

Kent's busiest wedding planner reveals Top Wedding Tips



Released on: October 03, 2013, 10:43 am

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Industry: [Consumer Services](#)

As summer approaches many people will start thinking about weddings and making plans so here are some tips from the wedding coordinator at one of Kents premier venues, [Cooling Castle Barn](#) Weddings. As someone who has helped organise and plan 1000's of weddings there are few people better qualified to pass on some tips to the happy couple ensuring that their day runs smoothly.

Kent, United Kingdom, October 03, 2013, 10:43 am -- /[EPR NETWORK](#)/ -- You're a fiancée! The man of your dreams has taken the plunge, you have a gorgeous sparkler of a ring and he wants to marry you! The honeymoon period has well & truly kicked in & dreams are about to come true. Then the planning fear arrives as the spider web of preparing for the wedding of the year actually becomes a reality. Not only do you need to think about both the necessities and those luxurious extra's you may wish to have to personalise your day, but there's a hundred companies all claiming to be the best in town for every service that you could imagine. Wedding fairs seem to make it worse as you peruse aisles of cakes, flowers, suits, photographers...each offering a better deal than the previous. Magazines bamboozle you with nationwide companies that bring you innovative, new and unique ideas.

"Where do I start?" You ask as panic sets it....

Stop! Put the magazines & goodie bags brimming with fliers, cards and special offers down. Breathe.....

Remember your day is exactly that. Wedding planning does not need to be stressful – it should be an enjoyable build up to your big day.

Your Budget

Assuming you have not planned a wedding before, this task can seem daunting. It's easy to get carried away looking at all the options and sometimes there's just too much choice! The ideas are flowing and the excitement is reaching fever pitch as you discover endless possibilities of loveliness and joyous wonder. Try to narrow down between yourself and your partner what your hopes, likes and priorities are for your big day because as always there's a baddie to every fairy tale and in this story it's the BUDGET! Unfortunately the Big Bad Budget rears his ugly head in many inappropriate places and it will seem incredibly difficult to budget when you have no idea of how much everything costs. We advise you to collect at least 3 quotes for each item that you are thinking of hiring or buying to seek the best value for money and where possible avoid saying you need it for a wedding as the "W" word means mega-bucks! Maybe chat to your venue at this point to see if they have recommended suppliers that may do offers in conjunction with the venue, but do remember, if you have a limit to stick to don't be afraid to haggle and pull in favours where you can. So Auntie Brenda's a dab hand at cake baking....voila, cake sorted!

So, what next?

Decide between yourselves do you like modern or classic, a sit down meal or buffet, indoors or out, flamboyant or quaint. From this you will have an idea of key things to look for in a venue. Also draw up a preliminary list of guests so that you have a guest number to work with. This all sounds very sensible but it is also very necessary. You can then splurge your time on the fun parts; picking out a shortlist of venues and visiting them, brainstorming themes, colours, things to include, joining wedding forums to get opinions and ideas and chatting to your venue for ideas of what works well in their space.

There are countless blogs and articles that can offer advice of wedding ideas so it may be worth perusing these however in some circumstances it can be much less stressful to leave it to the professionals! Ensure you have checked with your venue to see if they offer a set up service so that you can concentrate solely on yourself on

the morning of your big day. Also check to see if they will book your Registrars for you and offer various planning meetings and tastings to make your journey stress free!

Seating your loved ones

Some of the more interesting experiences you may have to contend with are the wonders of family politics which leads swiftly onto where to seat everyone. It may take you several attempts to work out how this is going to please all your guests, resulting in some people being sat outside, however the most important thing to remember is this is your day! Try not to let guests dictate to you who they want to sit with and do not be afraid to put guests where YOU want them to be. Some Brides like to encourage friends and family to mix so purposely put strangers together. This can bode well for the evening as everyone parties together in a slightly worse state! Other Brides feel that it is important to have family closer or all their important key guests on the top table with them. If there are too many split family members to factor in, the simplest answer is to have a romantic top table for two!

What to say?

As a wife to be, one of your duties may be to calm the nerves of your jittery Groom before his big speech. Traditionally he won't have the pressure that's carried by the Best man to tell all, but lend him an understanding ear & advise him the following;

Write from the heart about how you met and how pleased he is to be standing there with you by his side. If he is very nervous, seek advice from the Duty Manager or Toastmaster as they speak to the crowds more often and every venue's sound system and acoustics differ. Encourage him to enjoy it and speak clearly and slowly. Write the speech down but do not read from it on the day – Practice, practice, practice so he is familiar with its flow & appropriate pauses for gags! But most importantly email a copy to himself, an Usher (NOT the Bestman.....too easy to give him a heads up on how to annihilate your Groom later in his speech!) and even your venue so that he cannot lose it! I can assure you that a lost speech will send his stress levels over the top!

Can I book the Weather?

So, you have a beautiful venue, an array of gorgeous decorations and the finest food and drink. You have booked a top Photographer,

Videographer, musician and classic car.....there's only one thing that could possibly trouble you now. The Great British Weather! Unfortunately there's very little that can be said for this as it's as unpredictable as a two year old in the "speak now or forever hold your peace" part of the ceremony, however you can certainly make the best of it and prepare for any weather. Some say there is really no such thing as bad weather, only different kinds of good weather, Sunshine is delicious, rain is refreshing, wind braces us up and snow is exhilarating. Just don't pin your hopes on radiant sunshine, instead factor in cute wraps for your Bridesmaids, comical wellies and umbrella's for you and your groom, maybe even a rubber duck to add to the photo's! The more humour that you can bring to your day, the more you will relax and remember it for all the right reasons. I have met many a Bride that knows their local weather station worker on first name terms after calling every day for a month in the run up to their wedding and it really cannot change the weather on the day! You may also wish to discuss with your venue what they can do in the event of bad weather and where guests would go if they cannot get outside. After all they must have had a rainy day before now!

Gift giving etiquette

Arguable one of the more fun sides to your wedding planning is deciding what gifts to ask for on your big day. If you and your hubby-to-be have already set up house together, another toaster, sandwich maker or George Foreman Grill may not be so warmly received. It has been highly recommended to me to set aside a day to take a trip around your local John Lewis scanning favourable items and creating a desirable wedding list to put in your invites, after all it's not often we feel a tagine or nest of coffee tables is an important and necessary purchase. The alternative of course, is to request Honeymoon donations that will help you fly off into the sunset together instead of jumping on a donkey in Blackpool . This is becoming much more common and a witty ditty in the invitations is all that is needed.

"We are sending out this invitation
In hope you will join our celebration
But if a gift is your intention
May we take this opportunity to mention
We have already got a kettle and toaster
crockery, dinner mats and matching coaster's.
So rather than something we've already got
We would appreciate money for our honeymoon pot

But most importantly we request
That you come to our wedding as our guest."

Mr & Mrs!

Before I draw conclusion on tips to "Keep calm & plan your stress free wedding" there is one very important item to remind all excited Brides to be. Choose your married name and practice your signature! This all sounds very obvious but really is the most exciting thing! Will you keep your maiden name, double-barrel yourselves to be the next Middleton-Windsor's or simply immerse yourself in the glory of becoming Mrs Windsor. Then create a master piece of a brand new signature that you take pride in and allows a small smile to escape every time you sign it! You're a MRS!!!!!!

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