a clan tartan, many others opt for more general tartans, including McCalls' exclusive Pride of Scotland collection (see the latest offering on opposite page), where the 15 designs take inspiration from Scottish heritage and culture. This provides the opportunity to choose a tartan from more of a personal and fashion-focused perspective. "No matter if you have a preference to wear your clan's tartan or if you'd rather don a design without any family ties, you should feel your absolute best while wearing the style. Don't feel forced to pick a specific tartan because, ultimately, it is a special and personal choice for a big day you will treasure forever," Simone adds.

Kilts 4 U

Iain Carlton, director of Kilts 4 U says in Scotland we are so fortunate to have a formal attire that has universal appeal. "The heritage surrounding tartan is truly magical and indeed timeless," he explains. "Many grooms have always wanted to wear and own their family tartan, but many outfits are also chosen due to a colour or theme."

Adding in the ancient Celtic ritual of handfasting is a popular feature of many weddings and tartan ribbons are often used. Iain says their seamstress can create bespoke ribbons to match all their tartans.

"Clan and family tartans tend to be brighter and sometimes harder to match to a theme especially if bridesmaids' dresses are already chosen," he goes on. "Modern tartans tend to be more muted, so easier to find tones that fit the feel of the wedding. With so many to choose from, that's where the expert advice we offer is very helpful, so it's important to come and see us early."



"From such a simple form of warp and weft, thousands of unique tartans exist, each with their own story and connections." Gordon Nicolson

Gordon Nicolson Kiltmakers

Gordon Nicolson, founder of Gordon Nicolson Kiltmakers in Edinburgh, says an integral element of tartan's enduring appeal is its colour and variety of pattern. "From such a simple form of warp and weft, thousands of unique tartans exist, each with their own story and connections," he explains. "We find that our customers make their choices based on a myriad of personal priorities and individual reasons. For some, the choice is simply based on their family clan connections. For others, their choice of tartan may be purely aesthetic, based



Highland Mist kilt and trews, navy charcoal jacket and waistcoat made with Liberty fabric, fox dress sporran, Loullymakes accessories (all POA), **Gordon Nicolson Kiltmakers**

on colour and outfit preference."

GNK offers a curated selection of in-house designed tartans and its tartan design service is something that is increasing in popularity, allowing individuals to create their own personal tartan. "We have certainly enjoyed an incredible upsurge in requests for tartan shawls and other accessories for brides and bridal party outfits in recent years," adds Gordon. "Essentially, the tartan is one to be worn to celebrate a joyous occasion and should make the wearer feel their best."







Introducing our new columnist and groom-to-be **Lee Thomas**. Lee proposed to his fiancée Louise last summer and he's sharing their wedding planning experience with *YSW*. First up, the proposal!

Lee and Louise first became sweethearts while he was serving in the military. "I was due to be posted out to a new location and we bumped into each other on my leaving night out," he explains.

When they first started seeing each other Lee joked that if they were together in 10 years he would marry Louise. "This unexpectedly became our thing and before we knew it, it was closer to 11," he says. With a proposal on the cards, Lee started looking for somewhere to sweep Louise off her feet and stumbled across Culdees Castle near Crieff. "As soon as I saw the pictures online, I knew this was the place," he remembers. "Something seemed very magical." Wanting to make sure everything was perfect, Lee contacted Tracey the owner to enlist her help in his grand plan.

Lee had booked glamping cabin Spiers Lodge, which looks directly out on the castle, for their romantic getaway. "It's such a peaceful setting and I could not have wished for more," he says. "We snuggled up together in the tree swing and just listened to the birds - bliss!" All the little touches the owners had laid on including Champagne, chocolates, a barbecue pack, flowers and a fire pit package set the romantic tone, not to mention having a private hot tub and waking up to views of the castle.

By their second morning Lee was well and truly nervous, as he still hadn't proposed. "We went for a morning walk and while in front of the castle I got down on one knee and asked Louise to marry me," he smiles. With Louise's "yes" and a cute love lock secured in the grounds to mark the occasion, the team at Culdees helped them celebrate in style, providing a magical spread of food and drinks in the castle courtyard with the help of Crieff Food Co. "Later in the evening the owners invited us for Champagne and gave us a tour of the castle," says Lee. "It finished off the evening perfectly. I came away with memories that will last a lifetime and a fiancée!"



Eart the search

While Lee planned the proposal with military precision he says the hard task is now upon them. "Being blessed with so many beautiful and amazing locations in Scotland we are spoilt for choice for a fairy tale wedding," he explains. "We've spent many long weekends exploring the country high and low."

During one trip they visited Loch Awe and by chance passed St Conan's Kirk, the beautiful church by the water. "It was everything we could have dreamed of and we fell in love with it at first sight," he says. "This has presented us with the problem of finding a venue to match the stunning church in this location." The couple are now on the hunt for a castle or mansion setting for their romantic reception. "Once we find the magical location it will be full steam ahead and time to book!"







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to the

modern mamas

As more MOBs and MOGs opt for 'something different', Claire Muir highlights the top trends for creating a cool edge when it comes to occasionwear

Times are changing in the MOB/MOG world and it's no surprise, given how much fashion has moved forward in the last 10 years or so. Add to that the ease of getting info online and mums of to-be-weds are more aware of what's out there than ever, arriving at occasionwear boutiques armed with a reimagined idea of what a mother should look like on their child's wedding day.

"Our customers are looking" for that special outfit they can feel comfortable in all day, whilst still looking fresh and current.'

Christina, Mia Bella

"About 60% of the mums who come to see me let me know as soon as they're through the door that they're looking



(POA), Mia Bella

for 'something different' and don't want to look like a mother-of-the-bride or -groom," says Stephanie Gallen, owner of Stephanie Gallen Millinery. At Mia Bella, Christina Sigerson agrees. "We regularly meet mums who don't want to look 'mumsy'," She says. "Our customers are looking for that special outfit they can feel comfortable in all day, whilst still looking fresh and current."

Some mums, however, take it to the next level and go extra funky! "We had a lovely mum a few years ago whose daughter planned an XXL Disney-style wedding," says Christina. "The bride had the biggest Cinders gown I've ever seen, and she and her 10 bridesmaids were in Mia Bella blue. MOB wanted a long shiftstyle dress with neck embellishment and a detachable full-length cape, trimmed with matching ostrich feathers all the way round. The photos were stunning."

Headpieces that pack a punch

When it comes to headgear, a proper hat where the crown and brim are sewn together is the most traditional look but large, angled hatinators have been the MOB/MOG go-to for a few years now. If you want to break from the norm, though, think about the size (Stephanie recommends going small yet impactful as opposed to large and expected) and materials used - introduce elements you wouldn't normally see, like leather, suggests Stephanie.

For something really extra, scroll through Instagram to see what people are wearing to the races. "Normally these are a little more 'out there' than what would be worn to a wedding, so it's a great place to look and see if anything inspires you to go a little different," advises Stephanie.

Mums

Whilst you can never go wrong with something classic and timeless. there are some 2023 trends we can't wait for this year's MOBs and MOGs to jump on! We quizzed Scotland's best boutiques on what's not to be missed in the wedding world...



Frox of Falkirk

Trendalert: Chiffon

"We've had a lot of new 2023 styles with chiffon - chiffon sleeves, floaty chiffon skirts and full chiffon dresses. It's very versatile. The stunning pastel colours and bold floral patterns are perfect for spring/summer weddings and the gorgeous jewel colours (cobalt, teal and jade green) work well for autumn/winter." Natalie, Frox of Falkirk





Ostrich Pom Pink and Ostrich Pom Purple (£45 to hire or £235 made to order), Stephanie Gallen Millinery

Trendalert: . Østrich feathers

"Ostrich feathers feature on a lot of headpieces, either covering the whole surface on large hats (and making a huge statement) or adorning hats in a pompom style - still making quite the statement but in a more subtle way. Colour-wise, pastel ostrich feathers are a bit of a vibe." Stephanie, Stephanie Gallen Millinery

Style 1109 (product code EA037084) from Snoxell & Gwyther (POA), Elegance of Perth





How to add extra style points to your outfit

"Dipped hem dresses and trouser suits with long tunic tops are very modern, fresh and stylish. When it comes to a jacket, we have some gorgeous ostrich feather wraps - they look fabulous as a cover up. Getting your shoes and bag dyed to the same colour as your outfit always adds an extra wow factor. And with your jewellery, I always say not to overdo it. Your outfit should always do the talking! Finally, a headpiece can really make an outfit come to life and MOB/ MOG should always have the best hats at the wedding. A statement hatinator finishes an outfit off perfectly." Natalie, Frox of Falkirk

Style 7G1F8 (£735), Frox of Falkirk

rend alert Prints

"One of our most asked for styles for 2023 is prints. These two (pictured) would be perfect for the mum who's looking for a more youthful style - and one that could be worn again." Louise Brown, Catwalk



Style 29662 from Veni Infantino Invitations range (POA),



Trend alert: Headgear

"Customers have been asking for traditional hats again and if you want to keep your outfit classic and tailored, this is an option for you. East to west brims are better for smaller people and downturn Audrey Hepburn styles suit an A-line dress. If that feels too much, opt for a headband. They give a youthful and modern look to your outfit, and they're fun to wear." Lynda Wilson, Elegance of Perth

Trendalert: Trousers

"A few customers have opted for this quirky style. The latest had a bohemian vibe and went for a floral, wide-leg trouser suit. She added a natural straw hat for her daughter's wedding in the garden and looked so comfortable and happy with her choice." Lynda, Elegance of Perth

Trend alert: Body confidence

"Body confidence comes when you wear what suits your shape and this year is all about flattering curves. Busty ladies are loving a V-neck or shoulder-skimming Bardot style; slimmer ladies are going for straight styles with round necklines whilst the everpopular fit and flare works for all shapes and sizes." Georgea Scobie, **Gina Smart Boutique**



Invitations by Veni 29819 royal/ivory dress (POA), **Gina Smart Boutique**



Irend alert: Jumpsnits

"Mums always want that little bit of something different and a beautiful jumpsuit always hits the spot." Christina, **Mia Bella**

Style 7G197 in petrol blue from Couture Club (POA), **Mia Bella**



MOB style - For real

When Mandy Reilly considered what she'd wear to her daughter's wedding, her first thought was that she didn't want anything 'typically MOB'...

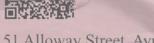
"The day we bought my outfit was purely by chance. My husband and I were going to St Andrews for a kilt fitting and meeting up with the brides-to-be Amanda and Victoria. We were early so I suggested a browse in the boutiques and my heart was racing when I saw it... I just loved it. But I wasn't sure due to the fact it was a jumpsuit... No way would the girls allow me to wear one!

"After the fitting we headed back to see it and the girls approved so I immediately tried it all on - the jacket, the shoes and the hat. The colour was just right; very natural, and the decision was made. I couldn't stop talking about how good I felt in it!

"Then the pandemic came along and the wedding was postponed. I kept thinking 'Am I still going to love this outfit a year later?' So, I decided I needed to look and feel my best - my only daughter was getting married after all! I hit the gym and started eating better. But two months before the big day (and almost two years after purchasing) I tried it on and it didn't fit... I'd lost 30lbs and it was too big! Panicked, I called the boutique and explained. Amazingly, they still had one in stock in the next size down and it fitted like a glove. I felt like a million dollars and got so many compliments that made it even more special."

See Amanda and Victoria's wedding on page 234





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SOPHISTICATION AND GLAMOUR FOR WOMEN

All hands on deck

You may be the one getting married but never underestimate how signifant your wedding is for your mum and mother-in-law. Katie Bletcher investigates ways to involve the women in your life

History isn't always kind to mothers and even less so to mother-in-laws who are frequently cast as a dragon-like harridan. And when it comes to weddings, motherin-law comments can become more cruel. Words of wisdom I once heard jokingly recounted stated, "The mother of the groom's job is to shut up and wear beige." Harsh!

When mums aren't the butt of cruel jokes they can be painted out of the picture entirely with significant jobs like walking the bride down the aisle reserved for dads. Thankfully there are so many ways to give your mum (and mother-in-law) an active role. Here are a few of our favourites...

GIRLS' DAY

Not to conform to stereotypes but I do love some mother-daughter retail therapy and it's only natural that so many brides want their mum by their side on one of the most important shopping trips of their life. "Mums are usually the ones who know a bride best so their input and

Michelle from sister store Kudos Bridal Edinburgh advises coming for an advance look without them and then bringing them back to see your shortlist. "The brides generally want mum to be there to share the 'Yes' moment," she adds.

Don't downplay how important this moment will be for your mum, especially

> if she's the one paying! "It can be quite an emotional moment for everyone, and we always give the bride and her mum a few minutes alone to share their feelings, and a glass of fizz to celebrate," says Michelle. And Megan adds, "With appointments you want to surround yourself with your biggest cheerleaders and mum is normally front and centre when it comes to this!"

> Besides the emotions there are some practical elements

to consider. Megan always likes to get your mum to pick out a dress. "Often this is the complete opposite to what the bride herself wants and helps to get everyone

on the same page as to what we are searching for, but you'd be surprised how often mum manages to pick The One!" she savs.

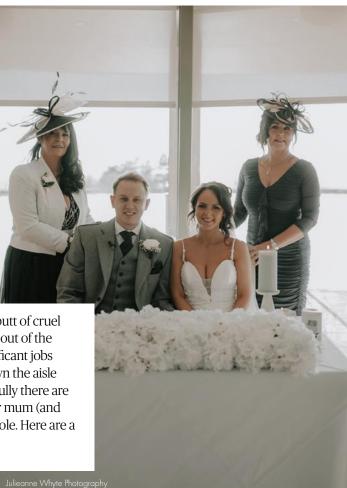
And if you have a few people with you Michelle will always give you and your mum some information directly, especially technical aspects, such as the different fabrics, how to bustle the dress and whether an underskirt will be needed. "It shows we respect her experience and involvement and marks out her special role," she says.

With your own mum covered, what about your mother-in-law-to-be? While it's less common to invite them along, both Megan and Michelle do see some brides asking their MIL, especially when they value their opinion or if they have no daughters of their own. "I always warm to the brides who are thoughtful enough to think of that and include them," says Michelle. But don't feel you have to invite her on the initial search. "We find it's more common for brides to bring their MIL after the initial appointment to see the dress, often at fittings or try-ons so that they can get a sneak peek ahead of the big day," says Megan.



support can be invaluable," says Megan of Kudos Bridal Dunfermline.

However, if you're afraid of being "overinfluenced" by your mum's preferences,





MUM'S TURN

While finding your dress is obviously of paramount importance, the shopping fun can continue with your mum's outfit. There's no hard and fast rule to say you must accompany

her but according to Natalie at Frox of Falkirk, mums tend to value the bride's opinion. "More so if it's the mother of the bride because it's their daughter," she says. However, the boutique does see brides joining their partner's mum too.

Having you there can help relax your mum (or MIL) as they will want everything to be right for you on the day and they care what you think. "They want the bride's approval," says Natalie.

Just how involved you are in the decision-making process will of course be down to personal preference. If you're determined to keep the mums to a colour scheme or in line with the general wedding theme that's up to

you, but try to make sure your mum is comfortable and feeling confident in what she chooses.

Natalie's top tip when approaching MOB and MOG shopping is to relax and have fun. "It's meant to be enjoyable!" she adds.







THE COMPLETE LOOK

You'll want to look your most gorgeous for the wedding and it's no different for your mum. After all, as Leigh of Makeup by Leigh Blaney, says, these photos are going to be around for ages - "Mums want to be the best version of themselves too." It comes as no surprise then that getting your mum in on the glam has become part of the new normal. Leigh says, "Some mums are used to make-up, some aren't, but it's a very special occasion and they want to be the best they can for their daughter or son's wedding."

Leigh warns that a lot of mums aren't used to getting this kind of attention so it's a great idea to take them to your make-up trial. "Go to an experienced make-up artist who can do all age groups that will enhance mum's features and not mask," she advises. "It helps the bride when the mums are relaxed and comfortable about the day. You don't want them fretting or worried if they're going to look or feel ok."

MOTHER'S PRIDE

While it's important to look and feel your best let's not forget the real reason you're here. The ceremony is at the heart of the entire wedding but in the past mums have often been overlooked.

Thankfully there are so many opportunities to include mums in the ceremony, something celebrant Allan Kidd of Fuze Ceremonies has witnessed an increase in with mothers walking down the aisle together or accompanying their daughter down the aisle, either when the dad is not there, or together with him. "I have also had mums lighting candles in remembrance of loved ones at the start of a ceremony or being the witnesses to the marriage."

Other rituals your mums (and dads) can get involved in include the hand fasting or drinking from the quaich. Brian Baxter, also of Fuze Ceremonies.

says, "Mums can pour and share a dram with the couple or bring the materials to the front and assist in the hand tying. I also encourage parents to send me words of support to the couple, like the couple's three things of love and three things 'the partner can improve on'. I read these out after the couple's three things or the parents can read them. A surprise for the couple!"

Fuze celebrant Matthew Tett remembers a tree planting ceremony last year where the groom put Orcadian soil in the pot and the bride Invernessian soil, followed by both mums watering the tree. "The idea was that the mums were giving the marriage a helping start together."

It just goes to show, however you choose to personalise your ceremony there's an opportunity to include your mums.









vimm

Mums

points

Beautiful beading, elegant waterfall coats and showstopping headpieces are all on the bill for these super-glamorous mothers of the bride and groom at our Kimpton Blythswood Square Hotel shoot

LEFT TO RIGHT: JULIE Ispirato standalone dress in floral print with v-neckline, 3/4-length sleeves and flattering ruche waistline (£359) with Snoxell & Gwyther hatinator (POA), **Catwalk**

VALERIE Alquema fuchsia ombre Collare waterfall coat and Estrella long dress set with pleated folds – available in a choice of ombre colour tones ($\pounds479$) with Snoxell & Gwyther hatinator (POA), **Catwalk**

GILLIAN Veni Infantino silver and blush lace dress with wrap waist and chiffon opera coat (\pounds 539) with Snoxell & Gwyther hatinator (POA), **Catwalk**



THIS PAGE: As before

OPPOSITE PAGE: GILLIAN Veni Infantino cerise print A-line knee-length dress with simple side bow on the waist and 34 sleeves (£575) with Ispirato hatinator (POA), all **Catwalk**







THIS PAGE AND OPPOSITE PAGE: As before





THIS PAGE AND OPPOSITE PAGE: As before

Mums





THIS PAGE: Olvis floral print lace dress teamed with Snoxell & Gwyther headpiece and nude 'Starra' shoes from The Perfect Bridal Co. (POA), all available at **Frox of Falkirk**

OPPOSITE PAGE, LEFT TO RIGHT: GILLIAN Gill Harvey ice blue, beaded dress from The Decade Collection with headpiece from Failsworth, silver 'Celeste' shoes from The Perfect Bridal Co. with matching bag (POA), all available at **Frox of Falkirk**

VALERIE Rosa Clara one shoulder polka dot, monochrome, dipped hem dress (£495) with statement headpiece from Snoxell & Gwyther (POA), both availbale at **Frox of Falkirk**

JULIE Carla Ruiz emerald, full-length pleated dress with deep V and balloon sleeves (£415) worn with handmade headpiece from bespoke Sarah Crozier range and silver Lexus shoes and bag (POA), all available at **Frox of Falkirk** Mums







THIS PAGE AND OPPOSITE PAGE: As before









THIS PAGE: JULIE Champagne off the shoulder look fluted dress with sparkle brooch on waistband and chiffon beaded full-length sleeves (£735) with Max & Ellie champagne hatinator available to hire or buy (POA), both Mia Bella

OPPOSITE PAGE: GILLIAN Smoke honeycomb sparkle full-length gown with charcoal chrome beads, straight skirt, cape sleeves, round neck and net self-coloured smoke wrap (£675) with Nigel Rayment navy hatinator available to hire or buy (POA), both **Mia Bella**





THIS PAGE: VALERIE Navy A-line dress with rose gold and sage green floral pattern, off the shoulder wrap top and ¾-length sleeves, (£599) with Snoxells navy/silver Barbie hatinator available to hire or buy (POA), both **Mia Bella**

OPPOSITE PAGE: JULIE Petrol jumpsuit with chiffon plaid, beaded waistband, neck and ³/₄-length sleeves and wide leg trousers (£665) with Max & Ellie winter teal large side twist hatinator available to hire or buy (POA), both **Mia Bella**











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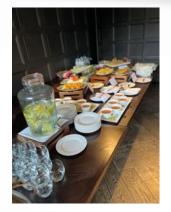
Kimpton Blythswood Square Hotel was the setting for our mums shoot back in March and we loved exploring all the gorgeous spaces that would be perfect for an elegant wedding in the heart of Glasgow.

Our own stylists from the *YSW* team, Mallory and Louize, got to work to create 12 distinct looks for our models Gillian, Valerie and Julie, with outfits supplied and coordinated by **Frox of Falkirk, Catwalk** and **Mia Bella**.

Hair stylist Maureen from The Bride to be was busy working her magic on the various up-dos and of-the-moment half-up half-down styles, while MUAs Rebecca and Colleen of AMM Team brought the glam to our MOB and MOG models.

We had great fun letting our "mums" experience the delights of the hotel bar with prosecco in hand - posing against the backdrop of the stunning art deco-style chandelier and grand staircase, and getting to grips with Blythswood Square's gardens in their heels.



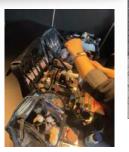






















Thank you

Our thanks go to Kimpton Blysthswood Square Hotel for hosting this photoshoot and all their help on the day. We would also like to thank our models Gillian, Valerie and Julie for being such pros and to Frox of Falkirk, Catwalk and Mia Bella for providing all the gorgeous outfits, hatinators, shoes and bags. They were a stylist's dream to work with! Thanks also go to Maureen from The Bride to be and Rebecca and Colleen from AMM Team for transforming our models into super-glam mums of the bride or groom. And finally, thank you to Francesca from FM Photography for steering this styled shoot and capturing such beautiful images.



HAIR The Bride to be

MAKE-UP Rebecca Hughes and Colleen Davidson of AMM Team

MODELS Gillian Cheung, Valerie Coleman Julie Gemmell

PHOTOGRAPHY FM Photography

STYLISTS Louize Hollywood Mallory Reid

VENUE Kimpton Blythswood Square Hotel





Put your stamp on it

Katie Bletcher discovers a whole host of rituals and symbols you can include to ensure your wedding ceremony *truly reflects you*

Part of the beauty of marrying in Scotland is the ability to say 'I do' absolutely anywhere, whether that's in a church, a hotel or even at the top of a mountain. But choosing the location is only the start. In fact, there's a myriad of things you can include to add meaning and deliver a ceremony that feels special to you. Here the experts share some of their favourites...



Light a *unity* candle

We love this gesture where the couple use two candles to light one larger unity candle, representing them joining together. However, you can adapt this ceremony to symbolise other aspects of your families coming together.

Celebrant Maureen Waterson of Celebrate People remembers one such ceremony at Bowfield Hotel last October when she married Joseph and Cheryl. "They took the symbolism of the unity candle and made it work for them in a way that was so moving and full of love," she says. On either side of the large pillar candle sat two candelabra with space for five candles in each. Joseph and Cheryl each lit a candle from the central pillar candle and placed it in the middle holder of each candelabra. "As a surprise I asked their loved ones to come forward, take a candle, light it and place it in the candelabra," explains Maureen. "There were tears of joy as this was done with framed photographs of both sets of parents, now deceased, on their wedding day watching them. It was such a unique take on the unity candle and one I will never forget."

Sand ceremony

Another gesture symbolic of two becoming one, the sand ceremony involves two individual containers of sand which can be tied in with the colour scheme of the day, but according to Mo Ackroyd, a celebrant with Fuze Ceremonies, it works best when two contrasting colours are used. "The couple take it in turns to alternate pouring their sand into what is called the joining vessel and the layers of sand begin to build up," she explains. "As the layers become higher,



Camerashy Photography

Ring warming

One way to involve your guests in the ceremony is to include a ring warming, which starts after the celebrant's introduction to leave plenty of time before the rings are required by the couple. Mo from Fuze Ceremonies, explains how it works. "The best man passes the rings (tied together with a ribbon or in a little gauze bag) to the front row and they are then passed around all the guests, allowing the couple to involve their guests in their hopes and wishes as they take their first steps in their married lives together,"

the grains of sand can be seen merging together and this is what it represents. Once the grains of sand are merged together, they will remain so, just like the couple as their lives become one."

Mo says this ceremony works well for couples who want to display them coming together and the two families as one and it can be adapted to involve family members and children of the happy couple. "If it's a blended family relationship, it's a good way to show unity," she adds.

The vase also makes a lovely keepsake from the day.



she says. "The celebrant asks that everyone hold the rings for a few moments and think about their hopes for the couple as they begin married life and warm the rings with their love, then pass to the next person, and so on."

Be warned though, this is not well suited to a larger wedding as the rings may not make it back in time for exchanging! However, Mo says it's perfect for more intimate ceremonies and for "couples who have a bond with family and friends and don't mind showing their love and connection publicly."



Las Arras

Arras dates back to before the Romans and the word arras translates from Spanish as "earnest money." Celebrant Libby McArthur of Celebrate People explains an arras is a civil law contract so giving an arras payment is to provide evidence of "contract earnest". "Today it represents our couple's commitment to each other and the way they share obligations and happiness," says Libby.

One of her couples Lyn and Saz chose to include the Las Arras custom in their wedding, but with a twist. "It felt relevant to them because of the shared responsibility for prosperity in their marriage, and the promise to protect each other's wealth," says Libby. "They felt being married would open a whole new world, new opportunities, a new life, and financial security." Traditionally 13 coins are used in Las Arras and Lyn and Saz used 13 American quarters. Why quarters? A few months before she met Saz, Lyn was in Coney Island and came across an animatronic of a full-size dancing woman. Miss Coney Island claimed it was "25c to fall in love and no longer postpone joy".

Lyn told him about it the day she met Saz and he found a quarter in his pocket which became his "lucky coin". This became hugely stressful though and a once unsuperstitious Saz feared losing it or giving it away. To secure his sanity, the coin was put in a safe place, where it remains, alongside Saz's late mum's original wedding ring. However, on their first Valentine's he had the quarter tattooed on him.

For their ceremony, the couple attached 13 quarters to 13 random wedding invitations and when it came to Las Arras Libby asked the recipients to bring the coins forward and place them in the couple's cupped hands. "They received these coins as symbols of abundance for them both! We all stood and cheered as they fell sparkling in the light and tinkling in their hand, back and forth from one to the other."



Handfasting

If you want to incorporate a gesture that will give your ceremony an authentic Scottish feel consider a handfasting, though Craig Flowers of Independent Humanist Ceremonies says, as with many rituals, there are many competing theories as to its origins. "It can be found in many cultures with slight variations," he explains. "The origin that sounds most likely to me is that it was used as it was very visual and inexpensive. Poor people couldn't afford gold rings! Everyone involved and those watching could be left in no doubt that a wedding was taking place as knots were tied or hands were bound for everyone to see!"

In terms of what handfasting involves, Craig says it can vary from binding hands to tying knots. "The most common I find is starting with two lengths symbolising each individual," he says. "I then form a simple knot around their joined hands. When the hands part the knot is formed symbolising two becoming one. "Tying the knot!" Craig encourages his couples to source their own material and keep it personal. Family members, including young children can help perform the ceremony - with the help of your celebrant!



Paul Budzinski Photography

Personalised vows

Writing your own vows really depends on how comfortable you are displaying sentiment in front of each other and your guests. Your celebrant can always suggest existing vows if coming up with your own is too much. "The couple 100% need to want to do this as it can be a very emotional experience to publicly lay out verbally how you deeply feel about becoming a husband or wife," agrees Mo from Fuze Ceremonies.



If it is something you want to do though, Mo suggests agreeing with your partner on a certain length and sending the personal vows to your celebrant for feedback. "Not all couples keep these vows a secret." she adds. "Some share ahead of the ceremony to make sure they are both comfortable with what the other person will be saying." And she says there are no hard and fast rules except from speaking from the heart.

The personal vows will come around the time of exchanging rings and the legal vows and before the celebrant's legal declaration.



Oathing stone

When it comes to exchanging vows, have you considered an oathing stone? Rhona McLachlan of Celebrate People explains this as placing your hands upon a stone while saying your vows and declaring your love.

Her couple Jed and Tabitha used one when they married up a hill on Easdale Island. Wanting to give them something easy to bring from England, Jed's cousin painted a round pebble with a cherry tree, signifying the tree they had first met under. Rhona then suggested the couple make it their oathing stone.

The couple were married on the 5th day of the 5th month with five of their closest family and all because they met under a cherry - facts Rhona says hold particular meaning. "The cherry tree comes under the dominion of the sun god Apollo and the goddess of love, Venus," she explains. "It's often used in incense to attract or strengthen love. Elementally cherry wood aligns itself with earth so acts as a grounding and stabilizing tool. Just like the cherry tree, Jed and Tabitha are a continuous support for each other."

And Rhona also told Jed, Tabitha and their guests that the number five was a perfect companion for the cherry as both encourage us to live fully with all five senses. She says, "Their message is 'go for it'. Dare to dream, explore, experiment, envision - then put down some roots so those hopes and desires have a chance to materialise."

Include your kids

While the idea of including young family members or your own children in your wedding ceremony is particularly cute remember the old adage about working with kids! Craig of IHC says "I love getting family involved, especially if the couple have kids. It depends on the age and personalities and if a young one isn't playing ball, you must be ready to adapt and roll with it! Don't pressurise them into doing anything they don't want to! It's really not a good idea if the kids are shy or determined not to be involved!"

Older children can take on bridesmaid or best man/groomsmen duties while younger ones can be flower girls, ring bearers or page boys. Craig adds, "Readings can be recited, kids can help with the rings, they can help with handfastings or other symbolic gestures. Most things can be adapted to be inclusive."





Drinking from the quaich

Drinking from a quaich is another traditional Scottish gesture to ponder. "This is an ancient celtic ritual that symbolises love, peace and trust between two or more people," explains Hazel Sharp of Humanist Society Scotland. "Since both hands should be used to hold the quaich, it proved they weren't going to use a free hand to reach for their sword."

In a wedding Hazel advises the couple perform the quaich ceremony immediately after they have been declared legally married and signed the marriage schedule. "It's their first drink together as a married couple, and a lovely way to bring their ceremony to a close." Drinking from the quaich symbolises their commitment to share all the future may bring. "All the sweetness life's cup may hold should only be sweeter because they drink it together," says Hazel. "Whatever bitterness it may contain should be less bitter." You can simply sip or drink the quaich dry. "They can even kiss the bottom of the quaich and place it

on their head," smiles Hazel. "Not strictly traditional, but good fun!"

It's of course tradition to drink whisky but feel free to choose your favourite tipple, even a jagerbomb or create your own cocktail. Hazel adds, "Look out for a very anxious celebrant in fear of a spillage on their wedding attire though!" And of course you don't need to use alcohol. One Humanist Society Scotland couple poured in tea from a pot and milk from a jug as when the proposal happened the bars were closed so they celebrated with a cuppa!

You can also choose to involve family members or friends in your quaich ceremony, getting a person from each family to pour the drinks or share the drink.

be Inspired

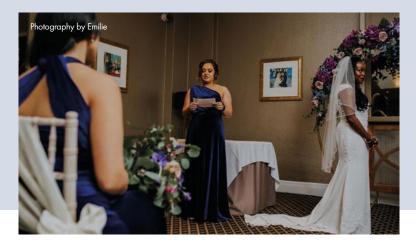
Personalised readings

Did you know including readings isn't compulsory? In fact, aside from the legal bits you don't have to have anything you don't fancy. However, Hazel at Humanist Society Scotland says readings can be a great way to help you express your feelings in ways you may not feel able to and they can change the mood or tone of the ceremony. They can also involve guests and allow you to hear another voice other than the celebrant's - "However lovely their voice may be!"

Hazel advises couples to choose readings that will hold the most importance for them, whether it's the reading itself or the person doing it. "Saying why they have chosen both the readers and reading can add a lot," she says. "Not only for themselves, but also for their guests, for the readers or even for the way the whole ceremony comes together."

If you don't have a particular text in mind, ask your celebrant for suggestions and you can choose from novels, songs or movies or ask your family and friends for help.

If you are having a humanist ceremony collective acts of religious worship like hymns and prayers would "be disingenuous" according to Hazel, but she adds it may be possible to include some readings and music that have religious origins, such as the classic Corinthians extract. "Most couples choose a humanist ceremony because it's non-religious, but we can often adapt poems or readings to remove religious connotations," she says.



Jumping the broom

Fancy ending your ceremony with a flourish? Mo from Fuze Ceremonies says jumping the broom can be used following the legal signing and before the couple walk back up the aisle.

According to Mo this gesture has been adapted from an old African American tradition and the broom symbolises sweeping away the past and the fact that the happy couple are starting a new life together. "In past times setting up home and getting officially married often took place months apart! This was sometimes due to not having an official celebrant to perform the ceremony," says Mo. "It was also said it may have been a way to have a trial period before committing to the legal marriage. To give the union a standing in the community the couple would declare their intention to 'live over the brush' and would in front of family, friends and neighbours jump over a broom." The brush was then kept as a symbol of the union.



Want to truly include your family?

Just get your dad to perform the ceremony! There was never a doubt in Caitlin's mind that she and fiancé Callum would have her dad Fuze Ceremonies' George McLean marry them. He had conducted the handfasting at her sister Holly's wedding before he trained to be a celebrant. "It means the absolute world my dad got to be there with me all morning, travel with me, walk down the aisle, perform the ceremony, do a speech and dance with me. It was a truly magical experience," says Caitlin.

Before the big day George helped them create their perfect ceremony. "From when we shared stories with him he created a beautiful passage in a unique, funny, heartwarming way which we were so excited for our friends and family to hear," smiles Caitlin. And keen to include something her dad hadn't done before, they included putting a bottle of the wine they shared on their first date in a wooden box with letters which they would open on their fifth anniversary - (wood symbolises five years of marriage).

Callum adds his father-in-law was willing to try different spins on some ceremonial gestures, including an alternative to drinking from a quaich. "Me and Caitlin have never been shy of a dancefloor and had our first kiss in a nightclub so naturally it felt right to cap off our ceremony with a shot," he smiles.

As for George, getting to walk his daughter down the aisle and then turn around and officiate was "special". "I must admit to having a wee moment at home when Caitlin's big reveal happened," he said. "She was a real life princess. After that I didn't feel nervous, more proud and excited."

Turn to page 178 to read all about *Caitlin and Callum's* wedding



We understand that as a society of equals.

Every one of us has a unique story to tell.

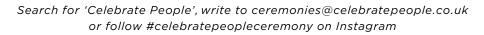
That's the beauty of a Celebrate People wedding.

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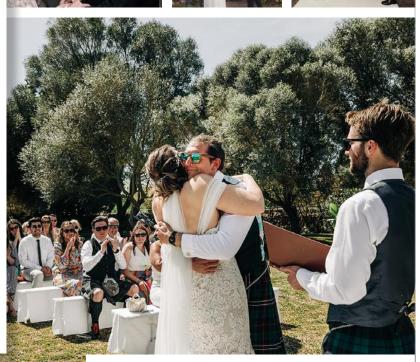


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So, you've got the perfect engagement ring, but what happens next? Jennifer McLaren hears from the experts about everything from searching for the ideal wedding ring to accessorising for the day

9ct rose gold wedding ring with 12 diamonds (£660), Sheila Fleet lewellery Sometimes the smallest of details can make the biggest difference, and that's certainly true when it comes to choosing your wedding jewellery. A wedding band will be on your finger for years to come, so it's important to take the time to select wisely. Karen Pirie, manager at McCalls Jewellers, Aberdeen, says a wedding ring should ideally be subtle enough to enhance the beauty of the engagement ring, yet beautiful to wear on its own. "If the band of the engagement ring is plain then a plain wedding ring may look best, whereas if there are diamonds perhaps the wedding ring should have a bit of sparkle," she explains. "These rings are meant to be worn together so the fit must be right, and very often a contoured wedding ring is needed to fit neatly round the setting of the engagement ring."

Orkney-based designer Sheila Fleet OBE of Sheila Fleet Jewellery says ensuring that rings sit comfortably and look nice as a set is essential. "It's important that the design of the engagement and wedding ring complement each other if they are from different designers and the thickness of the bands are a good fit," she advises. Jo-Ann Kinnear, director at Fennes Jewellery in Glenrothes, says her team would look at the profile and thickness of an engagement ring to offer a complementary shape.

Custom making is also a popular choice as bands can be shaped around an engagement ring for a bespoke look. Lesley Elder, of John McKay Jewellers in Paisley says many brides will have a vision in their head of their dream wedding ring. However, she says, "The only way you will know is to visit a store to try some, or to have a design done."

Show your metal

While yellow gold, white gold and platinum have generally been traditional choices for wedding rings, alternative metals to consider for your wedding band include silver and palladium - which is slightly whiter in appearance than platinum and white gold. Palladium 500, meanwhile, contains 50% palladium.

"Titanium and tungsten have become another popular metal, however these rings, whilst a cost-effective alternative, cannot be resized in the future," Jo-Ann reveals. "I therefore do not recommend these for wedding bands as they are going to be worn for a long time, so it needs to be right for the customer for years to come."

Lesley has noticed yellow gold growing in popularity. "White gold needs to be rhodium plated so it requires maintenance," she explains. "Carbon fibre rings are popular with men at the moment, they are very heavy and scratch resistant." Karen always recommends that a wedding ring matches the metal of the engagement ring. "This will mean that one ring will not scratch or wear away the other. It also ensures the finish and colour of the rings looks the same," she explains. "We have seen titanium and steel rings growing in popularity as they are hard wearing and very often come 'matt finished' - a look that appeals to modern grooms."

Sheila Fleet offers jewellery made from Scottish gold - a luxurious alternative to classic gold and platinum. "We are delighted to be one of only two jewellers in the world authorised to make and sell 18ct Scottish gold from Cononish Gold Mine, Scotland's only commercial gold mine," she says. Sheila adds that rose gold has also become a more common choice for engagement and wedding rings. Scottish gold ring (POA), **Sheila Fleet Jewellery**



18ct rose gold illusion style wedding band (£550), McCalls Jewellers

Custom-made ring using customer's original diamond engagement and wedding rings (POA), Fennes Jewellery





Style tips



bride's dress and look for the day,
Jo-Ann says there are a few things
to bear in mind. "If the dress is
plain, you can go all out bling - if it's
sparkly, a classic set of jewellery may
look better," she explains. And when
it comes to necklines, Jo-Ann adds
that V-necklines tend to look better
with a drop necklace while a straight
neckline suits a collar necklace.

To find jewellery to complement a

Sheila says it's all about basing your jewellery choices on the design of your dress, as you want them to complement each other perfectly. "If your dress is simpler in detail, it gives you the chance to be more adventurous in your jewellery choices such as a bold enamel colour or a bigger, statement design," she says. "If your dress has

18ct white gold lab grown diamond princess cut lct diamond earrings (£1,995), **McCalls Jewellers** a high neck, we'd recommend going for a pair of drop earrings and a bracelet, rather than a necklace."

Lesley adds the majority of her brides only wear earrings and choose to have a bare neck. "If you're going for a long drop earring then there is a tendency to stay away from a necklace. If it's a stud earring then there's a tendency to go for a necklace," she explains.

Karen advises brides to bear in mind how they will wear their hair on the big day; "If it is worn up then a drop earring would complement the look, if the hair is worn down then most earrings would look great - although try to avoid ones that dangle too much in case they get caught in the hair."

Silver flower style pearl drop earrings (£80).

McCalls Jewellers

Treat your bridal party

Sheila Fleet says couples often choose to gift jewellery to their bridal party to wear on the wedding day. "It's something sentimental that people can wear for many years to come and will always remind them of that occasion," she explains.

Karen adds that a gift is a good way for brides to show their appreciation to the bridal party and also an opportunity to ensure their looks are coordinated. "It is usual for the bride to pick out jewellery that matches with the tone of the bride's," she says.

Both Lesley and Jo-Ann say the groom will often visit to purchase a gift for his bride ahead of the wedding. "Thank you gifts for the bride and groom parties are always popular, from cufflinks to watches for the groom's party to silver horseshoe bracelets or a sparkly pendant for the bride's." River Ripples 4-link diamond bracelet in 9ct yellow gold (£1,482), **Sheila Fleet Jewellery**





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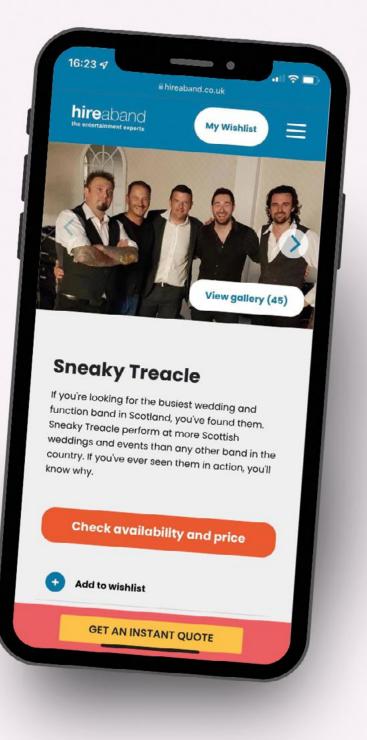


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Jedding music:

From silent disco to sax to *Bridgerton*-inspired ballads, we've unearthed the biggest songs and trends in weddings right now, so you don't have to...

After missing live entertainment during the pandemic, we all value it now more than ever - especially at a wedding. In fact, music is often what guests remember most from the day, even if some memories are a little hazy in the morning! Your choice of choons says so much about you, and couples are increasingly picking music-based entertainment that means something to them and their partnership. So, in true retro Top of the Pops-style (we're showing our age now...!), let's count down the top 10 wedding music trends for 2023 (in no particular order - they're all fab!), from those faithful non-mover crowd pleasers to the exciting brand new entries...



Dance like you mean it and head for some first dance lessons

"Some couples want their own unique take on impressing their guests without being over the top, and still looking natural. To be able to get up and dance together for the first time as a married couple, confident in harmony in such a beautiful setting, and looking your best is the best feeling in the world. Lessons bring couples closer together, learning something new as a couple and working towards their wedding day."

Felicity Drever, Learn 2 Wedding Dance

A personal performance

"Having a special arrangement written of a song unique to you as a couple is really beautiful. The classics are always popular, for good reason, but thinking outside the box can be extra personal and beautiful. A theme from a favourite film or TV series can sound amazing." **Siobhán Daly, Amarone Music**

A treat for the ears of your evening guests

"We recently introduced the solo violin, which has been really popular. People love having the violin during dinner, for the first dance (I've got one coming up where I'm playing Taylor Swift's *Love Story*) or to welcome the evening guests. This is a really different idea and a way to make those arriving later in the day feel special."

David Laing, Capella String Quartet

Wedding dances that could go viral

"We believe we'll start to see TikTok artists and dances become the forefront of evening entertainment with potential enhanced photo booth opportunities to record guests recreating the latest trends. Also, DJs and live saxophone artists are combining to create a 'clubland' experience for guests and we've seen special UV lighting, confetti cannons and pyrotechnics added to make a UK wedding feel like it's centre stage in Ibiza. Finally, we're seeing more musical surprises, whether that's a recreation of the *Love Actually* flash mob or singing waiters that get the party started." **Conor Taggart,**

Conor Taggart, Singers Secreto

Noughties 6

"We're planning a nice little set refresh this year and it'll probably be more weighted towards stuff from the 2000s and 2010s. We get older but the brides stay aged 25 to 30ish. So, that music is coming into the nostalgia point for them, whereas before it was 90s stuff."

Dee McLaren, Splendid Gentlemen

Andi Watson Photo

5 Incorporate your small screen faves into your big day

"Couples are requesting songs that mean something to them - fantasy and sci-fi has been greatly popular to play, including *Game of Thrones*, *Lord of the Rings, Star Wars* and songs from TV series like *Stranger Things, Bridgerton* and *The Witcher*. One of our recent highlights was a Medieval-themed castle wedding where we incorporated the couple's love for *Star Wars* in between Scottish tunes. For something a bit different, we offer to play a piece while couples slice the cake together this is a fun way to get everyone's attention! And for the ceremony stars, like the ring bearer or the flower girl, you could request a fun, upbeat track like *Crazy In Love* to kick things off before the main procession." **Lauren Hamilton, Four String Quartet**



ara Hotz Photography

Serve up music with your meal

"We're getting asked a lot for wedding breakfast entertainment. Couples want to make this part memorable when it's often overlooked. We'd suggest anything from our secret gospel singers to a live DJ to having a *Love Actually*-style choir serenade your guests from the balcony. Overall, though, we always find that the oldies are the classics, especially when it comes to choosing the perfect song for your bridal march. Our most asked for bridal march songs are *Can't Help Falling in Love* by Elvis Presley, Etta James' *At Last* and *Darling, Stand by Me* from The Temptations." **Gerad McArthur, Geo Gospel Choir**

Sax, sax and more sax

"We asked some of Hireaband's fabulous entertainers for their insights and the consensus was that music is only becoming a more important part of the big day. The Renegades and The Shakers both confirmed that the saxophone is huge at the moment. Whether it's adding a depth and flair to a band's set or getting down onto the dancefloor to some Ibiza classics like *Jubel*, the sax is becoming a wedding staple. When it comes to song choices, some classics aren't going anywhere. The boys from Chart Society say *Mr. Brightside* is the theme song to any British wedding and, in fact, nearly all our bands mentioned that hit by The Killers when asked about floor fillers. Dua Lipa, Lizzo and Harry Styles tunes are apparently requested at nearly every reception, and Gerry Cinnamon gets hundreds of requests too."

Rachel Cotton, Hireaband



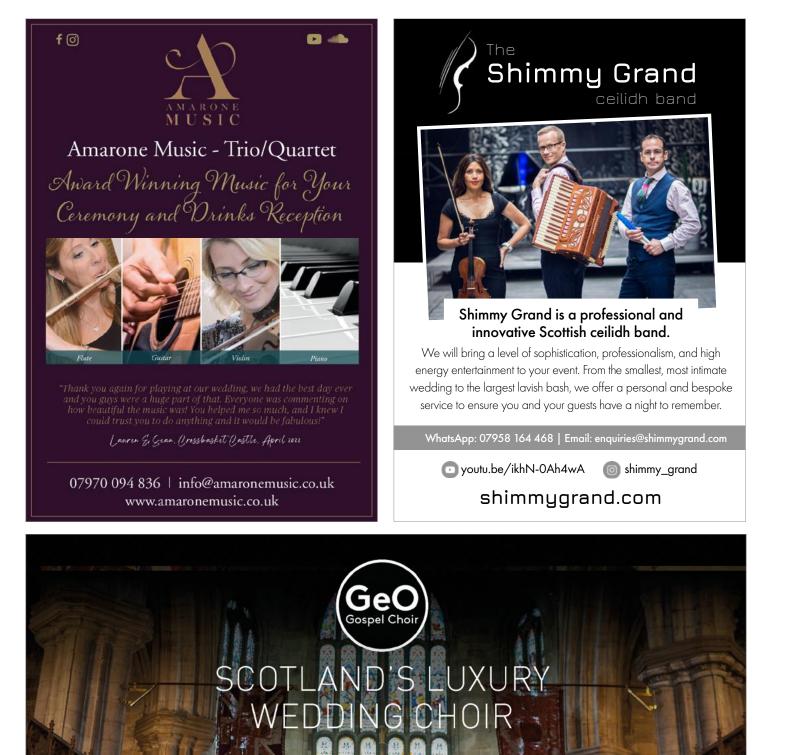
Go head-to-head as newlyweds

"We love our Newlyweds DJ Battle where we ask the couple to each choose three songs they believe will fill the floor. Then we hand out our Battle Boards (pre-written opinion cards), allowing the guests to tell the couple what they think."

Stuart Maclennan, Fresh Entertainments

Pay homage to homegrown talent

Last but certainly not least, did you know Scotland's very own GeO Gospel Choir is all over the airwaves right now, having teamed up with Revival and Kathy Brown for a rendition of *Your Love Keeps Lifting Me Higher*? The team at *YSW* has fallen head over heels for this collab and we reckon this could be an absolute anthem at your wedding!



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Choose your style

Get Knotted in style at *Aikwood Tower*

Growing up a stone's throw from 500-year-old Aikwood Tower, Katie Hart of wedding planning company Get Knotted knows this venue inside out. In fact, she and her husband held their own wedding reception in the tower's Laich Hall over 20 years ago.

Fast forward to the present and one of Aikwood's charms is the fact couples can hire it for the entire weekend or week surrounding the wedding, allowing them to treat it as their own and, as Aikwood only does a maximum of 15 wedddings a year, they get a very personal hands-on planning and creative service from Katie and the tower's owner Vicki Steel.

Vicki says Aikwood definitely appeals to couples who want a very special and relaxed style of wedding; "They don't want to compromise on style or quality and they have the vision and creative ideas to make Aikwood their own."

With over a decade's experience working together, Katie and Vicki know exactly how best to employ different areas of the venue throughout the day. And while they say there is a dream "flow" involving all the tower's amazing spaces, they try to be as flexible as possible to suit their individual couples' numbers and wishes. "I know the building and all its unique and quirky features so well and as I have played a part in many different weddings, there is always another piece of experience and wisdom to be gained," says Katie.

Here they show us just four different styles of wedding Get Knotted has planned at Aikwood Tower...

1 In the pink

The brief for Lucy and Aaron's wedding was mauve and dusky pink with gold/metallic accents. On their wedding day the weather was kind and they were able to enjoy a beautiful ceremony on the lawn against the backdrop of the tower itself and Get Knotted's twisted willow arch, decorated with faux hydrangea in dark dusky pinks and soft purples - sticking to the brief perfectly.

Dinner was served in the Cart Shed where a luxe look was achieved with clear three-tier chandeliers dressed with gold and copper to mirror the gold charger plates and copper lanterns.



Alex Martin Photography



Sometimes finding the venue that feels just right for your wedding is only the beginning of creating the perfect look, especially when you find somewhere that lends itself to different themes and styles. *Katie Bletcher* speaks to two wedding planners and stylists who show us the different ways they've worked their magic on two such versatile venues







Paul and Laura had a very clear view for the décor. "They had a gorgeous colour palette which we worked to tying in with their bespoke lush velvet banners," says Katie. They also had glitterballs which the team worked into their welcome display and then used again in the Cart Shed before hanging them over the dance floor. "The flow of the day was perfect," Katie adds. "They had been worried about where the dancing would be and it worked really well in the Laich Hall for their smaller numbers."

Dave Fallon Photography







"We included sweet peas in Laura's bouquet in memory of her Grandad who grew them when she was wee." Katie

Choose your style





3 Seasonal change

Emily and Allan's wedding plans were completely scuppered more than once by Covid and lockdown, but according to Katie, they were unphased, even when they had to move from a spring wedding to December and tweak original plans and designs. "We focused more on the inside décor, particularly the Laich Hall, so we went to town with abundant foliage decorating the staircase, added more candlelight and lanterns, and moved lanterns and flower displays throughout the day to get the very best from every element," adds Katie.

4 *Keep it intimate*

"Lindsay and Spencer loved the intimacy of the Tower and its history and their brief was centred around making sure we could weave in some lovely personal touches, including handmade individual boxes of four types of brownies for each guests, as a nod to their four cats who couldn't be there on the day," says Katie.

For their intimate wedding, dried flowers were used in all the floral touches and after a cosy fireside ceremony in the Great Hall, the entire party dined around one table in the Laich Hall, decorated with gold charger plates, fresh fruit and lots of candlelight." We love that the couple sat on peacock chairs with fur throws!



"The Great Hall was ideal for a ceremony in November and the intimate elopement vibe."





Choose your style

Canvas & Peach Studios

Your wedding look is All Wrapped Up at Bachilton Barn

Set in 740 acres of land. Bachilton Barn near Methven, Perthshire is what wedding planner Roni Hyslop of All Wrapped Up Scotland describes as "clean rustic." "You have all the charm of a barn venue in a wonderful rural setting, but it is beautifully presented, clean and ever-evolving!" she says. Roni ought to know, she has been styling weddings here for years, working alongside Bachilton's wedding manager Kayleigh Deans who says the blank canvas venue appeals to couples wanting a relaxed and chilled wedding, with that rustic but finished backdrop they can put their own stamp on.

Part of Bachilton's appeal is its flexibility. The venue has four distinct spaces; Bachilton, The Barn, Lochy and Cairnies, while outside the pond and gazebo create the perfect scene for an al fresco ceremony. However, couples can find plenty of beautiful ceremony and photo spots in Bachilton's grounds.

With so much choice it's no wonder different couples tend to use the spaces differently. "Whether they get married outside in the woods or at the gazebo or indoors, they know they have a back-up plan if the Scottish weather lets them down!" adds Roni. "The barn is an awesome space for dinner and dancing, with beautiful beams, marquee ceiling and lots of fairy lights. It's bright during the day and wonderfully atmospheric at night. The neutral



walls make the room perfect for every theme and colour scheme."

The seasons can influence how couples use the spaces with winter ceremonies often held in Bachilton before drinks in the smallest room Lochy and the meal and dancing taking place in the Barn, while summer couples tend to opt for ceremonies and drinks outside at the gazebo "with views for days!" However, Kayleigh adds, "This is only guidance, our couples can run their day, their way - whether that's hiring a teepee and dancing under the stars or enjoying the outside all night!" And when the festivities are over guests can stay in the five cottages and two yurts.

Roni and Kayleigh share with us four totally different style weddings. All four couples added All Wrapped Up's coordination package to their day, giving them peace of mind that all furniture and props would be moved from the ceremony to dinner to the evening reception seamlessly.







Here comes the sun

Catriona and Gavin's "classic summer Bachilton wedding" took full advantage of the picturesque setting with an outdoor ceremony at the gazebo and drinks in the courtyard before moving indoors for the meal and evening reception. "Their colour palette was unreal!" remembers Kayleigh. And Roni recalls guests enjoying the challenge of a bucking bronco!

Inside, the Bachilton room was converted into a chilled space with clusters of hay bales with bright tartan blankets. "Catriona had created most of the décor herself giving the reception and dinner lovely personal touches," adds Roni. "We coupled this with our rustic tables, cross back chairs and dusky pink drapes to bring everything together."

Coming up roses

For Debbie and Fraser's large scale wedding they knew exactly what vibe they wanted to create. "Debbie was all over the theme and décor, knowing exactly what she wanted from our hire list and where everything was going to go in the venue," says Roni. "We just added lots of fresh foliage and roses to bring everything to life!"



Choose your style





3 Individual style

"Rachel and Alan wanted a relaxed feel to the day so they brought in lots of comfy furniture and created chill out spaces for their guests at the back of the ceremony," says Roni. The couple also wanted lots of foliage and candles. During the ceremony the window sill was filled with thick foliage garlands that All Wrapped Up had wired individually so they could be used along the top table at dinner with candles to complement the guests' tables.

Kayleigh recalls how the couple kept their wedding décor on trend with peacock chairs at the top table and a mix of round tables with coloured linen and wooden rustic tables for the guests. "They had individual table installations and kept the rustic vibe going with palettes and a wooden crate display for family members," she adds.

Photographs: Mad House Weddings

the gibson



4 Keep it classic

Candice and Kieran kept it intimate with a ceremony for their nearest and dearest 24 guests followed by an early dinner in Bachilton. "Classic greenery and white details really made this couple's wedding décor pop!" says Kayleigh. Roni adds, "Candice wanted a natural look for her day with lots of foliage and rustic touches. They used the beautiful arch as a backdrop to their top table and the aisle décor was used for the tables in the evening."

Other guests arrived in the evening for a barbecue and party in the Barn and as only Bachilton had been used during the day the Barn's twinkly lights were a surprise for all the guests.



"I personally like an indoor ceremony, it removes the uncertainty of the Scottish weather and it gives the couple peace of mind and a sense of calm. They have set the space up the day before and know what it will look like when they walk down the aisle!"



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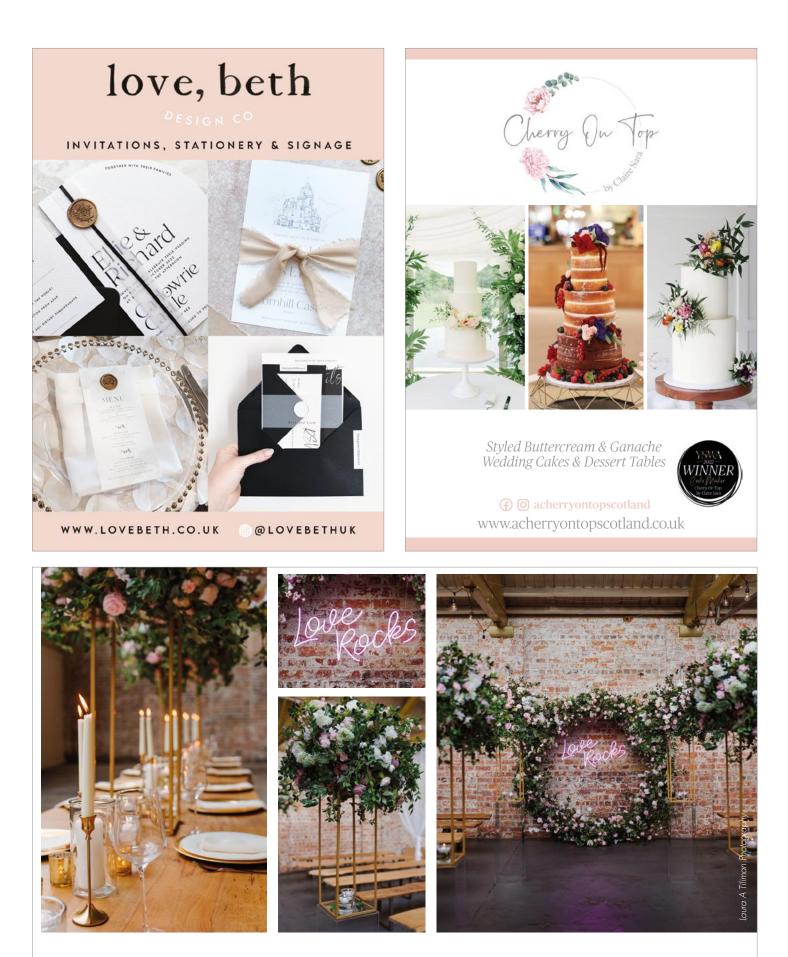
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The cool bridal looks to bring to your hair trial

For the uninitiated, talking about potential bridal hair styles is a bit like double Dutch. After all, it's not everyone who knows the difference between Dutch braids and French braids before you even introduce mermaid braids. And are you sure you know what's meant by the fancily named chignon the low bun at the nape of the neck that can be interpreted in a myriad of ways?

If this has got you floundering a bit and thinking you'll stay on safe ground and ask for the standard "curls with bits pinned back", don't panic! We've got some of Scotland's top bridal hair stylists to share the most popular hair dos that are trending now and how to achieve the look. Just remember to bring these pics to your trials!



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waved half up half down, is still really strong going forward into 2023"

"Relaxed, tousled.

Kirsty MacPherson



Caroline Stewart Makeup Artistry and Hair Stylist

And while the bride in this gorgeous picture (above) of a half up half down look from Caroline Stewart Makeup Artistry and Hair Stylist has thick hair, Caroline says there are ways to create volume and achieve the same look if you don't have super thick hair. "Clip extensions can be added for thickness or length," she says. "Clip ones are the best because we can move them and hide the attachments more."



vertically and all in the same direction, keeping a flatter root to create a root drag and a more modern feel to the look. This is combed out with the ghd anti-static comb to create this flowing movement. If our client's hair doesn't hold great we suggest adding human hair extensions matched to the colour of hair and clipped in on the morning by us to give a more lasting effect for the evening guests arriving. We normally recommend milk + blush as they do a sample to check colour and are really fast with delivery."

Anne Marie predicts big things for the wave trend with 2023 brides.

HALF-WAY house

If you love the idea of a soft wave but still want to have a bit of structure - and ensure your hair stays out of your face for those all-important shots - we love the half-up half-down look that's been all over our social feeds.

Lesley McCormick at Pamper & Polish nails the look to boho perfection with styled waves and the addition of of a floral hairpiece. To achieve this do Lesley used 35" barrel tongs with a specific wynd to create the waves, and used Moroccanoil hydrating styling cream, Moroccanoil treatment oil, Living Proof flexible hairspray, Living Proof dry volume and texture spray. "These are some of my 'must have' items," she tells us.

"Relaxed, tousled, waved half up half down, is still really strong going forward into 2023," adds Kirsty of Kirsty MacPherson Hair and Make Up Artist. "Lots of texture and messy is still perfect with the boho vibe. I used Moroccanoil hair spray in medium as it keep the hair in place but also gives it a gloss and also KYK magic hair powder, to help the twist stand up and give texture to clean natural hair."

RIDE THE wave

It can be so tempting to immediately think up-do when discussing bridal hair but freeflowing locks can have major impact. Just look at these sublime waves by AMM Team! "We created this gorgeous wave which is very popular with our clients with the ghd soft curl tong and we used the L'Oréal PLI which is a soft pliable product with a memory and also the fabulous WOW Spray for texture and volume with added heat protection," says Anne Marie McElroy from AMM Team. "We took sections the same length and width as the barrel going

Classic beauty

Think bridal hair do and the classic chignon bun is bound to make an appearance on your shortlist. But they comes in all styles and levels of "done" from a tight, structured look to something a bit more free and tousled. Here are just some examples we love from our experts.

Kirsty MacPherson again uses Moroccanoil hair spray and KYK magic hair powder to achieve this stunning look. "The chignon style never went away but it's coming in strong for 2023/24, having the neater look but with adding the flowers it has a slight boho theme to go with the lace of her dress, but still complementing its classic shape," says Kirsty.





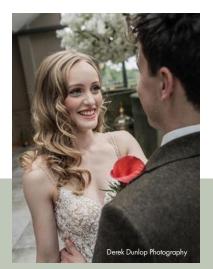
Moroccanoil's hydrating styling cream and treatment oils are the products Lesley of Pamper & Polish advises brides use to help hold an up-do in place. We love her pretty take on it (pictured here). "This style suits a bride who doesn't want anything too sleek and tidy but still wants an up-do," she says. "It would suit a boho/ whimsical bride and would also be pretty if wearing a veil, hair jewellery or fresh flowers. It's my favourite type of style to create."

If you're blessed with curls this up-do from Caroline Stewart is just perfect. "This is a great style for naturally curly hair and holds it all in well while keeping the texture," she says. "Curls can be sharpened up too but still look natural like this bride."





How pretty is AMM Team's simple, classic up-do with this gorgeous Eden b. Studio blossom accessory?



GREAT lengths

Whatever style you eventually opt for, Maureen Crolla of The Bride to be has the same initial advice, pointing brides in the direction of their Instagram and Facebook for ideas, and she adds Pinterest is also a great source of inspiration. At her bride's hairstyling rehearsal she always gives hair care tips and can suggest a hair care programme "to achieve the ultimate finish for her wedding day" if necessary.



Maureen says the style of your wedding dress will have a big influence on the hairstyle you eventually decide on. "The classic dress would require something a little more structured with great finesse. If the bridal gown lends itself to a period look we would then create a finish that is complementary to that era, which we all love."

But whether she's preparing hair for either an up-do or a down-do, she says, "the soft floating flirtatious relaxed look is always a goer for our brides, leaving the hair looking effortless and natural."

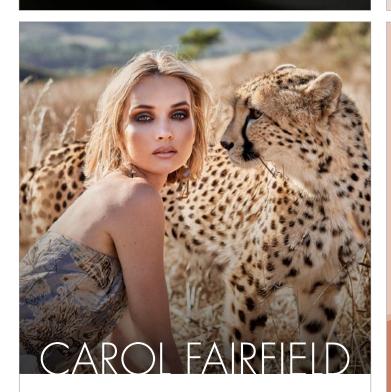


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It might seem unromantic to consider a prenuptial agreement ahead of marriage but, as **Jennifer McLaren** discovers, it could provide peace of mind for the future

Contrary to popular belief, prenuptial agreements (prenups) and pre-civil partnership agreements (precips) are not just for the rich and famous. In fact, their popularity is on the rise in Scotland. A prenup is a written contract signed by both parties that allows a couple to agree what happens to their finances and assets if they should separate or divorce further down the line. All sorts of arrangements can be included, such as protecting existing assets and agreeing the division of assets in the event of the marriage ending.

To ensure a prenup is legally binding, it needs to be drafted by a solicitor who can also advise on the process. Amanda Wilson of Dundeebased Amanda Wilson Family Law

says that while, for some, these agreements might appear unromantic and potentially damaging to a relationship, they can in fact strengthen it and provide transparency and certainty going forward.

"My view is that they give the couple certainty and they should be seen as a form of insurance: a good thing to have but hopefully you won't need it," Amanda explains. "It's very much like any other financial planning such as making a will or taking out life insurance." Amanda says prenups or precips are particularly beneficial if you have been married before or met later in life, having accumulated assets in your own right. They are also worth considering if a person has children from a previous relationship, ensuring

"It's very much like

any other financial

planning such

as making a will

or taking out life

insurance."

that their assets are protected and preserved for their child's future.

Another reason for getting a prenup might be that a family business is involved and an agreement can ensure control of the business

remains within the family in the event of a separation. "I am approached regularly to do prenups and these are not super-rich people - they are normal people who have usually worked hard or have been gifted/ inherited money from family which Amanda says it is crucial to obtain specialist advice as far in advance of your wedding or civil partnership as possible and not to leave it to the last minute.

they are simply looking to protect," Amanda explains. "A common situation is when one person is paying the deposit for a house which they will jointly own - or their parents are helping them - and that's a simple prenup to ring-fence that initial investment." Ultimately, by investing in a prenup, the couple can potentially save thousands of pounds in solicitor/ court fees if they do later part ways.

Unlike the position in England and Wales, prenups have been legally recognised in Scotland for centuries and, provided the document has been correctly entered into and certain boxes ticked, the courts in Scotland will recognise them. Amanda says it is crucial to obtain specialist advice as far in advance of your wedding or civil partnership as possible and not to leave it to the last minute. And there are four things that have to apply in order for a court to uphold an agreement.

If there isn't sufficient time to draw up a prenup then a postnup or postcip can be created after the wedding or civil partnership has taken place.

When it comes to costs, some legal firms may offer fixed fees while others will charge based upon the time it takes to draw up an agreement. "You need to speak to your solicitor, find out what the costs are and get them to be as transparent and upfront as possible. If you're not happy, then shop around," Amanda advises. "Around £1,000 is a starting ballpark figure, but it could be several thousands if it's a very complex one," she adds.

Amanda also warns that the cheapest option isn't always the best one. "What you want is certainty that it's been done properly and all the boxes ticked. Remember you're paying for that expertise."

> "What you want is certainty that it's been done properly and all the boxes ticked. Remember you're paying for that expertise."



1. Fair and reasonable at the time it was entered into

2. Both parties must have had the opportunity of separate legal advice

3. There must be no pressure or duress when it comes to both parties signing

4. It must be completed well in advance of the wedding





What is a POSTNUP?

A postnuptial agreement or a post-civil partnership agreement is entered into by a couple after their marriage or civil partnership has taken place. Sometimes, they can be used where one person has acquired assets after the date of the wedding or civil partnership, perhaps from a gift or inheritance, and they wish to clarify how the capital is to be dealt with.

According to Amanda, one of the most common reasons for a postnup is that the couple have started the process for a prenup too late and there would not be sufficient time to draw up the paperwork ahead of the wedding. By waiting, it means the agreement will not be rushed to completion and therefore unlikely to be set aside by the courts at a later date if it is challenged.

This article is not intended as legal advice but as a general guide. For specific advice about your own situation, legal advice should always be obtained

Wedding films

A firm fan of videography after having her own big day recorded, Claire Muir thinks today's to-be-weds should avoid post-wedding regret and book their wedding film ASAP...

Until recently, wedding videos may have been considered static and unimaginative but today's videographers are top-notch creative professionals with their finger on the pulse of film types and editing tech. Between this and the fact your wedding vid will quickly become something you'd save in a fire, it's certainly worth considering if budget allows. share your day with anyone who couldn't make it, says Matt Crofts at Next Scene Films. "I got to share mine with friends from America and my grandparents who couldn't travel. Now I have a five-year-old who loves watching us getting married, and seeing our family from before he was born. I also love having footage of my other grandma who's no longer with us."



Derek Sweeney of V.I.P Wedding Films promises it's one of the most important investments you'll make because a lot of couples don't realise how quickly the day goes by and a film captures all the special moments you don't get to see. At John Carroll Photography & Films, John agrees. "One piece of feedback we constantly get is that clients sit and watch their day over again, not realising how much they'd missed."

It's not just you who might miss out, though. Videography lets you

Just blend in, please

Camera-shy couples will be eyerolling at the thought of another person in their face all day. But Derek insists that once he speaks with tobe-weds and shows them his work, they realise it's not like that. Instead, it's very discreet and natural.

Matt, whose couples say they forget he was there early on in the day, suggests you make sure your



videographer's style fits what you want. "As one cameraman with one camera shooting in documentary style, I can easily go unnoticed."

Will it break the bank?

As with any supplier, videographers have a varied price bracket and there are packages for all budgets, plus deals can be found. "Many couples think it'll cost thousands but our two packages are under £1,000. They're affordable and cover everything, from the start of the day to the dancing at night," says Derek, whilst John assures to-be-weds that filmmakers are "worth the cost for being able to relive your day over and over for the rest of your lives."

> "As one cameraman with one camera shooting in documentary style, I can easily go unnoticed. Matt. Next Scene Films



Derek Sweeney of V.I.P Wedding Films

"Video tells it all - and you'll spot something different every time you watch."

Photo or video – or both?

Already got a photographer so don't think you need a vid? Derek urges you to think carefully. "Video tells it all - and you'll spot something different every time you watch."

At Fern Photography, which also offers videography, Dan Rannoch says the two media tell the story of your day together because they offer different ways to recall a memory.

"Photographs allow us to relive a moment internally, within our own selves. We see a photo then feel the moment through the image. Video is more of an external experience. It's a story told by the videographer through images and sound.



Dan Rannoch of Fern Photography

Individually, each is great and offers strengths where the other is weak. But combined, they offer a comprehensive and personal way to relive your day."



I hired a videographer...

Georgie South married Michael Madden at Coo Cathedral in October 2021. As she prepares for the arrival of baby Madden, she reflects on why her wedding film was worth every penny...

"My cousin who'd been married for 20 years said she still watched her wedding video so I knew it would be just as important as getting pictures. We also wanted to experience our wedding from a guest's perspective and be reminded of all the little things we might forget with time... and age!

"Simon at King Wedding Media was wonderful. He said he'd be 'in the background' and sure enough, we forgot he was there a lot of the time! He made a video diary with well wishes from our guests and it's one of my wedding highlights. I can't wait to show our little one their family in years to come.

"Watching our video makes me feel like I'm back there - and I got the chance to see my husband's reaction to things, which I missed at the time due to being so overwhelmed. I'd definitely have regretted not having our day filmed."

I didn't hire a videographer...

If he were tying the knot all over again, Oskar Gilchrist-Grodnicki, lead wedding planner at The Wedding Guru Oskar, would have it filmed - for sure

"A wedding ceremony is a very strange moment where your mind wanders. You're present but so overwhelmed that you easily miss things. We were so emotional that we don't remember every bit but it's something a video could have shown us.

"Don't get us wrong, still images are beautiful reminders of the day. But nothing replaces the feeling of a video - the voices, the laughs, the reactions, the jokes and the silly guest hiccups. We missed so much of this when we were away for the couple's photoshoot and getting changed for the evening reception. It'd be amazing to look back on it via video and see what happened during those moments.

"Unfortunately, some very dear family members who played important roles in our wedding are no longer around and it would mean so much to us to hear them one more time. You don't want to think about that when you're planning such a joyful and exciting event but life does move on post-wedding. A three-dimensional recording would most likely become an irreplaceable, priceless treasure."







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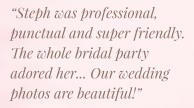
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We've asked some of the top photographers in the country to select just one of their favourite images from a ceremony they've shot and tell us just why that moment was so special to them. Prepare yourself for joy, emotions and all the feels!



"Amanda and Kenny Dass married in the Tudor Hotel, Airdrie and their [oathing] stone is from Arisaig (their special place). Kenny had broken his foot before the wedding and had to sit for [most of] the ceremony - I think it brought him out in a sweat!"

Rosaleen, Rosaleen Bonnar Photography





"I love being able to capture ceremonies that are full of fun and laughter. Here celebrant Niki Smith is joking with Amy and Ryan about their first meeting. I was laughing so much myself that it was difficult keeping the camera steady." "This was a really joyful wedding at The Byre at Inchyra and the ceremony was a great example of that. The day had been predicted to rain constantly but good fortune was on Wendy and Chris' side. The rain went away, the sun came out and the ceremony took place in this beautiful walled garden.

"We chose this image as it's the part of the ceremony that stands out most to us as a symbol of why couples marry. When they walk back down the aisle they are full of happiness, and so are their guests, as they are clapped and cheered along. It's the image of a community of friends and family sharing in the joy of the start of a new journey."

Dan, Fern Photography



John, John Carroll Photography & Films



"This image immediately sprang to mind! I absolutely love the 'Just married joy' radiating from my lovely couple Jess and Liam. I don't think they were expecting quite as much confetti but it was the perfect celebration for them finally getting to say 'I do!'"

Sarah, Joy Story

"Jay and Rebecca had a lockdown wedding ceremony in 2021, then had a friend officiate when they exchanged their vows at Carrick Castle Estate Lodge in April 2022. During their exchange of these very personal vows, Rebecca was starting to feel quite emotional about it all. So Jay stepped close to her, held her and whispered them into her ear, for only Rebecca to hear. It was an incredibly intimate moment. Ceremonies during a wedding can feel intensely emotional, it was wonderful that Jay just took the edge off that for the woman he loves." **Kristin, Struve Photography** "Emma; seconds before heading inside for her incredible city ceremony, right in the heart of Edinburgh. I really love this shot... A beautiful moment caught in a split second." John, John Elphinestone Stirling Wedding & Lifestyle Photography





"This couple eloped with only four guests, and had decided they wanted to do their vows completely alone upon a hilltop through in Edinburgh. It was such an amazing thing to be part of, and even though I could only photograph them from far away, I could tell it was one of the most emotional exchange of vows I'd ever been a part of. The vows are such an important and personal thing to the couple, and I totally encourage you to do what feels right!" Neil, Pocket Square Photography



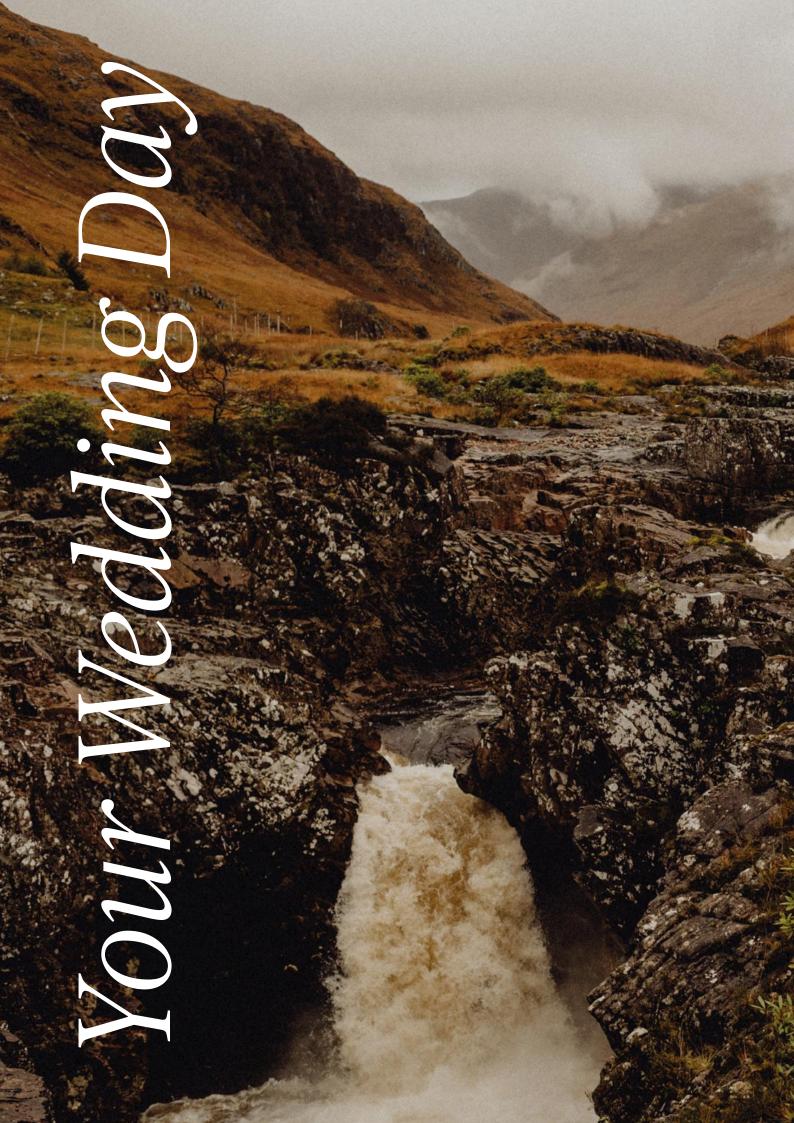


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Back to their roots

Ainsley Hamill & Jack Feinmann

DATE: Saturday 12th November 2022 PHOTOGRAPHY: Nikki Leadbetter Photogaphy VENUE: Glasgow University Chapel and Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow





Singer songwriter Ainsley and husband Jack celebrated the city where they were students, giving Glasgow a starring role in their stunning winter's evening wedding







For renowned singer songwriter Ainsley Hamill being in the spotlight is nothing new. In fact, in her role as cofounder and director of The Association of Exiled Scots she's used to creating bespoke music and entertainment for large-scale events like the Dubai expo, or planning album launches for her own music. So when it came to organising her wedding to husband Jack she took it all in her stride. "I associated planning a wedding with planning a music event where it's all about the audience," Ainsley explains. "If you're going to invite someone to a party they need to enjoy themselves."

So when the couple discovered they could hire Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum for an evening wedding reception it made perfect sense. "To have it at night time cut out the bit where guests get bored hanging about for posed photos," says Ainsley. Another venue the couple were quick to book was their ceremony location, the University of Glasgow Chapel. "Jack went to uni there and I went to the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland which has a connection," she explains. "It's non-denominational which lent itself to having a humanist ceremony which aligns with our own beliefs."

Ainsley and Jack met at secondary school in Helensburgh and were friends first but started going out when they were 15. Fast forward to June 2021 and Jack persuaded Ainsley to go for a walk to the town's Kidston Park, where they had their first date, under the guise of meeting their friend's new puppy. She remembers his proposal words as being "What do you reckon?" "I nearly fell off the bench," she laughs. "It was a nice surprise though I was quite disappointed not to meet the puppy!"

ALL OUT OPULENCE

Aesthetically, Ainsley knew exactly how she wanted their wedding to look. "I wanted it to feel really wintry," she remembers. "The aesthetic was opulence with gold bowls and urns filled with blood red roses and cut fruit spread around the venue. In the chapel we went for a slightly more whimsical winter theme. It wasn't to look too perfect but weird and wonderful and integrate with both spaces."

The couple were very hands on with the décor and adopted Glasgow as their wedding theme. Ainsley's friend. the designer Josef McFadden, was at the helm, creating stationery that incorporated elements of Glasgow like Irn Bru, Tunnocks' teacakes and the Duke of Wellington statue. He also made her man of honour, Grant, a Paisley print bowtie and pocketsquare with a hand painted depiction of his accordion on it. Then the couple set up three tables in the museum hall for their guest book, created by her friend's Etsy store The Hidden Gift Shop, an instax camera and their beautiful gold foil cake from Rustic Cakes by Annie.

"It's lovely to be able to show this commitment to each other. There's a dedication and closeness that wasn't taken into consideration before."

Ainslev

Ainsley describes herself as openminded but during a four-hour dress appointment at Eleganza Sposa she just wasn't vibing with any of the gowns until the stylist brought out a Suzanne Neville dress. "It had a really plunging neckline and it was off the shoulder with a big slit," she says. "I felt really amazing in it, funky and fresh and cool." And the best bit? A cape made in-house.

For his outfit Jack wore his own kilt and then added a sentimental touch, wearing Ainsley's late uncle's jacket and waistcoat. Jack is from Liverpool and as a wedding gift Ainsley commissioned a brooch for his plaid that incorporated the liver birds.

THE BIG EVENT

When the moment finally came Ainsley felt "elated" walking down the chapel aisle to her friend Alistair Iain Paterson playing the Robert Burns tune *Kelvingrove.* "It's like walking out on stage but without the nerves of a performance," she says. "It's lovely to see everyone and Jack was beaming."







Their ceremony was conducted by the "fab" humanist Melanie K Leckie but the couple didn't write their own vows. "We're not overly gushy," explains Ainsley. "We just wrote wee cards to each other but nobody else needed to hear."

There was a hugely Scottish and traditional music feel to the ceremony and the Alba Eurovision choir Ainsley performs with sang while they signed the register and their friends and family sang the old version of *Auld Lang Syne* together. "It's a song that encapsulates loads of years of friendship and it's really meaningful because Jack and I met when we were so young," she adds.

Over at the museum, guests were greeted by an ecclectic mix of organ music including Life on Mars, Dancing *Oueen* and even the theme from Dracula; Toccata in D minor. The speeches were "short and to the point but very, very felt and funny." Ainsley's dad actually opened with the very same story she planned to tell, sharing how they always knew she would be a performer when she made them dance round the table to Let's Go Fly a Kite. However, what he failed to mention, she said, was that as she was too small to be seen over the bay window the neighbours could only see her parents' efforts!

For the evening reception they again turned to Ainsley's friends with her pal Ewan's band Killer City Sound providing the entertainment. "They were mindblowingly good and the dancefloor was full. My pals also played a 20-minute ceilidh and I sang for the *Orcadian Strip the Willow*. The atmosphere was brilliant. The energy was really happy and there was no downtime after the ceremony. It was go, go, go." Just what Ainsley and Jack had planned!











BRIDE'S CAPE AND HEADDRESS Eleganza Sposa **BRIDE'S DRESS** Suzanne Neville at Eleganza Sposa BRIDE'S JEWELLERY Sarah Brown Jewellerv **BRIDE'S SHOES** Jimmy Choo BAND Killer City Sound CAKE Rustic Cakes by Annie CAKE OF CHEESE Lunya CATERING Encore Catering CELEBRANT Melanie K. Leckie of Humanist Socirty of Scotland CHOIR Alba Furovision Choir GROOM'S KILT MacGregor and MacDuff GUEST BOOK The Hidden Gift Shop MAKE-UP Makeup by Leigh Blaney PIANIST Alistair Iain Paterson TRANSPORT Met Wedding Cars and Doigs of Glasgow



PHOTOGRAPHER'S CREDIT

"One of the most atmospheric weddings I have ever photographed. From the grandeur of the venue at Kelvingrove to the incredible talent of the musicians playing throughout the day, there was a warm intimacy and watching the happiness radiate through Ainsley's face was magical. The evening was topped off by Ainsley getting on stage during the ceilidh and showcasing her insane talent. It was an utter treat and honour to photograph Jack and Ainsley's day."

Nikki

Nikki Leadbetter Photography

Nice day for a white wedding

Kayley <mark>Fl</mark>eming & John Souttar

DATE: Wednesday 25th May 2022 PHOTOGRAPHY: Stacey Clarke Photography SECOND SHOOTER: Kelsie Hale Photography VENUE: Carlowrie Castle, Kirkliston











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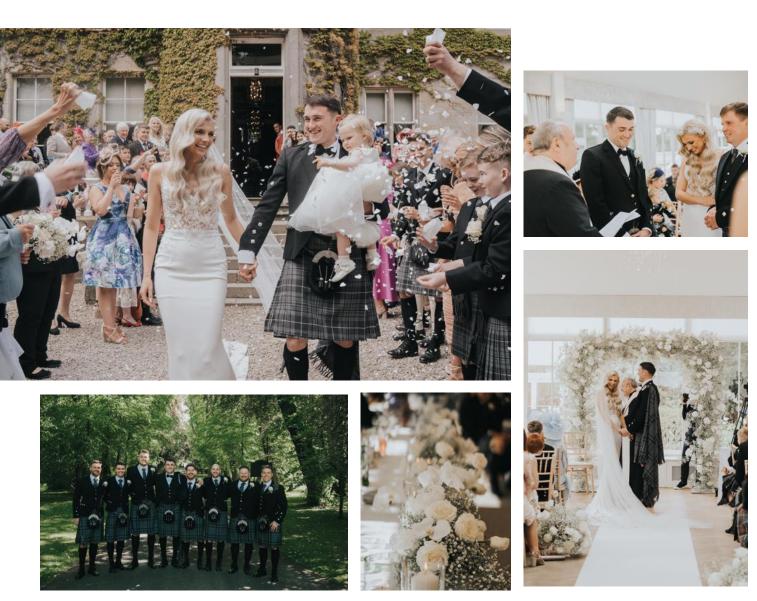
When a wedding story starts with a boat proposal in Central Park, is immediately followed by a search for a Scottish fairytale castle and comes with a flawless all-white theme, you know it's going to be a lovefilled day packed with luxe yet classic, romantic touches

THE MAGICAL VENUE

Business owner Kayley and footballer John quickly fell for Edinburgh's Carlowrie Castle - "It's modern and stunning, and simply takes your breath away," - and got to work planning their white-only celebration. "I wanted neutral décor with no greenery or colour. The stationery was gold - I sketched the castle for it - and we had white gypsophila, roses, peonies and orchids as well as white blossom trees," says the bride. They added some DIY details too. Kayley hand-cut the confetti with her sister and roped in her sisterin-law to help tie tags to gold jars of tequila (Kayley's shot of choice) for the favours.

Utterly on-theme, the bride had dreamed of a floaty, fairytale-style offthe-shoulder A-line dress but, instead, fell in love with a super-flattering sultry number, complete with an unlined illusion lace bodice, a deep sweetheart neckline, delicately beaded spaghetti straps and back detail to die for. She hadn't forgotten her original wish, though, and went back to Edinburgh's La Novia to find a lightweight gown for the evening. Enzoani's 'Evangeline' design, with its floral embroidered lace, Chantilly lace and tulle, fitted the bill perfectly.

The next step? Making sure her five best girls looked just as glam and stylish as her! Kayley explains, "I searched for a long time for a champagne gold satin dress and, eventually, Pretty Lavish brought out a range that was everything I was looking for." She added gypsophila to their hairups to tie in with the overall theme, and did the same with Myla, the couple's one-year-old daughter and flower girl. She had the cutest flower crown and mini bouquet we ever did see!



On her wedding eve, Kayley went out for dinner then stayed at Carlowrie Castle's gate lodge with her bridesmaids, her mum and Myla. She remembers sleeping amazingly and waking up surprisingly calm. "I was waiting for the nerves to kick in but they never did!" she laughs.

After exchanging gifts with her gals - her 'maids had made her a special memory book and treated her to lots of other goodies - she headed for the castle's orangery. Looking effortlessly glam and totally flawless, Kayley walked down the aisle to *A Thousand Years* by Christina Perri and was beyond excited to see John waiting for her. "We got married under a beautiful flower arch, surrounded by gypsophlia, roses and orchids, and repeated vows from the minister, Steven Manders of Morningside Holy Corner Church. He got the wedding off to a great start with his amazing humour and really entertained our 135 guests."

KING AND QUEEN OF THE CASTLE

The couple made their way back up the aisle with Myla in tow and totally nailed 'those' confetti shots with the most beautiful castle backdrop. Afterwards, Carlowrie was their playground and everyone enjoyed the exclusive use space as WooHoo Band played in the piano room.

The venue served traditional Scottish fare for dinner, then the groom was suitably embarrassed during the best man's speech (complete with picture boards!) before celebrations continued in the castle's marquee. Still on-site, WooHoo Band started the party for the newlyweds and Kayley remembers the dancefloor always being full. "We'd had singing waiters before dessert, which helped the atmosphere and people never wanted to leave the floor. It was amazing!" Later, they had a DJ and saxophonist, provided by Tartan Entertainment. "That's when it became more of a rave," laughs Kayley. "It was brilliant. Our guests were talking about it weeks later and I can't recommend Tartan Entertainment enough."

Reflecting, Kayley admits she loved every second of planning her big day, especially the wedding band showcases and castle-hunting around Scotland with her mum and hubby-to-be. The toughest part, she recalls, was deciding where everyone would sit at dinner. "I'd advise other couples organising their marriage to take their time and not rush into anything. Try not to get too absorbed in it all. Just enjoy the process and, when the wedding comes around, enjoy every second. It really is the best day of your life."



"Having our daughter, Myla, be part of the day as our little flower girl was just so special. Our wedding was delayed due to the pandemic and if we'd got married on the original date she wouldn't have been there." Kayley













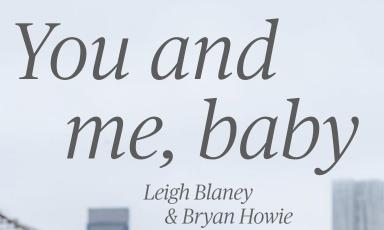
BAND WooHoo Band BRIDE'S DRESSES 'McKinley' and 'Evangeline' by Enzoani at La Novia BRIDE'S EARRINGS Lily & Roo BRIDE'S HAIR SLIDE John Lewis BRIDE'S SHOES Jimmy Choo BRIDE'S VEIL La Novia BRIDESMAID DRESSES Pretty Lavish CAKE Kim Gordon Cakes **CELEBRANT** Steven Manders of Morningside Holy Corner Church DJ AND SAX Tartan Entertainment FLOWER GIRL DRESS Carriage & Castles FLOWERS Mood Flowers GROOM'S OUTFIT McCalls Highlandwear HAIR Leia Loves London, Pout2Perfection MAKE-UP Jade McPike Makeup Artist, KMC MAKEUP RINGS Rox STATIONER PM Print and Signage VIDEOGRAPHY Pretty Little Films



PHOTOGRAPHER'S CREDIT

"A gorgeous couple and wedding. Kayley and John's love for one another was so evident, and Kayley was breathtaking - a truly stunning bride, closely matched by her daughter who almost stole the show!"

Stacey Stacey Clarke Photo



DATE: Wednesday 6th April 2022 PHOTOGRAPHY: Eloping Is Fun VENUE: New York



From the big yellow taxi and beautiful Brooklyn bridge backdrop to the funkiest Scottish/NYC fusion dressing, this secret stateside elopement is everything...



They may have met online but Leigh and Bryan's early days were full of old school romance. "We had the most amazing dates and I was whisked off my feet... Then lockdown hit," says makeup artist, Leigh. Her business, Makeup by Leigh Blaney, had to close so the twosome took advantage and wild camped on beaches all over Scotland. Eventually, it was time to return to work and the lovebirds realised they missed one another - and their adventures together.

LET'S ELOPE

Little did Leigh know, a pretty big voyage was just around the corner... "We'd been out for dinner and we were having a wee night cap and a dance about the house as you do," she explains. "He asked if I'd like to go to New York for my 50th and then added 'Do you fancy getting married while we're there?' What a way to kill two birds with one stone! He asked what we'd need and I just said, 'You and me'. He said 'Cool, let's elope'".

With a specific date in mind (New York's Tartan Day), the to-be-weds had just three months to plan. Luckily, Leigh found Eloping is Fun, a onestop-shop for saying 'I do' in the Big Apple. "They provide the photographer, videographer, entertainment, travel, minister and advise you on all the paperwork, etc. Excellent!"

Tartan Day provided the Scottish/NYC theme for the couple; Bryan looking casual yet edgy in a bespoke tweed kilt from 21st Century Kilts whilst Leigh oozed glamour in a Studio 54-style jumpsuit and cape combo. "Once we got the paperwork and travel sorted, it was right onto what we were wearing. I knew I didn't want a dress, and it had to be something that worked for walking around the city streets. I found an Elie Saab jumpsuit and cape but it just wasn't in my budget. So, knowing Megan from NugMeg Couture from my work life, I contacted her to see if this was something she could do in the time we had. I'd always admired her work."

Leigh loved the process - "Megan knew exactly what I wanted and how to make it work for my shape" - especially the last two appointments. Here, she felt the outfit really came together and she could begin to imagine the actual day. Her outfit already scored major style points but Leigh upped the ante with gold platform sandals, a statement brooch and a bespoke silk sequin clutch.











The couple touched down in New York the day before they were wed ("I felt like Carrie. It was all very exciting, overwhelming and surreal!" remembers the bride) and Leigh was more excited than ever before. "It felt like Santa is coming - that's the only explanation!"

They kicked off their special day with breakfast and bubbles in bed followed by a little pamper and a FaceTime to those back home to reveal the surprise. "When it was an hour to go, the nerves kicked in for me," says Leigh. "Even though I do this all the time at other people's weddings, I just couldn't control the nerves. I was shaking so much I couldn't get my lashes on."

LET'S GET MARRIED

Leigh and Bryan walked together to

meet their suppliers, feeling "amazing, full of love, proud and very Scottish". When the big moment arrived, they said 'I do' in front of the water with the iconic and beautiful Brooklyn Bridge behind them. Eloping Is Fun's Matt conducted a memorable humanist ceremony - with some Scottish sentiments thrown in, of course! Leigh's nerves kicked in even more at this stage but she says it was also the best part of the day. "I'll never forget it. It's just all about you two and what you mean to each other."

It wouldn't be nuptials in New York without a big yellow taxi so the newlyweds hopped in and headed for pics at some of the city's hotspots. Then it was off for celebratory champagne and cocktails before dinner at Restaurant Daniel, a two-Michelin-star restaurant handpicked by the groom. "It was sublime. They treated us like stars with outstanding service and food, and they made us a wedding cake while we were there!" Afterwards, in their true couple style, Leigh and Bryan flagged a cab downtown to a karaoke bar to sing and dance the night away.

Having thought previously she'd never get married ("I wasn't fussed"), Leigh says becoming Bryan's wife is the best thing she's ever done. "I can honestly say I woke up the day after and felt we were a team; a unit. I've got my best pal at my side and what a ball we've had. We may not have met each other until the autumn of our lives but what a winter we're going to have."



"Make sure you can look back at your wedding photos in 10 or 20 years and have no regrets. Remember, this is a happy time and as long as you both look and feel good, and you've got each other, nothing else matters." Leigh







BRIDE'S BAG Etsy BRIDE'S JUMPSUIT NutMeg Couture Bridal BRIDE'S SHOES Jimmy Choo CELEBRANT Eloping Is Fun FLOWERS Narcissus Wedding Flowers by Susan GROOM'S OUTFIT 21 st Century Kilts HAIR AND MAKE-UP Makeup by Leigh Blaney RINGS The I Do Studio VIDEOGRAPHY

Eloping Is Fun

PHOTOGRAPHER'S CREDIT



"What stood out most about their wedding was the way they incorporated their Scottish heritage and culture. Not only the bespoke kilt, but they included handfasting and a quaich into their ceremony, neither of which are common in the US. She looked smashing in her pantsuit and cape. The cape made it such a dramatic moment. And I loved that his kilt was modernised in a tweed. But most of all it was obvious how much they love each and they just enjoyed the day and each other as we visited different locations in Manhattan and Brooklyn."

Jonica Eloping is Fun

DATE: Sunday 18th December 2022 PHOTOGRAPHY: Daniel Mainland Photography VENUE: The Corinthian Club, Glasgow

Joy to the world

Caitlin McLean & Callum Phee



This couple held their festive wedding in a stunning Glasgow venue and made it all the more special with the bride's father as their celebrant

Caitlin and Callum first met when they were working in McDonald's while completing their college courses. After three years together, they swapped French fries for a French engagement in the city of love. Their fairy tale was complete when they tied the knot in the same Glasgow street where they had their first date. "Callum proposed to me in Paris at sunrise from the Eiffel Tower," Caitlin says. "He bought my engagement ring from Diamonds Factory and even got to select the exact diamond used in my ring."

Contact centre manager, Caitlin, and nursery teacher, Callum, embarked on planning their winter wedding with the help of Caitlin's father, George McLean, who was also their celebrant. "We didn't find the planning very stressful, we were very lucky as my dad is involved in the wedding industry. This honestly made the wedding planning much easier for us both," Caitlin explains. "It seems quite stereotypical that one partner leaves all the planning to their significant other, but I was very handson and we had so much fun tackling it together," Callum adds.

CHRISTMAS DINNER

The couple's first priority was finding a venue and setting a date. They fell for The Corinthian Club in Glasgow, which is housed within an impressive grade A listed building on the city's Ingram Street and is always decked out in spectacular style for the festive season. Set over five floors, the former bank and high court has The Flying Scotsman for private







"Every ceremony I conduct is special but to have proudly walked my own daughter down the aisle, then turn to conduct the actual ceremony was an incredible feeling. The adrenaline was rushing which gave me so much positive energy to deliver the most perfect ceremony for Caitlin and Callum. Caitlin was beaming the entire day but the smile she gave me as I pronounced her and Callum as husband and wife was just magical; a memory I'll never forget." George McLean, Fuze Ceremonies

When it came to looking for a dress, Caitlin didn't take long to settle on the perfect gown. The dress by Ronald Joyce was an ivory ball gown with a Bardot neckline and simple belt and buttons running down the back. Caitlin accessorised with a crown and her grandmother's earrings.

Her bridal party wore gowns in a beautiful dusty pink, ensuring her favourite colour was part of the festive glitz. Meanwhile, Callum looked dapper in a tuxedo alongside his best man Ben and three groomsmen.

The big day finally arrived and Callum was at the Corinthian to greet their loved ones but to his surprise his in-laws had arranged for magician Cameron Young to join him, performing tricks before the ceremony and entertaining guests as they took their seats.

And in a break from tradition Caitlin and Callum chose to have a first look, meeting each other in private before her grand entrance down the aisle. They even got to get in on the magic fun before their 'I do's'!

Caitlin chose to walk in to the *Beauty* and the Beast theme. "I felt like I was walking on air, it felt surreal that this was the moment I was about to marry my best friend," Caitlin recalls. "There could have been a thousand people in that room and I wouldn't have noticed because I was so focussed and happy to see my lady," Callum adds.







OUR STORY

With Caitlin's dad as their celebrant, the couple opted for a humanist ceremony so they could make it their own. They chose not to write their own vows as they thought they might become too tearful when saying them aloud, but George helped them pen some heartfelt words. "Our ceremony was very personal. George did such a great job of taking our story, making it flow and managing to highlight all the special parts of our relationship," Callum goes on.

But that wasn't all George had organised. Wanting to surprise the newlyweds again, he and his wife Alison had arranged a *Love Actually*-style performance by GeO Gospel Choir. "I produced mistletoe, asked them to have a kiss and said 'After all, all you need is love'," smiles George. "They went in for the kiss, the choir appeared on the balcony and started singing." And the gospel choir had even learned The Proclaimers' *Life With You* for Caitlin and Callum to walk down the aisle to.

For the drinks reception there was yet another surprise for the couple from



Caitlin's parents in the form of a visit from Mickey and Minnie Mouse, while the bride and groom had arranged for Santa to make an appearance in the evening to hand out personalised gifts for the children. "After our first dance and evening buffet we had burlesque dancers and then a saxophone player. The atmosphere was electric and myself and Callum never left the dance floor!"

Caitlin's advice to anyone planning a wedding is to "enjoy every single second". "Make sure to take a few moments with your partner to step back and look at your friends and loved ones," she adds. "You will have photos and videos but the moment is something you will never forget."















BRIDE'S DRESS Ronald Joyce BRIDE'S HEADWEAR Reeta's Fashions

BRIDESMAID DRESSES

CAKE 3D Cakes

CELEBRANT George McLean of Fuze Ceremonies

DÉCOR LBS Event Design & Wedding Planners

ENTERTAINMENT GeO Gospel Choir, Ace Tribe, Barry Munoz, Cameron Young, Wee Tait, Piping Services Scotland, Santa Glasgow, S4xxy FLOWERS Lucky Orchid

FLOWER GIRLS DRESSES Crystal and Petal Boutique

GROOM'S OUTFIT Jacket: John Lewis; waistcoat: Marc Darcy; trousers: Slaters

HAIR The Colour Cabin

MAKE-UP MegsyMac Makeup PHOTOBOOTH AND LETTERS Mr Q's Magic Booth

PIPER Piping Services Scotland

RINGS Diamonds Factory; Austen & Blake; Chisolm Hunter

TRANSPORT Enchanted Limousines

VIDEOGRAPHY Media Images Videography

You can read more about how Caitlin's dad performed their wedding ceremony on **page 107**



PHOTOGRAPHER'S CREDIT

"The surprises throughout this wedding for both the couple and their guests made for some truly special moments that I was honoured to capture. The highlight for me was the surprise appearance of Santa Claus who came to wish the couple well. It was a magical moment that will be forever etched in the memories of everyone (especially all the kids). Caitlin and Callum's joy and love was evident in every shot."

Daniel

Daniel Mainland Photography

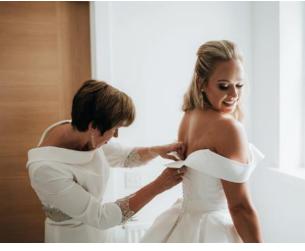
Happiness & laughter

Becky Hendry & James Coe

DATE: Saturday 3rd September 2022 PHOTOGRAPHY: Mairi Tiffoney Photography VENUE: Folkerton Mill, Lanark







Family is everything to Becky and James and their relaxed, rustic wedding day was all about celebrating with the most important people in their lives

A week after meeting on Tinder, Becky and James Coe decided to go for a drink at Waxy O'Connors bar in Glasgow. Then in May 2021 - a year and ten months after they got together - James proposed to Becky at South Lanarkshire beauty spot Spectacle E'ee Falls. "We walk our dog there all the time and James told me we were going for a picnic there one day," Becky says.

The couple fell in love with their venue Folkerton Mill straight away. "We live in the countryside and the rustic, personal feel suited us down to the ground. There were chickens and peacocks running around, a river running through it with a water wheel and the character of the building felt magical," Becky goes on.

Although event manager Becky had never planned a wedding before, she had a good idea about timelines and budgets. What's more, she says they were mostly able to laugh through the stressful periods. "Planning big corporate award ceremonies will never compare to planning your own wedding! We chipped away at it for a year, feeling pretty cocky, then in the final remaining months there were details cropping up that we had not accounted for," Becky explains.

REMEMBERING LOVED ONES

The toughest thing Becky and James found about planning their day was compiling the guestlist. They had 100 guests during the day and an extra 30 in the evening. "We both have huge families so deciding on no kids was tough. We were limited by capacity at the venue, which did make things tricky - although helpful, as it's so easy to get carried away," Becky says.

"James and I are really close to our

families, and we just wanted a day filled with things we love; our family and friends. I lost my dad when I was seven and James lost his mum when he was 24. We don't take our families for granted," Becky continues. "Folkerton Mill lets you plant a tree in memory of those who couldn't be there, so we did that to commemorate our parents. We didn't want sadness, though, only happiness and laughter, and remembering people with love."

Becky had 10 bridesmaids, but only eight made it to the wedding due to two being pregnant and unable to travel. The bridal party included her three sisters, James's sister, her cousin, and five best friends. Becky was happy to let her bridesmaids choose which dresses they wanted to wear as long as they matched one of the three colours from James's tartan kilt.











Becky reveals she didn't have a clue what kind of dress she wanted and it wasn't until her second shopping trip that she discovered the one for her. "It was a sweetheart Bardot neckline, with a huge skirt and train in white satin. We added a jewelled belt, and I wore a veil with a very long train covered in pearls. My little sister surprised me with Sophia Webster heels," she explains.

James wore Robertson Hunting Ancient tartan as his grandfather is a Robertson and that was his mother's maiden name. James' cousin Abby who is a tailor - made his kilt, jacket and waistcoat. His brothers Joe, Sam and Nat were best men.

Becky was up bright and early on her wedding day to await the bridal party, who were getting ready at her house. "I was so calm, I actually really surprised myself, I don't think many people would describe me as calm! I was just really excited," she recalls. James, meanwhile, got to the venue early and had to make a crucial decision on whether to hold the ceremony outside. "With 15 minutes to go I made the call to go ahead and, as the cars arrived, the rain stopped and the sun peeked through. Everything just seemed to fall into place," he says.

A DAY OF FUN

Classical music was a big part of Becky's upbringing and she walked down the aisle to Pachelbel's *Canon in D*. "I was nervous, as I'm not great with everyone looking at me, but I had my brother on one side and my stepdad on the other, and to be honest I just remember laughing a lot. When I saw James I was just trying to not cry!" Becky recalls.

Her uncle Alec performed a special family blessing. "He knows us both really well and is a very personable character. He made it funny, personal and relaxed, which was exactly what we wanted," she explains. And keeping loved ones at the heart of their ceremony, Becky's maid of honour Kat performed their handfasting.

There was a drinks reception after the ceremony and guests enjoyed a hog roast - something James had been dreaming of since the day Becky accepted his proposal! - and cake made by his sister Esme.

For their first dance, Becky's brother Sandy performed his arrangement of *Next to Me* by Imagine Dragons and then a ceilidh was held in the evening, which she describes as "fun and energetic." The guests even managed to drink the bar dry of gin!

Becky's advice to wedding planners is, "Stay calm, enjoy it and listen to one another. It's about the two of you and if you keep that at the base of every decision, you will end up with a day of fun filled with the people you love that's the most important thing."



"Folkerton Mill let you plant a tree in memory of those who couldn't be there, so we did that to commemorate our parents." Becky









BAND The Midgies Ceilidh Band BRIDE'S DRESS Essence of Australia BRIDE'S HEADWEAR Eleganza Sposa BRIDE'S SHOES Sophia Webster

CAKE James' sister Esme DÉCOR Tots Teens and Tipsy Events FAVOURS

Smelly Cow FLOWERS John Maclennan

GROOM'S OUTFIT Kilt in tartan by Locharron jacket and waistocat in Harris Tweed – all made by James' cousin Abby, sporran - Margaret Morrison Sporrans; Sgian dubh - Antler Sgian Dubhs HAIR

HAIR Opulent Hair and Beauty MAKE-UP Tabassum MUA

RINGS Blair and Sheridan

TRANSPORT Rennicks Wedding Cars



PHOTOGRAPHER'S CREDIT

"It was great to be a part of Becky and James' special day! They made me feel like I was part of the day and not just there to work. I'm honestly in love with all their images, they were an amazing couple to capture."

Mairi

Mairi Tiffoney Photography

perfect blend

Fizz & Shay

DATE: Sunday 27th November 2022 PHOTOGRAPHY: Gary James Photography VENUE: Westerwood Hotel, Cumbernauld

This couple had only 10 months to create a beautiful and personal ceremony that reflected both their cultures

Dating apps may be responsible for so many modern love stories but for Fizz and Shay it didn't happen with a simple click. The couple bypassed the matching feature with a simple message, started Facetiming, and the rest is history! That was back in 2016 and not one but two romantic proposals later - featuring a handwritten poem and the Harry Potter Glenfinnan Viaduct - they were ready to embark on their planning journey. From the start they knew this wasn't a case of a wedding by numbers as they had to decide what elements they wanted

to include from their English, Scottish, Pakistani and Indian heritage as well as figuring out how to personalise their day.

However, things weren't straightforward. "After contacting and visiting nearly 50 different venues we were starting to lose hope as we struggled to find a venue that would offer external catering to accommodate dietary requirements and the authentic Indian cuisine we wanted for our same sex, blended culture, mixed faith wedding, that would also accommodate plenty of rooms for traveling guests and would



be within budget," explains Fizz. It was important for them to find a venue that would properly consider the needs of an LGBTQ+ wedding - "not something we thought we would even have to question in 2022." But as they started to lose hope they fell in love with the Westerwood. "Our original coordinator Stephanie, and her replacement Dan understood our vision, and all the necessities for a two bride wedding were taken care of and offered without us having to ask!" remembers Fizz.

THIS IS US

Fizz and Shay put their crafting skills to work and DIY-ed most of the wedding. "We inadvertently ended up having the theme as being us, who we are as individuals and as a team, our love for our pets, nature, books, family, taking care of



those around us, our roots, the tiny humans in our lives, *Harry Potter*, poetry, crafting, and our love," smiles Fizz. Every little detail of their day reflected them down to the confetti they'd dried from flowers they'd given each other over the years, and the favours - RAF badges to honour Shay's family, Blackpool rock for her roots, homemade Scottish tablet for Fizz's heritage and wild flower seeded paper.

A forest green, gold and ivory colour scheme was chosen ,and Fizz made sure her traditional Pakistani dress tied in with the palette. After a fairly dispiriting shopping day in Birmingham she had started to despair before a rail in the final shop revealed the exact style and size of dress she was looking for. "I felt like a million quid!" she smiles.

Shay also suffered a set-back on her search for the perfect dress but an appointment at Pamela Jayne's Bridal resulted in her perfect intricate lace gown.



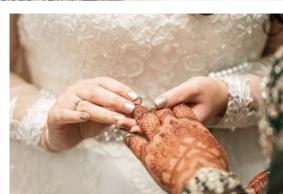






When the big day finally arrived the brides shared a private first look before their ceremony and then it was time to walk down the aisle, with their musical choices perfectly reflecting their personalities. Fizz's bridal party walked in to Hedwig's Theme from Harry Potter before she walked in to a strings version of Taylor Swift's Wildest Dreams. When Shay's turn came her bridal party walked in to The Shire music from Lord of the Rings before she entered to a string quartet version of Here Comes the Sun by the Beatles - "One of my favourite bands". Making her entrance, Shay says, "I could feel the excitement bubbling inside me to finally marry my best friend and I felt proud that we had come so far together."

Central to their wedding was the brides' need to reflect both their heritages so they had two wedding ceremonies, starting with a Nikkah, performed by the London Inclusive Mosque. "This was an important element for me and my faith," says Fizz. Then their celebrant Tasha











created a second bespoke ceremony that encapsulated their story and celebrated their partnership. Both women wrote their own vows and it was a nerve-racking experience saying them on the day. While Fizz was scared the emotion would get too much and she'd start "ugly crying", Shay surprised herself with how confident she felt. "I spoke only to Fizz, instigating both a few laughs and a few tears!" she smiles.

Following the ceremony, guests were entertained by Ed Travers Caricatures who had the couple's friends lining up all afternoon. "This was hands down the best decision we made because he was just absolutely terrific!" says Fizz. "All our guests could not rate him enough." Then when it came to the speeches there wasn't a dry eye in the house with Fizz's sister, Shay's dad and each bride blending humour and inside jokes. "Shay surprised me with a special slideshow she and her sister made with precious photos of us, milestones throughout our journey and a combination of each other's proposals, including original audio which I never imagined!" recalls Fizz. "It was beautiful and made me ugly cry... again!"

An "electric" evening ensued with guests up dancing away and Shay's family being introduced to the very Scottish tradition of ending on *Loch Lomond* - "Everyone loved it!" But that wasn't really the end. After all the guests had left, the couple ended with a last dance alone, something they would recommend to other to-be-weds. "It gives you an opportunity to take the final moments of your day in together as a married couple," smiles Fizz. "It'll be a moment you truly won't forget!"









BEST MAN'S KILT McCalls Highlandwear BACKDROP, AISLE RUNNER AND SELFIE BOX Crackin' Events **BRIDESMAID DRESSES** Maya Deluxe CAKE Aileen Custom Cakes CELEBRANT Tasha Monaghan-Leung of Fulcrum Foundation DHOL AND BAGPIPES Royal Dhol Force DI Triple M Events DRESSER Dressed by Sunday Rose ENTERTAINMENT Ed Travers Caricatures FIZZ'S SHOES New Look HAIR Kayleigh Dickson MAKE-UP Braw Beauty MENDHI/HENNA ARTIST Inspired by Rahima MOCKTAILS The Mocktail Company RINGS Ernest Jones and Emmy London at H Samuel SHAY'S DRESS Danielle Couture at Pamela Javne's Bridal SHAY'S HEADCOMB Fresablooms VIDEOGRAPHY Gary James Photography



PHOTOGRAPHERS' CREDIT

"We loved working with Fizz and Shay. It was our first time working on an interfaith wedding. There were lots of aspects to consider but my absolute favourite thing about the day was how much of Fizz and Shay was in the day - in every little detail - more than you could ever imagine! It was one of the most unique weddings I've ever been part of. We are so grateful to Fizz and Shay for giving us the opportunity to capture their day."

Gary and Rachael
Gary James Photography



Emma Milne & Scott Traynor

DATE: Saturday 29th October 2022 PHOTOGRAPHY: Joy Story VENUE: Netherbyres House, Eyemouth











Emma and Scott created a fun-filled and relaxed wedding with DIY details and a cool celestial vibe

For Emma and Scott, finding the perfect venue for their wedding was their top priority and as soon as they got engaged - Scott proposed at home on a Friday night with a beautiful reconstructed 1930s diamond ring - the search was on. The couple loved the idea of a place they could have exclusive use of and stay for the whole weekend and began hunting on wedding photographers' instragram accounts to create a list of possible venues. "We fell in love with how beautifully decorated Netherbyres House was," remembers Emma. "All the quirky details just suited our style. We organised a viewing and knew immediately this was where we wanted to get married."

OUT OF THIS WORLD

Emma has always been a big fan of the night sky, stars, moons and galaxy prints and was keen to incorporate her love of the celestial as a subtle theme. They then took inspiration for their colour palette from the kilt Scott has owned since he was 18, combining its blues and browns with Emma's favourite blush pink.

Netherbyres' unique décor is a photographer's dream and the couple added complementary DIY details, making their own centrepieces, menus, name place cards, favours, card box and seating chart. Emma used a glue gun to wrap champagne bottles with brown string and filled them with foliage for the table centrepieces, while large black beer bottles from Aldi were used for their menus. The crafty bride wrote the menu options on them in chalkboard pens.

For the place cards they stamped wooden star tree decorations with their names and wedding date and wrote their guests' names on the other side and, for favours, Emma used the same personalised stamp to make paper wallets to attach a scratch card to. "Based on inspiration from Etsy, we also stuck a penny to the wallet for guests so they could play the scratch card before the meal." The couple's card box was a wicker suitcase with a sign on string – again from Etsy – and for their seating chart they used stencils to detail stars, moon and the title on a chalk board.

SURPRISE CHOICE

Emma wasn't sure what style of wedding dress would be right and was determined to try every shape to narrow it down. "I actually went for a dress I never thought I would," she says. "It was fitted and lacy with a long train." The dress was originally sleeveless but the seamstress at Junes Bridal Wear & Kilt Hire was able to incorporate sleeves from a bridal jacket for the October wedding. Emma accessorised with a beautiful pair of Irregular Choice Mrs Lover shoes Scott had bought for her birthday the first year they were together - sweet!











FUN HOUSE

About 10 minutes before the ceremony Emma admits to a rush of nerves. "I remember standing looking at myself in the mirror and realising it was all finally happening," she recalls. "I was walking down a staircase as part of my entrance and I was nervous I would trip or stumble, but I remember telling myself to relax and enjoy the moment."

She walked in to *On my Way* by Rusted Root and made it to Scott without any trips for their humanist ceremony. "Fiona our celebrant was absolutely lovely and captured our story so well. She had us all smiling and laughing throughout," says Emma.

The ceremony passed in a "blur of excitement" before they joined their guests for a signature rum negroni and an amazing grazing table "It created a lovely relaxed sociable atmosphere."

The couple opted not to have formal

speeches during their relaxed hog roast meal but Emma's dad introduced them as they entered the main hall for the reception before she said a few words of thanks and toasted the bridal party. "During the meal I remember looking at all our guests chatting and laughing and just thinking everything had fallen into place and everyone is enjoying everything we had planned!" she says. "That was a lovely feeling."

The evening felt like a big house party with a DJ playing tunes in the main hall while guests who weren't dancing chilled in the bar or even played cards.

Emma and Scott revelled in planning their gorgeous wedding. "It was really fun just having nights together drinking wine and deciding on the things we wanted to have on the day," she says. She advises to-be-weds to focus on what's important to you and your partner. And her wedding highlight? "Marrying my favourite person!"

The couple stayed at Netherbyres the night before the wedding with immediate family and close friends and were able to relax and catch up before an early night. However, the bride admits she was too excited to settle properly and in the morning she was ready to pop the fizz and start getting ready.

Emma is naturally curly and had spent the year before practising an adapted version of the curly girl method to get her hair in the best condition. On the day she washed it and styled it herself before Una, the hair stylist with Jenna Clayton Makeup and Hair helped her fit a gorgeous celestial hair vine in place. She loved being in the thick of everyone getting ready but did sneak out for a coffee at one point. "It was exciting walking about the venue before our guests began to arrive," she smiles.



"It feels lovely to be married, like we are a wee unit ready to take on the world." Emma















BRIDE'S DRESS Alfred Angelo at Junes Bridal Wear & Kilt Hire BRIDE AND BRIDESMAID'S EARRINGS Six Stories BRIDE'S HAIR VINE Debbie Carlisle on Etsy BRIDE'S SHOES Irregular Choi BRIDESMAID DRESS ASOS **CAKE** ESP Cake Design CELEBRANT Fiona Flanagan IHC Celebrant Scotland DJ Beyond Entertainments FLOWERS Occasions of Eyemouth FLOWER GIRL DRESS JJ's House GROOM'S OUTFIT Totally Tartan Kiltmakers HAIR AND MAKE-UP Jenna Clayton Makeup and Hair RINGS McGowans Jewellers **STATIONER** Flutterbeeze Wedding Stationery



PHOTOGRAPHER'S CREDIT

"Emma and Scott just radiated joy the entire day - their faces must have been sore from smiling. I absolutely adored getting to spend time with them, and their wonderful family and friends at the very stylish Netherbyres House. Autumn is such a beautiful season for a wedding, I just love all the colours."

Sarah

Joy Story

ttish Venue





SMALL AND PERFECTLY FORMED

Exclusive use venue Aikwood Tower has teamed up with event stylist and wedding planner Get Knotted to launch a luxurious new wedding package for couples who favour a small, intimate and very personal wedding in 2023 or 2024. The Scottish Borders venue has worked with Get Knotted for over a decade now and the companies' combined experience will help take a lot of the unknowns out of planning especially at a time when for many watching the budget is more important than ever.

Designed specifically for smaller weddings the packages cost £9,750 for 20 guests, £12,500 for 30 or £15,500 for 40 and includes exclusive use of Aikwood Tower for your ceremony, drinks reception, wedding meal and evening party as well as luxury self-catering accommodation for 10 guests over three nights. You'll also receive wedding planning services and an experienced event team on the day, use of the garden and grounds for photography, canapés, a three-course meal, reception and meal drinks with tokens for the evening bar, bridal flowers, ceremony, table decorations and decorative lighting.

While your wedding may be safe in Aikwood and Get Knotted's capable hands you'll still be able to tailor your package, choosing from a seasonal wedding menu, selecting floral and styling arrangements and picking drinks offerings. Aikwood Tower owner Vicki Steel says, "With this new package, we're making it even easier for couples to put together all the pieces that make up the wedding jigsaw." **aikwoodtower.com**



he glow up

Couples who book their wedding at Balbirnie House Hotel already know they're onto a winner. After all, it has been named Best Wedding Hotel on a Global Level three times, as well as being crowned Wedding Hotel of the Year by The Scottish Hotel of the Year scheme 14 times. So you can expect a certain level of luxury here, and it just got even more gorgeous with the Orangery receiving a high-end refurbishment. Bathed in natural light with a calming neutral colour scheme, this is the perfect space to host up to 150 guests for your ceremony or a wedding breakfast for 50-60. **balbirnie.co.uk**

-SAVE-THE DATE 7th May

Balbirnie House Hotel venue viewing day

If Balbirnie's the wedding venue you have your eye on make sure you make an appointment to look around on 7th May. The venue's recommended suppliers will have been in to dress the house so you can imagine how it could look set up for your wedding day as you tour on a show-round with a member of the wedding team.

The event is by appointment only and runs from 10am-4pm.



QUICK TURNAROUND

Are you hoping to keep your wedding planning timescale to a minimum? Well listen up because The Rhynd in Fife has a sweet offer you'll love. Couples who plan to marry within six months of the date of booking will enjoy a discounted rate of just £3,000. We reckon that's pretty great for such a fab blank canvas byre venue.

But that's not the only special offer they have on. If you're planning a smaller wedding with 50 guests or fewer and choose to exchange vows on any Tuesday throughout the year or a weekend date November - March you'll only pay £2,500, leaving you more budget to really spoil your nearest and dearest.

therhynd.com

unday Gervice

If you're tempted to tie the knot in Perthshire's gorgeous Bachilton Barn - and why wouldn't you be? - you might want to consider a Sunday wedding. Priced at £2,495, the venue's new Sunday Wedding Package gives access on the morning of the wedding and allows normal guest list numbers. Accommodation is subject to availability.

Then couples who fancy a micro-wedding will love the Wee Wedding Package for up to 40 guests. Priced at £3,995 the package runs Sunday - Thursday and includes the full venue, access the day before to set up, and two nights in the yurts.

Check out Bachilton Barn for yourself on 7th May and 19th November open days or 28th June, 9th August and 4th October open evenings. **bachiltonbarn.co.uk**





PERFECTLY FORMED

The Isle of Arran is often described as Scotland in miniature and you can add a real Scottish flavour to your wedding at the island's exclusive use The Dougarie Boathouse when you take advantage of its Iorsa package. Priced at just £10,900 for 40 guests the special wedding package includes a traditional Scottish piper from the island to play before, during and after your ceremony.

In addition, the package also includes a celebrant to work closely with you to create a personal, beautiful and memorable ceremony, along with a photographer to capture all those special moments. You can treat your guests to a delicious three-course meal, served as sharing boards and buffet-style options and to get everything ready on time, you'll have access to the Boathouse the day before your wedding to set everything up or have a practice run. What's more The Dougarie Boathouse has a recommended supplier list to help you fine-tune all your wedding plans. **thedougarieboathouse.co.uk**

figh praise

If you're looking for a tried and tested wedding venue that comes highly recommended by other couples Houstoun House is definitely worth a visit. The exclusive use venue near Livingston has received nearly 40 fivestar reviews on Bridebook and was awarded a Platinum Award for Best of Bridebook 2023 in January.

And it's easy to see what all the fuss is about. Set in 22 acres of beautiful woodland and grounds, this country hotel boasts a 16th century tower house at its heart while the contemporary Houstoun Suite can comfortably accommodate up to 150 day guests and 180 evening guests. Plus, you'll have your pick of packages. Fancy getting married within nine months? The whirlwind package is perfect for you.









lew arrival

Steffi Clark has swapped cabin crew for wedding crew, ioining the wedding team at The Old Course Hotel. Golf Resort & Spa. Steffi began her career soaring the skies before moving to Glencoe to pursue her career in hospitality. She gained a wealth of experience working in different departments from reception to reservations and now she's bringing all that knowledge to her new role. Working with you, she'll help create your perfect day at The Old Course. You can book a showround with Steffi or another member of team by visiting the website. oldcoursehotel.co.uk



SPECIAL GUESTS

THE VIP LIST

If you have your hearts set on a micro-

make sure you check out Dunglass

wedding with a maximum of 28 people,

Estate's intimate package. The beautiful

East Lothian venue's offering for smaller

weddings includes the use of the historic

15th century Dunglass church or Stable

Yard room for your ceremony, use of

Dunglass Pavilion for your reception,

exclusive use of Seaview House - the

gorgeous rotunda honeymoon suite - and

the three courtyard cottages for 2 nights,

giving you space for all 28 to stay over. What's more, the package also includes a fabulous three-course meal and canapés with drinks from catering partner Platter and Pop. Priced at just £10,495 it's definitely

Sure you could leave ringbearer duties to your best man but if you're looking for a less traditional and - dare we say it - cuter option look no further than Fruin Farm's alpacas. The beautifully rustic venue near Helensburgh still has some May to December availability for weddings this year and if you want to make a last minute booking for 2023 they will add complimentary champagne to your booking for when you are getting ready in

the bridal suite and either an alpaca ring bearer or a llama photoshoot, depending on whether you decide to say 'I do' outside, in the barn or steading. Just quote 'champagne llamas' when you make an enquiry.

And it's not just the furry guests who'll be comfortable at Fruin Farm. The venue now has two steading rooms that can be hired separately for your guests, allowing them to stay over and dance the night away.

fruinfarm.co.uk

(ret in quick!

Set in the heart of Merchant City, and housed in the old court building. Citation is one of Glasgow's iconic venues. Oozing sophistication with its exposed brick, rustic wooden floors, elegant staircase and fairy lit pillars, a wedding here is guaranteed to secure it for your wedding in 2023 and early 2024 book your showround with wedding manager Pauline quickly as there

From intimate wedding packages to larger celebrations, the venue has something for today and contact Pauline on 0141 225 6650 or email pauline@citation-glasgow.com citation-glasgow.com





INTIMATE I DO'S

one to add to the shortlist. dunglassestate.com

Times are tough right now with cost of living pressures and in response Dalmahoy Hotel & Country Club has created a new 'Intimate I do's' for 2023 package. The new competitively-priced package has been designed specifically to meet the growing micro-weddings trend, dialling back the price to start from £2,023 for up to 40 guests. This includes a welcome drink and three course meal paired with wine in the 18th

century Baronial manor house. Intimate I do's is perfect for couples wanting to celebrate with their most cherished family and friends. However, there's the option to live stream the ceremony so the virtual guest list is limitless.

To get a taste of the new package and the others on offer head along to the next Dalmahoy 'I Do' Open Day on Sunday 14th May 12-3pm and the Dalmahoy Annual Wedding Show on Sunday 24th September. dalmahoyhotelandcountryclub.co.uk















Which dream is yours? Visit nts.org.uk/weddings

The National Trust for Scotland is a Scottish charity, SC007410

The Weaving Shed

Want all the freedom of a blank canvas byre-style venue but in the heart of a city, with an edgy industrial look? Then you'll love The Weaving Shed, one of Dundee's coolest new wedding spaces. The light, bright building has roots in Dundee's textile industry and only launched in 2020.

The venue encompasses a range of different spaces that you can use and style exactly how you choose. The layout lends itself to hosting your ceremony in one space before moving on to the reception drinks area, and then heading into the largest room for your wedding breakfast, drinks at the custom-made main bar, and dancing. You'll love the exposed brick and OSB walls and there's plenty of space to host 160 for dinner and 60 more in the evening. Remember to consider putting the outdoor courtyard to use in the

evening. We reckon some street food vans would be perfect!

theweavingshedstudios.com





Boreland Loch Tay

Set high on a hill above Loch Tay in Highland Perthshire, Boreland Loch Tay is really somewhere rather special. The unique appeal of this restored farm venue lies in its freedom to shape your wedding in whatever way suits you. The hillside site comprises a number of different spaces and accommodation options meaning that, from June, you'll have room for up to 78 guests to stay over once the final dance is done and the last drinks swallowed.

Weddings at Boreland range from the super-intimate - think just you and your celebrant and witnesses on the private beach - to something much, much larger. The vast barn has space to cater for 150 for dinner and up to 210 in the evening. You can also choose from the Farmhouse, Workshop and the Cowshed and there's always the option to marry outdoors. And for a quirky wee touch we can't resist, the venue's even come up with its own version of semaphore making for a cute talking point.

borelandlochtay.co.uk

AWAY from the norm

If you want to guarantee guests are talking about your wedding for years to come booking a slightly quirky or more unusual venue is a good start. Afterall, bring them somewhere a little different and you're already setting the scene for a memorable wedding

Unusual Venues of Edinburgh

The clue's in the title with these three unique venues. Based in Edinburgh's historical Old Town, they will delight your loved ones and guarantee that wow factor. Exposed stone and brick lit by a myriad of fairy lights and candles pay tribute to the spaces' history, creating three romantic and atmospheric settings for your vows.

Located in the sub-structure of the city's South Bridge, The Caves is the largest of the three with room for weddings with 70-150 day guests and 200 plus at night.

unusualvenuesedinburgh.com

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However, if you want to step in the footsteps of Scottish Enlightenment figures like Burns, David Hume and Adam Smith, The Rowantree is the venue for you. The former Lucky Middlesmass' Tavern is suitable for 50-70 day guests (110 in the evening).

Booking the smallest venue, Marlin's Wynd (capacity 40-50 day guests, 120 evening), is like stepping back in time, descending from the Georgian reception area to the vaulted 16th century cellars below. Definitely a venue to get your guests talking!





The Dougarie Boathouse

If the thought of getting married on a beautiful Scottish island ticks all your boxes make sure you add The Dougarie Boathouse to your shortlist. Located on the island of Arran, you'll be blown away by this exclusive use venue with its unique curved roof, picturesque setting and undeniable allure. Once the party spot of the 11th Duke of Hamilton, it's been lovingly transformed into a gorgeous wedding venue. Set on a secluded shoreline, the boathouse with its fairy-lit vaulted ceiling, original stained glass windows and modern sliding doors to make the most of the view is a dreamy location for your I do's'. But if an al fresco ceremony appeals, you can marry on the stone circle overlooking the water or on the sandy beach, before dinner and dancing in the boathouse.

Then when the party's over, there's space for up to 35 guests to stay in five separate properties on the Dougarie Estate.

thedougarieboathouse.co.uk

Fingal

Taking to the high seas, or at least the Alexandra Dock, Leith, sets the tone for a wedding like no other when you step aboard Fingal. After all, few couples can say they got married on board their own miniature luxury liner complete with that 1930s Hollywood feel!

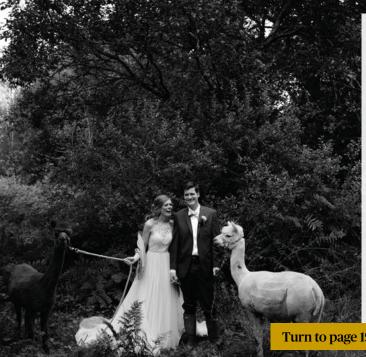
Beginning life in 1963 to carry out work for the Northern Lighthouse Board, Fingal is now a luxurious floating hotel and the very last word in elegance. A £5 million conversion transformed the ship

fingal.co.uk

into an unrivalled exclusive use venue, perfect for weddings with up to 60 guests.

You'll love the elegant ballroom with its curved walls, shimmering beaten copper ceiling and portholes, plus the deck space is a distinctive setting for those just married photos. And when the festivities are over, you can kick off married life in one of the 22 exceptional cabins. We have our eyes on Skerryvore Suite - ideal for newlyweds.





Fruin Farm

Just a mile from Loch Lomond you'll find the charming Fruin Farm. This gorgeous exclusive use venue specialises in intimate and relaxed weddings for a maximum of 60 guests with no minimum number.

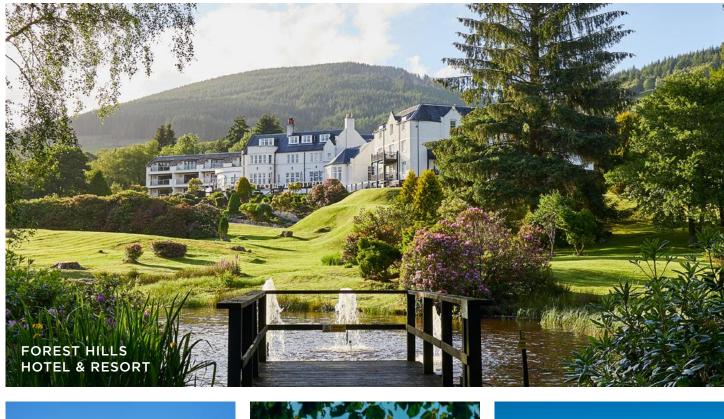
The rustic barn has all the character you could wish for with stone walls and exposed wooden beams while the more contemporary glass-fronted steading is the perfect spot from which to enjoy those views of the hills and loch. The beauty of Fruin is you can use the spaces however you wish; exchanging vows in one and dining and partying in the other. And you'll love the bridal suite; an oasis of calm for getting ready and then retiring to at the end of the night.

And we've not even mentioned the resident alpacas and llamas! Your guests will love meeting them and you could even have one as your special ring bearer! fruinfarm.co.uk

Turn to page 198 to find out about Fruin Farm's unique champagne llama offering



ABERDEEN • ABERDEENSHIRE • GLASGOW SOUTH • INVERNESS • AVIEMORE • ABERFOYLE • FALKIRK • WEST LOTHIAN • PEEBLES













With 10 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.



acdonai

OTELS & RESORTS

Arniston House

Steeped in more than four centuries of heritage and family history, Arniston House has been home to the Dundas family since 1571 and is still the family residence today.

As a wedding venue, The Orangery and grounds offer a picturesque, timeless setting surrounded by the beautiful countryside. With options for a day to a full weekend retreat, Arniston offers a range of settings from the beautiful Orangery, bathed in the natural light of south facing, floor to ceiling windows to the Sunken and Walled gardens.

Arniston has hosted such productions as Churchill: The Untold Story of D-Day (2017) starring Brian Cox, Miranda Richardson and John Slattery, Outlander Season 4 Episode 8 entitled Wilmington (2018), films Tommy's Honour and The Wicker Tree, and most recently Apple TV's period drama, Debutante, so your wedding here is guaranteed star quality.

arnistonhouse.com





Blair Castle

Blair Castle has been the home of the Atholl family for over seven centuries and is a perfect wedding venue, surrounded by extensive gardens, lochs, rivers and glens. Whether you're looking for the fairvtale grandeur of the castle, a rustic outdoor wedding or an intimate lodge wedding, this historic Highland Perthshire venue can cater for an array of ceremonies.

Standing proudly on Atholl Estates, Blair Castle has one of the most spectacular ballrooms and Georgian state rooms in the country.

Offering a fascinating range of historic interiors, contemporary spaces and spectacular gardens, it's no wonder it was used as a filming location for the ITV drama Victoria, starring Jenna Coleman which, focussed on the early reign of Queen Victoria (1819-1901). The monarch visited Highland Perthshire and Blair Castle on a number of occasions and now you could follow in her footsteps and host your own opulent wedding here.

Stars of the SILVER SCREEN

Scotland is filled with stunning castles and grand houses nestled in the most beautiful estates, so it's no wonder these lavish wedding venues have also been used as filming locations.

Cluny Castle

Situated in the tranquil Aberdeenshire countryside and hidden from view by over two hundred acres of beautiful landscaped parkland, Cluny Castle is one of the largest privately owned castles in the whole of Scotland.

Renowned for its romantic and secluded setting, it makes for an enchanting wedding venue. During the hundreds of years that have passed since Cluny was built, it has remained the much-loved home of the Gordons of Cluny.

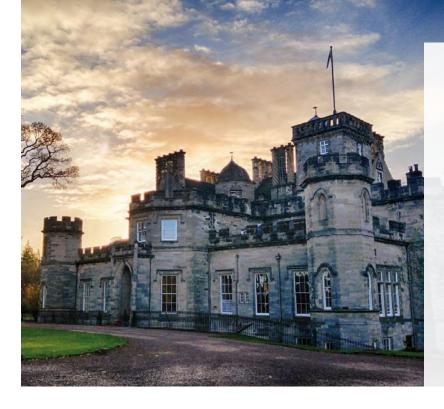
The venue has attracted some of the world's leading filmmakers and has provided locations for a number of high-profile films including acclaimed movie The Queen, starring Helen Mirren.

Doubling as royal residence Balmoral on screen, Mirren's portrayal of the late monarch won her several accolades, including the Academy Award for best actress in a leading role. And marrying at Cluny you too can be queen (or king) for the day!

clunycastle.com

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Winton Castle

Winton Castle blends palace and family home and is more than 500 years old. It was restored during the Scottish Renaissance. Just 30 minutes from Edinburgh, Winton is the family home of Sir Francis and Lady Ogilvy and the castle now hosts weddings, business events, private parties and conferences.

Steeped in history with links to the Setons, Bonnie Prince Charlie and even the Elgin Marbles, the romantic venue is a hidden gem surrounded by mature walled and terraced gardens.

The castle's beautifully restored reception rooms and historic nooks and crannies make it a popular location for filming and photoshoots. It has featured in TV productions such as *The Railway Man* and *The Wicker Tree*. More recently, a production crew from Edinburgh filmed romcom, *Meet You in Scotland*, which will be released later this year. What better setting for your own love story?

wintoncastle.co.uk





Royal Burgh of Culross

Featuring in a number of episodes of TV series *Outlander*, the Royal Burgh of Culross is steeped in history. Owned by the National Trust for Scotland, it is a complete community preserved as it was in the 16th and 17th Centuries. White-harled houses with red-tiled roofs line the steep cobbled streets, which run from the market cross to the hilltop abbey. Culross Palace, Town House and Burgh combine to offer a unique period setting for weddings and other celebrations. Guest numbers are limited at Culross, with outside ceremonies available for up to 60 and a maximum capacity within the palace of only 8. Acting as the fictional village of Cranesmuir in *Outlander*, the palace, garden and Royal Burgh feature in seasons 1 and 2 as well as season 4.

nts.org.uk/visit/places/culross

Culzean Castle

Designed by renowned Scottish architect Robert Adam, Culzean Castle was built in the late 18th Century. Perched high upon the Ayrshire cliffs, the castle has a host of unique settings to exchange your vows, from the beautiful Orangery or Camellia House with its floor-toceiling windows, to the dramatic Robert Adam Oval Staircase, the elegant Round Room or the viewing platform overlooking the Ayrshire coastline.

nts.org.uk/visit/places/culzean

The perfect setting for adventure, romance and intrigue, Culzean featured in film *The Wicker Man* (1973) as the home of Lord Summerisle, played by the late Christopher Lee.

It's worth noting that Culzean Castle is fully booked for 2023 and, due to planned refurbishments within the castle, is not taking further 2024 bookings at this time. Keep an eye on the website for updates next year, and you could host your future wedding on such an iconic stage.





Aberdeen, Grampian, Highlands & Islands

From the Highlands with love

Elena Hindinger & Sam Collins

DATE: Saturday 27th October 2022

CEREMONY DAY PHOTOGRAPHY: Neil Thomas Douglas Photography RECEPTION DAY PHOTOGRAPHY: Radoslaw Rachwal Photography CEREMONY VENUE: Dalness Estate, Glen Etive RECEPTION VENUE: The Free Company, Balerno

Scottish Sam and his Austrian fiancée Elena fused their cultures with two beautiful and sustainable celebrations, including one at Dalness House - the inspiration for the James Bond Skyfall house

After a proposal that sounds like it's out of a romantic movie (Sam got down on one knee in the pouring rain on top of a mountain on the Isle of Skye), he and Elena were excited to wed in a way that would reflect how they live their lives together. "We wanted to be surrounded by nature and ensure everything had sustainability in mind. We wanted an intimate ceremony and a big celebration so broke the wedding into two parts over several days." They had a specific destination in mind for their micro-wedding - "We wanted to marry surrounded by the lovely burnt orange colour that the Highlands turn in October" - and based themselves at Dalness House. Set in the spectacular Glen Etive, the stunning house sleeps 15 people and comes with a private chef. "We could bring our families together over several days in the lead up and really felt at home here." And a wee sidenote: it is also the inspiration for the James Bond *Skyfall*







"We asked for autumnal flowers to complement the beautiful Scottish hills and Mel at Briar Rose Design got them spot on. The bouquet was beautiful and made with such care, and the hair flowers were incredible. It was all created from Scottish/British sustainably grown flowers, too."

Elena





house! The guests spent time fly fishing and hiking and, the night before the wedding, the couple hosted an Elena and Sam-themed pub quiz before finishing their vows at midnight.

Whilst Sam didn't sleep a wink, Elena snoozed like a baby. She enjoyed a calm morning of bridal prep before a special 'first look' with her husband-to-be in Dalness' walled garden. After a preceremony prosecco with their guests in the drawing room, they led the party out into the hills and settled at their chosen spot. "We were first to arrive on the hilltop and it was a wonderful sight watching our friends and family walking up the trail to join us," they remember.

ROMANCE AMONG THE RUGGED MOUNTAINS

They married in a relaxed and intimate humanist ceremony with a firm focus on involving their nearest and dearest. The couple had written their vows in books made by Sam's mother (a textile artist), whilst father-of-the-bride and mother-of-the-groom got involved with handfasting, then Elena's mother, a professional flautist, shared her music. With rings on fingers, it was time for a photoshoot throughout Glen Etive and Glencoe with photographer Neil ("He was fantastic - cameraman and weatherman; master of ceremonies and keeper of the clock"), before an evening of food and drinks with the family. "I loved the uniqueness of this wedding and its international mix. Sam and Elena found the perfect blend, from hiring Ian Fleming's family home as the wedding location, to the confetti tunnel of dried flowers from Elena's parents' garden in Austria, to the stunning mountains that gave us the most epic of backdrops for the ceremony."

Douglas Gilgallon Fuze Ceremonies







CEREMONY DAY PHOTOGRAPHER'S CREDIT

"Dalness House has been on my radar for a while now and I got super-excited when Sam and Elena asked me to be their wedding photographer. They invited their closest friends and family for their wee Highland adventure, and it made for a very relaxing morning."

Neil

Neil Thomas Douglas Photography

Fast forward two days and it was time for a larger get-together in Edinburgh with 75 guests. Opting for a venue that aligned with their own beliefs, The Free Company - a farm and seasonal restaurant - played host to Sam and Elena's celebration. The venue was dressed in-house with local vegetation and dried foliage and the couple added thoughtful DIY details. Elena sewed cloth bunting in autumnal colours, they made their own place names (using ink stamps, wax seals and Sam's signet ring) and they put together the table decs using sustainably grown dried flowers and glass bottles. The twosome sourced scented candles to cosy up the farm buildings, choosing Scots Pine as their wedding scent.

"We started with a prosecco reception and nibbles with the wonderful Ginny & the Tonic playing a set. We also had a short quaich ceremony, celebrating our first drink as a married couple," they smile. The Free Company designed a "truly incredible" menu based on what was in season in October and prepared it with food grown organically on the farm. This was followed by a set of speeches from Sam, Elena and Elena's dad, Joe. "We joked afterwards that Sam made people laugh, Elena made people cry and Joe sent everyone over the edge. Both of our speeches brought in stories about the different groups of people gathered, making everyone feel included."

After the meal, there was whisky, schnapps and cake, then a ceilidh. "As we had such an international crowd, we had a party hat traffic light system for the first dance. A green hat meant you were an experienced ceilidh dancer; you wore a yellow hat if you'd been to at least one ceilidh before and the red hats were for complete newbies," says Elena. "The hats were a nod to my late friend Catherine, who loved party hats, and it was incredible to see everyone dance with them on, from Sam's little nephews to my grandfather."

ON REFLECTION

Looking back, the couple realised the time from proposal to marriage was almost exactly a year and, despite the challenges of planning a wedding in Scotland from their home in Portugal, they felt it was a good amount of time to balance work and life with wedding planning. "Overall, we think we did a good job of dealing with the stressful parts, like only meeting suppliers online or having parcels delivered to friends and family in Scotland. One other aspect we had to manage was that Elena had never been to a wedding so there were a lot of unknowns for her. But this perhaps made it even more special as the wedding world was essentially a blank canvas for her. Organising everything to come together on the day may have been a challenge but, amazingly, it all worked!"

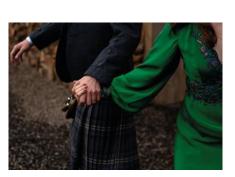






BAND Carnan **BRIDE'S DRESSES** Rowanjoy BRIDE'S JEWELLERY Ginger Jewels, Liam Ross Jewellery CELEBRANT Douglas Gilgallon of Fuze Ceremonies CAKE Cuckoo's Bakery CANDLES Isle of Skye Candle Company **FLOWERS** Briar Rose Design GROOM'S OUTFIT Slaters HAIR AND MAKE-UP (WEDDING DAY) Bonny's Wonderland HAIR (WEDDING CELEBRATION) McGills Hairdressing

MUSICIANS Ginny & The Tonic STATIONER Pearwood Studios









RECEPTION DAY PHOTOGRAPHER'S CREDIT

"Elena had an absolutely gorgeous dress and they had their own quirky touches, like the coloured hats for ceilidh dancing. It was such a fun evening."

Radoslaw

Radoslaw Rachwal Photography



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Edinburgh, Lothians & The Borders

| 215

Say 'I do' at the zoo

Sarah Andrew & Craig Leyland

DATE: Saturday 26th November 2022 PHOTOGRAPHY: Bear & Butterfly Photography VENUE: Edinburgh Zoo, Edinburgh











From the cosy, autumnal colour palette to the creative wild animal theme, there's nothing we don't love about this funky Edinburgh Zoo wedding

Whilst former zookeeper Sarah had always dreamed of saying her vows surrounded by animals, hubby-to-be Craig was keen on marrying in a castle. Thankfully the historic Mansion House, set at the heart of Edinburgh Zoo, offered the best of both worlds for the couple.

THE NEXT STEPS

With the venue sorted, they chose a seasonal theme, embracing all the autumnal vibes, and packed in loads of creative, personal details. One family friend helped out with favours whilst another, Glasgow-based florist MJ's Cherished Occasions, was responsible for the fab florals. Sarah and Craig got crafty too, making their own save the dates and on-theme place cards. "The most fun thing about planning was deciding which table was which animal," said the bride.

The to-be-weds scored a special 'something borrowed' from friends who'd gone ultra-DIY at their own wedding. "They lent us their centrepieces, which were woodland scenes in glass globes made from tiny trees, pinecones, moss, mushrooms and roses. With their permission, we painted the roses autumnal colours, and dabbed the trees and moss to make it look like the leaves were changing colour and falling."

The rustic theme carried through to the bridal party attire with Sarah kitting her best girls (her sister, oldest niece and longest friend) out in super-stylish burnt orange gowns from David's Bridal. "I wasn't too picky - I wanted the colour to match but it was important they were all happy and comfortable. In the end, they all looked the same from the front but my sister and niece's dresses had a cowl at the back whereas my friend's dress didn't."

When it came to her own outfit, she'd always imagined herself in a ballgown with a sweetheart bust and quickly found the dress of her dreams, complete with a not-too-long train and intricate detailing. She added a little sparkle with a jewelled belt and Craig surprised her with a special finishing touch - a shawl made from his clan tartan - after the ceremony.



After a sometimes-stressful lead up to the big day ("It was mostly the table plans; trying to get the families mixed together in the right way, and making sure everything was done on time"), Sarah enjoyed some relaxing family time the night before the wedding. They had a few drinks, read some of the advice slips filled out at her hen party and enjoyed a visit from her sister-in-law-to-be who presented her with a necklace of the Tree of Life, engraved with 'Welcome to the Family'.

The next morning, Sarah admits she was on autopilot as she knew what needed to get done and just wanted to get started! "Once everyone arrived I started to feel a bit calmer, knowing people were where they should be. However, I'd asked my maid of honour to make sure Craig didn't come out of his room while I nipped to the loo and when she knocked on the door there was no answer. Then when she went in, she found they weren't there! Thankfully, a quick call revealed they were down at Murrayfield kicking a ball around. At least he was in Edinburgh...!"









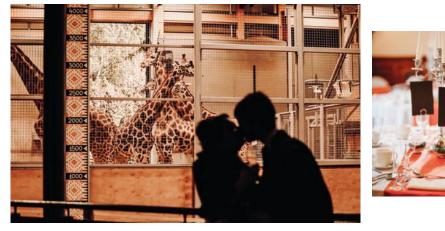


Sarah walked down the aisle to *There She Is* by Frank Turner, her head buzzing - "I was worried about the dress so kicked my feet out to try not to stand on it, *then* I was worried my dad would stand on it, then I worried everyone could see me kicking the skirt out!" - but remembers feeling that "everything melted away" once she saw Craig. "I just couldn't get to him fast enough!"

DRINKS WITH A DIFFERENCE

They tied the knot in a happy, positive humanist ceremony where they said their own vows and let everyone know exactly how they felt about one another. Afterwards, the newlyweds spent a precious ten minutes "just being together and letting it sink in" before hosting a rather unique drinks reception that included complimentary zoo access!

Marrying in the capital meant traditional Scottish fare (lentil soup or chicken pâté; chicken Balmoral or roast beef; and sticky toffee pudding or ice cream, prepared by the zoo's catering team, Compass) and equally patriotic evening entertainment, led by Bass Rock Ceilidh Band. "It was warm, happy and bubbly," remembers Sarah. "Everyone was having a good time drinking and dancing."









BAND Bass Rock Ceilidh Band BRIDE'S DRESS WFD2B BRIDESMAID DRESSES David's Bridal CELEBRANT Stewart Struthers of Humanist Society Scotland **FLOWERS** MJ's Cherished Occasions GROOM'S OUTFIT MacGregor & MacDuff HAIR NC Hair-Bridal Hair Specialist MAKE-UP Erika Marie MUA RINGS Derek Prescott



PHOTOGRAPHER'S CREDIT

"I absolutely love a unique wedding venue and this was an absolute dream! Sarah and Craig filled their day with animals, history, culture and incredible people. Newlywed images were taken while listening to the deafening roars of lions and giggles of monkeys - what an experience."

Sarah

Bear & Butterfly Photography



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Fife & Tayside

Venues

Che bella!

Amanda Reilly & Victoria Houston

DATE: Friday 27th May 2022 PHOTOGRAPHY: Lewis Cannon Photography VENUE: Forbes of Kingennie, Kingennie

From rustic décor and sax tunes to the most glorious comfort food, Amanda and Victoria chose all the best trends for their wedding at Forbes of Kingennie Despite always insisting she wasn't fussed about planning a wedding, Amanda "turned into Monica from *Friends* overnight" after proposing to her girlfriend of three years, Victoria, on Nairn beach with the help of their golden retriever, Bella. "I couldn't wait to get everything booked," she explains. After ring shopping together - "We bought from Ernest Jones in Perth who couldn't have been more helpful if they tried," - their priority was finding a venue that was dog-friendly, had beautiful surroundings and boasted space to have the ceremony and reception in different rooms.

RUSTIC VIBES

Perfectly picturesque Forbes of Kingennie was the one and it inspired the warm, autumnal theme that the girls' suppliers brought to life: "We used the talented Pauline at Celebre Events to create our rustic centrepieces, which were beautiful. The floating candles burned all night. We hired chiavari chairs and aisle décor from Martin at Occasions, and he worked closely with



our florist on the chair décor. Stucio & Waow were truly fantastic, hunting down our dream, Pinterest-inspired blooms and even making Bella a little floral piece for her collar. We opted for a naked cake and, for favours, little hessian bags with personalised Love Heart sweeties."

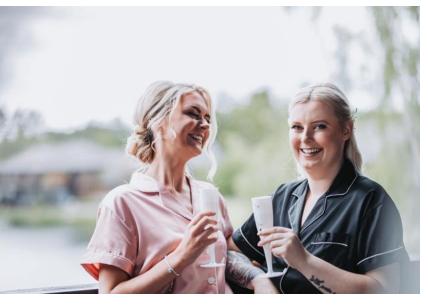
When it came to dress shopping, the brides couldn't have been more different. Whilst Victoria had set her heart on a style she found online (and ended up buying it when she tried it on in the boutique), Amanda had "absolutely no idea" - but had already picked out her Jimmy Choo shoes! "I lost a lot of weight so wanted to showcase that but as I'm quite plain, I didn't want too much going on. I found a dress online with an overskirt and loved the idea of having something different to wear at the reception. This led me to The Bridal Studio in Dollar but when I put it on, I quickly decided it wasn't for me. Lesley, the owner, had me try on lots of options that were out of my comfort zone and I was so surprised that some styles I was dead against actually looked good! I picked the very last dress I tried; a high neck fit and flare with illusion sides and intricate beading - simple and classy with little details."













"As we were staying at the venue, we didn't need transport. But Vic fell in love with a vintage campervan and I decided to surprise her on the day. View from the Slow Lane were great to deal with, helped keep the secret and even supplied a little hamper for us. Not only did the camper look stunning in photographs, it was lovely to have half an hour alone in there!"

Amanda

After finding wedding planning alongside full-time work rather stressful - "I'm a crazy perfectionist and putting that control into other people's hands was hard for me!" -Amanda was delighted when the big day finally rolled around. Following tradition, the twosome got ready separately; Victoria sipped a few gins to calm the nerves whilst Amanda chilled, tucking into a brunch board and prosecco. Her nerves kicked in when her dad arrived though, and she admits the next part went by in a flash: "I can't even remember the music. I just remember seeing Vic and thinking; 'Wow.' She had a little quivering lip and I just wanted to be up there beside her!"

With neither of the brides religious, they opted for a humanist ceremony with traditional vows and a few symbolic gestures (lighting a candle in memory of Victoria's mum and a handfasting using their family tartans). Afterwards, it was onto the decking for beers, fizz, nibbles and ice cream with Rich Gordon on the sax.











FOOD GLORIOUS FOOD

"The food was the part Vic couldn't wait to plan," remembers Amanda. They tried to balance what they enjoy the most with what would suit most people's tastes, and settled on pâté or soup to start, chicken or steak pie for main, and sticky toffee pudding or lemon meringue pie for dessert. Struggling to settle on a choice for late night nibbles, Victoria asked the venue to combine her three favourites - pizza, pies and macaroni - and says their guests called it the best buffet ever!

After three great speeches, a further 75 guests joined Amanda and Victoria's "typical Scottish party," where the dance floor was never empty. They treated guests to a candy buffet and got them giggling with a photo booth. "All we wanted was for people to enjoy themselves and when we looked out at the room it was clear everyone was having an amazing time," smiles Amanda.

Looking back on the planning process, the couple says going to wedding shows and sampling cakes were the best bits whilst sticking to a budget was their biggest challenge. And when it comes to their wedding highlight? There isn't one! "We honestly couldn't pick one moment. It truly was the best day and we wish we could do it all over again!"











AMANDA'S DRESS

Ronald Joyce at The Bridal Studio AMANDA'S HEADPIECE The Bridal Studio AMANDA'S EARRINGS Vivienne Westwood AMANDA'S SHOES Jimmy Choo BAND Studio Wedding Band **BRIDESMAID DRESSES** David's Bridal CELEBRANT Lucy Black Humanist Celebrant CAKE A Bonnie Wee Cake DÉCOR Celebre Weddings & Events, Occasions FLOWERS Stucio & Waow Florist HAIR Hair Ups by Mandy HARPIST Sarah MacNeil MAKE-UP Charlie Campbell Bridal RINGS Frnest Iones SAXOPHONIST + PIPER Rich Gordon Music **STATIONERY** Stationery by Suzanne TRANSPORT View from the Slow Lane VICTORIA'S DRESS Justin Alexander at Alison Kirk Bridal VIDEOGRAPHY Elliot Caunce Photography + Videography



PHOTOGRAPHER'S CREDIT

"Amanda & Victoria dreamt up a perfect day that became real! I especially enjoyed the time after the ceremony where everyone gathered for hugs, Janetta's ice cream, drinks and enjoyed the sun with the saxophonist playing away."

Lewis

Lewis Cannon Photography



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YSW on tour | Great expectations

Head of editorial Katie Bletcher discovers the **Old Course Hotel, Golf Resort & Spa** lives up to its reputation for high-end luxury



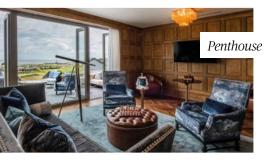
neutral palette. The eye-catching thistle motif carpet along with the three-tier chandeliers were designed by the hotel's late chairman Mr Kohler himself, and the room can be subdivided into a series of smaller rooms.



I've long held the belief that couples should spend their last day before marriage savouring the moment. However, unlike those beautifully choreographed movie scenes where you quaff Champagne with your squad, I spent my prewedding night venue decorating before grabbing some sub-par pizza.

So as I check into the famous Old Course Hotel, Golf Resort & Spa I can't help but be a little jealous of the to-be-weds who get to chill here the night before and possibly relax in the luxurious spa - more on that later.

I last stayed here just before lockdown and much is as I remember, including just how gorgeous the floral arrangements in the entrance lobby are and the doorman's warm welcome. But being shown round by wedding and events manager Laura Russell and her colleague Will Grewar, we get a tour of the vast Hall of Champions



which has had a complete glow-up since I last visited. The venue's largest room, which can comfortably seat 480 for dinner or 400 for a good dinner dance, has replaced dark greens and reds with an understated If your numbers aren't quite so grand, the hotel's tasteful ballroom with its slight art deco feel, is ideal for up to 130 evening guests. And with the bar being located in a separate entrance room, you can greet your evening guests with a welcome drink.

For your wedding ceremony I'm in love with the conservatory which has been extended to allow a full-length aisle. The showstopping chandelier and views over the world's most famous golf course make it the perfect spot for your vows.

Speaking of views, the Penthouse is the last word in luxury. Entering by the private staircase or lift you're immediately struck by the vista through the glass doors that open onto the private balcony. I can just imagine newlyweds kicking back here before retiring to the sumptuous bedroom, complete with roll-top bath.

Our own room is one of the stunning new Old Course Double Doubles. We also have a (more modest) balcony overlooking the course, and the bathroom boasts a gloriously powerful three head shower.

Dinner, served in the fourth floor Road Hole restaurant, of course lives up to the opulent surroundings, with my highlight being the west coast scallop carpaccio with crab and scallop roe ravioli. This is definitely food to wow your wedding guests.

Time to unwind

Remember I said everyone should do something special before their big day? It doesn't get much better than a trip to the hotel's Kohler Waters Spa. You know your treatment's been fabulous when you're told your 90 minutes are at an end and you hear a little voice from within cry "no!" That's exactly how I felt after experiencing the Sea Holistic Face & Body Ritual.

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Then it was on to sampling (nearly) all the delights of the spa, including the hydrotherapy pool, experience showers and sauna. There's also a cold plunge pool but I was feeling way too chilled for anything so adventurous! My tip to any couple needing to unwind pre-wedding? Book yourself in for the exact same ritual. **oldcoursehotel.co.uk**









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PHOTOGRAPHY: Lena Sebala Photography DÉCOR BY: Fifty Six Events



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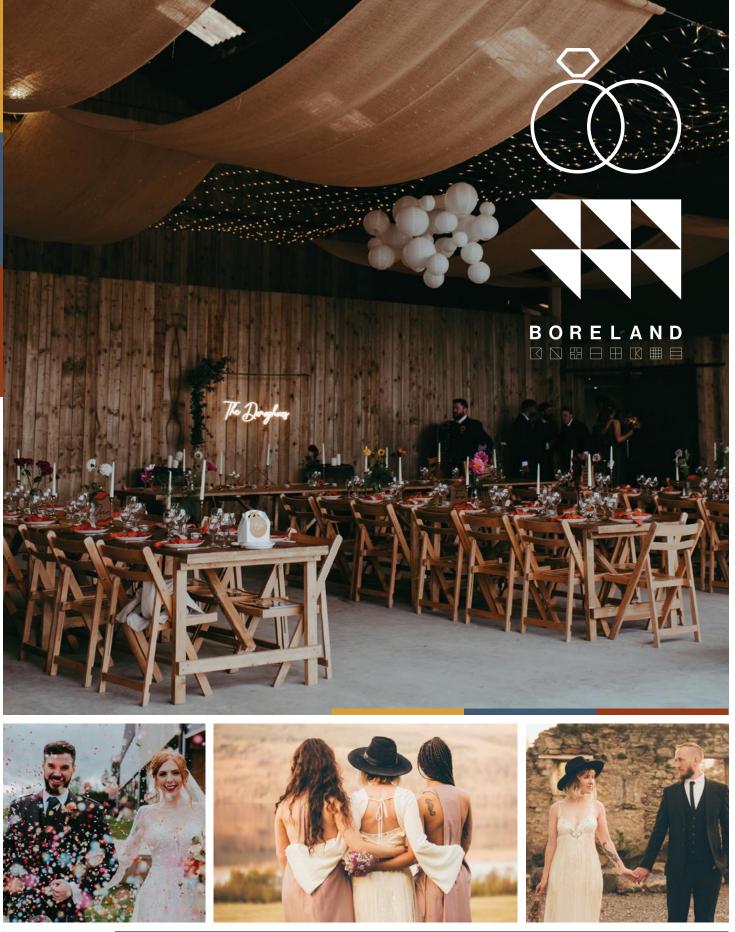
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"It really was like a big Christmas night out with the best friends and family." Jennifer





Christmas lovers Jennifer and David planned a December wedding at their Glasgow venue, and it was made special with a little help from friends

Jennifer and David first set eyes on each other while in a pet shop where David was working. "He was working there for a very short two weeks, and I went in with my new puppy," Jennifer explains.

After 10 months together, David planned a magical proposal in front of the castle at Disneyland, Paris. "We got both my rings from Ian Gallagher jewellers in Stirling and David's was from America," Jennifer goes on.

The couple were keen to marry in December of the same year, and with only 10 months to plan, they began searching for the perfect venue for a festive celebration. "We love Christmas and really wanted some Christmas décor incorporated in our day." Jennifer says. "The Busby were really amazing from start to finish. We knew pretty much instantly it was the right place. It was close for all of our friends and family and Megan, the wedding coordinator, was outstanding."

Jennifer and David didn't have a set theme, but Jennifer was keen for her bridesmaids to wear something with a wintry feel to it. "We made some cat and dog treat favours, which went down well, and David made some Christmas baubles for the tables. We also did our own table plan with Christmas film cards," Jennifer goes on.

LESS IS MORE

Charity manager Jennifer previously owned The Bridal Courtyard in Glasgow, so she had a good idea of the style of dress she was looking for. "I knew I didn't want anything over the top," she explains. "I have looked at so many dresses over the years I realised that for me, less was more. I knew I wanted something plain and with a sleeve - pretty much what I ended up with."

Her Justin Alexander gown was A-line in plain chiffon with floaty sleeves. "I loved it as it felt like it flattered my shape," she says. "I actually went back to my old shop for my accessories. The girls were so accommodating and helpful and it was nice to be back in the place I built up."

Jennifer had four bridesmaids, including best friend and maid of honour, Catrina. She was open to them all choosing something different as long as the colour was the same and, surprisingly, they all ended up settling on the same dress! They accessorised with some cosy fur.

David had a best man and three groomsmen and the couple's page boy was Jennifer's godson, Arran.











Jennifer says she felt calm throughout the planning process. "I am known as the planning one so, for me, the whole thing was fun. I love organising events, so this was just perfect for me."

The night before the wedding, Jennifer's best friend came round, they steamed the dresses and enjoyed a girls' night in with Jennifer's mum. "I slept for about five hours, which was pretty good I think," Jennifer says. "I feel like the morning was a bit of everything. I was excited and nervous, but also had fun with all the girls. The nerves took over at certain points but my maid of honour knew exactly what to say and when to say it, which really helped."

For Jennifer, walking down the aisle was a bit of a blur, but she knew once she saw her wedding video it would all sink in. "I was really nervous at the thought of everyone looking at me but then when it came to it, I didn't even notice people at all," she recalls. "I am in the Glasgow City Centre Rock Choir and my choir all came along to sing on the day. They sang me down the aisle to *A Thousand Years*. There were many tears from what I heard."

OUT OF THIS WORLD

The couple had a Catholic ceremony at nearby St Joseph's church in Clarkston and were glad the priest - a family friend - told them what to say, otherwise their nerves might have taken over!

Their 110 guests enjoyed a drinks reception which began with maid of honour Catrina's husband playing the guitar and singing. "We had an amazing reception. Our band Fiore Wedding and Event Band were absolutely out of this world and the dance floor was never empty. Everyone has commented on how great they were," Jennifer reveals. "We also had Ladycaricature for two hours, so our guests could get a wee memento of themselves on the day."

Jennifer describes the evening like "a big Christmas night out with the best friends and family". And she says her favourite part of the day - apart from marrying



the love of her life - was having their miniature dachshunds Haggis, Neeps and Tattie along for some photos. "They have turned out to be some of my favourite pictures and it wouldn't have been right not to have them feature somewhere."

She adds that her advice for readers planning their weddings is not to sweat the small stuff, and focus on enjoying time with your family and friends. "Take five minutes to watch everyone enjoy themselves and make sure you do the same - it goes by in a flash."













BAND Fiore Wedding and Event Band

BRIDE'S DRESS Justin Alexander

BRIDE'S ACCESSORIES The Bridal Courtyard

BRIDE'S SHOES The Perfect Bridal Company

BRIDESMAID DRESSES David's Bridal

CAKE Special Days Cake

ENTERTAINMENT Ladycaricature

FLOWERS Pretty Little Petals

HAIR Fiona's Mobile Hair Design

MAKE-UP Stephanie McDowell Makeup

RINGS Ian Gallacher Jewellers

TRANSPORT MET Wedding Cars

VIDEOGRAPHER SensiFilm



PHOTOGRAPHER'S CREDIT

"Photographing Jen and David's wedding was special for so many reasons. They had given so much thought and attention to detail to all parts of their day, including an unforgettable cameo appearance by Jen's three gorgeous little dachshunds in tartan kilts and flowers. What they couldn't have organised were the flakes of white snow that began to fall at the start of the day and continued throughout, making it feel absolutely magical. By the end of the night, it had all melted away again making it feel like the snow had been just for them."

Eoin

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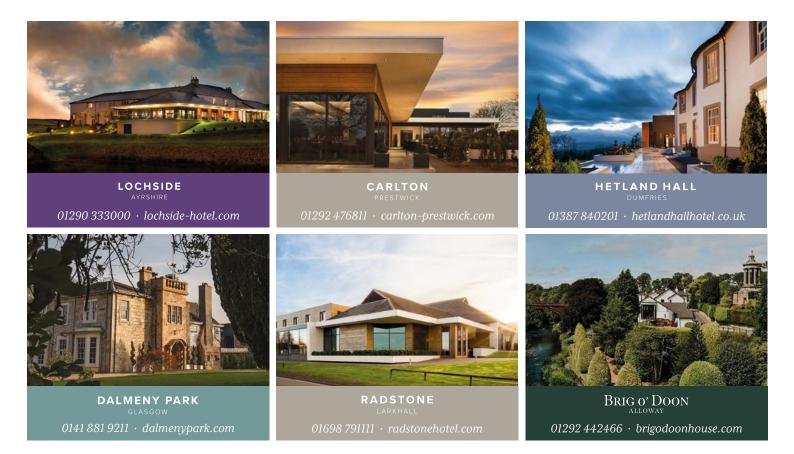
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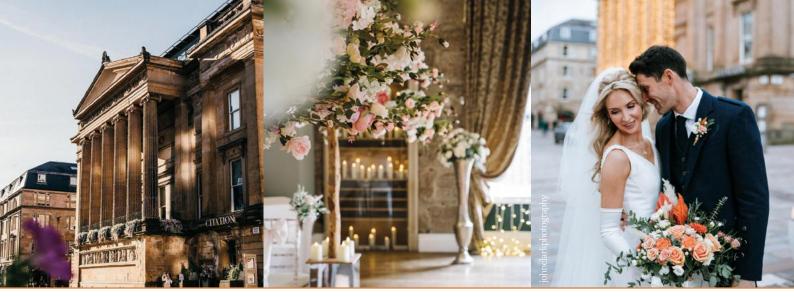
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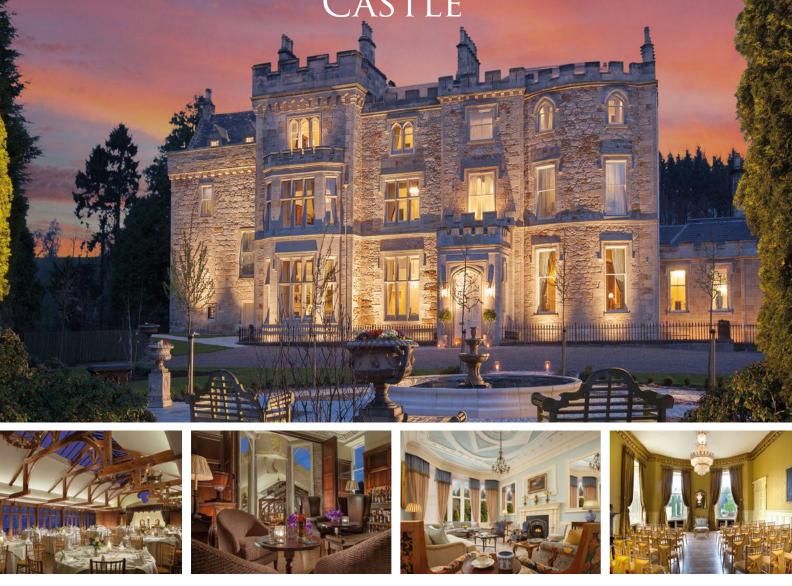
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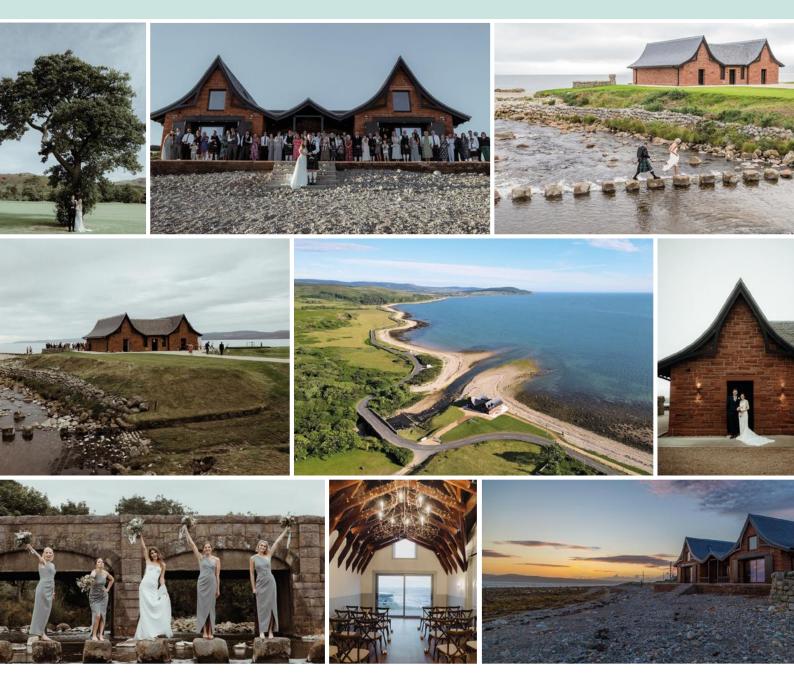
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Stirling, Argyll & the Trossachs

Dance with me

Robyn Casey & Graham Thomson

DATE: **Saturday 22nd October 2022** PHOTOGRAPHY: **Ezra Studios** VENUE: **Carrick Castle Estate, Argyll & Bute**

This couple channelled their creativity to blend their personalities into a day of celebration set against the backdrop of a stunning Scottish loch Robyn and Graham first met at a mutual friend's barbecue and hit it off straight away. After five years, Graham proposed to dancer and actor Robyn at sunset while on the bow of a cruise ship as it went underneath the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco. Robyn was working on the ship and Graham had come out to visit. In a fitting tribute to Robyn's profession, Graham designed a platinum engagement ring at Love Diamonds called a pirouette, which has a round diamond at the top and a twisted band with diamonds set into it. The couple were engaged for four years before they tied the knot, having to reschedule their original date of June 2021.

Robyn wanted to get married next to a loch and hoped for an outdoor ceremony, so the couple booked Carrick Castle Estate on the banks of Loch Goil for October 2022, keeping their fingers crossed for fair weather and looking forward to the beautiful autumnal colours. "There wasn't a particular colour scheme in mind, but the day did feature a lot of black, burgundy, grey and green," Robyn explains. Meanwhile, the words "can you spray paint it black?" became her catchphrase! "Basically, every effort was made to avoid white," she adds.

GETTING CREATIVE

DIY details also featured in the day with Robyn's dad, Gordon, creating a frame that sat behind them at the top table and the photo stand that had the seating plan, and Robyn's mum made the hanging garlands.

Graham's mum and dad spraypainted bird cages and hand-tied bows around the favours. All the parents also helped generate and spray paint empty wine bottles! Robyn's cousin and bridesmaid, Steph, created the buttonholes, customised their welcome sign and restyled their wedding cake. Robyn also made her bridesmaids gifts, embroidering a personalised flower onto denim jackets with their initials. At first, Robyn didn't intend to veer away from a traditional white dress, but when the perfect gown presented itself, she knew it was the right choice. "As soon as I put it on, I felt like me, I was dancing to the music in the shop and couldn't stop smiling - I loved it! Plus I never wear white in everyday life so I had a feeling I wouldn't wear white on my wedding day either," Robyn says. She opted for a two-tone ombre dress in smokey grey and white. It was a V-neck with a low V back, an A-line skirt and a short train.

Robyn has had acne on her back and chest since she was a teenager and has spent years hiding it. However, on her wedding day she says it was so important to accept herself as she is. "The love, acceptance and support my husband has given me and my skin helped me see no one thinks or cares about my skin as much as me. The fact that we would be accepting each other exactly as we are, felt like the perfect time for me to finally accept who I am."











"As soon as I put it on, I felt like me, I was dancing to the music in the shop and couldn't stop smiling - I loved it!" Robyn



Robyn accessorised with a striking headpiece by Ziptie Jewelry and she wore Steven Madden punk-inspired court stilettos and also changed into a second pair of white chunky heel boots from Nasty Gal.

There were six in the bridal party including Robyn's sister Morgan who was maid of honour and groomsmaid Claire, who is Graham's sister. They wore black dresses from ASOS, while Morgan's was a longer length in burgundy.

Graham wore a custom-made kilt and jacket including a plaid in Hebridean Peat and the jacket also had a surprise custom lining on the inside that Robyn only saw when she was walking down the aisle.

Robyn didn't get much sleep before the wedding, but she enjoyed getting ready with her bridal party, determined that nothing would get in the way of her happiness. Graham was fairly relaxed in the morning, but things became a bit more frantic as all of the chair legs ended up having to be covered in wrapping film to ensure Robyn got the wedding of her dreams outside!

FIRST DANCE

Robyn walked down the aisle to the song *Beautiful Life* by The Collection, feeling overwhelmed with emotion and happiness. She and Graham had a very personal, non-religious, ceremony with their friend, Franco Casilli, officiating and telling personal stories about the couple. They wrote their own vows and had a traditional Scottish handfasting ceremony. The legal part of the ceremony was carried out by celebrant Carol Ann Ramsay of Celebrate People.

For the reception, the couple served their favourite snacks - crisps and chocolate! There were also some garden games outside for entertainment. Their wedding breakfast consisted of a main and dessert served in a family feast style with communal plates. At night, the caterers brought along their pizza oven and created fresh Neapolitan pizzas as well as providing tea and coffee to accompany the wedding cake. "The food was incredible and definitely a highlight. Our family and friends still talk about how great it was!" Robyn says.

The couple had a choreographed first dance, which Robyn describes as a "special moment". Even though she taught Graham the dance, it was Graham who ended up keeping her right as she had been celebrating a little too much!

Afterwards there were a few ceilidh dances followed by a rock band for the rest of the night. "It was awesome," Robyn enthuses. "It was just a big, fun, pizza-fuelled, rock 'n' roll love party with all of our family and friends!"















BAND BRIDE'S DRESS Lucy Can't Dance BRIDE'S HEADPIECE Ziptie Jewelr BRIDE'S JACKET Little Lies BRIDE'S JEWELLERY Regal Rose BRIDE'S SHOES Steve Madden / Nasty Gal BRIDESMAID DRESSES ASOS CATERER Shotgun Weddings / The Dispensary Bar CAKE Rosewood Cakes CELEBRANT Carol Ann Ramsay of Celebrate People FLOWERS MUD Urban Flowers GROOM'S OUTFIT Eight Yards HAIR Nicola Thomson MAKE-UP LeeAnne Fraser PLANNER Clementine Weddings RINGS Love Diamonds STATIONERY Express Wishes TRANSPORT David Fox / Loch Goil community bus VIDEOGRAPHY Sean De Francesco





PHOTOGRAPHERS' CREDIT

"We had met Graham and Robyn for their pre-wedding shoot and immediately all four of us hit it off and had such good chemistry as we drove around Glencoe for photos, so we've been excited for their wedding for a long time and they didn't disappoint. The venue was stunning, the weather was moody and beautiful and, my goodness, they both looked stunning. The day was just a photographer's dream from start to finish and we would love to do it all over again."

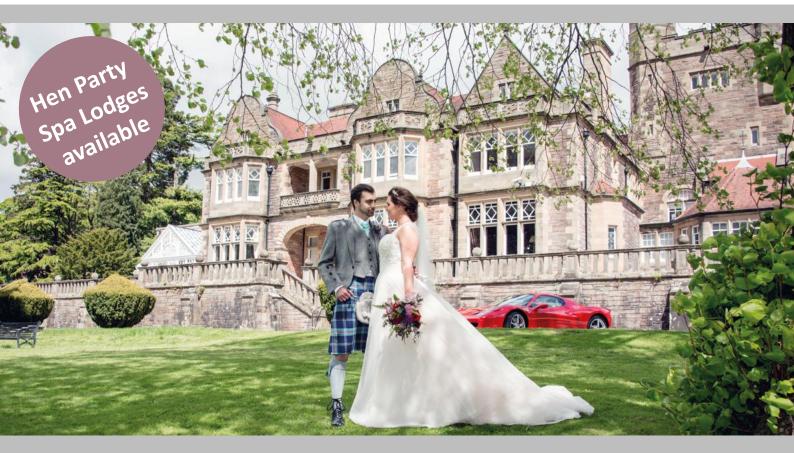
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