

Q&A

Let our experts take care of your wedding worries!

Our panel of experts



Nic Cleve
Nationally renowned and multi-award-winning photographer based in South Wales.
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Advisor on all aspects of flowers for the Flowers and Plants Association.
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Blooming drama

Q I want a dramatic, scented flower for my autumn wedding, and I'm worried there'll be nothing in season! Can you give some suggestions?

A *Sarah says:* Go for lilies. They're dramatic enough to look fantastic on their own with little need for other flowers – just try some simple foliage like grasses or meeds. If you want to mix with other flowers, try gladioli – its architectural shape will look fantastic in a sheaf bouquet, perfect for an autumn wedding. Add sheaves of corn or wheat for a fantastic rustic look that really reflects nature's 'back to nature' outlook. Lilies have a wonderful sweet scent that will add natural fragrance to your ceremony. Try fun plants for your table decorations in bright pots – this will save you money and keep the harvest theme strong! You can go for lily plants, as well as ornamental peppers and winter cherries (solanum).



STRIKE A POSE

Q How do we choose which photographer to have on our wedding day?

A *Nic says:* Style: Photographers vary greatly from relaxed and unobtrusive reportage photography, to very formal and heavily posed photography, to somewhere in-between. Do a quick search of photographers' websites and take a look at the various styles available. Relationship: I can't stress enough how important it is to choose a photographer you trust and feel a 'connection' with as if you're not completely relaxed with them, you'll find it difficult to be yourselves and this will show in the photos.

Part body of work: Always check that when you meet photographers they show you 'complete weddings' and not just a random selection of their 'best shots'. Ask to see a complete 'real wedding' they have photographed recently. If this is not possible, proceed with care.

Price: Photographers charge from £500 to £5000 but we are quick to remind couples that price alone should not be the determining factor if photography is high on their list of priorities!



www.usbailey.com



Food glorious food

Q I'm struggling to find a way of providing food for evening guests that's within my budget. I would love to do something other than a finger buffet – can you offer any ideas?

A *Ruth says:* A typical finger buffet provided by a venue or caterer can prove expensive. As an alternative, you could consider a pig roast and salads, a pizza buffet, bacon rolls or selection of cheese and breads. A great idea, that your guests will remember, is to order small individually wrapped portions of fish and chips from a local chip shop and have them laid on a table for guests to help themselves. Also, consider providing food for 75% of your evening guests as this will be plenty to feed everyone without any waste. Lastly, cut your cake at the beginning of the evening reception. This way you will not only share this moment with everyone but can serve the cake with the buffet!

PICTURE PERFECT

Q How far in advance should we book our photographer?

A *Nic says:* Basically it depends on how important to you the photography of your day is. If it's low on the list of priorities you are likely to find 'a photographer' that is free quite close to the actual day. However if it is important to you we suggest couples approach the job of booking their photographer in the same way as their venue. Some of the nicer venues we regularly work at are booked two to three years in advance for the most popular dates of the year and the same can be said for the more sought-after photographers across South Wales. That said, many photographers prefer not to take bookings so early and most of our couples book somewhere between 12 to 18 months before. Our advice is this: as soon as you know the date start shortlisting your photographers and don't put off meeting them if you want your first choice photographer to be available!



Al fresco affair

Q I've been brought up in the countryside and have always dreamed of a wedding outside but recently I heard you can't get married outdoors in Wales, is this true?

A *Ruth says:* I'm delighted to say that you can get married outdoors! However, there are certain laws that restrict where this can happen. Under English and Welsh law you have to be married under a permanent roof – this doesn't mean it has to be inside a building but a venue must have an outdoor structure such as a summer house or gazebo that's licensed for civil ceremonies. Speak to your local registry office to find out which venues have a license for outdoor ceremonies. Alternatively, a humanist wedding allows you to be married anywhere you wish but as it's not legally binding, you would need to have a marriage at a registry office too. Take a look at www.humanism.org.uk for more information.

Got a question? Write to us at 'Q&A', Your South Wales Wedding, Braselley House, Newlands Drive, William, Esser, CMB 2UL. Alternatively email your question to editor@countyweddingmagazines.com