

# A picture perfect day

It was a personal day for Catherine and Dean as they celebrated their fun wedding with friends and family – and a few famous faces

Images courtesy of Nic Cleave Photography



Dean Richards married Catherine Harris on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> June, 2010, at St Luke's Church, Cwmbwria in Swansea followed by a reception at The King Arthur Hotel in Gower

## In the bouquet

"Our florist Maureen Cattoy used large-headed blooms like peonies and avalanche roses combined with eucalyptus, rosemary and thyme to create the romantic look we were looking for." – Catherine

## In the beginning

Catherine and Dean had known each other a long time before they actually got together, they were at the same school and shared the same classes for years. "We were – and still are – part of a large group of friends who all hung out together," says Catherine. "We got on well and made each other laugh. Although it wasn't quite love at first sight, I think our friends saw something there long before we did."

It wasn't until the pair left school in 1999 that they went out on a date. "So much has changed since then," recalls Catherine. "But the qualities we saw in each other back then are still here now. Dean made me laugh then, and he still does." Dean agrees: "Cath and I had so much in common when we were at school, and over the years that friendship kept growing. She's always been loved by my family, and as my grandfather told me, I've got excellent taste in women. I've married my best friend."

Dean proposed to Catherine while the pair were holidaying in Rome. "Our birthdays are five days apart," says Catherine, "so Dean organised a surprise trip for both of us. I had no idea where we were going until we got to the airport – and I certainly had no idea he was planning to propose."

After seeing the sights of Rome, Catherine and Dean enjoyed a meal together and walked back to the hotel via the Trevi Fountain. Although it had been bustling with people earlier that day, the area was completely empty so the couple sat down to take in the surroundings. "As we got up to leave, Dean got down on one knee, pulled the ring

out of his pocket and proposed," says Catherine. "I was so shocked, but said yes straight away and then rang my parents."

## Setting the scene

Despite scouring the M4 corridor in Wales, looking for the perfect venue, Catherine and Dean admit they found it difficult choosing the right place. "When we came across The King Arthur Hotel it was an icy December morning, which was far from the hot June wedding day we actually had, but straight away it felt right," says Catherine. "In particular we loved how welcoming the staff were, and how homely and comforting the food was. We wanted our guests to really enjoy the wedding breakfast and the hotel allowed us to provide different menu options for them."

The couple agreed that the hotel setting was so pretty that not much decoration was needed. Instead they opted for natural flower displays to enhance the room, coupled with a few fun extras on the tables.





*Photo-fabulous*

"We wanted to add a real personal touch to our wedding, and had the idea to include photos on as many items of the stationery as possible," says Catherine. "We included photos of ourselves on the invitations, and on each of the menus there was a thumbnail-sized photo of the guest it belonged to."

Carrying on the picture theme, the couple placed masks of famous faces on everyone's chairs, including Marilyn Monroe, Audrey Hepburn, Charlie Chaplin and Elvis. "We have a love for all things fancy dress," laughs Catherine. "For the children we handed out personalised goodie bags with sparkly masks inside for the girls and pirate accessories for the boys, as well as lots of other bits and pieces for them to play with throughout the evening."

*The bride's outfit*

Catherine chose a dress from designer Benjamin Roberts, bought from Amy Chloe Bridal in Anmanford. The A-line cut of the gown was very simple but the beautiful diamond and pearl detailing across the waist and along the buttons at the back gave it a flattering and elegant look. "To finish my outfit, I opted for a simple headband tiara from Rhapsody Bridal in Swansea," adds Catherine. "The staff made the piece from scratch to my specifications, to complement the stones that were on the gown."

I also wore a pair of diamond earrings, given to me as a gift from Dean. They were brilliant-cut with a teardrop of white gold surrounding them, which, fittingly enough, matched the teardrop detailing on my dress. I suspect there were a few conversations between Dean and my mum beforehand!"

*Purple rain*

Catherine had four bridesmaids with her on the day; her best friends Jo, Lisa and Gemma, and her cousin Hollie. She also had four flowergirls - her cousins Megan and Isabel and her young god-daughters Ellie and Megan-Ruby.

"My bridesmaids all wore dresses from Dessy," says Catherine. "As soon as they tried them on I fell in love with them, and luckily they did too. I wanted to make sure the girls felt good in the gowns, and not like they were wearing a uniform. To complete the look they wore simple pewter-coloured shoes which had diamond detailing over the straps and they carried clutch bags that matched their dresses."



*Editor loves...*

Too-cool-for-school Dean arrived at the church in a retro ice cream van, organised as a surprise by his brother Matthew. It provided the perfect entrance on such a hot day. We bet the guests were pleased too!

*It's a guy thing*

Dean and his groomsmen donned dark grey tail suits. To finish his outfit, Dean wore his with a fitted ivory shirt and waistcoat and a stylish latte-coloured tie. "I opted for a regular tie as opposed to a traditional cravat because I wanted a look that was slightly more contemporary," says Dean. The suit was finished off with black shoes and Swarovski crystal cufflinks.

Dean's best man Robert wore a similar outfit, but chose a purple tie to complement the bridesmaids' dresses. "Rob did a great job," recalls Dean. "He organised a fantastic stag do and of course, ridiculed me in the best man's speech. I was lucky actually, he was going to use the megaphone that made an appearance at our stag do, but changed his mind at the last minute."



*Sweet treats*

Guests indulged in a little chocolate heaven at Catherine and Dean's reception, as the pair chose to serve a delicious chocolate wedding cake with a tasty chocolate mousse and fondant filling. It also came complete with individual chocolate cups for everyone. "From all the comments we received in the guest book, it sounds like it went down a storm," laughs Catherine.

The couple also chose to have quirky Wonka Bars from the classic film Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory, as favours for their guests. "Inside, there were three golden tickets hidden," says Catherine, "and those that found them were given prizes which included a bottle of Veuve Clicquot, a huge box of chocolates and Vue cinema vouchers."

At the evening reception, Catherine and Dean had a pick'n'mix corner for guests to help themselves to, including lots of old-fashioned sweetie jars filled with retro goodies. The pick'n'mix bags were personalised with the couple's name and the date of the wedding.

*It's party time*

"One of my favourite moments has to be the speeches," remembers Catherine. "As part of my father's speech, he recited lyrics from the Blues Brothers hit *Everybody Needs Somebody* because it was one of the songs all the guys had sung on the stag do. My dad donned his Blues Brothers trolley and as he started reciting the words, everyone who had been on the stag do got up and started singing. It was brilliant!"

Dean also recalls enjoying the speeches, and that included doing his own: "I enjoyed everything, especially the build-up and anticipation. We also had a live band, which was amazing, and the dancefloor was full all night. Seeing the guests' reactions to some of the fun elements we added to the day was also very rewarding," he says.

*Honeymooners*

For their honeymoon, the couple combined a relaxing break in Cancun with a more bustling trip to Las Vegas. "We went to Vegas first, and stayed at the Planet Hollywood Resort which had the most wonderful views over the Bellagio Fountains," says Catherine. "While we were there we managed to see illusionist David Copperfield and the brilliant Cirque du Soleil. It's an amazing place."

The second leg of the couple's holiday involved travelling down



to Mexico, where they stayed at the five-star Moon Palace Resort in Cancun. "On arrival we couldn't believe how luxurious the hotel was," says Catherine, "and to our surprise we were quickly upgraded to concierge level, where benefits included 24-hour room service, a private beach area and a Jacuzzi in our room. As it was the final part of our honeymoon, we didn't plan too many activities and instead enjoyed being waited on all day long!" ♥

*Catherine and Dean's contact book*

**Photographer**

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www.niccleave.com

**Cake**

Dragons and Daffodils  
07872 037 832  
www.dragonsanddaffodils.com

**Venue**

The King Arthur Hotel  
01792 390 775  
www.kingarthurhotel.co.uk

**Flowers**

Maureen Cottle  
01792 349 760  
www.maureencottle.com  
swansea.co.uk

**Bride's dress**

Amy Chloe Bridal  
01269 595 500  
www.amy-chloe-bridal-shop.co.uk

**Cars**

Bevan Wedding Cars  
01792 586 117  
www.bevanweddingcars.co.uk

**Bride's hair**

The Hair Business  
01792 642 804  
www.thehairbusiness.com

**Stationery**

GPS Wedding Stationery  
01792 206 647  
www.gpsweddingstationery.co.uk

**Groom's suit**

Dyfed Menswear  
02920 619 040  
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**Reception décor**

RSVP Coordinators  
01792 882 884  
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