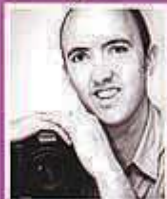


# Q&A

Let our experts take care of your wedding worries!

## Our panel of experts



**Nic Cleave**  
Nationally renowned and multi-award winning photographer based in South Wales.  
Tel: 01792 429 201 or visit [www.niccleave.com](http://www.niccleave.com)



**Sarah Holland**  
Advisor on all aspects of flowers for the Flowers and Plants Association.  
Visit: [www.flowers.org.uk](http://www.flowers.org.uk)



**Ruth Hunter**  
Certified wedding planner and managing director of Finesse Planning in Cardiff.  
Tel: 029 2065 0702 or visit the website at [www.finesseplanning.co.uk](http://www.finesseplanning.co.uk)



## Winter Worries

[www.mike-photo.com](http://www.mike-photo.com)

## MONEY MATTERS

**Q** My friend got married last year and says she paid the photographer almost as much money after her wedding day as she did before it. I have a set photography budget so how can I avoid this?

**A** *Nic says:* Some photographers sell packages that don't include albums, or that include very small or basic albums which most couples will want to upgrade later. This is where additional expenses are added. The original package price may look very attractive on paper but you'll need to allow for this extra cost later. This system can catch some people out. If you want to avoid expensive surprises make sure that your photography package includes an album that you'll be happy with after the day. Your photographer should be able to show you a complete example of the album in your chosen package so that you can be sure.



## Rose-free Valentine's Day

**Q** Since red roses will be in great demand at the time of my Valentine's Day wedding, what else is available in red at this time of year that still looks glamorous?

**A** *Sarah says:* Ask your florist for flamboyant, dramatic, architectural anaryllis instead. They're such a statement, so all you need are a few stems with some foliage tied with a velvet bow for your bouquet, and the bridesmaids can just carry a single, dressed-up stem.

You can get really creative with these flowers for your reception party too – they can be used upside-down to make floral chandeliers, look great cut low in glass cubes, or can be arranged tall and glamorous in a lily vase. Ask your florist for more ideas, and enjoy this fabulous flower.

**Q** I'm having a winter wedding and everything is organised. But there is one thing I don't know how to prepare for – the weather. Do you have any tips on how to deal with rain or snow?

**A** *Ruth says:* Most winter brides dream about a white wedding but in reality it can cause all sorts of problems. The chance of snow is rare but rain, wind and general cold weather is likely. There are a few ways of handling the elements though so don't panic. Ensure that you have matting available for paths if you have to walk on soft ground or fill in large puddles with woodchips. If you think it will be icy ask the church and venue if they will grit the pathways for you. You can also give your ushers some old towels at the church or ceremony to dry the floor before you arrive so your dress doesn't soak up muddy water. It is also a good idea to look into providing gas patio heaters outside for smokers. Finally check with your venue that there is a cloakroom available for guests to leave their winter coats.



**Q** I'm getting married next year but due to the economic climate my fiancé and I are on a budget. Photography is really important to us but we're worried we won't be able to afford a high quality photographer. Do you have any ideas on how to keep costs down?

**A** *Nic says:* Firstly don't assume you can't have a great professional photographer to capture your day. Here are my tips for achieving quality photography on a budget:

- Instead of choosing an all-day package ask your short-listed photographers if they are willing to offer a shorter package, for example photographing the ceremony and part of the reception.
- If you're willing to risk booking your photographer later than usual, some photographers offer a late booking package. Be aware of the risk that your preferred photographer may not be available on your wedding day though.
- If a professional album is not a priority for you, choose a photographer who offers a digital package. Here, the images are supplied on a CD with printing permission. There is no album included so the package should be cheaper than a standard package which would come complete with a finished album.
- If photography is of prime importance to you there is a new trend in the UK, where couples ask family and friends to buy portions of a wedding photography package for them as a wedding gift. You will only need a few family members to take part to make the difference between buying the package you can afford and the package you have your hearts set on.



[www.niccleave.com](http://www.niccleave.com)



[www.gayevaller.co.uk](http://www.gayevaller.co.uk)

## Playing host

**Q** Both mine and my fiancé's parents are divorced and don't get on very well. It's really beginning to cause us stress as we're not sure how we're going to arrange the top table without causing hostility. Do you have any suggestions?

**A** *Ruth says:* The best solution that I've used for this problem is to do away with a traditional top table in exchange for hosted tables. You can ask each parent if they would host a table each at the wedding. You can then seat people on their table that you know they get on well with. Make sure that their tables are on opposite sides of the room to reduce opportunities for them to come into contact. You can also ask other guests to host additional tables and have your closest friends or wedding party members on your table – which leaves you totally free to relax and enjoy the reception.

## BOUQUETS OF HYACINTH

**Q** I want to use seasonal flowers for my February wedding, but I don't want traditional spring blooms, as they don't seem sumptuous enough to me. What can you suggest?

**A** *Sarah says:* The perfect spring flower that reeks of luxury is the hyacinth. They are naturally sweetly scented, and some of the world's most famous, fabulous fragrances use the scent in their composition, such as Cacharel's Anais Anais and Eau d'Eden; Chanel's Chance; Gucci's Eau de Gucci, Gucci No 1 and Envy, and YSL's Paris and Y. Hyacinth perfume in its original, natural state will add to your allure and fragrance the whole room. The shape of the starry flower is so delicate, and massed together in the natural wand shape of the hyacinth looks indulgent and magical. Go for a simple hand-tied posy of hyacinths, or ask your florist to wire the pigs (individual flowers) into jewellery for extra decadence.

