

Homespun CHIC

Eleanor and Richard's homemade wedding reflected their love of all things vintage

Images courtesy of Nic Cleave Photography



Richard James and Eleanor Moyle tied the knot at All Saints Church in Barry, followed by a marquee reception at West Country House Hotel, Llantwit Major, on Saturday 28 August, 2010.



Bride's tip

Try not to hold your bouquet too much like a shield, otherwise you won't be able to see your dress properly in the photos.

In the beginning

Eleanor and Richard met at a mutual friend's house party back in 2008. With Eleanor being dressed up in a hilarious *Scooby Doo* costume, and Richard dressed as *Batman*, the pair hit it off right away.

"Despite living 120 miles apart, we travelled every weekend to see each other," recalls Eleanor. "It wasn't quite love at first sight but we both knew it might grow into something special in the future. From the moment we met, Rich was so much fun. The more we got to know each other, the more I realised how kind, honest and intelligent he was."

"Eleanor is so dedicated to her family and friends, I know she'd do anything at the drop of a hat to make sure people are safe and well," adds Richard.

Clearly in love, it's no surprise that Richard and Eleanor had discussed marriage prior to the engagement. The couple even found themselves at a point where they were planning the wedding itself and so decided to

make the engagement official with a beautiful emerald-cut diamond set on a platinum band for Eleanor to wear.

Home from home

Wanting to keep their wedding as personal as possible, Eleanor and Richard decided on a shabby chic vintage theme, which incorporated lots of beach details and homemade elements. The couple knew they wanted to say their vows at their local church in Barry, as Richard had attended All Saints throughout his childhood, so it was a special place for both of them.

"When we visited the West Country House Hotel in Llantwit Major, we fell in love with the location and the warm, personal vibe we felt from the staff," says Eleanor. "We also loved the fact that we could have complete exclusivity on the day and our friends and family could stay over. It meant we could spend the whole weekend with the people that we loved."



"My friend Kate was my chief bridesmaid, and I also asked my friend Sarah and Rich's sister Emma to be with me on the day. All three girls have different styles and were aware of our theme and colour scheme, so I let them choose their own outfits for the day because I wanted them to be comfortable. Kate (left) chose a dress from Monsoon and the other girls picked dresses from Coast."



Antique chic

"As soon as our engagement was official I started looking at wedding dresses in magazines, and one designer that stuck out for me was Charlotte Balbier," says Eleanor. "I booked an appointment at one of her stockists in Ironbridge and went along with my mum and friend Lisa. I had my heart set on a style called Pixie, but when I tried it on I found it didn't really suit my shape."

Luckily for Eleanor, Charlotte came to the rescue: "As she could see my disappointment, the owner of the boutique phoned Charlotte there and then, who agreed to make an A-line version of Pixie especially, so I could still wear my dream dress," she says. "I loved the vintage style and the pretty lace sleeves were perfect. I accessorised with two simple flower grips in the side of my hair."

Blooming beautiful

Eleanor chose a selection of flowers that tied in with the colours of her bridesmaids'

dresses, with her only request being amnesia roses because they are her favourite. "I also had shells in my bouquet," she adds. "These represented the beach because that is where Rich and I are at our happiest."

Pretty potted hydrangeas and other mixed floral arrangements dotted the reception marquee. Richard's godmother made these herself using flowers from her garden.

Foodie details

"Neither of us like fruit cake, so we decided against having a traditional wedding cake," says Eleanor. "Instead we chose to have three of our favourites, handmade by my mum. These were lemon drizzle, chocolate and Cointreau, and toffee cake. All three tasted amazing."

"For the favours, my mum made heart-shaped Welshcakes and her good friend Margaret baked heart-shaped caramel shortbread. This was given out as guests left the church after the ceremony, so they could have something to eat before the drinking began!"



Vintage charm

The couple's marquee reception was adorned with pretty homemade bunting, created by Richard's parents and aunts. On the tables were candles, vases filled with grey pebbles to remind them of the beach, and table numbers that featured childhood photos of the couple. "Most of them were on the embarrassing side, but we thought it would break the ice a bit," laughs Eleanor.

Perfect plans

Eleanor admits that she enjoyed the planning process, as it gave her an excuse to indulge her stationery and magazine obsession. "We booked most things in the first couple of months after our engagement so we didn't have anything to worry about in the last few weeks before the day."

"We wanted our wedding to be full of fun; a relaxed occasion with family and friends. Everyone was incredibly supportive and we were so grateful that nobody tried to impose their own ideas on us, but rather respected our vision of how we wanted the day to be."

Looking back

"The whole day was amazing," says Richard. "However, the highlight for me has to be when Eleanor walked into the church and I saw the smile on her face. I could see how excited she was. I also loved taking some time out and travelling down to Porthkerry together in the VW Beetle. We had a lovely romantic walk and our photographer Nic Cleave took some amazing photos."

Eleanor agrees and says one of her favourite moments of the day was going down to The Knap in Barry to have photos taken with the bridal party. "It suddenly turned into the windiest day ever," she laughs.

Beyond the sea

After the wedding, Eleanor and Richard headed off to the luxurious Harbourmaster Hotel in Aberaeron for a night. "It was carnival day so we sat by the sea, ate fish and chips and watched all the floats go by," recalls Eleanor. "We enjoyed chilling out before having dinner later on at the hotel, where we ate – quite possibly – the best steak ever." ♥



Eleanor and Richard's contact book

Photographer
Nic Cleave Photography
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Venue
West House Country Hotel
01446 792 406
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Bride's dress
Charlotte Balbier
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Bride's make-up
Heidi Herkes
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Bride's bouquet
Alison Bentley Flowers
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Groom's suit
Moss Bros
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Transport
Lovebug Wedding Car Hire
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