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St Lucia

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Venues in north
Northumberland

ENDLESS LOVE

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Planning sos

Top wedding advice

Fashion icon

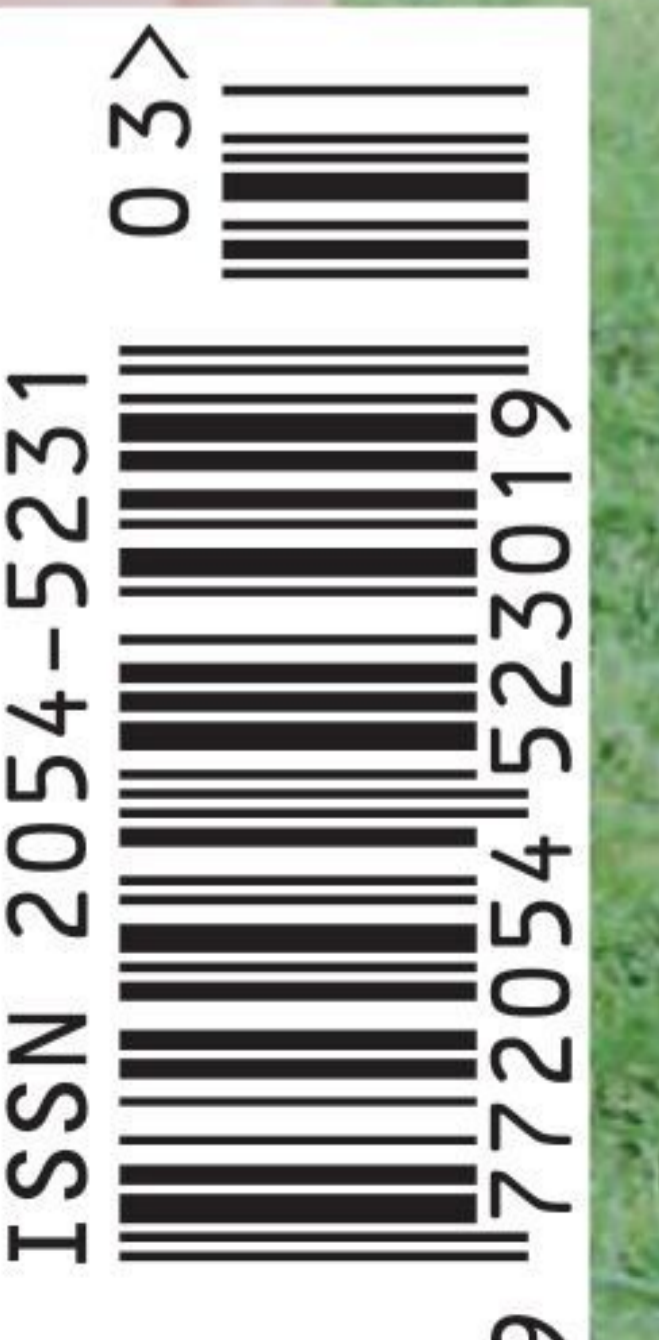
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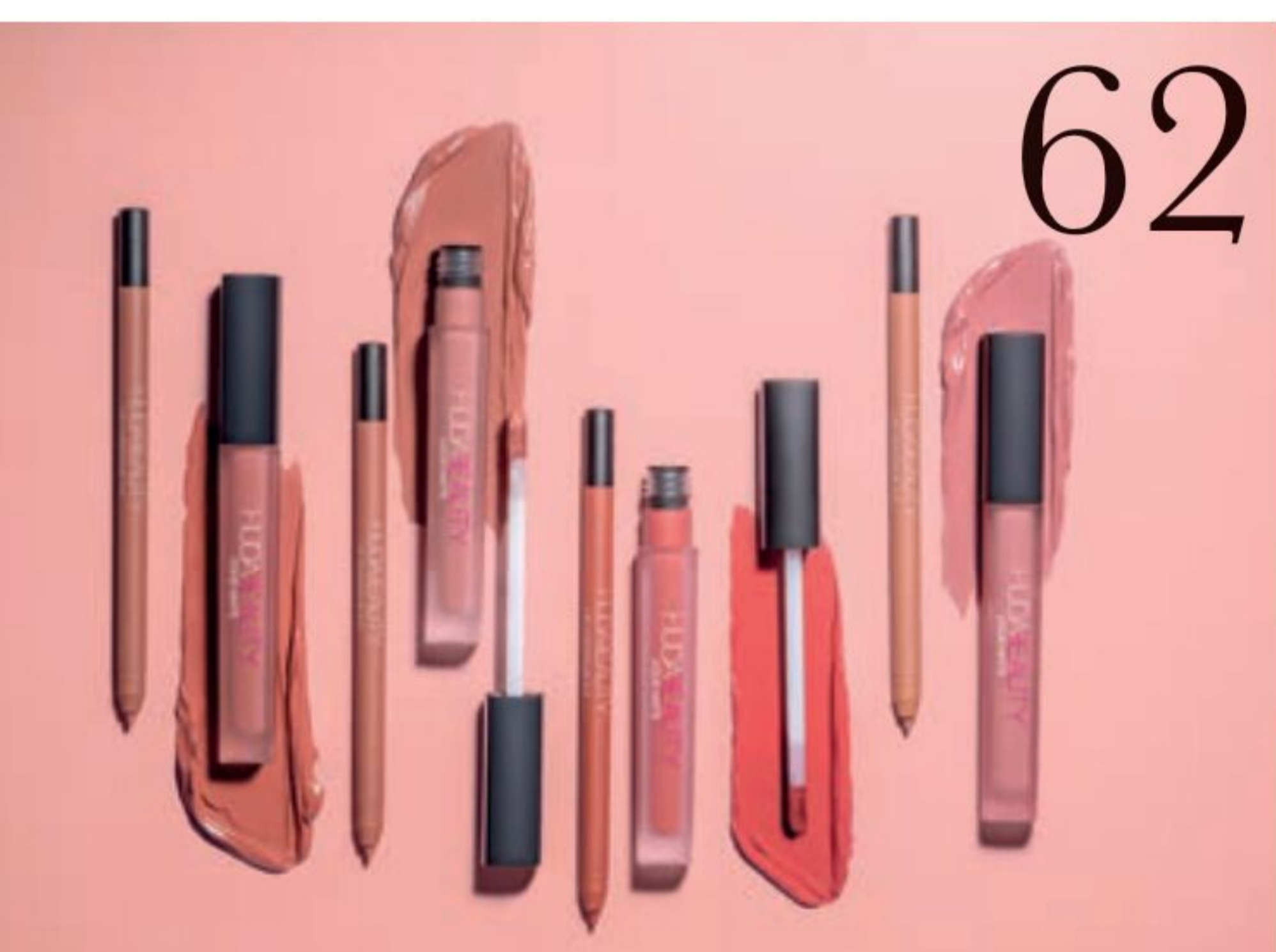
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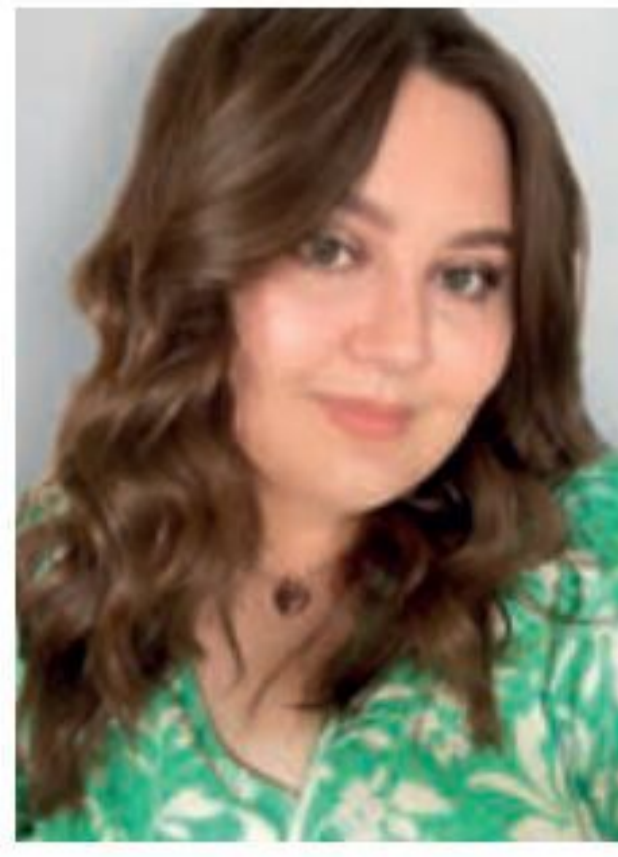
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Here comes the sun



Hello lovely readers, and welcome to another issue of *Your North East Wedding*. As the weather warms up and the daffodils start peeping through, it's time to welcome spring with open arms. We're one step closer to summer, and although I'm dreaming of those beach days soaking up the sun, spring is such a special time of year. I love being in nature surrounded by pretty flowers, and as a huge animal lover, I'm so excited for adorable animals to be born!

As we get closer to July, I can't help but get even more excited for my colleague Melissa to tie the knot to the lovely Dave. As a bridesmaid, I've loved supporting my close friend and helping her prepare for such an important day – I can't wait to see her walk down the aisle! I've found my perfect attire; a sage green cold-shoulder dress that flows to the floor. All I need now is to find those perfect finishing touches.

The time of year is perfect for exchanging vows, and we can begin utilizing outdoor spaces more for the "I dos", drinks receptions, garden games, chill out areas and more. Make sure to check out our Glorious Gardens feature, where you'll discover beautiful venues with amazing surroundings.

In this issue, you'll also find beauty tips, entertainment ideas, stunning real weddings, venue inspiration and more. We've gathered some of the top suppliers from around the county to share their advice regarding wedding dilemmas and last-minute worries.

My time as the editor for *Your North East Wedding* has come to an end. Over the last two years, I've really seen what this amazing region has to offer from the talented suppliers, showstopping venues and inspirational couples – I'm so proud of what you have all achieved.

That's all from me; now sit back, relax and celebrate anything and everything wedding.

Happy planning!

Olivia x

Olivia Gibson
Editor

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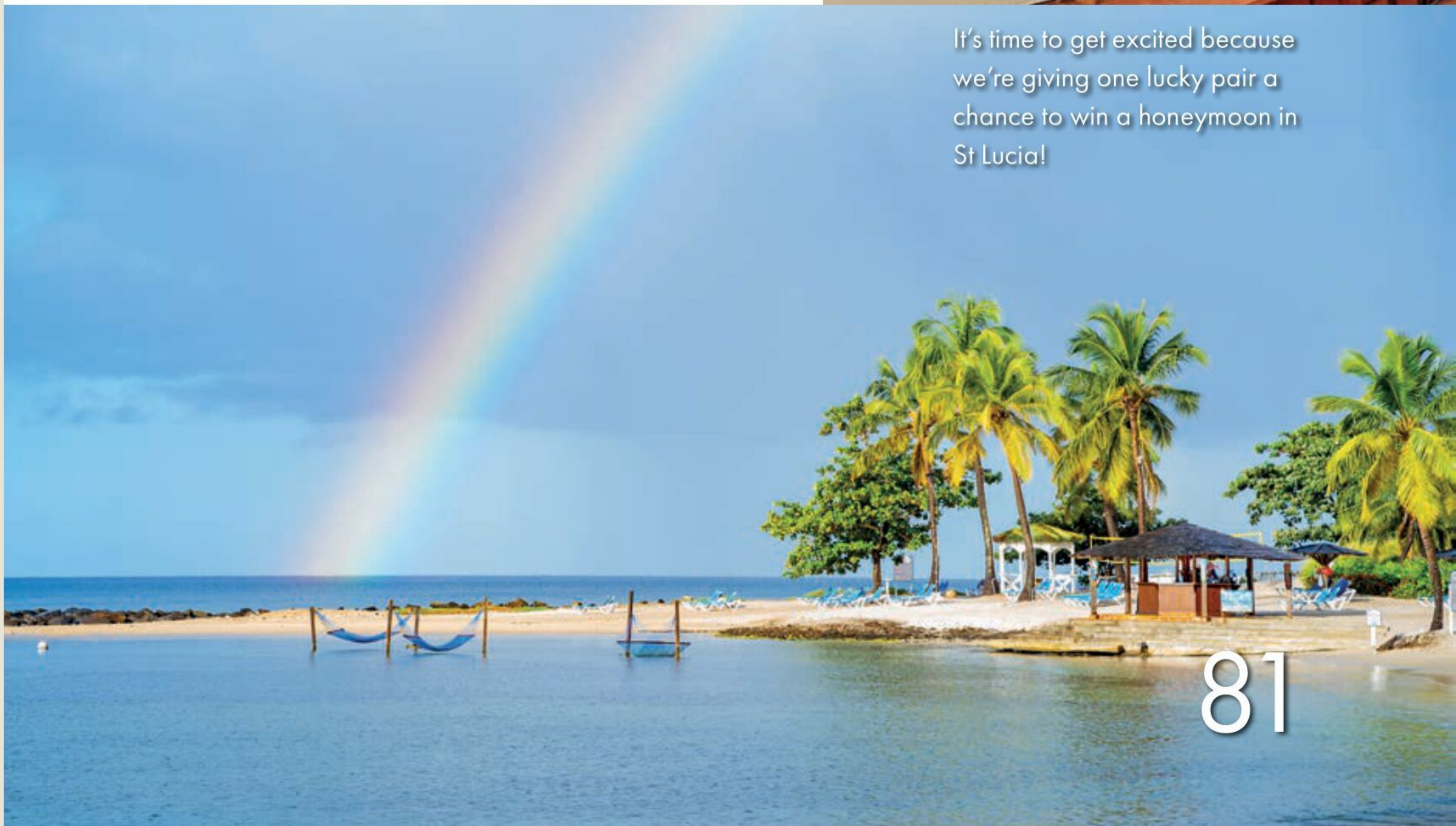
I love this showstopping dress available at Kate Collins Couture – just look at those stunning sleeves!

52



Check out beautiful gowns from the latest bridal collections.

It's time to get excited because we're giving one lucky pair a chance to win a honeymoon in St Lucia!



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www.laurabeasleyphotography

Plan your special day with confidence and turn to our Planning SOS feature where you'll discover top advice and tips on how to create a stress free and memorable wedding.

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https://jossguestphotography.co.uk

EDITOR'S LETTER

Gael and Peter tied the knot last year during the pandemic and had a second wedding after restrictions lifted to celebrate with loved ones.

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www.edwardashleyphotography.co.uk

We've gathered properties set in stunning surroundings to help you find the perfect wedding setting – your dream venue could be a few pages away!

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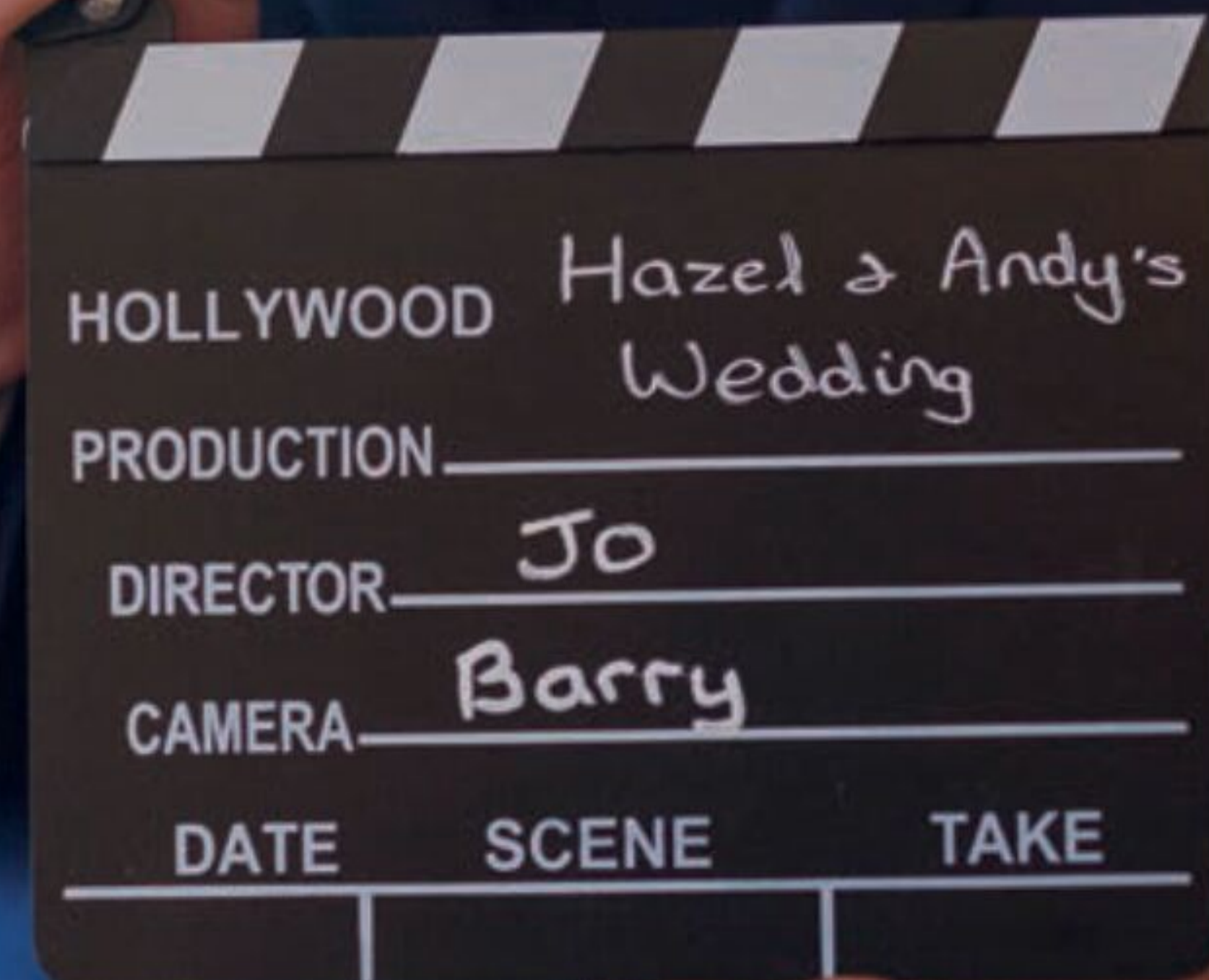


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Psst, North East Celebrant is currently offering 10 per cent off celebrant-led weddings!

Read a heartwarming tale from Hazel and Andy's wedding and discover all the little details that made their day stand out.

www.barryforshawphotography.com



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Say Yes To The Dress

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THE PERFECT SETTING

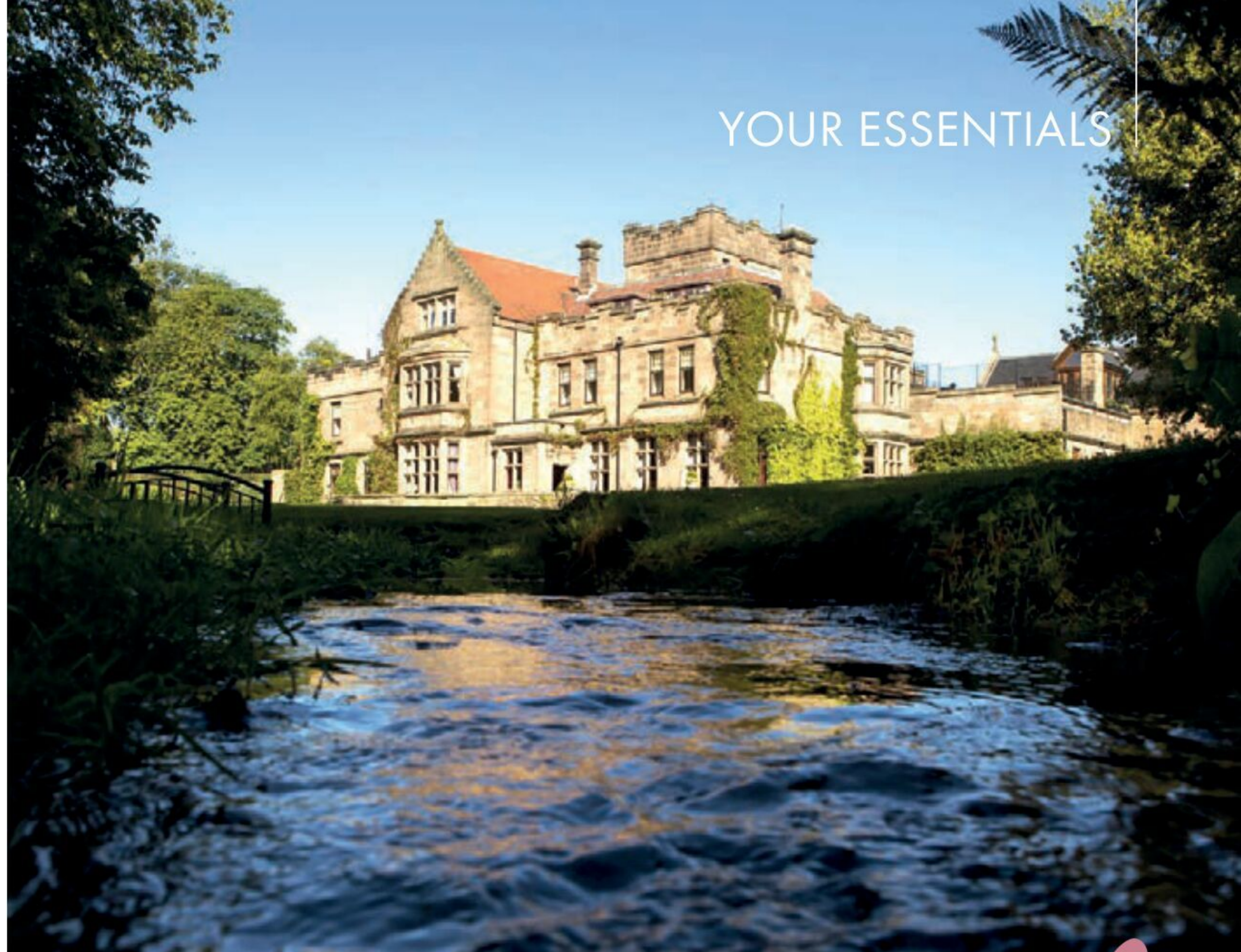
Situated in Northumberland, Ellingham Hall has been awarded Event Team of the Year at The Wedding Industry Awards 2022. The event took place at The Vermont Hotel and highlighted talented companies from England, Scotland and Wales.

Set in eight acres, the hall has been offering exclusive weddings for more than 15 years and has a team of 40 hardworking individuals. General manager David Fordham-Scott says, "The award is not just an accolade for the event team; it acknowledges the tremendous effort that every single member of staff makes for our couples. We're now excited about going through to the national finals."

The venue is the perfect choice for wow-factor weddings with high ceilings, an underground games room, stunning architectural features and a showstopping staircase. The 18th-century stately home features a stone exterior with climbing ivy that's picture-perfect all year round. There's plenty of outdoor spaces with luscious lawns, peaceful streams, mini waterfalls and enchanted woodlands.

The property offers a two-night exclusive wedding experience to create memorable events. David says, "Our approach is different to what is traditionally expected of a wedding venue. We offer couples a chance to have quality time to relax together and immerse themselves in the beautiful surroundings".

Check out: www.ellingham-hall.co.uk



Nearlywed NEWS

Catch up on news from around the region



www.laurenswweeneyphotography.com

THE PERFECT FIT

Nestled in Durham, Wedding Wardrobe has announced the opening of its new Bridal Sewing Rooms, due to open in spring 2022. The team is currently renovating a gorgeous space in Chester-le-Street and will be offering brides alteration services in a beautiful setting. After purchasing their gown from any boutique, clients can tweak their design and ensure the perfect fit thanks to the experienced seamstresses.

The Bridal Sewing Rooms is the perfect place for clients to continue their wedding journey in style, and all appointments will be private with space to bring guests along.

The business also offers additional services, including dress storage, dry cleaning and a dressing service for wedding days.

Check out: www.weddingwardrobe.com

INTIMATE WEDDINGS

Situated in County Durham, Ramside Hall Hotel Golf and Spa has released the Just the Two of Us wedding package, which is popular with couples opting for an intimate wedding without loved ones. The experience allows pairs to exchange vows in one of three treehouses without worrying about the hassle of guest list politics, and the hotel even provides a legal witness.

Following the "I dos", lovebirds can enjoy drinks on the wraparound balcony followed by a romantic dinner with a bottle of wine. They can enjoy their first moments as newlyweds in their chosen treehouse, which includes accommodation and a private hot tub. The following day, couples can explore the award-winning spa and enjoy a one-hour treatment. The venue's owner, John Adamson, has created the perfect setting for newlyweds. He says, "While big weddings were the norm before the pandemic, we've seen more couples opting to plan an intimate wedding – even after restrictions have been lifted." He continues, "Although the events may be on a smaller scale, our luxury treehouses ensure that newlyweds don't have to sacrifice any of the wow factor for their big day."

Check out: www.ramsidehallhotel.co.uk



BRIDAL BEAUTY

Based in Northumberland, Make-up my Wedding by Michelle is currently offering 20 per cent off new bookings when couples quote YNEWM22 before 31st July, 2022.

After more than 20 years' experience in the beauty industry, owner Michelle Brooks works all around the north of England. The business specialises in bridal make-up and hairstyling alongside many beauty treatments – giving brides the ultimate pampering experience.

By working with clients, the company creates tailor-made packages to accommodate all types of weddings and can include trials for brides and bridal parties, hen-do pamper parties, make-up lessons and more!

Michelle loves working with brides to make them feel extra special on their wedding day. She says, "My focus is on the individual and making sure that each person gets the attention they deserve to feel beautiful. I'm privileged to share such important events with my clients."

Make-up my Wedding by Michelle will be exhibiting at the Spanish City Elite Wedding Show on the 20th March 2022, its the perfect opportunity to meet the supplier in person. Each bride that registers with the company at the event will be offered a free make-up trial worth £40.

Check out: www.make-upmywedding.co.uk



FASHION ICON

Situated in Whitley Bay, Kate Collins Couture is currently offering 10 per cent off orders placed before May, 2022. The team knows how tough the last two years have been throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, especially for those planning their wedding, and wanted to give back to couples.

The company offers bespoke and affordable bridalwear all designed in the North East. Visit the beautiful studio by the sea and be inspired by the current range of made-to-measure dresses featuring beautiful materials and beadwork.

The owner Kate Collins has many years of experience, and she will guide brides throughout the process of finding their dream gown. Her work is contemporary in design, expertly cut and beautifully made using hand-finished couture techniques.

Check out: www.kate-collins.com



BOTTOMS UP!

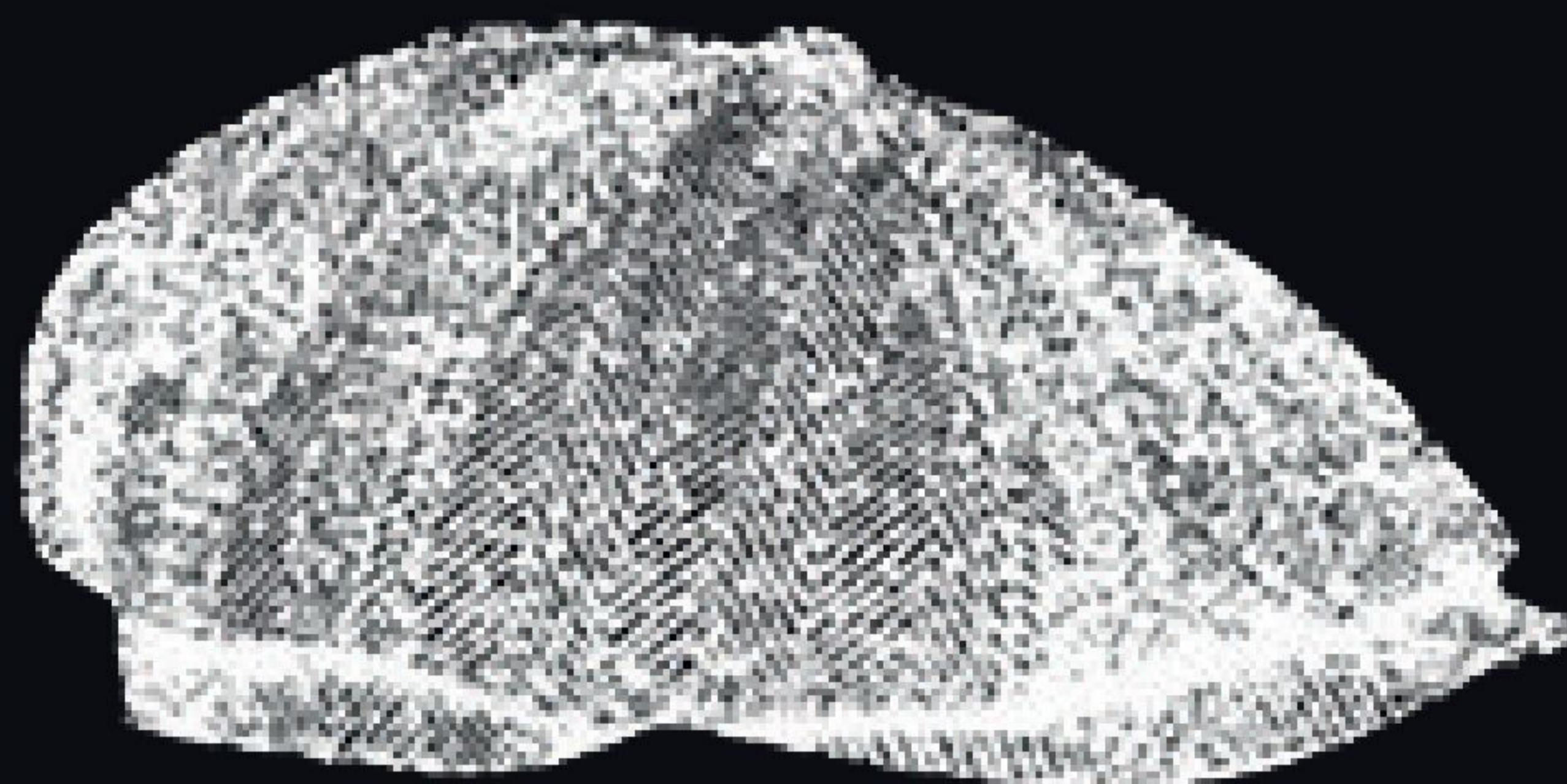
Located in Consett, Nickynoo Quirky Mobile Bars is thrilled to have won three awards after working hard to help create special weddings with exceptional service. The team is over the moon to have been recognised for their hard work and are excited to kick start this year's wedding season, which is already looking to be the busiest year to date.

The company has won the following awards...

- ♥ Best Vintage Mobile Bar Hire in County Durham by Northern Enterprise Awards.
- ♥ Mobile Bar Company of the Year from the Corporate LiveWire Awards 2021/22.
- ♥ Mobile Bar hire of the Year - North England (Durham) in the North England Prestige Awards 2021/22.

The business offers three vintage-style mobile bars for all types of budgets – there's something for every wedding! The fully stocked bars come with local craft beer on draught, more than 23 choices of gin, quirky cocktails, mocktails, wine, bubbles, cider, lager and soft drinks. Couples can hire the Vintage Mobile Bicycle Bar Gin Wizz and Vintage Gin Suitcase as part of the fully stocked bar or on its own.

Check out: www.nickynoo.co.uk



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MOMENTS THAT MATTER

A wedding day is a wonderful event, which represents two families coming together to celebrate love. Leave behind tradition and inject plenty of personality into your day with a celebrant-led wedding.

Located in Sunderland, North East Celebrant specialises in creating memorable ceremonies for all types of couples; it doesn't matter if the wedding is religious, interfaith, quirky, spiritual or themed. The company's owner, Gemma Jay, has worked in the industry since 2009 and knows how to incorporate special touches and memorable moments into events.

The business is currently offering 10% off all new bookings when couples quote *Your North East Wedding* before May 1st 2022.

Check out: www.northeastcelebrant.com

CAPTURING MEMORIES

Hiring a professional photographer is vital for weddings, as it allows newlyweds to look back on the images for years to come. It's important to find a trustworthy company that knows the must-have shots and makes you feel comfortable in front of the camera.

The Little Portrait Shop has been capturing special days for more than 13 years. While blending into the background, the photographer snaps up showstopping images for lovebirds to treasure. The team will send over a small preview of images 24 hours after weddings and aims to have all the photos online seven to 10 days after events.

The supplier is currently offering 15% off packages for new bookings when couples quote *Your North East Wedding* before May 1st 2022. This offer also includes additional add-ons such as a second shooter or highlight video coverage.

Check out: www.littleportraitshop.com

Freebies & OFFERS

Great giveaways and discounts up for grabs

WIN AN OVERNIGHT STAY

Coppa Club's The Swan at Streatley is a tranquil countryside getaway set in the Berkshire village of Streatley. Situated on the River Thames, roughly an hour from London, the 47-bedroom property has been newly refurbished and offers river-view rooms, or suites opening onto the garden lawn making it a great option for a dog-friendly getaway!

The grounds include the property's own private island, lovely walks for couples and families (and four-legged companions) and the property is also ideal for riverside weddings, seating up to 130 friends and family!

Perfect for a pre- or post-wedding getaway, guests can access the property via car, boat or helicopter and have access to on-site paddle boarding, exercise classes, hotel gym and events throughout the year.

You can book a Small Double Room from £80 per night, and a Medium Double Room from £100 per night.

Check out www.theswanatstreatley.com

County Wedding Magazines has teamed up with Coppa Club The Swan At Streatley to give readers the chance to win an overnight stay for two people with breakfast, as well as a three-course meal with a bottle of fizz!



FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN, ENTER VIA OUR WEBSITE.

Closing date 3rd June 2022. Terms and conditions apply.



GOING LOCAL

Where to say "I do" in north Northumberland

CUDDYSTONE HALL

01668 216 148 | www.college-valley.co.uk

Situated in Northumberland National Park, Cuddystone Hall is a magnificent location surrounded by picturesque scenery. Guests will arrive at the charming site to a three mile, well-maintained driveway that leads to the venue.

Whether it's classy and romantic weddings where guests drink champagne or more relaxed events with barbecues and children playing by the stream, anything can be possible at the property.

The experienced staff understands what it takes to create wow-factor weddings, and will work alongside couples to bring their vision to life. The venue is hired on an exclusive basis to give pairs more privacy with loved ones, and the team can recommend suppliers to help.

Cuddystone Hall provides a picture-perfect ceremony space with a blank canvas to allow couples to personalise the space to match any colour scheme or theme. Once lovebirds say "I do", they can ring a bell to highlight the extraordinary moment. There's a large area beside the hall to accommodate a marquee for receptions, or the celebrations can continue in the hall itself – both are perfect locations to dance the night away.

There are four private holiday houses, two bed and breakfasts and an independent hostel in the valley, which allow friends and family to stay nearby if desired.





www.alanlawphotography.co.uk



https://fionasaxtonphotography.com



BAMBURGH CASTLE

01668 214 208 | www.bamburghcastle.com

Situated on the coast, Bamburgh Castle is a breathtaking location overlooking Northumberland.

From its earliest beginnings, the venue has captured the hearts of the local community and now allows lovebirds to turn their dream fairytale wedding into a reality.

With plenty of natural lighting, couples can exchange vows in The Cross Hall with 150 people. Or why not descent down the fairytale staircase into the 12th-century Keep Hall, which features vaulted ceilings, stone-flagged floors and a treasure trove of eclectic pieces?

With its sweeping sea views of the coastline to one side and the splendour of the castle on the other, The Battery Terrace is an open-air space that allows couples to exchange vows surrounded by 60 loved ones. Drinks receptions occur in either The Battery Terrace, weather dependent, or inside The Victorian Stables.

The castle itself doesn't have the facilities to host wedding breakfasts inside, but loved ones can continue the celebrations in The Victorian Stable with 40 loved ones and hire external caterers to create their favourite dishes.

Couples can hire a marquee for receptions on the famous village green with the castle illuminated above or on the historic Glebe field, which offers spectacular views.



www.lecscullion.com



www.lecscullion.com

LE PETIT CHÂTEAU

01830 570 400 | www.le-petit-chateau.com

Situated in Otterburn, Le Petit Château is a French country manor that features a shabby chic interior and elegant features. Couples can wander hand-in-hand to the serene riverside for photographs, complete with beautiful ruins and a wildflower meadow.

Say "I do" surrounded by 160 loved ones in the La Belle Époque. This gorgeous chapel is the perfect mix of romance and fantasy with a crystal chandelier, marble fireplace and a shingle thatched roof. Alternatively, the outdoor terrace can host al fresco ceremonies due to its retractable roof, meaning outdoor nuptials can occur regardless of the British weather.

With floor-to-ceiling glass doors that open straight onto the Mediterranean Garden, the sumptuous Ballroom provides the ideal space for wedding breakfasts with 160 guests and 220 for evening receptions. Imagine feasts served on banqueting-style tables dressed in elegant linen or opt for rustic farmhouse tables with Louis XIV chairs.

When couples book the venue, they'll receive a complimentary night's stay in the bridal suite on their special day and a wedding taster session to try some dishes from the award-winning chefs. Four-legged friends are welcome to join in the celebrations, and there are selected rooms available for them to sleep in.

SHOTTON GRANGE

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Blooming beautiful venues surrounded by nature

THE BOWES MUSEUM

01833 690 606 | www.thebowesmuseum.org.uk

Located in the heart of Teesdale, The Bowes Museum is a hidden gem with a selection of beautiful, elegant and opulent rooms. The French chateau-style property was built from local stone and opened to the public in 1892. Fast forward to now, the location hosts all sorts of weddings.

Guests will fall in love with the venue as soon as they enter the stone entrance hall and see the sweeping staircase that leads to the spectacular picture galleries and ceremony spaces.

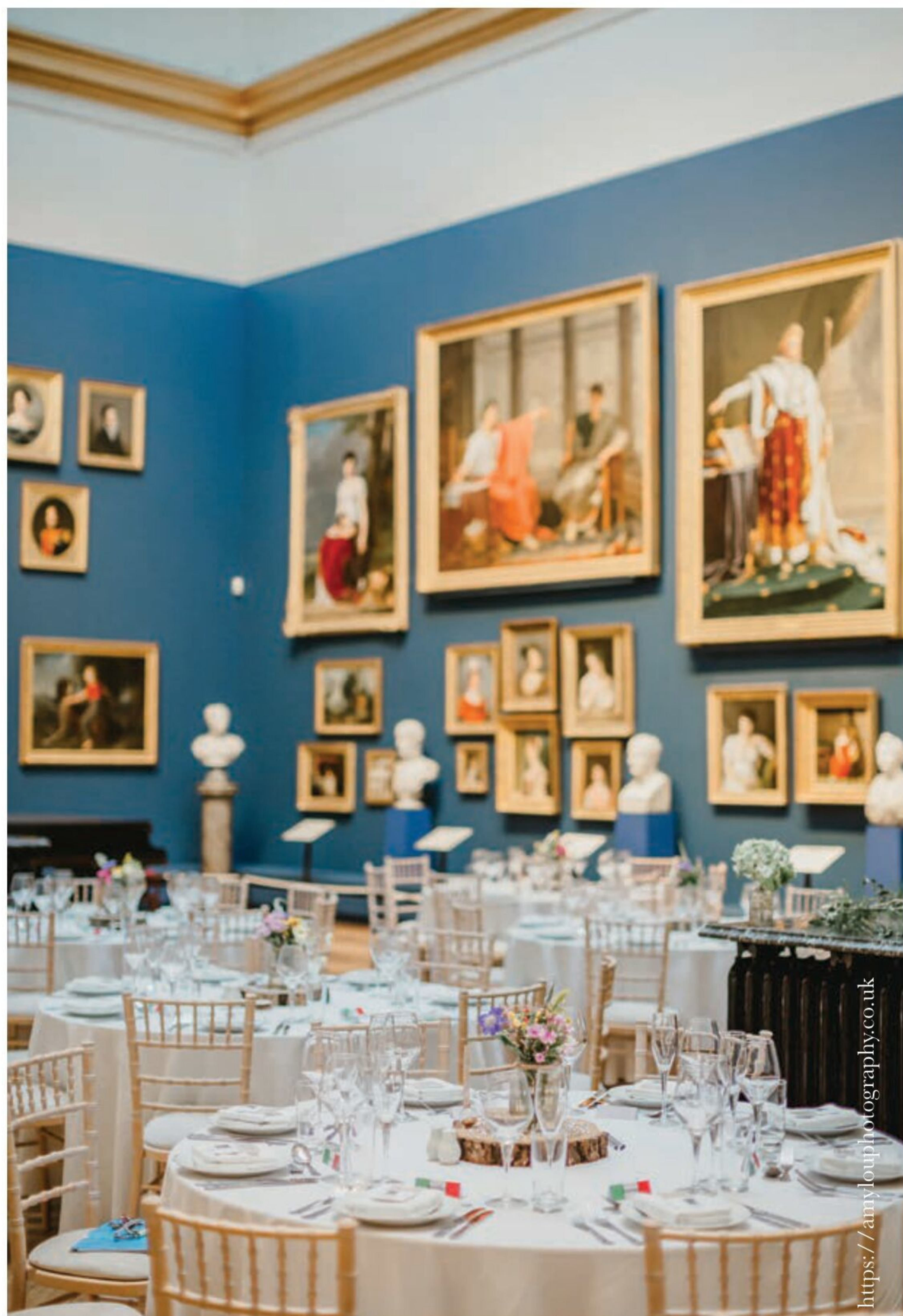
Say "I do" in the beautiful Music Room, which can hold a maximum capacity of 64 guests. The space is picture-perfect, with large windows overlooking the terrace and a collection of musical instruments plus paintings. Or why not exchange vows in the Jubilee Room, which caters to 100 people and features panoramic views overlooking the surrounding area? For larger weddings, the magnificent 19th-century Picture Gallery has a maximum capacity of 200 guests and hosts an unrivalled collection of paintings from around the world.

Drinks receptions occur in the Picture Gallery, Music Room or on the stunning terrace overlooking the manicured garden if the weather allows.

Wedding breakfasts are usually held in the Picture Gallery, while evening receptions occur in the Entrance Hall and Café Bowes with a capacity of 120 guests. The venue offers marquee receptions for larger evening parties.

The in-house wedding team are always on hand to offer support from the initial enquiry right through to the day itself, along with the friendly and experienced hospitality team. The wedding coordinators know that it's an honour to host someone's wedding and only holds one per day.

When couples pick the Grade I listed venue for their wedding day, they'll receive complimentary admission to the museum from the date of booking to their first wedding anniversary.



<https://amyloophotography.co.uk>



LANGLEY CASTLE



The timeless venue...

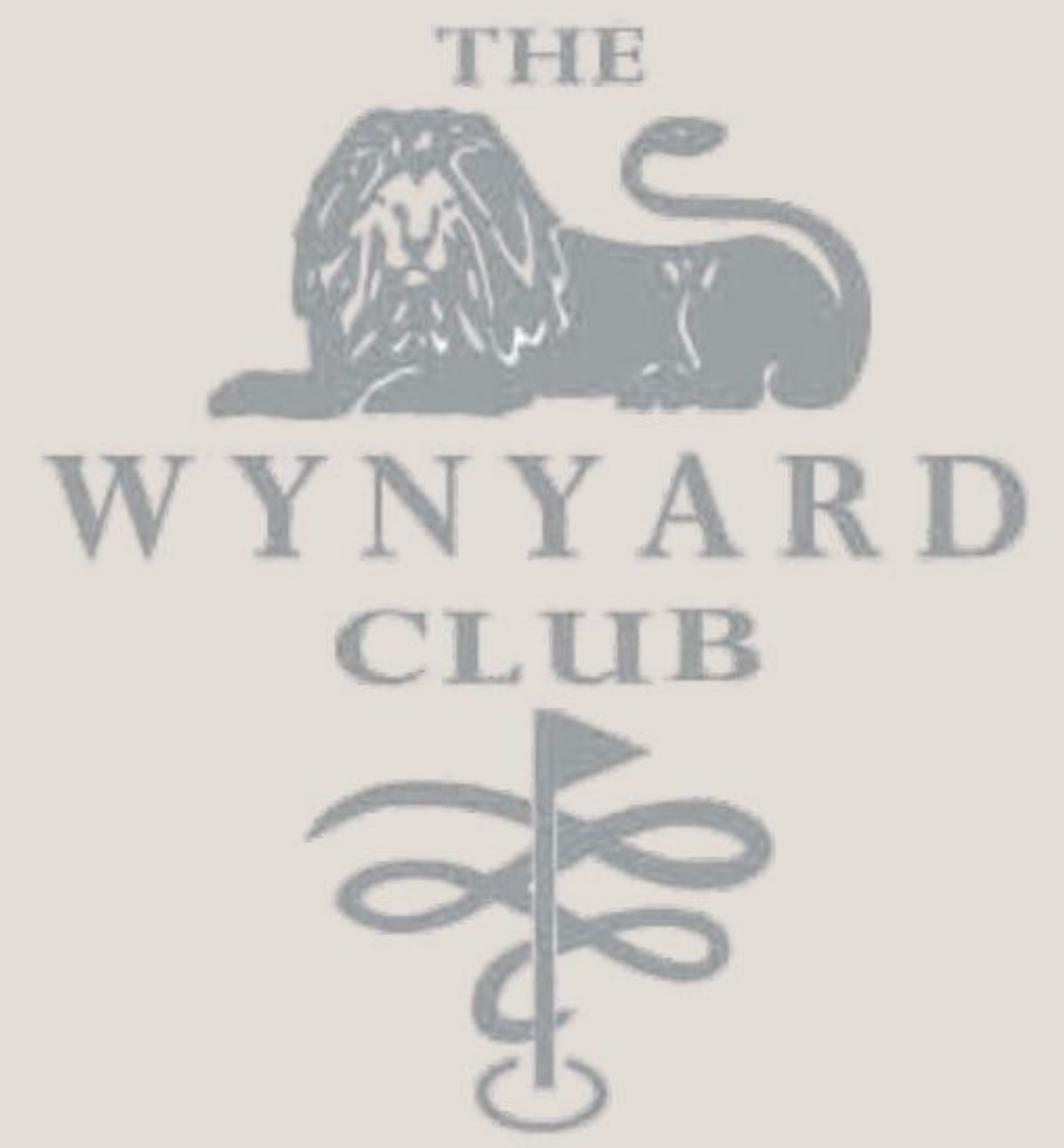
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ROSE'S BOWER

07860 846 316 | www.facebook.com/rosesbower

Set in 15 secluded acres, Rose's Bower is a new wedding venue that provides the perfect backdrop to weddings. Guests will love exploring all the magical spaces, including the Courtyard Garden, open lawns and private woodland area.

The newly restored barn is stunning, with vaulted-beamed ceilings and bi-fold doors that allows for breathtaking views over Northumberland. The property is perfect for couples looking for a charming setting with style and elegance.

Lovebirds will have exclusive use of the venue over three or five days, which allows them to personalise the venue to reflect their theme and colour scheme.

Celebrant-led ceremonies can occur in the barn, the Courtyard Garden or the woodland area, which will soon be licensed for civil ceremonies. Continue the celebrations with 120 people for wedding breakfasts in the barn or the marquee, which is ideal for festival-style events. Couples can hire food trucks, a hog roast or a pizza van to keep guests from going hungry in the evenings. Newlyweds can use the private woodland area



for silent discos under the stars; what better way to end their day?

Rose's Bower comes with luxury accommodation for up to 22 guests in the three cottages and a quirky treehouse – the perfect locations to retreat to after dancing the night away.



BLACKWELL GRANGE HOTEL

03301 027 238 | www.blackwellgrangehotel.com

Nestled in wooded parkland on Darlington's outskirts, Blackwell Grange Hotel is a stunning 17th-century mansion surrounded by beautiful countryside. Guests will arrive at the top of a sweeping driveway and their first impressions will be of the beautiful lawned gardens.

The hotel is like no other venue and has benefited from an extensive refurbishment of public areas, giving the spaces a contemporary and sophisticated feel.

Couples can choose to be married in one of three locations at the hotel;



The Gazebo creates a fairytale backdrop for the "I dos" and is set in the lawned gardens, while The Bruhenny Suite is a light and airy room for 120 people. For more intimate weddings, The George Allan Suite can fit 70 loved ones and features traditional décor and amazing views of the grounds. Both suites can be transformed for receptions to keep the celebrations going. After dancing the night away, newlyweds can retire to a completely refurbished Bridal Suite.

When lovebirds book this hotel for their wedding, they'll receive a complimentary two-course wedding taster meal and three-month leisure membership.



RUSHPOOL HALL

01287 624 111 | www.rushpoolhall.co.uk

Set in the rolling countryside, Rushpool Hall is a striking property with charming décor and beautiful sea views. The dreamy grounds are littered with beautiful features, including the outdoor ceremony area, the stunning temple walk featuring an ornate gazebo and two lakes.

The venue creates the perfect setting for photographs with a gothic and striking architecture, which creates a showstopping backdrop. Inside the hall, couples will find luxurious spaces with comfortable furnishings. The Ballroom is perfect for ceremonies with 110 people and has stunning gold

windows plus regal chandeliers. Alternatively, The Peacock Room is ideal for intimate ceremonies with 60 guests. This Victorian-style room is stylish and cosy, with beautiful peacock-inspired lampshades in keeping with the theme. Or why not exchange vows in the outdoor Pavilion, which features stone columns and a domed ceiling – the area looks beautiful with or without decorations.

After saying “I do”, the team can flip The Ballroom for wedding breakfasts and evening receptions, accommodating 180 loved ones. Another option is The Undercroft with a bar and orangery; pairs can imagine their own private nightclub with a fully stocked bar to party the night away.



BOWBURN HALL HOTEL

01913 770 311 | www.bowburnhallhotel.co.uk

Situated in five acres of lovely landscaped gardens, Bowburn Hall Hotel is an intimate venue that creates the perfect backdrop to memorable occasions. Accessible from the A1, the property is the perfect choice for guests travelling from both near and far.

The recently refurbished Ballroom can accommodate 160 people for ceremonies and 180 for receptions. The space is decorated in a classic French theme with quirky and modern touches such as glass doors leading to the stunning grounds.

During the summer months, couples can exchange vows in the

Ceremony Garden under the ornate gazebo surrounded by 160 people. The space can accommodate drinks receptions and there’s even an outdoor seating and play area to keep the little ones entertained.

The staff knows that every wedding is different, that’s why they offer personalised wedding packages to accommodate all types of couples. With a strict one wedding per day policy, lovebirds will receive the team’s undivided attention throughout their entire day. Why not go that extra mile and hire the hotel and grounds exclusively?

There are five new woodland lodges nestled in the grounds for loved ones to enjoy. Each boasts a six-foot double bed, whirlpool bath, walk-in shower, sofa and decking area.



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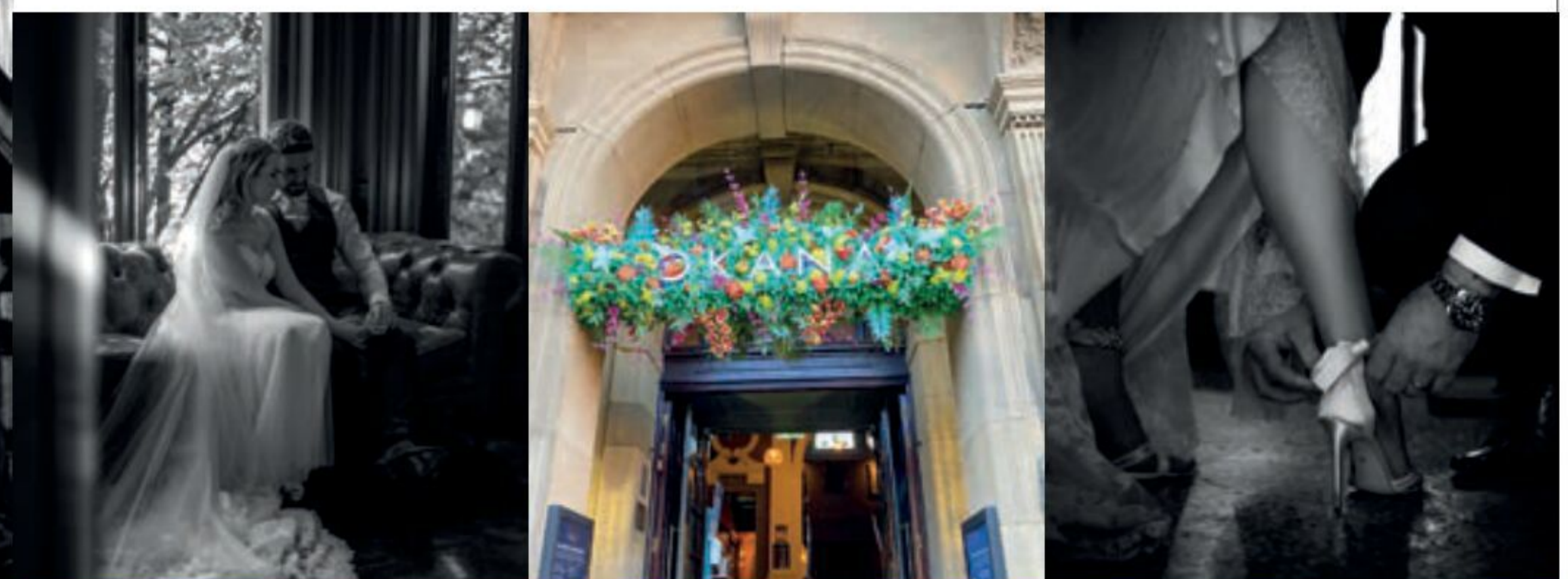
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SOUTH CAUSEY INN

01207 235 555 | www.southcausey.co.uk

South Causey Inn provides newlyweds with a traditional countryside setting in the stunning Breamish Valley. With four completely different wedding spaces available, the venue can cater for intimate nuptials to grand affairs.

The Old Barn is separate from the main hotel and is a truly splendid space for celebrations. With wooden floors, original beams, and classic features; this beautiful barn can host 150 people for ceremonies and 200 for receptions.

Alternatively, The Durham Suite was once a stone stable block and has been converted into a bright space that can accommodate 100 guests for the "I dos" and 150 in the evenings. The area is flooded with natural daylight and has access to a stunning private garden plus an outdoor tipi-style seating area with heaters and fur throws.

Another option for couples is the 150-year-old stone Farmhouse, which

has exclusive grounds and a private driveway with seasonal blooms. Guests can enjoy the private bar, civil ceremony area, function rooms and six ensuite bedrooms. For more intimate receptions, The Beamish Barn can host 45 loved ones and boasts original-wooden beams, rustic floors, natural lighting and a roaring log fire.

South Causey Inn has a state-of-the-art outdoor bar, which is an original 1960s fire engine fitted with an indoor and outdoor heated seating area and a music sound system.

There has also been an incredible conversion of a 1960s London bus that has been transformed into stylish accommodation with an upstairs luxury bedroom and lounge, a downstairs bathroom and a private garden area with a hot tub.

The property offers tasting nights for couples before their wedding day and a free anniversary stay one year after the big day.

Also check out...

BRINKBURN NORTHUMBERLAND

01665 570 870 | www.brinkburnnorthumberland.com

Set in the Coquet Valley, Brinkburn Northumberland is a hidden gem surrounded by acres of woodland. The River Coquet gently loops around the property, which creates a calming backdrop for weddings.

KIELDER WATERSIDE

01434 251 000 | www.kielderwaterside.com/weddings

Situated in the heart of Northumberland in Kielder Forest, Kielder Waterside is a calm oasis away from the everyday hustle and bustle of life. It overlooks unspoilt wildlife and stunning water views. The venue enables couples to let their imaginations run wild with the possibilities of what a wedding day could be like.

NEWCASTLE CASTLE

01912 306 300 | www.newcastlecastle.co.uk

Located in the heart of the city, Newcastle Castle is one of the UK's finest surviving examples of a Norman stone keep. Built in 1178, the sandstone building and beautiful grounds have been well maintained by staff over the centuries and provide a dramatic backdrop to photographs.

HEADLAM HALL COUNTRY HOTEL & SPA

01325 730 238 | www.headlamhall.co.uk

Nestled in four acres, Headlam Hall Country Hotel & Spa is located in the beautiful countryside of lower Teesdale, just between Barnard Castle and Darlington. The superb 17th-century Jacobean manor looks impressive from any angle and the grounds are beautifully kept with a manicured lawn and a pond with a romantic bridge.



WHIMSICAL *wedding*

Vinaya and Tom's bohemian wedding at Wylam Brewery featured a burnt orange and forest green colour scheme
Images courtesy of Forget Me Knot Images



Vinaya and Tom first met while training to become lawyers and immediately clicked. They bonded over their mutual love of soul music, plus red wine, and have been inseparable ever since. Vinaya says, "Meeting when we were a bit older meant that we knew what we wanted in a partner. We knew we'd found the one and spent every day together during the lockdowns." She adds, "Our relationship felt very natural and like it was meant to be – everything has always happened very easily for us."

After moving into their new home together, Tom proposed in the kitchen. His original plan was to pop the question in Italy, but Covid-19 restrictions got in the way. Vinaya comments, "We were getting ready to go out to one of our favourite restaurants, and he secretly set up candles, champagne and flowers while I was upstairs. Tom put on an Elvis Presley song and called me downstairs – I started to twig what was going on!" She continues, "Our rescue puppy Hector was in the kitchen at the time and decided to get involved by jumping on Tom when he got down on one knee – of course I said yes!"

SETTING THE SCENE

The couple's wedding took place on the 13th August 2021 and was inspired by *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The aim was for the day to be relaxed to reflect the pair's personalities with a big party, good food, great music and plenty of dancing.

Wylam Brewery was the obvious choice for the couple when it came to finding the perfect setting for their special day. The bride says, "It's the only venue we went to see and they had one date left in August, almost exactly one year later, and we were so lucky to get that date. The property is very different and not your traditional venue, which suited us perfectly."

The couple hired a 1963 Jaguar MK2 on the day, which created the perfect backdrop to wedding photography – as did the wooden arch with cascading flowers! The blooms throughout the day featured wildflowers and plenty of green foliage which looked beautiful against the rustic lanterns and wooden slices of the table centrepieces.

The couple didn't have place names as they wanted loved ones to sit where they liked, and each setting had wildflower seeds for favours.

Guests all enjoyed a two- or three-course wedding breakfast as per their choosing and indulged in a stunning semi-naked cake with lemon and Victoria sponge layers in the evening.

LOOKING THE PART

The bride looked beautiful in a mermaid-styled dress by Morilee. She says, "I went to the dress appointment with a fairly open mind, but I knew I wanted something fitted and beaded for the day. The gown I picked was more traditional than I originally wanted but it was perfect – all four bridesmaids and my mum cried."

The bride picked a slinky sequin dress with an oversized satin bow at the back for the evening. She finished off her look with a mixture of vintage-style jewellery from her mum and mother-in-law, Valentino shoes during the day and electric blue strappy Jimmy Choos in the evening. Vinaya says, "I felt very glamorous and like the best version of myself thanks to the fabulous Lisa Jones – my make-up and hair magician!"

The groom wore a bespoke tailored three-piece suit in royal blue with a light grey waistcoat, a forest-green tie, a burnt-orange pocket square and dark tan brogues.

The groomsmen and dads wore three-piece royal blue suits from Slaters with a matching tie and pocket square to complement Tom. The bridesmaids looked lovely in cream floral midi-wrap dresses.

TIME TO CELEBRATE

A big hit with guests on the day was the band The Gatenbys, Vinaya says, "The three local lads, led by John Gatenby on vocals, were even better than we'd





hoped for. We didn't want a typical cheesy wedding band and these guys were exactly what we were looking for." She adds, "John did an amazing cover of *At Last* by Etta James for our first dance, and many guests got their details for future events."

MEMORABLE MOMENTS

The couple organised a big meal the night before the wedding with family and close friends to extend the celebrations, and to give everyone the chance to get to know each other. The couple couldn't stop smiling all day, and many moments made the day even more special. Tom says, "Seeing Vin walking down the aisle was a moment I'd imagined a million times but it was almost surreal". He adds, "Looking around the room during the wedding breakfast and seeing all our favourite people happy and having fun together was just so special." Another memorable moment for the groom was seeing a packed dancefloor with guests singing *Sit Down* by the band James at the end of the night.

A top moment for Vinaya was getting ready in the morning with her best girls. She comments, "They made me giggle the whole morning, which just set the mood for the day. My mum and dad arriving made it even more perfect, although tricky to keep my beautifully applied make-up on due to lots of happy tears!

"On the wedding morning, Tom ended up watching a Newcastle United game from the '90s in bed with his brother and best man Matt at 6am because he was too excited and nervous to sleep!"

She adds, "Seeing the man of my dreams waiting for me at the end of the aisle, looking at me the way I'd always hoped my future husband would, was so emotional."

All the suppliers involved in the couple's special day were brilliant and couldn't have done a better job, especially Alex and Rod at Wylam Brewery. They made the whole day run like clockwork, which meant the couple didn't worry about a thing all day.

HONEYMOON

The couple had originally planned to go island hopping in Greece for two weeks for their honeymoon. However, the pandemic caused travel restrictions, and they ended up going to Ridding Park for a minimoon instead. A trip to Greece was planned this year, but the couple have postponed the holiday as they're expecting their first child.

VINAYA SHARES HER TOP WEDDING TIP...

"On the day, turn your phone off and give it to someone else to look after. You spend such a long time planning and thinking about the big day, and the best thing you can do is try and be present to take it all in. "Make sure you have plenty of time with your new husband/wife too – you're making new memories together!"



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"We booked Hexham House apartments for our wedding party accommodation, and it was honestly one of the best decisions we made. The apartments are all absolutely beautiful and had everything we could possibly need in the run up to our wedding. On top of this Sam and Vicky left us some thoughtful extra special touches which went down a treat!

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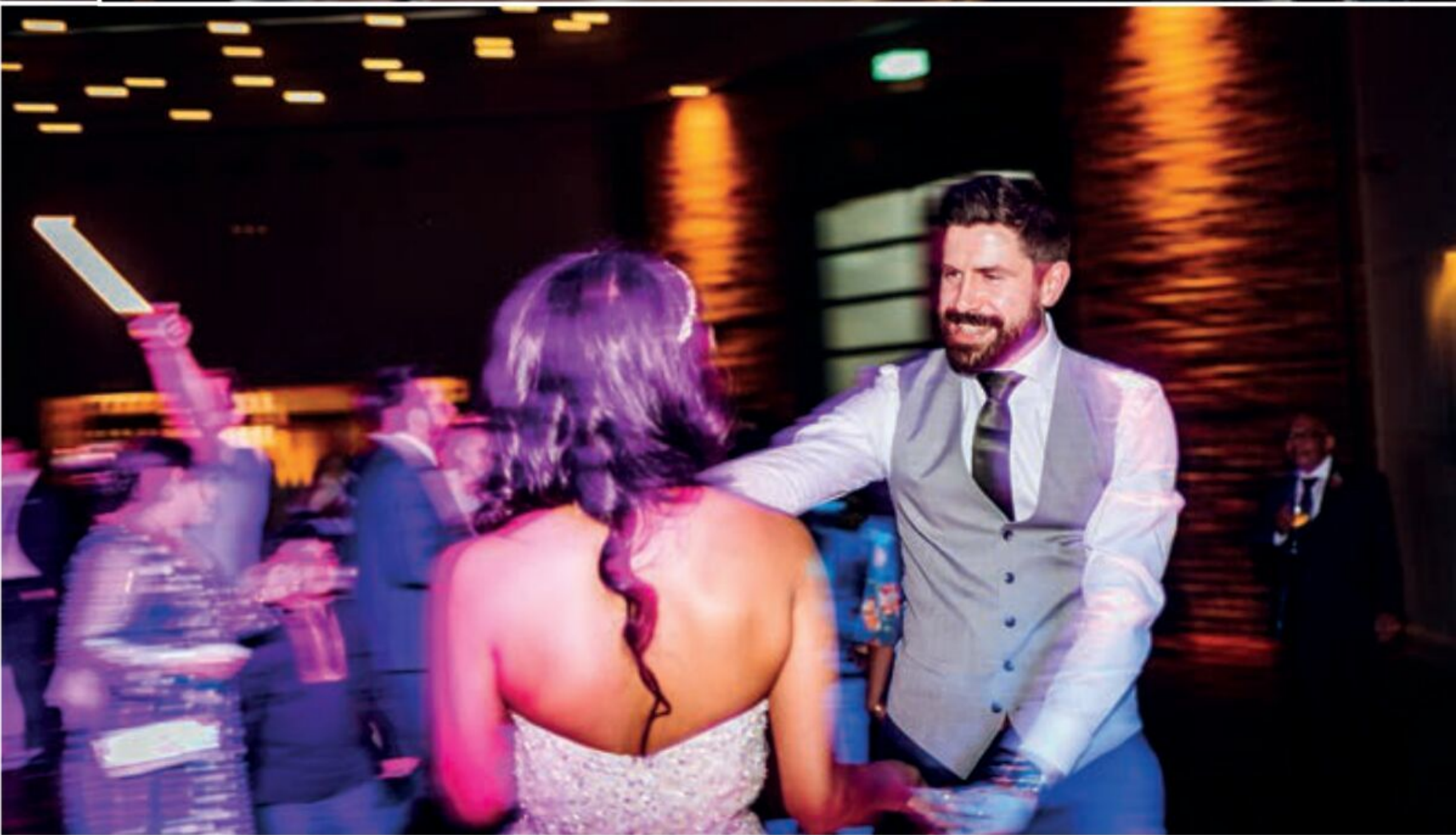
For Hexham House Apartments bookings then please contact Wooden Star Cottages Sam Perkins can be contacted on **07590 996916** and Vicky Collingwood on **07971 008223** Alternatively visit <https://woodenstarcottages.co.uk/hexham-house>



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VINAYA AND TOM'S LITTLE WHITE BOOK

Venue and catering, www.wylambrewery.co.uk | **Photographer,** <https://forgetmeknotimages.co.uk>

Bride's dress, <https://marrimebridalwear.co.uk> and www.yapbridal.co.uk | **Hair and make-up,** <https://lisajoneshairandmakeup.co.uk> | **Cake,** www.facebook.com/cakescoffeeandcutters | **Flowers,** <https://thefinishingtouchcompany.co.uk> | **Transport,** <http://northumbriaclassics.com>

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TIME

for love

After their special day was affected by Covid-19 restrictions, Gael and Peter decided to create a second wedding to celebrate with loved ones

Images courtesy of Joss Guest Photography

Gael and Peter first met at school as teenagers and have been childhood sweethearts ever since. During a walk with their dogs, Buddy and Louis, Peter got down on one knee and asked Gael to marry him – causing her to burst into tears. She says, “It was a surprise, despite big hints from me saying my hand would

suit a diamond ring.” The couple set out to have a relaxed day that perfectly represented them both. Little did the pair know, they would officially tie the knot with a handful of guests due to Covid-19 restrictions and ended up having a larger wedding two months later to celebrate with their whole family.

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Hexham House had the perfect ceremony setting for the pair's first wedding, which took place on the 14th May, 2021. The property stood out to the couple for many reasons, including the stunning spaces and picture-perfect grounds. As the pair were born in a nearby hospital, the area held a special meaning to them both. They then headed to The Duke of Wellington Inn at Newton for a small reception.



After the restrictions lifted, the pair created a second wedding to celebrate with a more extensive guest list on the 31st July, 2021. The day started with hair and make-up at Walwick Hall, where the couple stayed for three nights with loved ones. The wedding itself took place at The Duke of Wellington Inn at Newton, where the lovebirds had a blessing followed by a reception full of entertainment and memorable moments.

Here Gael shares details about their second wedding...



"I picked a timeless and elegant Rebecca Ingram dress, which I loved once we added a belt. I incorporated the mask I wore while dress shopping into the gown's lining for my *something blue*. My bridesmaids looked stunning in tailor-made dresses in dusky pink, purchased from That Special Day Bridal.

"Peter wore a navy Ted Baker suit, the first one he'd tried, and the best man and our dads matched."



"Our table plan was on an easel, and the tables were split into significant dates: when we were born, met, got engaged, bought our first home, and legally married. Each one was decorated with wooden logs and jars with flowers inside and guests were given coasters for favours, which doubled up as place names."

"We had a semi-naked cake with flowers and banoffee, lemon and chocolate orange flavours. Our florals matched our colour scheme as we opted for dusky pink and cream roses and eucalyptus throughout the day."





"We hired Union Street to entertain guests, and the band had us all dancing for the first time in over a year as restrictions had only just eased. We also had a photo booth supplied by Crazy-Pix; the team was amazing and got so many people involved."

"We honestly felt like the luckiest people in the world on the day; we couldn't believe we'd managed to pull both days off! Being with friends and family, many of whom we hadn't seen in such a long time because of the lockdowns, was just so special."

"All of our suppliers were great and accommodated our weddings perfectly. A big treat for Peter was the classic Jaguar E-Type in dark blue supplied by Northumbria Classic Car Hire."

"Two companies really stood out to us. The manager Nick at The Duke of Wellington Inn met with us numerous times before the wedding and got everything spot on. Our photographer Joss was also brilliant and photographed all those special moments. We received so much feedback from our guests about how friendly she was."



"After our May wedding, we went to Stablewood Coastal Cottages in Lucker with our dogs and then went for a couple of relaxing days at Brimstone Hotel, which was absolute luxury. We were lucky enough to get on a plane after our July wedding for our second honeymoon, which felt like a huge achievement given all the travel restrictions. We stayed 11 nights at the Excellence Oyster Bay in Jamaica; it was absolute bliss with sun, sea and rum – our favourite things!"



GAEL AND PETER'S LITTLE WHITE BOOK

Venues, www.mynorthumberlandwedding.co.uk/venue/hexam-house and www.thedukeofwellingtoninn.co.uk | **Accommodation**, <https://walwickhall.com> | **Photography**, <https://jossguestphotography.co.uk> | **Bride's dress and accessories**, www.yapbridal.co.uk | **Make-up**, www.facebook.com/Makeupbysophiehollows | **Hair**, www.facebook.com/EmmaHillBridalHair | **Bridesmaids' dresses**, www.thatsspecialdaybridal.co.uk | **Groom's suit**, www.slaters.co.uk | **Cake**, www.facebook.com/cakefulness | **Flowers**, www.flowersunlimited.uk.com | **Transport**, <http://northumbriaclassics.com> and <https://jewittscoaches.co.uk> | **Stationery**, www.etsy.com/uk/shop/TwistStationery and www.ecreativestudio.co.uk | **Entertainment**, <https://amvlivemusic.com/artists/union-street> and <https://crazy-pix.co.uk>

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Lights, CAMERA, ACTION!

Guests loved Hazel and Andy's movie-themed wedding
Images courtesy of Barry Forshaw Photography



Hazel and Andy's adventure first started after meeting online, where they hit it off straight away. The couple visited the Tyne Theatre and Opera House to see Dylan Moran as Andy had a spare ticket, and the evening went perfectly. The pair bonded over their mutual love for movies and told each other jokes all night. After spending more time together, it was clear that the lovebirds shared a strong connection.

Andy proposed at home after Hazel arrived back from a work trip in Las Vegas – it cured her jet lag instantly! The couple set the date for the 21st August 2021, and created a personal wedding full of memorable moments. Hazel comments, "We wanted a relaxing day surrounded by those we loved the most to celebrate who we are as individuals and as a couple."

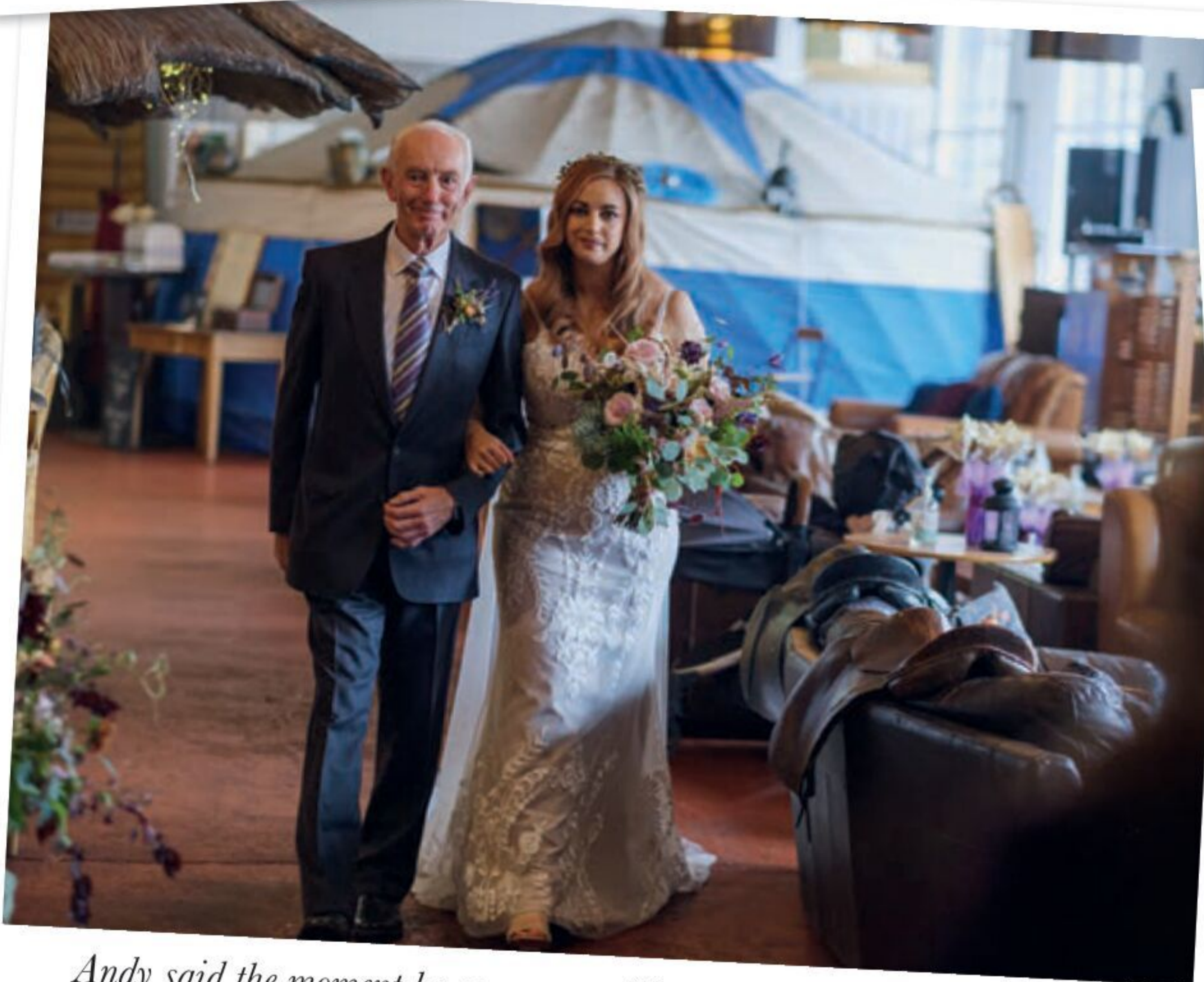
Here Hazel shares details about their special day...



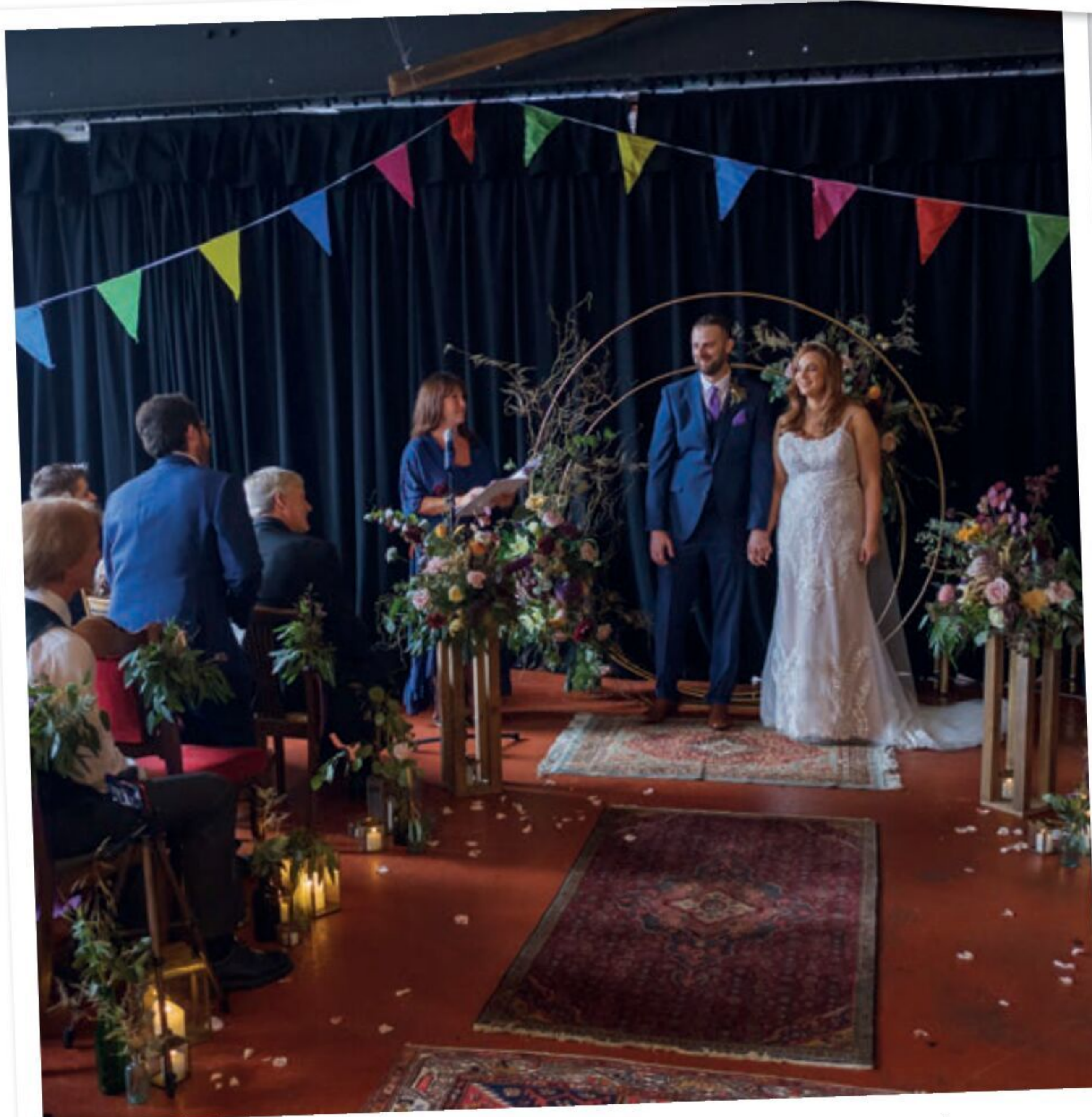
We'd visited Brinkburn St Brewery, Bar & Kitchen early on in our relationship; it's where we realised we were serious about a future together and was perfect for our special day.



I picked an Evie Young Bridal gown and a hairband by Arianna Tiaras from Sisters of Grace in Newcastle upon Tyne.



Andy said the moment he saw me walking down the aisle stood out the most to him.



We had a celebrant-led wedding in the Maling Hall; the venue's team were brilliant and couldn't do enough for us.





Our loved ones wrote movie quotes onto pieces of paper and placed them into a bowl before the ceremony began. We would occasionally pause during our vows to read whatever was written and incorporate this seamlessly into our following sentence.



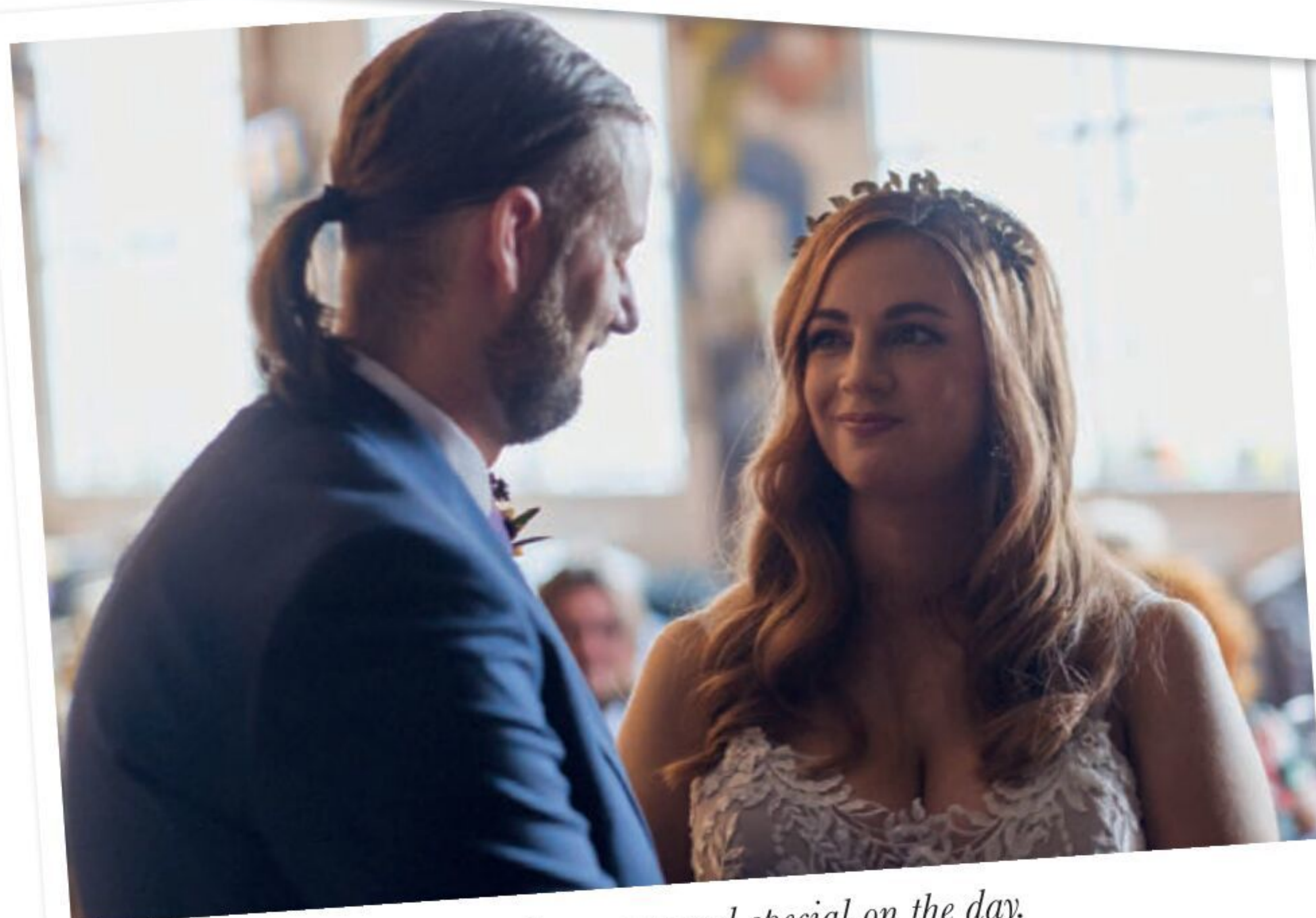
We're big fans of the show Hamilton and my improv teachers Ian McLaughlin and Bev Fox performed a song they wrote themselves in the style of You'll Be Back.



The ceremony was completely bespoke and personal to us; we're very grateful to our celebrant, Jo Stott, who shared our love story perfectly.



Our mums did a joint reading where they gave us plenty of insights and advice from their happy marriages – it was the perfect mix of humour and sentiment.



I felt so glamorous and special on the day.





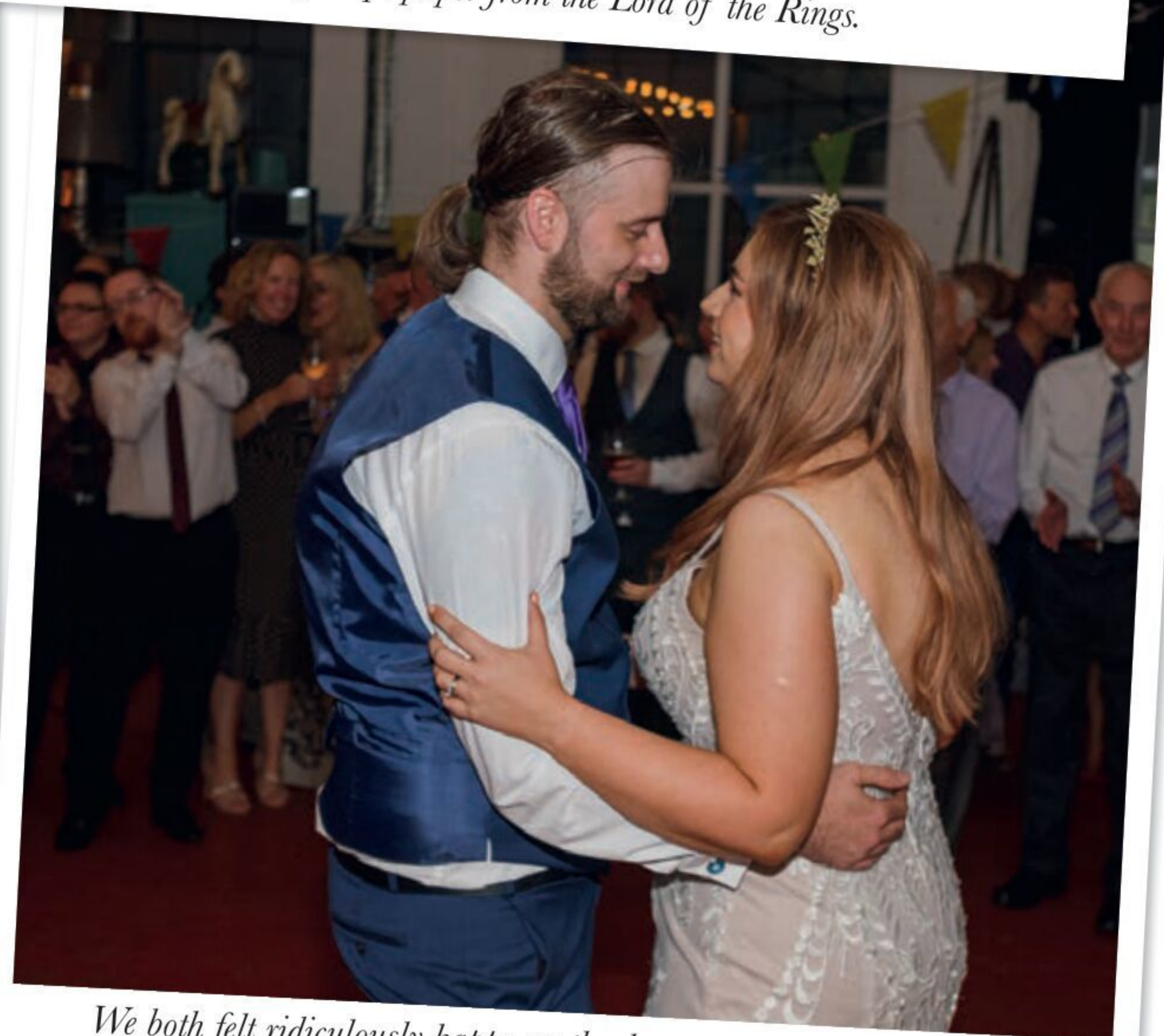
Sticky Sponge Cake Studio created clapperboard-style cookies for our favours.



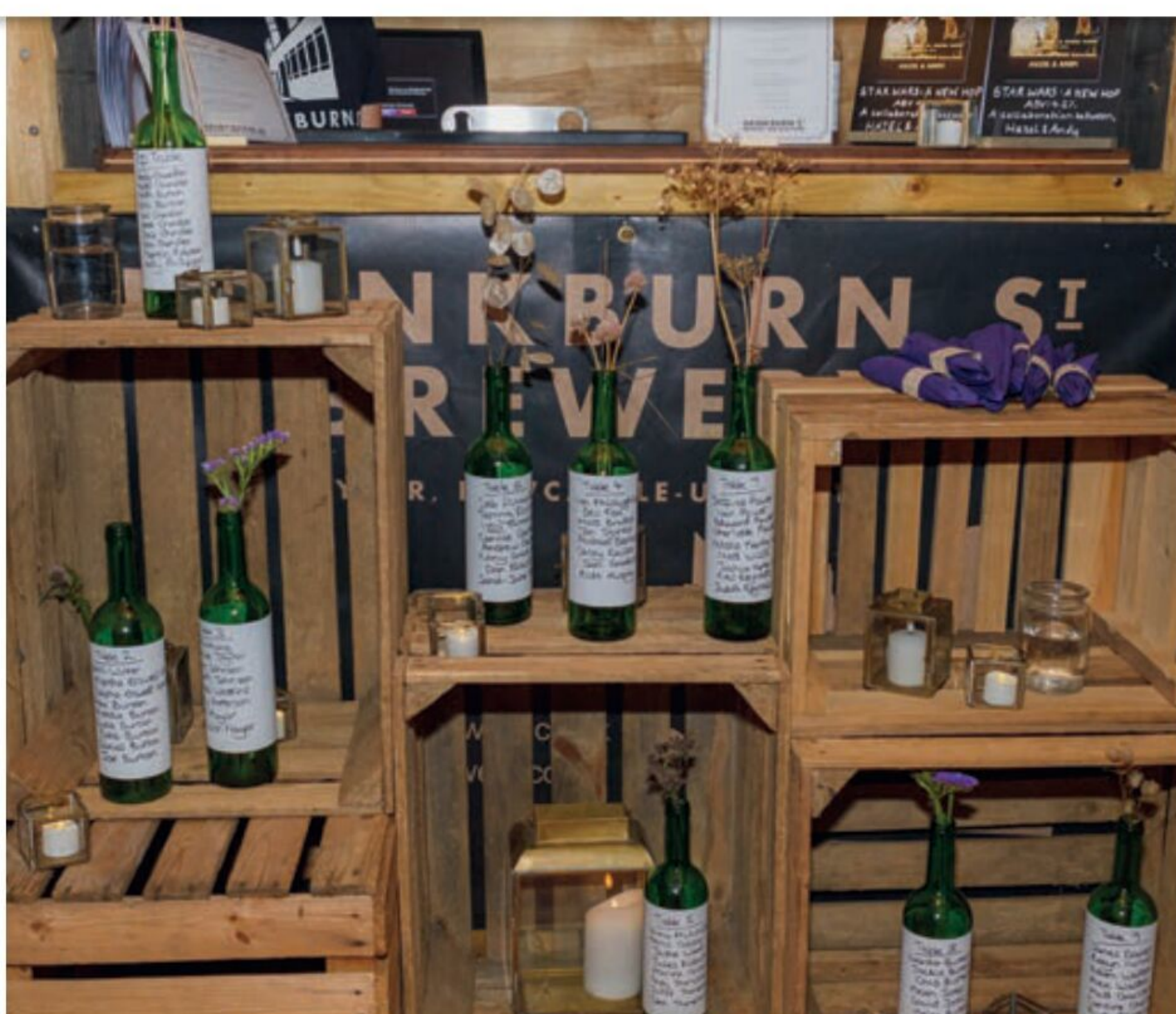
Our centrepieces consisted of paper flower arrangements made using script paper from the Lord of the Rings.



A special moment was when my dad and uncle got up to sing Unchained Melody; it was the first time they'd performed together in many years.



We both felt ridiculously happy on the day – everything went perfectly!



Andy's dad performed in his band called Five Down to keep guests entertained – the groom joined in on a few songs.

HAZEL AND ANDY'S LITTLE WHITE BOOK

Venue and catering, www.brinkburnbrewery.co.uk | **Photographer**, www.barryforshawphotography.com | **Bride's dress and accessories**, www.sistersofgrace.co.uk | **Hair**, www.karascotthair.co.uk | **Make-up**, www.instagram.com/makeup_by_sandra_h | **Groom's suit**, Marks & Spencer | **Cake**, www.stickysponge.co.uk | **Flowers**, www.bloomhead.co.uk | **Entertainment**, Five Down 01642 784 872 | **Venue styling**, www.birdcagesanddragonflies.com | **Celebrant**, www.lovejoceremonies.co.uk

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Plan the PERFECT WEDDING

Local suppliers share tips and tricks to help couples create their dream day

Planning a wedding might seem like a scary experience at first with so many different aspects to consider – it's hard knowing where to start. That's why we've gathered top suppliers from around the region to share their advice for wedding planning.



BRIDAL BEAUTY

Alice says: Your make-up is something that can make or break your entire bridal look, so it's vital to get it right. Things can get a little confusing with so many looks to choose from and factors to consider.

Think about how you usually wear your make-up on special occasions and look back at images of when you'd felt the best version of yourself – it's important to know what you like and dislike.

Pinterest is a great inspirational tool for creating mood boards but be careful, as it can also be full of unrealistic edited images. Some make-up styles can look amazing when eyes are closed but are actually heavy and cause the eyes to look smaller once opened.

Keep in mind your dress style as the shape, material and neckline can all impact your look. Also, consider the time of year as a bold red lip can look fantastic for a winter wedding while glowing and dewy looks work well for summer.

Preparing your skin with a skincare routine will help the make-up sit on your skin better. Ensure you cleanse, tone, and moisturise morning and night while drinking at least two litres of water per day.

A spray tan can make you feel and look even more amazing on your big day as it helps to even out your skin tone, leaving behind a beautiful glow. It's a good idea to get one well before your wedding to see how you look and feel. Make sure to think about the shade of foundation you'll need to match your new tan.

When it comes to photography, digital colour can wash you out, and that's why you should go for a slightly heavier look – particularly with lipstick and blusher. No one wants flashbacks in their pictures, which is why I only use products with no more than an SPF of 15.

Alice Quinn | Wonderland Hair & Beauty By Alice
www.wonderlandhairandbeautybyalice.com



PICTURE-PERFECT PHOTOGRAPHY

Dawn says: With so many different companies to choose from, finding the perfect photographer can be a difficult task. Think about what you'd like the end product to look like and the style of photography you're after; this could be dramatic shots or light and airy images.

Seek out photographers around your budget and get in touch with them – it always helps if you like them and know you can work well together. Let the team know as much as possible before booking them, so you both understand any expectations. Research their work to look at full galleries

and view all parts of a wedding, not just the images they showcase. If you do pick a photographer that's not local, make sure you're happy with their travel arrangements because many like myself will stay local to the wedding the night before.

After booking a company, make sure you both stay in touch. From a photographers point of view, the more we know about your arrangements, the better!

Dawn Matthews | Little Portrait Shop
www.littleportraitshop.com

RAISE YOUR GLASS

Nicola says: Booking additional drinks for your wedding doesn't need to be expensive. Make sure to check with your venue to find out what external services they allow.

It may be more cost-effective to do it yourself, but think about the logistics of providing your drinks. How would you get them to the venue, keep them at the correct temperature, serve the drinks and clear them away? Tables can quickly become full of dirty glasses spoiling your centrepieces if you don't consider these factors.

A professional company is worth considering to take away added stress or worry. Provide the supplier with the order of the day, starting with arrival times for the welcoming drinks. Discuss if you want toast drinks placed on the tables before guests sit down or poured just before the speeches.

Most companies have a selection of drinks packages available to suit different budgets, from welcome drinks to all-inclusive bars. However, don't be afraid to ask if you can substitute something or create a bespoke package because they can only say no. At Nickynoo Quirky Mobile Bars, we often adapt our packages and in the past have provided beers/ales from local breweries, bespoke cocktails, jugs of soft drinks for children and pimp your own gin or prosecco stations. Make sure to consider none drinkers as there are lots of lovely none alcoholic options, such as mocktails and spritzers.

Nicola Robinson | Nickynoo Quirky Mobile Bars
www.nickynoo.co.uk



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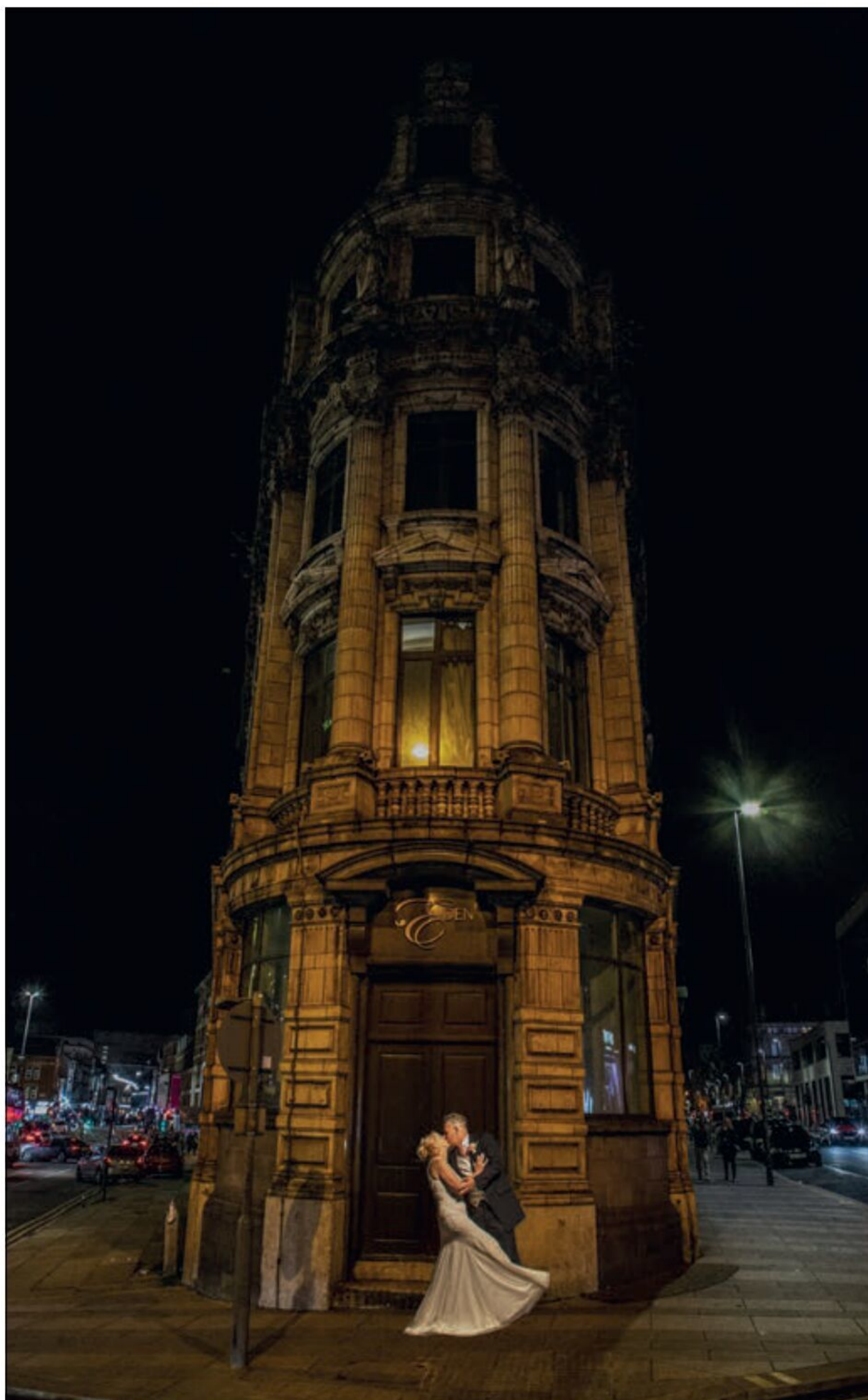
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PURE BLISS

Nicola says: Wedding preparations can often be stressful, so the best way to relax and spend time together before the big day is to book a luxurious pre-wedding spa experience.

Personalised facial treatments are the perfect way to create a glowy appearance and will help you both feel revived for the special day. Treatments are full of nutrient-rich products that restore the skin. Dull or tired complexions are brightened and refreshed thanks to our Active Nutrients Glow From Within Facial, which features a gua sha massage combined with steaming, exfoliating, and multi-masking. The personally-tailored Men's ESPA Deep Cleansing Facial gives instant results for a clear, smooth, and energised complexion – perfect for restoring

inner calm.

A tranquil countryside daybreak is ideal for pre-wedding downtime to alleviate the stress and tension from wedding planning and help immerse you both in total relaxation. We offer The Revive and Relax package, which allows couples to indulge in two hours of spa time with a choice of a 60-minute ESPA facial or a massage treatment each, as well as a glass of prosecco and the choice between a delicious cheese board, charcuterie board or vegetarian platter to share. For the ultimate luxury experience, upgrade to a longer treatment time or book an overnight stay for a relaxing getaway retreat.

Nicola Baillie | The Spa at Wynyard Hall
www.wynyardhall.co.uk



<https://spphotography.uk>

BRIDAL PREPARATIONS

Norma says: If I could give one piece of advice to those attending their first fitting, it would be to ensure they have the right underwear – this will make quite a difference in your posture and how your bust sits. You want to feel comfortable and confident on the big day, not worrying about straps cutting in, wrinkles and more.

Many women are unaware of what underwear styles are suitable for their figure type and the kind of dress they have in mind. It's wise to book a professional lingerie fitting before shopping for a gown, so you're aware of any limitations.

Although having a smooth line is essential, think carefully before buying heavy-duty contour wear for a twelve-hour stint on a hot day. Lace undies may seem luxurious, but floaty and clingy fabrics will ripple instead of gliding over the fabric.

Help is at hand at your local haberdasher, as the team should carry a wide range of bra accessories to both enhance your shape and keep everything in place. For smaller busts, chicken fillets pads, bra boosters, nipple covers, modesty pads and body tape are valuable items in your armoury – particularly for a low front gown.

For those with a large bust, bra extenders and comfort strap pads help support and prevent lines from straps cutting in. Even if you think you won't need them, it's always handy to have as well as an emergency sewing kit and safety pins. Remember that your bridalwear budget needs to include good underwear and to have your dress altered.

Norma Arthur | Amble Pin Cushion
www.amblepincushion.co.uk



LOOKING YOUR BEST

Victoria says: Planning your special day can be one of the most exciting and overwhelming times of your life. Here are some top tips to make planning your make-up that little bit easier!

- ♥ Consider your colour scheme, bridesmaid dresses, flowers, styling and venue because this will all contribute to a particular wedding style and help you plan your make-up.
- ♥ After picking a venue, research local make-up artists nearby and ask friends for referrals. Remember, the team not only needs to enhance your natural features to create your desired look, but they should also make you feel relaxed and comfortable.
- ♥ Have a make-up trial six to eight weeks before the wedding. Some brides have an additional one before booking a make-up artist to ensure they're happy with their work.
- ♥ Spend time browsing photos online for looks that appeal to you; remember that every face shape is different, and styles you see online might appear different on you. Choose three favourite looks to show your supplier and let them work their magic.
- ♥ If you aren't used to wearing make-up, feel free to keep things natural. Be honest with your make-up artist at your trial, as it's better to give us more feedback.

Victoria Taylor | Victoria Taylor Makeup
www.facebook.com/victoriataylormakeup

BEST DRESSED LADIES

Ann says: I've been in the occasion wear business for more than 46 years and have lost count of the mother-of-the-brides/grooms we have dressed.

My advice would be to look for good quality outfits created by a trustworthy and experienced designer that offers a good range of styles and sizes. Finding the proper attire can be a stressful experience, so it's essential to find somewhere with a relaxing atmosphere where you can browse at your leisure. Ask friends, relatives or colleagues for recommendations, and check if they were happy with the service offered.

It's best to see the completed look for any special event, so check if the company has matching hats, shoes and handbags. Many outfits need adjustments to be perfect, so you'll need alterations to ensure the perfect fit.

You should receive a personal and unhurried service from the team who can share advice on fit, colour and style. You'll get this service from the team at Marianne Fashions, where we all have a minimum of 20 years of experience dressing ladies for special events.

Ann Carpenter | Marianne Fashions
www.mariannefashions.co.uk



<https://condici.com>

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Brides to be, your dream dress just got closer. English Rose Bridal Boutique is a luxury wedding dress shop located in Chester-Le-Street, County Durham, boasting a huge array of designer gowns, accessories, shoes.

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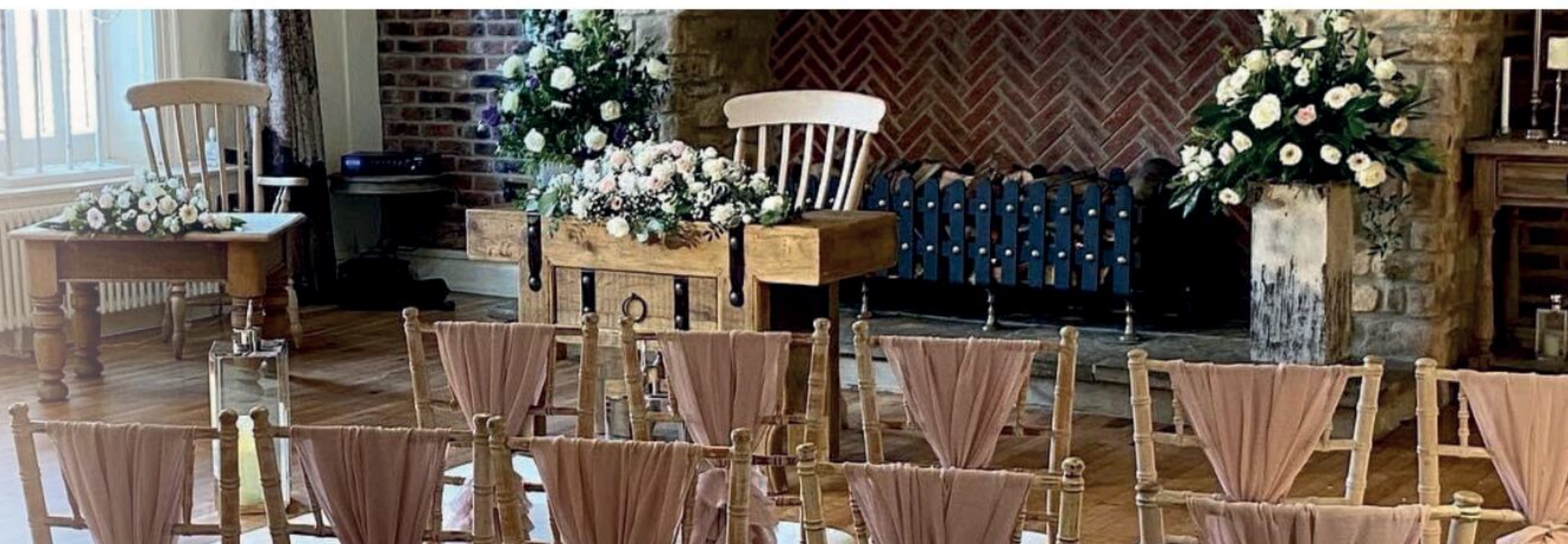
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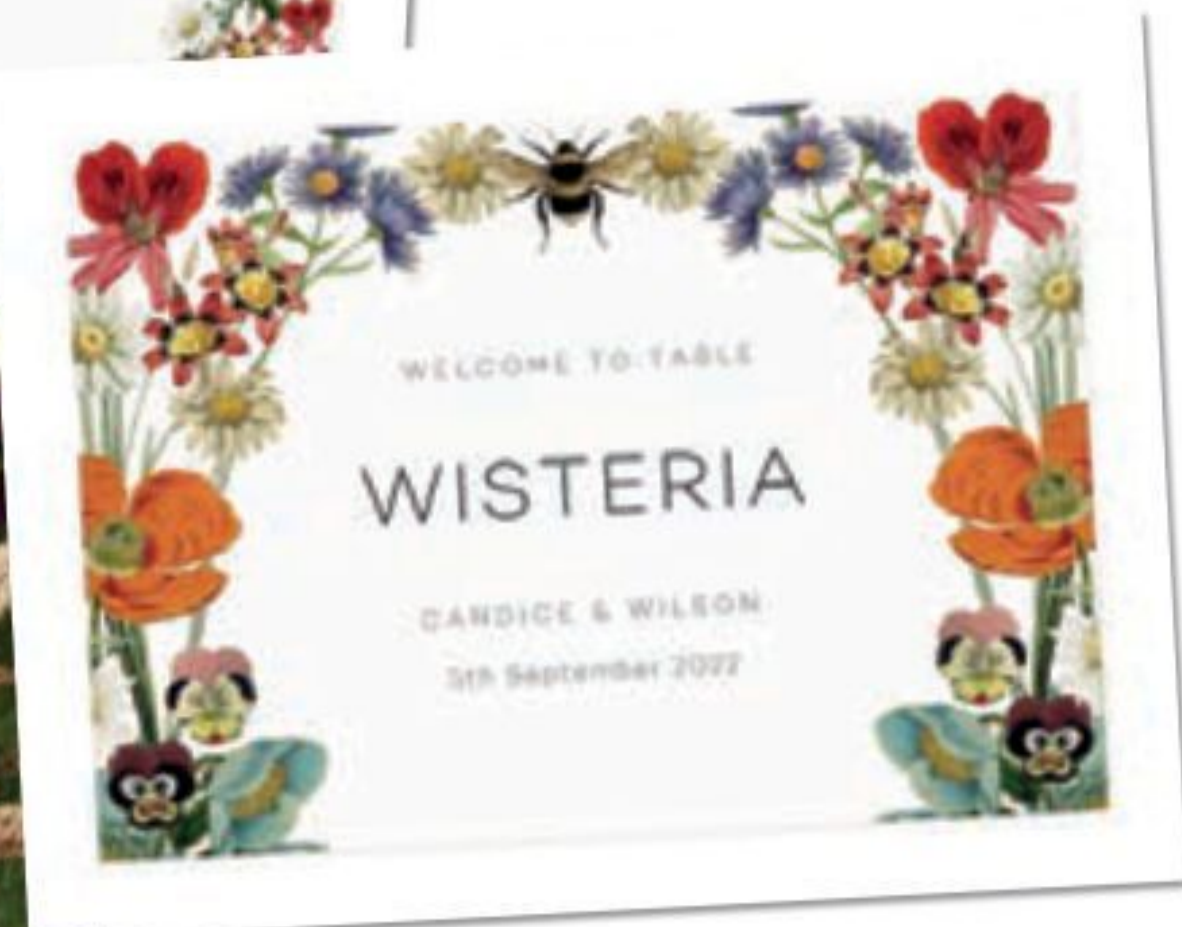
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FASHION

Fashion editor Claire Ridley reveals the latest bridal news, buys and launches

focus

Editor's favourite

This white satin eye mask, £10, www.bouxavenue.com, is perfect for getting some pre-wedding beauty sleep!



FASHION MEETS STATIONERY

Online stationery brand Papier has collaborated with iconic fashion house Temperley London, whose S/S22 bridal dress collection is available now, on a new wedding stationery collection inspired by the ethereal gowns. Decorated with whimsical details including bumblebees and wildflowers, the paper designs showcase the sense of fantasy that the Temperley brand is famous for. The collection is made up of three suites including *Bibi*, *Delft Blue* and *Spring Rustic* that's inspired by the *Toledo* dress, pictured.

To shop, visit www.temperleylondon.com and www.papier.com/collaborations/temperley-london



Thanks, mum!

The latest bridal collection from Joma Jewellery includes stylish gift ideas for brides, bridesmaids, flowergirls and mothers-of-the-bride (don't forget that Mother's Day is around the corner!) These silver styles, £17.99 each, feature charms including hearts and flowers and all of the bracelets in the collection can be personalised. The brand has recently unveiled the Wellness Collection featuring real semi-precious gemstones that represent empowering mantras and positive vibes. To shop, visit <https://jomajewellery.com>

GIRLS WHO WEAR PEARLS

The latest collection from www.coeur-de-lion.org offers pretty pearl pieces, from necklaces and bracelets to these drop earrings, £105.



Dress to impress

The new Chi Chi London Wedding Collection has launched featuring luxury styles in soft fabrics with hand-designed embroidery for brides, bridesmaids, and flowergirls ranging from sizes four to 26. This is in addition to their selection of elegant guest outfits and accessories. To shop, visit www.chichiclothing.com/collections/wedding-shop

Gifts for little lovelies

Flitzy, the newly launched children's accessories brand has revealed its collection of jewellery charms championing the work of the WWF. Four unique designs have been created each representing an endangered animal that the WWF is working to protect with 50% of the profit donated to the charity. The charms are designed for mixing and matching across Flitzy's collection of charm bracelets and necklaces and make great big-day gift ideas priced at just £6 each. To shop, visit <https://flitzy.co.uk>



The frill of it

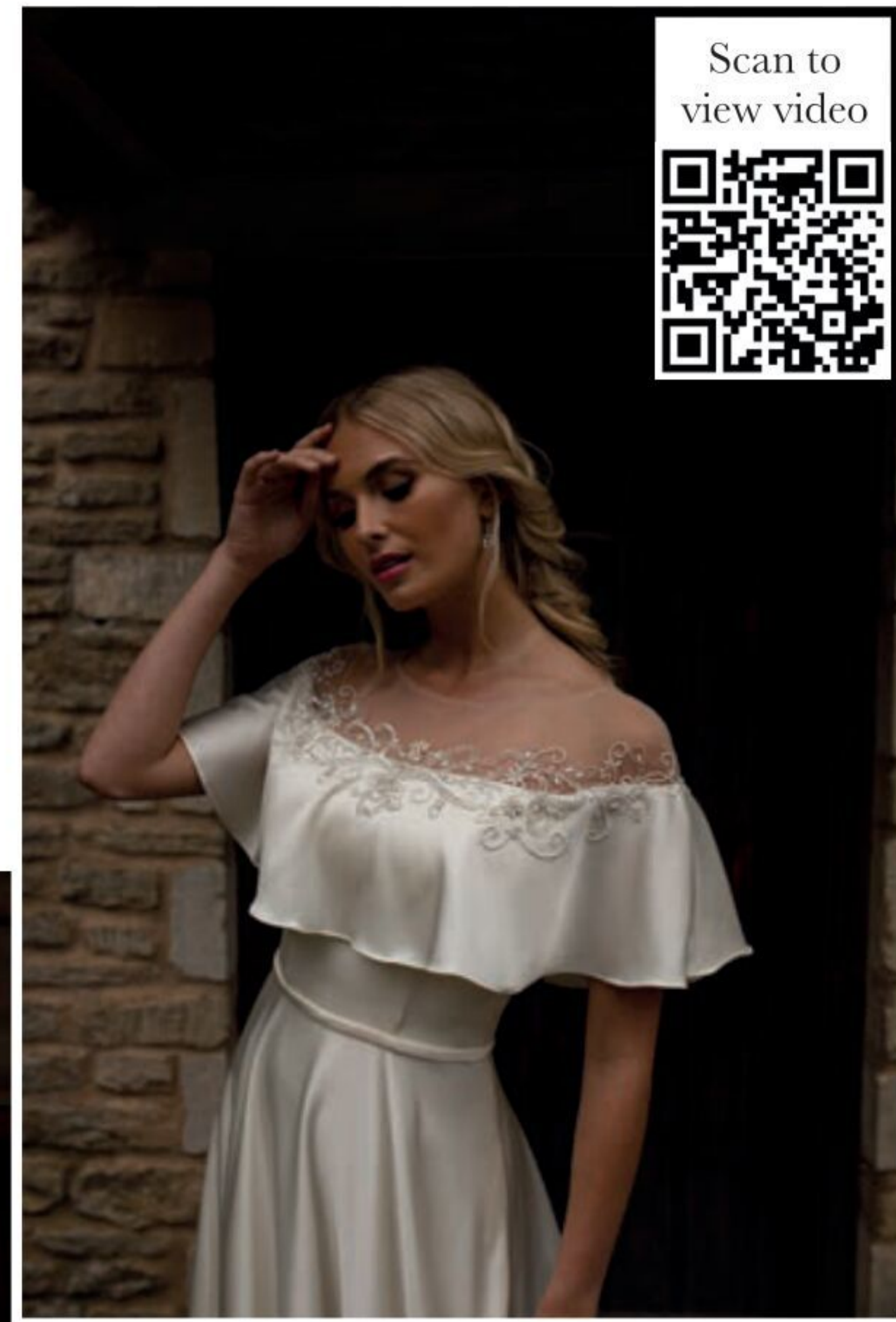
Layers and ruffles adorn dresses in the new-season bridal collections



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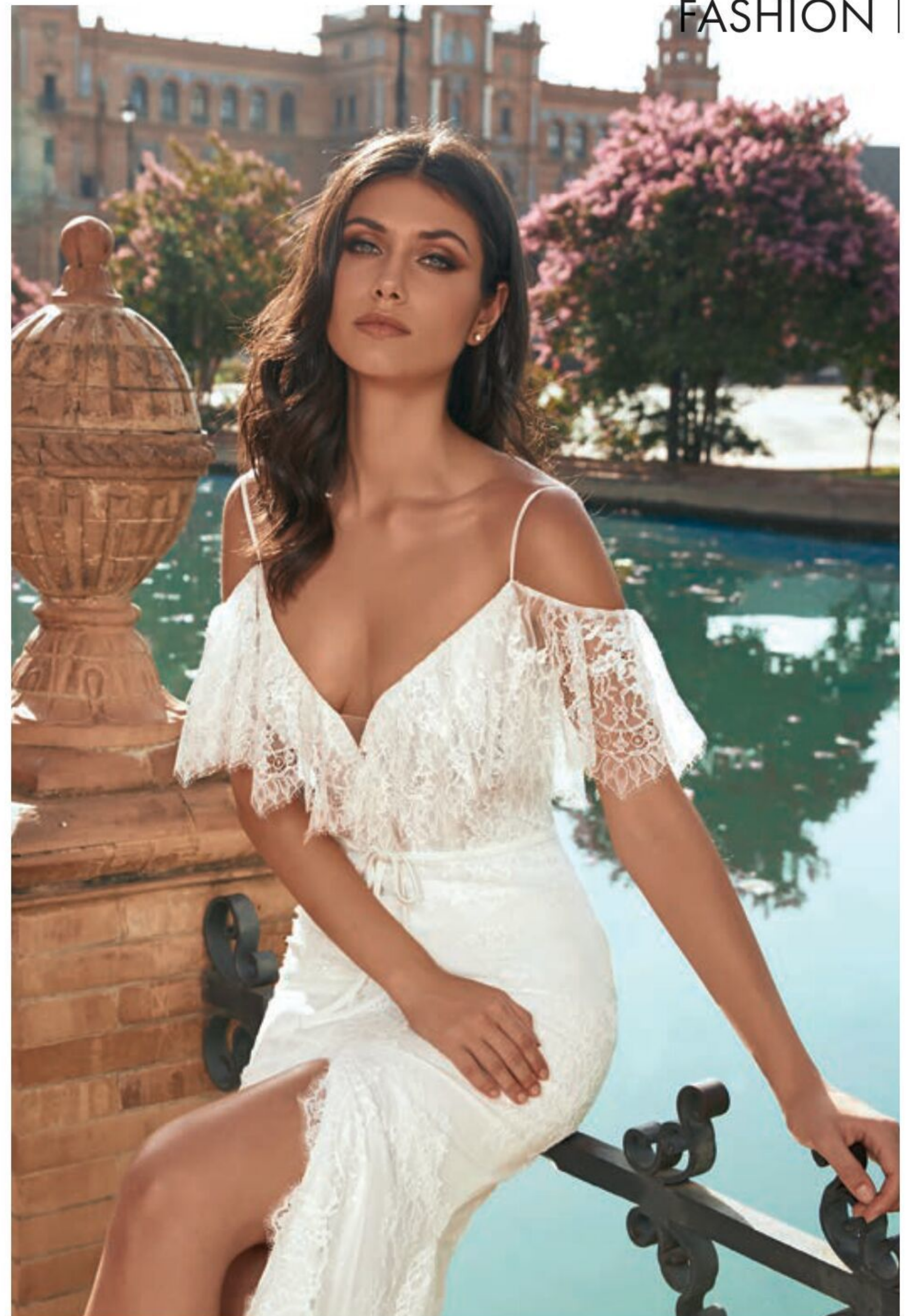
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www.jlmcouture.com/designer/allison-webb



Style no 22-17 by www.bertha.com



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Nathalia by <https://graceloveslace.com>



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White leather sandals with ankle straps, £210, <https://graceloveslace.com>

White clutch bag with ring detail, £22.99, www.quizclothing.co.uk



Ivory flat satin shoes with diamanté trim, £80, www.monsoon.co.uk



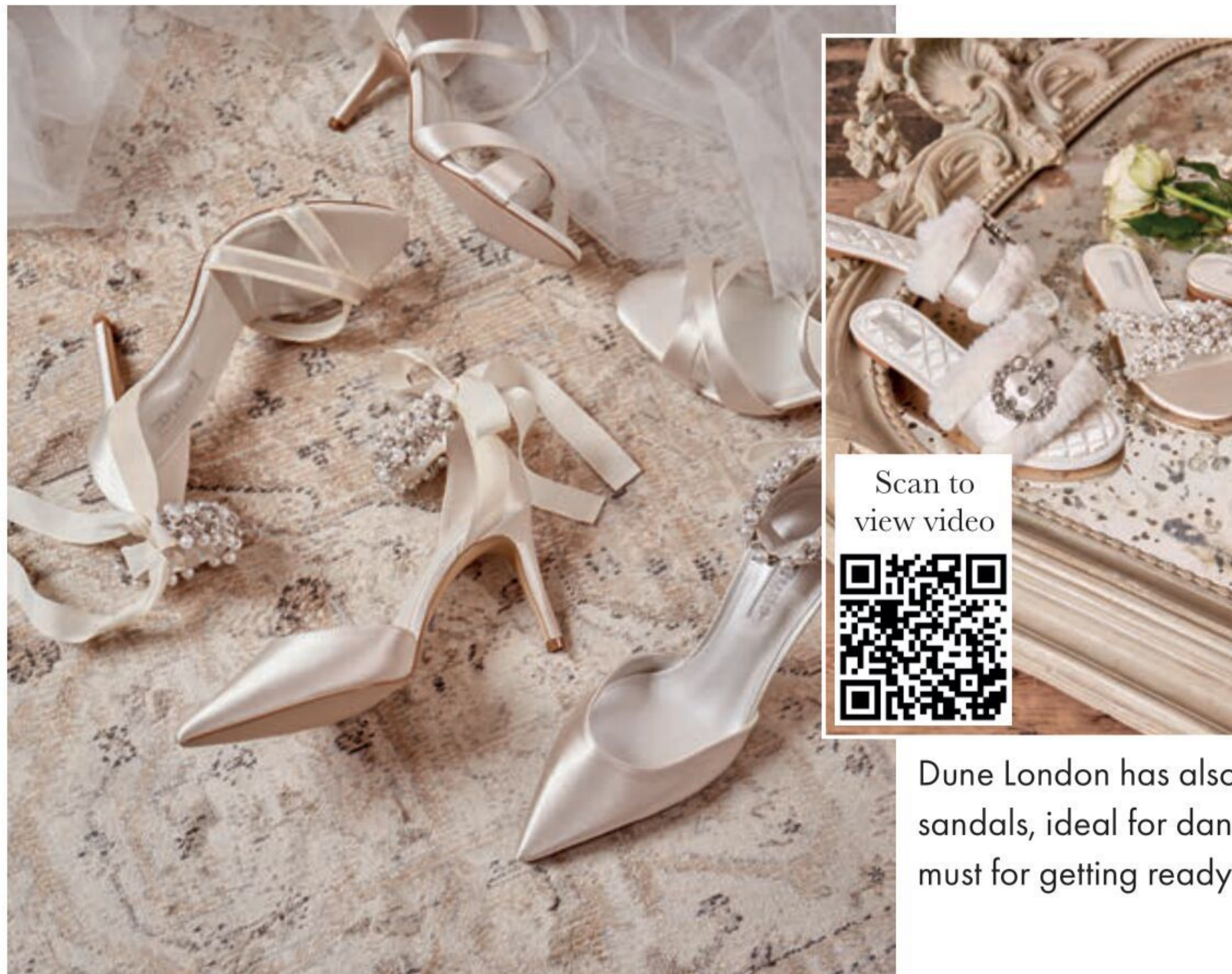
AISLE STYLE

From skyscraper stilettos to comfortable flats and even sliders, the new-season bridal shoe and bag collections offer something for everyone

Ivory suede peep toes with leather trim, £395, www.emmylondon.com



White leather sandals with interchangeable diamanté ankle strap, £137.50, <https://camillaelphick.com>



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Rose leather and ostrich feather shoes, from a selection, <https://carmenllaguno.com>



Dune London has also introduced beaded flat sandals, ideal for dancing, and these fluffy sliders, a must for getting ready in! www.dunelondon.com



Ivory clutch bag, £220, www.harrietwilde.com

Dune London's new collection includes beaded ankle straps, crystal-encrusted heels and satin strappy sandals with a selection of heel heights from tall stilettos to elegant kitten heels and everything in between.



Satin T-bar shoes with silver trim, £300, www.pronovias.com



Ivory satin beaded slingbacks, £149, www.rainbowclub.co.uk



Crystal-encrusted sandals, £85, www.paradoxlondon.com

Pink clutch bag, £15, www.next.co.uk



Ivory suede sandals with mother-of-pearl block heel, £695, <https://freyarose.com>



Tulle peep-ties with pearl detail, from a selection, www.jimmychoo.com

These pearl-beaded mules are a must for fashionistas! £315, <https://dianehassall.com>





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SWEET ESCAPE

Tom Ford's latest perfume launch lets you escape to the luxurious Mediterranean. Costa Azzurra Parfum (£108 50ml, £150 100ml) offers an air of freshness through crisp Italian lemon and evokes a dense coastal forest with magnified oakwood extract and cypress. Plus, cistus absolute and a harmony of ambers capture the spirit of luxury. Check out www.tomford.co.uk



Beauty editor Kelly Andrews reveals all the latest must-haves for the bride-to-be

Beauty BUZZ

TOTALLY TONED

ESPA's new Tri-Active Regenerating Define and Tighten Body Serum (£60) aids in tightening and toning for naturally plumper skin. Harnessing the natural power of regenerating sea moss, mushroom, mandarin, plant stem cells and more for a symphony of super-nutrients, it helps to define skin and banish imperfections, restoring the body's skin texture with luxurious hydration. Naturally enriched with aromatherapy, this body serum features essential oils from rose and geraniums for holistic, seasonal wellbeing. Check out www.espaskincare.com

SMOOTH OPERATOR

Award-winning haircare brand, Innersense Organic Beauty, has launched Serenity Smoothing Cream (£24), a nutrient-rich formula suitable for all hair types delivering a flawless and bouncy blow dry with a sleek look. Baobab and frangipani help to lock in moisture, as well as providing care for hair exposed to heated styling tools and strengthening strands without weighing them down. Meanwhile, vitamin-rich mango seed butter, avocado and coconut oils nourish and boost hydration while smoothing the cuticle to reduce frizz. Find it at www.naturisimo.com



A GROWER, NOT A THROWER

Recycling in the beauty industry is notoriously difficult, but here's a clever invention by award-winning eco-pencil company Sprout World, designed not only to reduce waste, but to give something beautiful and useful back to the planet – recycling at its finest I have to say! Introducing Sprout Makeup Pencils (£9.95), the world's first zero-waste plantable make-up pencils. Yep, plantable! Just use as normal and instead of throwing them away when they become too small to use, flip them around, stick the end into a pot of damp soil and ta-da – beautiful, bee-friendly wildflowers will start to sprout within 1-2 weeks. Check out www.sproutworld.com

CHILLED-OUT SKIN

Adaptogens have been used for thousands of years in ancient Chinese medicine and ayurvedic remedies to help mitigate the effects of stress on the body, and until recently have mostly been used in herbal supplements and teas to regulate stress levels. But they could also offer the solution to stressed-out skin. MARA Volcanic Sea Clay Detox Masque (£48) contains aswagandha, a skin-strengthening herb and adaptogen powered by antioxidants, which works to fight free radicals, boost hydration and soothe stressed-out, blemish-prone skin. Find it at www.cultbeauty.co.uk



BYE, BYE DRY

Have the ravages of winter left your skin dry, dull, sensitive, flaky and tight? As we embrace the spring, get your glow back with Q+A Snow Algae Intensive Face Cream (£12). If, like me, you're reaching for Google, allow me to explain. Snow algae, also known as watermelon snow, is a species of green algae containing astaxanthin, a potent antioxidant great at improving dryness, sun damage and protecting against free radicals. I've only been using it for a couple of days and my dry skin is already showing signs of improvement. Find it at www.qandaskin.com



YOU CAN IMPROVE ON PERFECTION!

Now reformulated to be vegan-friendly and even more comfortable with an extended shade range suitable for all skin tones, Huda Beauty proves that the perfect liquid matte lipstick does exist. The non-drying formula delivers a one-swipe application of vibrant colour coverage with up to eight hours of staying power that every bride needs and is flake-, streak-, smudge-, and transfer-proof. It also now boasts the thinnest possible texture thanks to the brand's unique L.O.V.E complex (lycopene, olive oil, vitamin A and E, essential fatty acids) helping to keep lips supple all day long. Find the new and improved Huda Beauty Liquid Matte Lipsticks (£18) at www.cultbeauty.co.uk



COOL, CALM AND COLLECTED

Is worrying about irritated skin on your wedding day keeping you awake at night? Check out Organic Series' new Soothing Mask (£29). Designed to soothe irritation and redness it contains rich amounts of floral chamomile, rose and lavender, sure to leave you with a spring in your step. With aloe vera and hyaluronic acid too, skin will feel moisturised, smooth and protected, while anti-bacterial rosemary helps reduce fine lines and firms the skin. Use at night before your head hits the pillow and wake up to regenerated skin. Check out www.organicseries.co.uk



BODY BEAUTIFUL

Alexandra Kay Time to Ease Muscle Relax (£29) and Time to Soothe Scent Free (£28) Body Oils are natural, organic and carefully-blended massage oils. They're created with plant extracts including hemp, rosehip and a new phytoactive CB2-skin™ biofunctional to offer calming and relaxing benefits. As well as soothing tired and aching muscles, these two new oils use innovative botanicals that deliver a comforting, nutrient-rich boost to delicate and sensitive skin. Find them at www.greenpeople.co.uk



FREEZE FRAME

Having seen Skin Proud Frozen Over (£16.95) go viral on TikTok I was keen to know more about this cryotherapy gel moisturiser. Designed to combat tired and puffy skin in desperate need of a pick me up, the gel-to-ice moisturiser hydrates and cools. Infused with anti-inflammatory aloe vera extract and hyaluronic acid it also works to lock in moisture and calm the skin. It can be used as is or popped in the freezer for a slush-like texture and extra-cooling relief. Find it at www.boots.com

EYE LOVE THIS!

Hot on FeelUnique at the moment is Vichy Mineral 89 Eye Brightening Serum with hyaluronic acid and caffeine (£20). This multi-tasker is designed to lighten the appearance of dark circles, make eye bags less visible, hydrate and plump the sensitive eye area for 24 hours and protect the skin's barrier function. It can even make eyelashes appear stronger and feel silkier. I love the instantly soothing effect it has on the delicate eye area after scrubbing away to remove make-up. It's an all-round little hero and you can find it at www.feelunique.com





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– **Olivia Gibson**

Q+A VITAMIN C BRIGHTENING SERUM

£9 (30ml), www.qandaskin.com

"This product absorbed quickly and left my skin soft and silky in minutes. In just two days use, morning and night, my blemish-filled complexion had begun to clear and a soft glow had taken hold. Just one pump is enough to cover the entire face, so despite the bottle's small size, it's definitely going to last."

– **Beth Morton**



SKINCARE SUPERHEROES

Serums are the skincare essentials of the 20s, especially if you're on the quest for a radiant big-day complexion

WISHFUL THIRST TRAP JUICE SERUM

£41 (30ml), www.feelunique.com

"The first thing to make me smile about this serum was its fresh scent, I could pick out the rose and aloe vera notes instantly. The second was the ease of application as it glided on smoothly. This mix of hyaluronic acid with firming peptides has benefited my skin, which is glowing and more hydrated."

– **Claire Ridley**



GLOW RECIPE GUAVA VITAMIN C DARK SPOT SERUM

£41 (30ml), www.cultbeauty.co.uk

"This super serum had me hooked from the moment I picked up its 100 per cent recyclable packaging and shelf-worthy pink bottle. It doesn't claim to be a miracle worker but my mature skin soaked it up without leaving a trace and although I can't report that my dark spots have disappeared, it has certainly made a difference. My skin already appears more even with a healthier glow so I'll definitely be sticking with it!"

– **Sarah Reeve**



INSTITUT ESTHEDERM INTENSIVE HYALURONIC SERUM

£52 (30ml),

www.feelunique.com

"I've been suffering from dry skin lately, so I grabbed this little beauty as soon as I saw it. It sinks into the skin at breakneck speed, with no unpleasant residue whatsoever and leaves it feeling nourished, plumped and smooth. I've noticed an improvement in my make-up application already."

– **Kelly Andrews**



OLE HENRIKSEN DEWTOPIA 20% ACID NIGHT TREATMENT

£49 (30ml),

www.boots.com

"I'm thrilled with this night serum. Each morning I wake up and feel a difference to my skin. Containing a powerful 20 per cent acid blend, it's certainly helped minimise my pores and gives my skin the radiance it had previously been lacking."

– **Rachel Westall**

ROC MULTI CORREXION HYDRATE + PLUMP SERUM CAPSULES

£35.99 for 30, www.feelunique.com

"Using one serum capsule every night for a week so far has made my skin feel soft and smooth. It's helped solve my dry-skin problem and given me a glowing complexion. Each capsule provided more than enough product to cover my face and I even had enough excess to use on my hands, which also suffer."

– **Melissa Barker**



Fashion Q & A

Look your big-day best with
help from the experts

FINDING THE ONE

I'm nervous about my first bridal appointment, what can I expect and should I take anything with me?

Your first bridal appointment is the start of an important journey, so the experience must be enjoyable. Ensure the essential details have been sorted before attending the consultation, such as a venue booked, date confirmed and the desired theme picked to make the experience easier.

Do some research online to envision what type of dress you're after, and take screenshots to show your consultant. Search the boutique you're visiting online to check reviews to find out if other brides would recommend the company or not.

Make sure to stick to your budget and avoid wearing fake tan on the day as this can often stain the dresses, particularly if you sweat a lot.

If you want to lose a considerable amount of weight before your big day, more than one stone, wait until you have achieved this goal before looking for a gown. Your self-confidence will change as well as the styles you like.

Wearing a nude seamless knicker is all that's required as tight-fitting support garments aren't necessary and often change the way the dress sits on a bride, particularly with fitted styles. Bring a hair bobble to envision how you'd look with your hair up.

Be open to suggestions from the team and be honest with what you do and don't like about the gowns. Don't be afraid to ask questions, and ensure you read all the terms and conditions before signing anything. Stop looking at gowns once you find the perfect dress.

Helen Danbury-Trott | Simply Wed Bridal Limited
www.simplywedbridal.co.uk

SHOWSTOPPING GOWNS

I'm looking for an elegant dress that's easy to dance the night away in. What styles would you suggest?

It depends on what type of dancing you're thinking of doing and how energetic it will be. You'll want to move around a lot more if you're having a ceilidh wedding and not just planning on busting some excellent moves on the dancefloor. One of the most important factors will be the need to move your legs, so you'll want something with a bit of stretch to the fabric. An example of this would be *Fernanda* by Maggie Sottero, made from a talin crepe.

Another option is a floaty A-line dress, which allows brides to hook their train out of the way. *Camellia* by Morilee is perfect for this with lightweight tulle and plenty of room to kick your legs up. We're seeing lots of dresses in 2022 collections feature a slit in the skirt – perfect for the dancefloor.

It's a good idea to add shoestring straps to strapless dresses or remove off-the-shoulder sleeves to throw your hands up in the air without any resistance when the right track comes on.

Tracey Whelan | Wedding Wardrobe | www.weddingwardrobe.com



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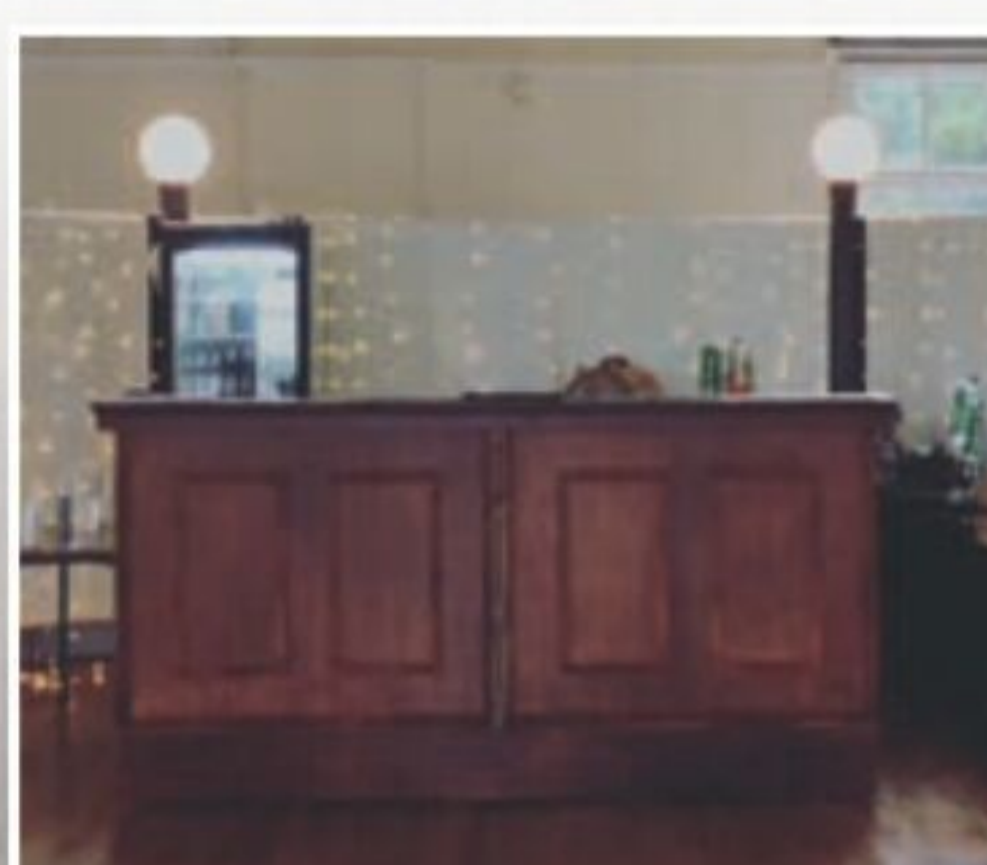
Special occasions require a special look, and there is no bigger event than your wedding day. At Niche Hairdressing, we understand the importance of looking your best when you walk down the aisle. Our talented hairdressers specialise in wedding and prom hairstyles, working with you to achieve the stunning style you have been craving. To help you relax the night before your wedding, arrange one of our luxurious and relaxing pamper parties.



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HOT TOPIC

Local experts offer stellar advice on wedding dilemmas

BLOOMIN' BEAUTIFUL

We love flowers and want to incorporate them into our cake design. What do you recommend we look for?

I prefer sugar flowers to fresh florals on cakes because you won't have any issues with them wilting throughout the day.

I try to match the blooms and colours incorporated in the bouquet and there are so many options for displaying them on the cake. Do your research to find some examples of layouts you like to show your baker.

If you've gone for a wild-style bouquet, tie this in with the cake and have a more free and explosive arrangement. If you've opted for a more traditional and tighter design, maybe have small tight clusters of flowers to reflect this.

Gabriella Grace Rottiers | Gabriella Grace Cakes
www.gabriellagracc cakes.co.uk



www.laurenbraithwaite.com

TEARS OF JOY

I'm going to be emotional on our special day and I'm worried about my eye make-up. How can I ensure it won't budge throughout the day?

Many moments can bring on happy tears, including the big dress reveal after getting ready. These moments can often leave you worrying about your eye make-up and how to keep everything in place. There are a few steps you or the make-up artist can take to ensure the longevity of the products throughout the day.

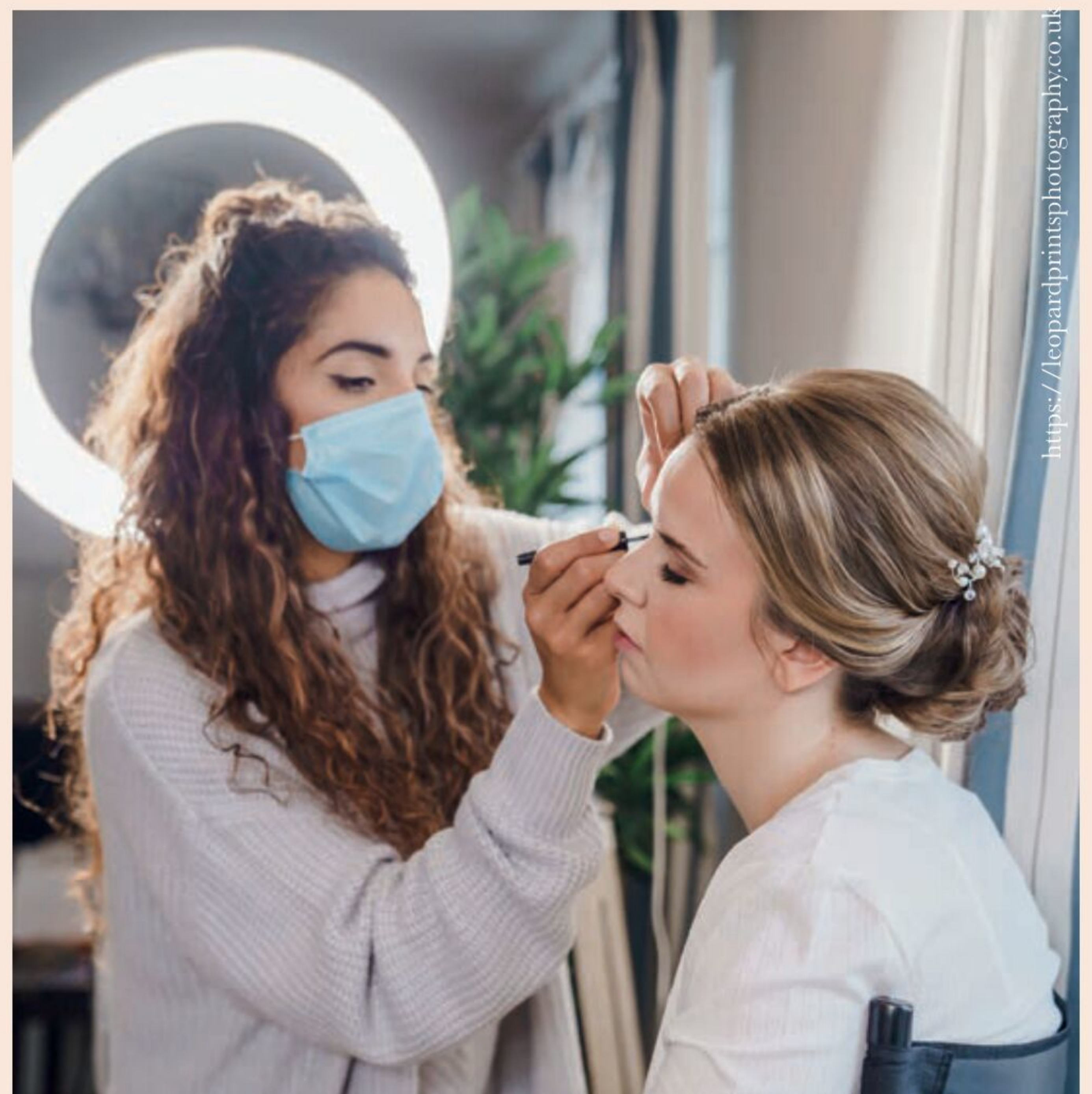
Prepare your base with a good primer; you can get ones specifically for your eyes to help keep your eyeshadow in place. Make sure to use a waterproof eyeliner and mascara as well.

Once the look is complete, apply a good setting spray to prevent any fading or smudging.

If your make-up artist has applied strip lashes, make sure to carry lash glue in your bag. Although it is unlikely you'll need to use it, it's good to have the item if you need to stick any part of the lash back down.

Use a tissue just above your bottom lash line to absorb watery eyes and never rub – apply this technique on your face as well to keep your make-up in place.

Néveen Hudspith | Makeup by Néveen
www.facebook.com/MakeupByNeveen



<https://leopardprintsphotography.co.uk>

LOOKING YOUR BEST

I don't wear a lot of make-up normally. How do I create a perfect big-day look while still feeling like me?

Make-up is very personal to each client, and I always work with brides to create a look they're comfortable wearing. You don't have to wear a lot of make-up on your wedding day, remember that the products are there to enhance your features and not overtake them.

When I meet my customers, I always do a thorough consultation to understand what they're looking for. There are so many different brands of make-up available, and the key is to try a few until you find one you like – this also applies to finding the right look at your make-up trial. Your make-up artist should help you find a look that will be true to who you are, in keeping with your overall look – don't be afraid to stick with products you would typically use. It's also important to remember that make-up shows up differently on camera than it does to the naked eye, and an experienced company will know how to strike a balance between the two.

Michelle Brooks | Make-up my Wedding by Michelle

www.make-upmywedding.co.uk



THE PERFECT SETTING

What questions are important to ask venues before we book one for our wedding?

When looking for your wedding venue, make sure to check with each property that there's availability on your desired date. Spring and summer weddings are always popular, so these months do tend to get filled up pretty quickly.

It's good to have in mind a set budget and figure out how you want to spend it – make sure to prioritise the most important aspects of your day first.

Find out if your wedding will be the only one held that day, as it's essential to understand how everything will run in terms of service and attentiveness. Get to know your wedding coordinator, as they will work closely with you to turn your dream day into a reality.

Mariel Jones | Wynyard Hall | www.wynyardhall.co.uk



BOHO BABE

We're having a boho-inspired wedding and we'd love to incorporate elements of our theme into our cake. How can we achieve this?

Boho-style weddings are extremely popular at the moment and would be perfect if traditional weddings are not your sort of thing. The whimsical and romantic style allows you to be slightly unconventional and lets your artistic nature run wild. There are many beautiful elements linked to this theme, think dried flowers, feathers, pampas, succulents, macramé pieces and heavy lacework. The above cake has a wonderfully sentimental feel as all the flowers used were cut and dried from family members' gardens – what a fantastic idea!

Helen Edwards | Vanilla Teas | www.vanillateas.co.uk

SHOW OF AFFECTION

Different ways to keep loved ones entertained throughout your wedding day

Wedding entertainment is vital for keeping guests occupied and the atmosphere flowing throughout the day. There are a wide range of options for local entertainment in the North East; we've gathered talented suppliers to help you plan a wow-factor wedding and impress guests of all ages.

Memorable music

Aurora Strings first started back in 1997 and has created a special atmosphere at weddings ever since. The string quartet can help set the scene throughout the day, such as when guests arrive, throughout ceremonies, drinks receptions and wedding breakfasts.

The manager and viola player Gayle Roberts says, "We consist of full-time professional musicians who are passionate about what we do. Our huge and varied repertoire means that we can play traditional classical music, pop music or anything in between." He adds, "We also write music arrangements and we can make one for you if there's a piece of music that isn't on our list."

Check out: www.aurorastrings.org.uk



www.fpphotography.co.uk



<https://greenvisionphotography.myportfolio.com>



www.jackcookphotography.com

Murder mystery

Murder One has offered interactive murder mystery events for more than 35 years, and works closely with newlyweds to create the perfect entertainment for loved ones. Company director Aidey Pugh says, "We specialise in extremely realistic and naturalistic events with the use of professional actors. If desired, we can easily trick guests who won't know what's happening until a murder is announced!"

Some guests will pursue and interrogate the suspects to their heart's content, while others prefer to watch the action from a discrete distance, making a note of whispered blackmail, threats and more. The team will display an array of visual clues in the function rooms, consisting of notes, love letters, Facebook messages between the characters and more. Towards the end of the event, tables are invited to reach a majority verdict and sum up their case before the officers reveal the murderer.

Couples can also have a video of the whole event afterwards, as the officers have working bodycams attached to their stab vests to capture the event and those involved.

Check out: www.murder-one.com



Boogie all night

Based in Northumberland, Hedfone Party provides silent disco entertainment for all to enjoy. The team has been offering these events for more than 15 years and has plenty of knowledge to help couples plan their perfect evening.

Each guest is given headphones to listen to one of three channels of music being broadcasted. So, you could have a third of the dancefloor dancing to Abba, some rapping along to Eminem and others rocking out to Queen. It's a fun and memorable experience that adds an extra special

touch to weddings.

The supplier can provide the full-service with a DJ from Marvellous Disco, lighting equipment and even speaker systems. Or the most cost-effective option allows couples to hire equipment from the company and use their own playlists.

Check out: www.hedfoneparty.com



Live, love, laugh

For more than 20 year, Character Faces has been entertaining guests all over the North East and offers caricature cartoons for people to treasure for years to come. The smile guaranteed service offers loved ones of all ages their very own special piece of artwork to take home. The team aims to spot guests unique characteristics and bring them to life through drawings, which will certainly get everyone laughing.

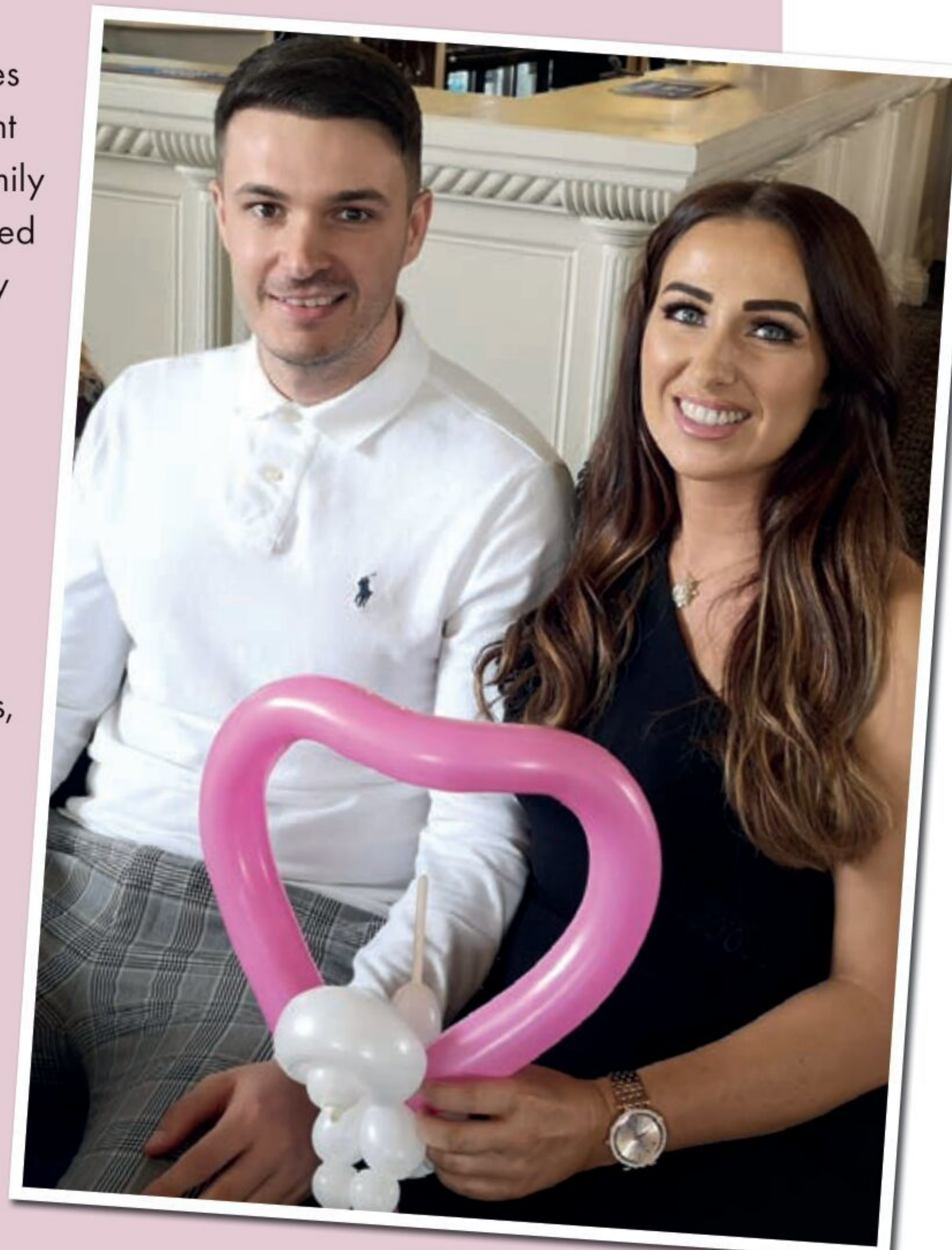
Check out: www.charaterfaces.co.uk

Children's entertainment

Sunsett Balloon Entertainment provides the perfect amusement to keep the whole family entertained. Established in 1999, the company has many balloon twisting surprises to choose from while the experienced entertainer wows guests with comedy. By twisting, bending and shaping balloons, the business can create fun designs that kids will love.

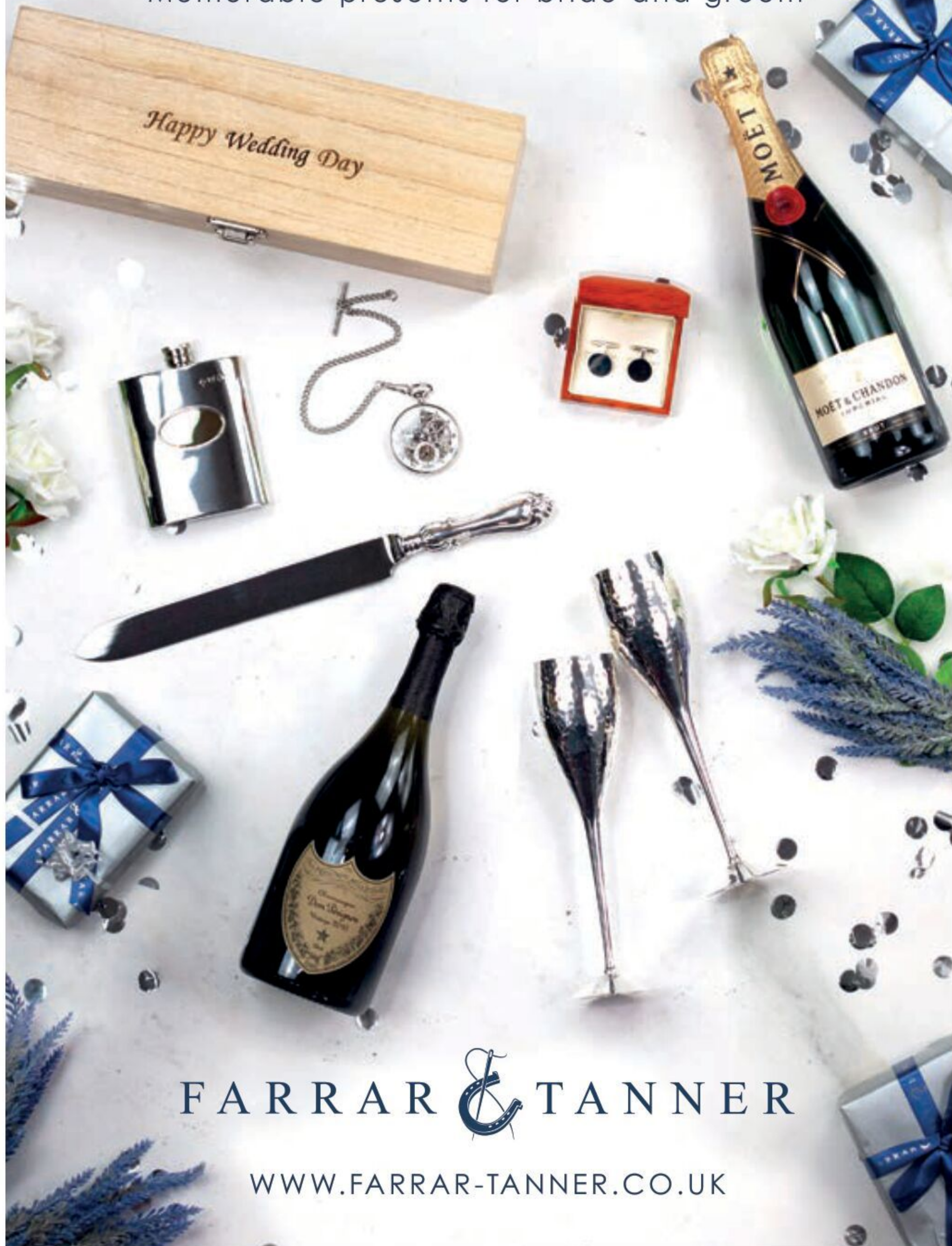
The team specialises in weddings and owner Alun Young enjoys creating fun surprises for wedding guests. He says, "We're always delighted with the reaction we receive at weddings all over the North East."

Check out: www.sunsettballoons.co.uk



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ENTERTAINMENT INSPIRATION



Calling all animal lovers!

Make your wedding memorable by having animals throughout the day – doves, alpacas, rabbits and horses are great options!



Abracadabra!

There's a reason why magic has been popular throughout the years, magicians can capture audiences of all ages and create astonishing shows that will be a talking point long after the dancefloor has cleared.



Let the games begin

Make the most of your venue's grounds and lay out some vintage garden games such as croquet, giant Jenga and hoopla. Your guests will have so much fun while they wait for the wedding breakfast, they'll barely notice their tummies rumble.



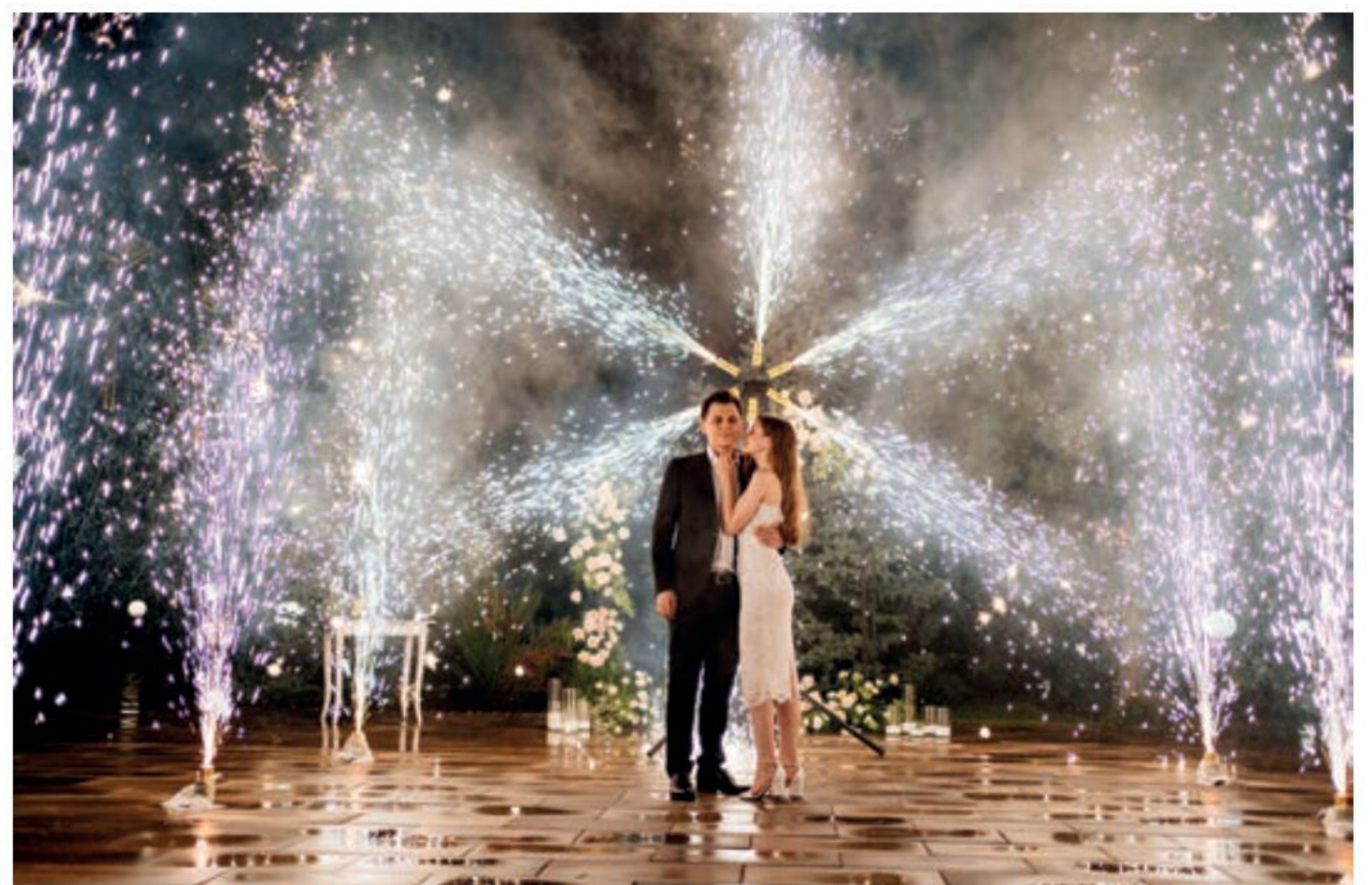
Say cheese!

Photo booths with props are a fantastic way to capture fun and goofy photos of all your guests. Not only do the images create a hilarious guest book to treasure for years to come, but loved ones can keep the images as a reminder of the day.



All that sparkles

You can never go wrong with a dab of sparkle. Add a festival-vibe to your celebrations with a glitter bar for blinged-up beards and glistening cheekbones.



Out with a bang

End the night with a spectacular firework display! What could be more romantic than watching the sky sparkle and light up with loved ones?



The Camden Watch Company's recent collaboration with tattoo artist Rebecca Vincent launched in December 2021. The No.27 Camden x Rebecca Vincent design, in either a black or tan strap, features a mother of pearl dial and was inspired by the Victorian language of flowers. In Rebecca's signature style, this beautiful and striking unisex watch is the perfect addition to any wrist. Priced £155, from www.camdenwatchcompany.com



Grooms' NEWS

All the latest best buys and product launches

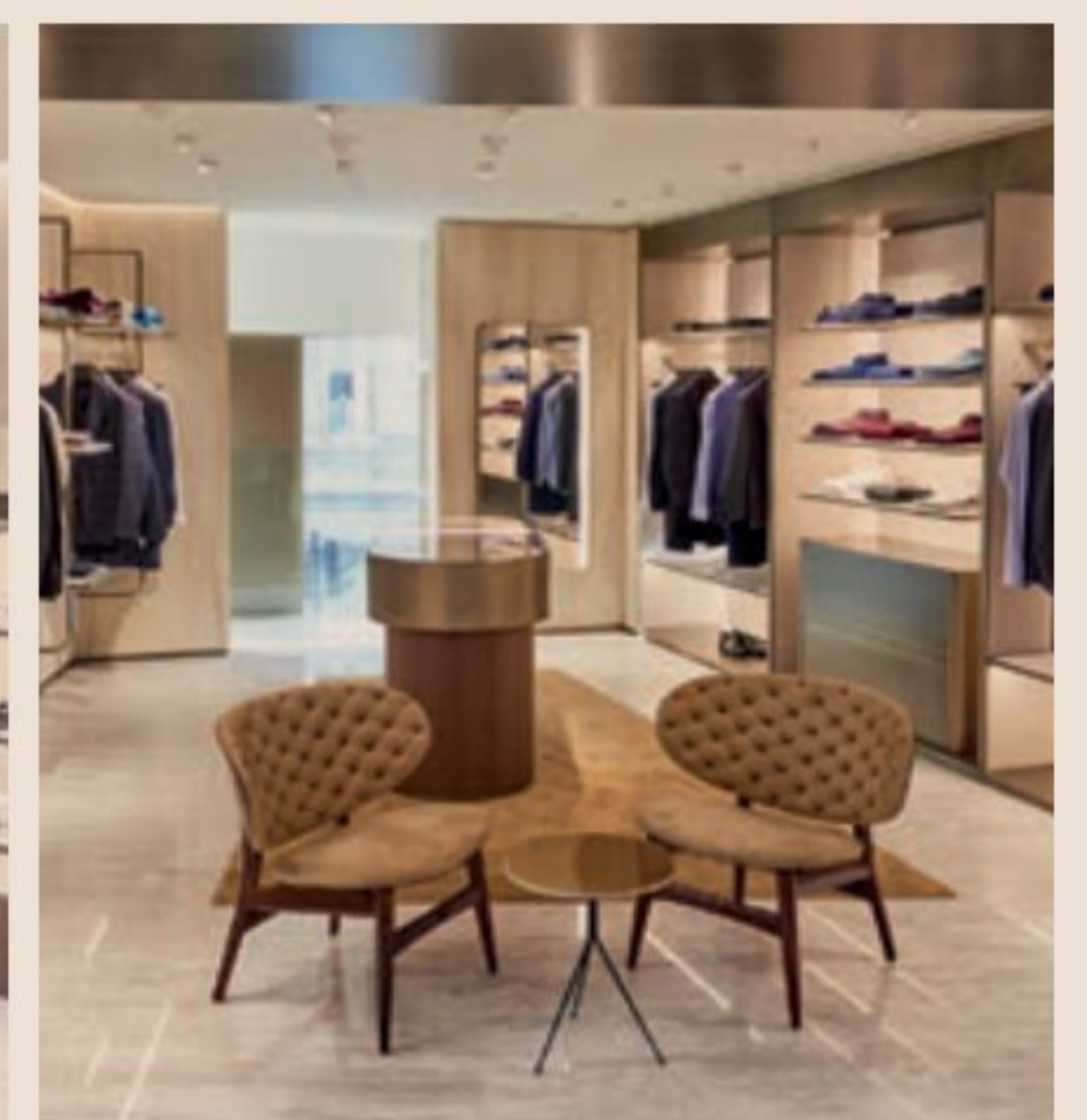
Lush has launched two new hairstyling products. Wig, is designed to train your hair into shape with a matte, firm-hold, no-product-look. Scented with the brand's Salty fragrance, it's perfect for keeping hair looking trim between cuts.

Infra Wig is a soft hair styling gel with an invisible no-crunch feel, for subtle hold and supple styles. Fragranced with Lush's The Hairdresser's Husband perfume, a mouth-watering combination of grapefruit, lemon, myrtle and vanilla, it's a treat for the senses.

These lockdown inventions were designed to be used together, alternating daily use. Both £8 for 100g from www.lush.com

The new Charles Tyrwhitt wedding collection for spring 2022 encompasses some key pieces which would be perfect for a spring/summer wedding. The range includes this sophisticated combo: a black tailored morning suit, duck egg waistcoat, luxury silk Italian tie and the regent weave shirt.

Check out: www.charlestyrwhitt.com



Iconic Italian luxury tailored menswear brand Canali, has opened its flagship store in London. Located on the corner of New Bond Street and Brooks Street, conceived by the strategic design studio Hangar Design Group, the interior brings together the aesthetic style of the Canali fashion house and Milan.

Elegantly decorated, the boutique, spreading over 310 square metres, is an ode to the magnificent Milanese residential architecture of the early to mid-20th century.

The project focused on restyling the brand's identity by introducing a more contemporary dimension to the display space dedicated to menswear. Visible from the street, airy spaces are dedicated to displaying tailored products in the area historically regarded as the most luxurious in London and devoted to prêt-à-porter purchases: Mayfair.

The upper floor houses a VIP Room for 'Su Misura' appointments. This made-to-measure service is available all year round in order to meet the brand's high production standards.

Check out : www.canali.com/en_gb



The experts at OnBuy Men's Aftershave (www.onbuy.com) have revealed the top fragrances as ranked on TikTok. In first place, with a staggering 114,000,000 views is Sauvage by Dior. This woody, aromatic, fragrance currently retails for an average of £112. In second, with 51,900,000 views, is Eros by Versace. This 2013 minty fragrance currently retails for an average of £85. In third place is Bleu de Chanel by Chanel with 45,400,000 views. Bearing similar notes to Sauvage by Dior, this fragrance is also woody and aromatic, and it retails for an average of £102.



IN THE *pink*

Fuchsia, watermelon, flamingo, rouge, salmon, coral, hot pink... the choices are endless when it comes to this oh-so fabulous hue!

Tailored fit pine herringbone suit jacket £119, trousers £80, waistcoat £70, brown boots £129. Visit www.mossbroshire.co.uk

GROOMS' FASHION



The Bedingfeld, navy and pink suede men's tassel loafer, £165, www.fairfaxandfavor.com



San Shi amethyst cufflinks in 18ct rose gold vermeil, £150, www.tsaixtsai.com



Vegas dried flower boutonhole, £16, <http://maryelizabethflowers.co.uk>



Blazer, www.riverisland.com



Floral jacquard shirt, black wool trousers, burgundy tie all from www.tmlwin.co.uk



Luxury lounge socks, £25.75, www.heating-and-plumbing.com



Washable reusable face mask, £12, www.thefinecottoncompany.com



Scallop pink silk tie, £35, <http://foxandchave.com>



Burgundy velvet cotton Chaucer jacket, £553, <https://favourbrook.com>



Here come the girls

County Wedding Magazines senior editor Melissa Barker shares her wedding planning journey

I can't believe that in just a few months time I'll officially become Mrs Cullen – eek! Dave and I have been engaged since Christmas Day 2020 and are due to get married this July. With all of the uncertainty surrounding COVID-19 restrictions, it's been quite a stressful journey. However, now that the date is drawing closer I'm finally starting to feel excited. In this issue, read all about my experience going shopping for the bridesmaids' dresses.

DRESSED TO IMPRESS

Choosing who I wanted to be my bridesmaids was one of the easiest decisions I had to make. My sister-in-law, Nolwenn, has been part of the family for a few years now and I really wanted to involve her in our day, so I was pleased when she wanted to be one of my bridesmaids! I also asked my two best friends and fellow County Wedding Magazines editors, Kelly and Olivia, who were over the moon when I asked them (virtually) during one of the many lockdowns.

With the easy bit done, we were on to the task of choosing their bridesmaids' dresses. With conflicting schedules and unpredictable restrictions it was hard to decide on a date that worked for everyone but we were eventually able to book an appointment for the beginning of December 2021.

Shopping for their outfits was one of the things I was most excited about when we got

engaged. I love all the girls dearly and really wanted them to feel special and a part of our big day, so making sure that they were comfortable was my number one priority. I wanted them to choose their own style and the only thing I asked was that all the dresses were sage green, which worked out perfectly as the girls all love that colour – it was meant to be!

We booked a Saturday appointment and oh my gosh it was busy! The girls had to share a changing room and only managed to try on a handful of dresses before our time was up. What shocked us all was just how long the dresses take to come into the store. Starting our shopping eight months early we all thought we'd have plenty of time to shop around, but we found that all of the gowns wouldn't be in the store until early May 2022, which would only leave us with two months for alterations – this of course, sent my stress levels through the roof!

Despite all of the craziness and the insane amount of people in the boutique, Olivia and Nolwenn both managed to find their dresses on that first visit; Nolwenn opted for a sleeveless A-line gown and Olivia chose a similar style but with floaty off-the-shoulder straps.

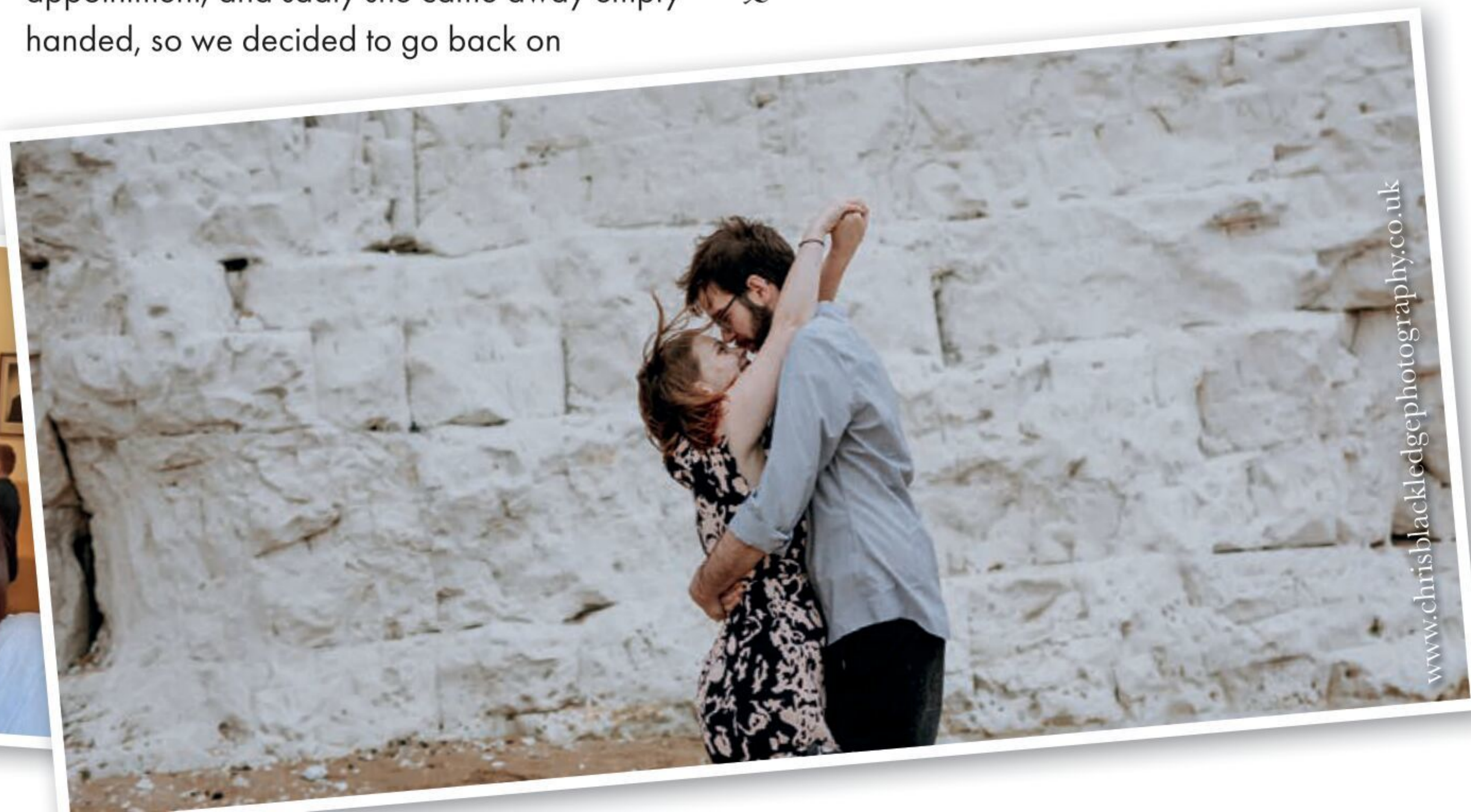
Kelly and I both felt overwhelmed by the first appointment, and sadly she came away empty handed, so we decided to go back on

a Monday when it was quieter and I'm so glad we did! The consultant was absolutely lovely and couldn't do enough for us. She made Kelly feel amazing and we didn't feel pressured at all. With no time constraint, Kelly was able to try on every dress that caught her eye – it was a struggle to choose just one, she looked and felt stunning in them all. She eventually chose the same dress as Olivia, and in my humble (non-biased) opinion, they all look fabulous and I can't wait to walk down the aisle with my beautiful friends.

Overall, shopping together was a nice experience and it was great spending time with the girls, but I'd definitely recommend that fellow brides-to-be start shopping for dresses sooner rather than later – particularly if you have got quite a few bridesmaids! I also can't stress enough to avoid popular visiting times at your chosen boutiques. It will create a completely different experience and ensured everyone feels relaxed and can enjoy it.

Check out the next issue where I'll be discussing our search for the groomsmen's outfits and a last-minute videographer.

Melissa
x



Here are some things that we've learned during wedding planning.



VENUE

- ♥ Make sure a registrar or celebrant is available on your wedding day before confirming with the venue.
- ♥ Find out what is and what isn't included in the booking price.
- ♥ Check whether your venue has any sound limiters or a curfew in place.
- ♥ Ensure the venue has liability insurance in case the worst was to happen.
- ♥ How will the venue handle poor weather or last-minute changes?
- ♥ Before booking, check the venue's COVID-19 policies.



FLOWERS

- ♥ Some flowers are seasonal and may not be available at the time of year you're getting married, so be prepared to discuss this with your florist.
- ♥ Your supplier will have a wealth of knowledge and will be able to advise you on what blooms will suit your day.
- ♥ Check your quotes include VAT.
- ♥ Think carefully about if you'd like real or dried flowers. If you're unsure it may be worth talking to a few different companies to discuss the pros and cons.
- ♥ Your florist should suggest ways you can save money, for example, re-using blooms from your ceremony for the reception.
- ♥ There are so many ways that you can preserve your flowers after the wedding, so it's worth looking at your options.



PHOTOGRAPHER

- ♥ If like me, you're nervous or unsure in front of the camera book a pre-wedding shoot – it really does make a difference.
- ♥ Before booking, decide on what style of photography you like and set a budget.
- ♥ Lots of photographers don't have prices stated on their website; find five you like and email them all asking for quotes so that you can compare.
- ♥ Find out how many images you'll be receiving and how long your photographer will spend with you on the day.
- ♥ Most suppliers will require a meal, so factor that into your catering budget and check if they have any dietary requirements.
- ♥ You'll be spending a large portion of the day with your photographer, so it's important you get on well, and they make you feel relaxed.



WEDDING DRESS

- ♥ Try on a variety of styles to find what best suits your shape.
- ♥ Trust your bridal consultant and listen to their recommendations, after all, they're the experts.
- ♥ Choose a dress that you feel comfortable in and makes you feel like the best version of yourself.
- ♥ Wear white or skin-coloured underwear to your appointment.
- ♥ Start shopping nine to 12 months before the wedding to ensure you have plenty of time to get the gown in-store and alterations to be done.
- ♥ The shopping process can be daunting, so don't feel pressured to purchase a dress for the sake of it, when you find the right gown, you'll know it.



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WIN! A HONEYMOON IN ST LUCIA



Windjammer Landing Villa Beach Resort is situated on the stunning Eastern Caribbean island of St Lucia – a honeymooners paradise.

Nestled into 60 acres of lush hillside, Windjammer Landing is a Mediterranean-style resort on a large crescent-shaped stretch of beach, boasting six swimming pools (two of them for kids), a selection of signature restaurants and bars, spa, fitness centre, watersports programmes and well-equipped kids club.

The resort's 212 guest rooms, suites and villas range from stylish and contemporary waterfront villas to beachfront suites steps from the water's edge and charming hillside rooms each designed to offer its guests beautiful views across Labrolette Bay and the Caribbean Sea.

With complimentary windsurfing, Hobie Cat sailing, kayaking, snorkelling, paddle boarding, pedal boating, day and night tennis, 24-hour fitness centre access and water aerobics, guests are encouraged to be as busy or relaxed as they like. Motorised water sports and scuba diving are also available, and the St Lucia Golf and Country Club's 18-hole course is just a 25-minute drive away. At the end of an action-packed day, Windjammer's Spa provides the perfect tranquil setting to relax and unwind.

An array of restaurants and bars cater to the most discerning palates offering everything from elegant dining to more casual tastes either

beachside or nestled in the hillsides overlooking the bay. Those looking for something truly special can book a private dining experience with their own in-villa chef and a personalised menu.

For couples who can tear themselves away from the myriad attractions at the resort, honeymooners can enjoy St Lucia's natural beauty with a scenic island cruise or rainforest excursion. Adrenaline seekers might prefer to zip-line through the forest canopy or climb the Gros Piton, the tallest of the island's iconic twin peaks The Pitons – a UNESCO World Heritage site. What's more, you can enjoy dolphin and whale watching, a helicopter tour or horseback riding on the beach. The sulphur springs, Pigeon Point, Marigot Bay, Castries Market and Rodney Bay are all within reach and easily booked through Jammin' Tours, the resort's own excursion team!

Rooms at Windjammer Landing start a US\$266 per night with Villas starting at US\$448.

For information and reservations visit www.windjammer-landing.com

THE PRIZE: County Wedding Magazines has teamed up with Windjammer Landing Villa Beach Resort to give readers the chance to win: a three-night stay in a premium one-bedroom villa with breakfast included for two adults. T&Cs apply and the winners can add on additional nights for an additional charge.



Closing date 3rd June, 2022. Terms and conditions apply. Please see our website for details.

HONEYMOON

News

A round up of new openings for post-vow getaways

RHODES

2022 marks the 500th anniversary of the Siege of Rhodes, and premium seafront resort Amada Colossos is brilliantly placed for those looking to explore this history-rich island and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre the Medieval City of Rhodes.

The resort boasts an impressive 140m swimming pool running parallel to its private Blue Flag beach, with dedicated adults-only zones it's perfect for honeymooners! Its swim-up suites offer luxury for all the family, while the standalone villas provide privacy as well as private pools and sea views.

The resort's catering offering is phenomenal, particularly the traditional Greek mezze at the taverna, and couples can make the most of these with its flexible packages booking either B&B, half-board or all inclusive to suit their individual needs.

The resort is ahead of the game on sustainable initiatives, including minimising irrigation needs by using native Mediterranean plants, reverse osmosis and nanofiltration technology which saves 50g of CO2 emissions (equivalent to 6km of driving) by consuming the three-litre daily water quota; the resort proudly flies the Blue Flag, awarded for the exceptional water quality and cleanliness of Kallithea beach.

2022 rates start from €187 for a Double B&B room. Check out <https://amadacolossosresort.com>



COTSWOLDS

Beautiful country retreat The Feathered Nest Inn has launched a new cottage to add to its bespoke room collection, giving guests more options for a luxury break in the Cotswolds. The cottage sits within the grounds of the 15th-century inn, located in the pretty village of Nether Westcote – it has stunning views of the Cotswolds countryside.

Known as the 'Little House' the cosy cottage combines period charm and modern elegance and includes key original features: flagstone flooring, exposed fire mantle and wooden beams.

The sitting room and modern kitchenette feature a comfy sofa and dining area. On the middle floor is a modern bathroom followed by a luxurious double bedroom on the top floor featuring a super-king size bed.

The Feathered Nest Inn offers outstanding 3AA Rosette cuisine and diners can choose between a gourmet tasting menu and an à la carte menu. Owner, Adam Taylor says, "The new cottage represents the new style of The Feathered Nest, relaxed luxury in the heart of the Cotswolds. We wanted to retain as much of the period charm as possible but also ensure we combined this with a modern understated style."

The Cottage is available for stays Thursday to Monday, it is family and dog-friendly. Rates start from £465 per night. Check out <https://thefeatherednestinn.co.uk>



SCOTLAND

If you're looking for a honeymoon spa destination then check out The Spa at Turnberry; it's been named as ESPA's Worldwide Spa of the Month for December 2021, beating 300 spas spanning 55 countries.

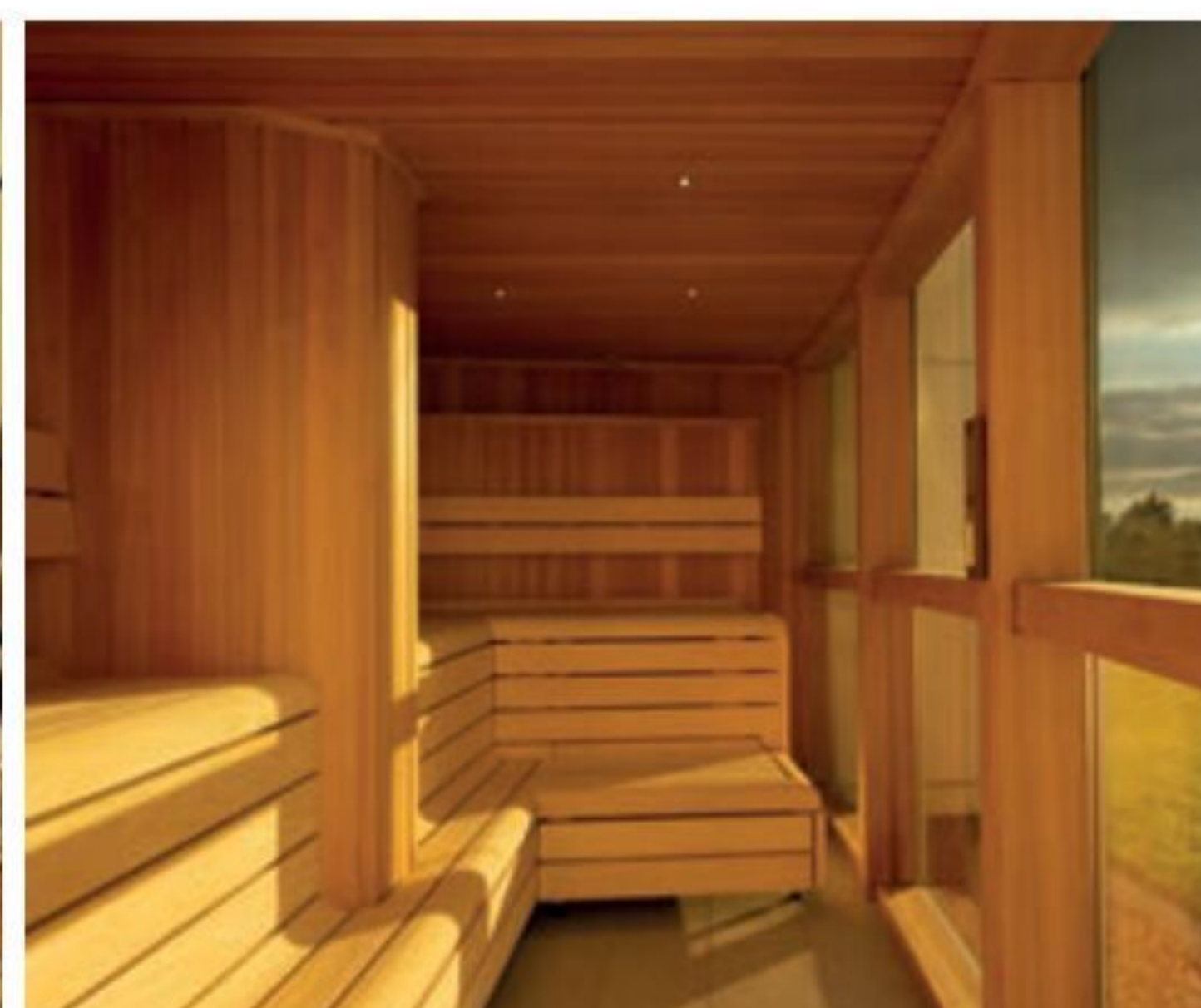
Set amongst 800 acres of beautiful Scottish countryside along the Ayrshire coastline it offers an oasis of pure relaxation.

ESPA launched its newest treatment range exclusively to The Spa at Turnberry, using its products to provide guests with a holistic experience designed to relax and rejuvenate the mind and body.

There's also the innovative ishga range of products, which use locally sourced Scottish seaweed to harness natural anti-ageing properties. All treatments have been designed by the dedicated team of therapists and comprise massages, body scrubs, facials, reflexology and even a specialised massage for golfers.

Guests can also enjoy the resort's picturesque 65ft heated infinity pool, whirlpool, a sensory shower, relaxation rooms, sauna, steam room, ice fountain and pool-side bio-sauna.

Check out: www.turnberry.co.uk/spa-at-turnberry



LONDON

Keep your eyes peeled in 2022 for Broadwick Soho, a 57-room townhouse hotel in the heart of London. Home to a Sicilian-inspired restaurant and terrace, rooftop lounge, intimate dining room and speakeasy bar, the refreshingly original property will offer impeccable personalised service in opulent yet cosy surroundings, inspired by the spirit of Soho.

Conceived by a group of friends, who dreamed of creating a hideaway in London's most loved neighbourhood, the hotel will offer sanctuary and a place for fun, where all are welcome.

The residential style guest rooms, including one Penthouse and nine suites, are all individually designed, with many rooms offering private balconies and all featuring the finest appointments and amenities. Moreover, the hotel's signature restaurant will serve Sicilian-inspired fare, including a classic aperitivo and traditional sharing dishes. On the upper floor, the wraparound rooftop bar and terrace will be a space for casual dining, excellent cocktails, exceptional vistas and a carefully curated programme of live music and entertainment. For those seeking private experiences, the eighth-floor dining room with views overlooking Soho offers a glamorous backdrop for celebrations and weddings.

Check out www.broadwicksoho.com



WORLDWIDE

Oliver's Travels has introduced a stunning collection of wellness villas for those seeking to indulge in some R&R and hide away from the stresses of modern life in 2022 pre- or post-vows.

Boasting an incredible selection of private and exclusive tranquil European villas, opulent British boltholes, and relaxing rentals afar, Oliver's Travels has a host of properties for an idyllic wellness retreat. From private yoga studios and spa facilities to state-of-the-art gyms, these luxury wellness villas have the ultimate power to refresh and rejuvenate burnt-out guests.

In addition to offering some of the most exceptional and unusual places to stay, travellers can benefit from Oliver's Travels concierge service offering a range of benefits from chef services, food delivery, fridge stocking, childcare, spa treatments, airport transfers, private yoga classes, car hire, travel insurance, tours and activities, maid service and much more.

To book, visit www.oliverstravels.com

LONDON

Joining its beloved Surrey sibling, Beaverbrook Town House is the debut London outpost from the lauded Beaverbrook brand, in partnership with Cadogan. This heritage hotel occupies two masterfully revamped Georgian townhouses, with views of the leafy-green, Grade II listed Cadogan Gardens opposite – a prime perch on Sloane Street, in the heart of Chelsea.

Inside the hotel, guests will be in awe of the 14 theatrical suites, art and antiques, the 60-cover contemporary Japanese restaurant and bar, as well as benefitting from meeting and private event rooms, and a pretty perfumed garden reserved for corporate functions and private hire.

Rates start from £400 on a room-only basis, visit the website for more information www.beaverbrooktownhouse.co.uk



DUBLIN

Lifestyle aparthotel brand Locke has launched Beckett Locke in the centre of Dublin's thriving Docklands area.

Tucked behind the 3Arena, the 241-studio aparthotel is a new hub for culture and entertainment in the city. Set around a naturally lit atrium, Beckett Locke features a neighbourhood co-working space, artisan coffee shop, restaurant and intimate cocktail bar in addition to meeting and event spaces for up to 100 people.

Locke's hybrid 'home-meets-hotel' concept has proven popular among guests seeking flexible accommodation for a night, a month or longer. Each beautifully designed apartment provides the space and comfort of home – including fully fitted kitchens, adaptable living areas where guests can dine or work, and ample storage – with industry-leading design and guest experience. This is combined with the social attributes of a lifestyle hotel, including buzzy co-working spaces, original food and drink concepts and a team of local house hosts.

The opening of Beckett Locke follows the successful launch of the 160-apartment Zanzibar Locke, which opened by Ha'penny Bridge in the centre of Dublin in June last year. Room rates at Beckett Locke start from €110 per night. Discounted rates are also available for mid- to long-stay guests. Check out www.lockeliving.com/en/dublin/beckett-locke



Gourmet lovers paradise in the Algarve...

With 3,000 hours of sunshine and just a three-hour flight from the UK, the Algarve is unique in that it offers a truly delightful year-round destination. Situated in Quinta do Lago and nestled within the privacy and security of the Ria Formosa nature reserve, a scenic swirl of seawater lagoons, sandy islands, salt marshlands and diverse bird life, lies Four Seasons Fairways – the ideal spot to escape a deus. Think warmth, sun and sumptuous Mediterranean food.

This discreet and elegant private villa resort is home to 132 colonial style villas and apartments many of which have recently been newly renovated. Set in beautifully landscaped gardens, each features its own pool or jacuzzi, terrace or garden area and outdoor barbecue/cooking station. The resorts 'Clubhouse' area is home to stunning heated indoor and outdoor pools, a wine cellar, gym, indoor-outdoor bar and there are tennis courts and bikes to hire for adventure loving newlyweds.

Visitors to the area are really spoilt for choice when it comes to dining too, here's a round-up of mouth-watering suggestions...

A VER TAVIRA

Enjoy lunch or dinner at this elegant restaurant, accompanied by great views over the city, Gilao River and Tavira Island. A unique gastronomic selection of international dishes with a regional twist and explosive flavours. A tip here would be to make a reservation for one of its exquisite Degustation Menus. Dishes change depending on the season but expect scarlet shrimps, pork cheeks, sea bass, tuna tartar and galician entrecote.

Visit: <https://avertavira.com/en/>



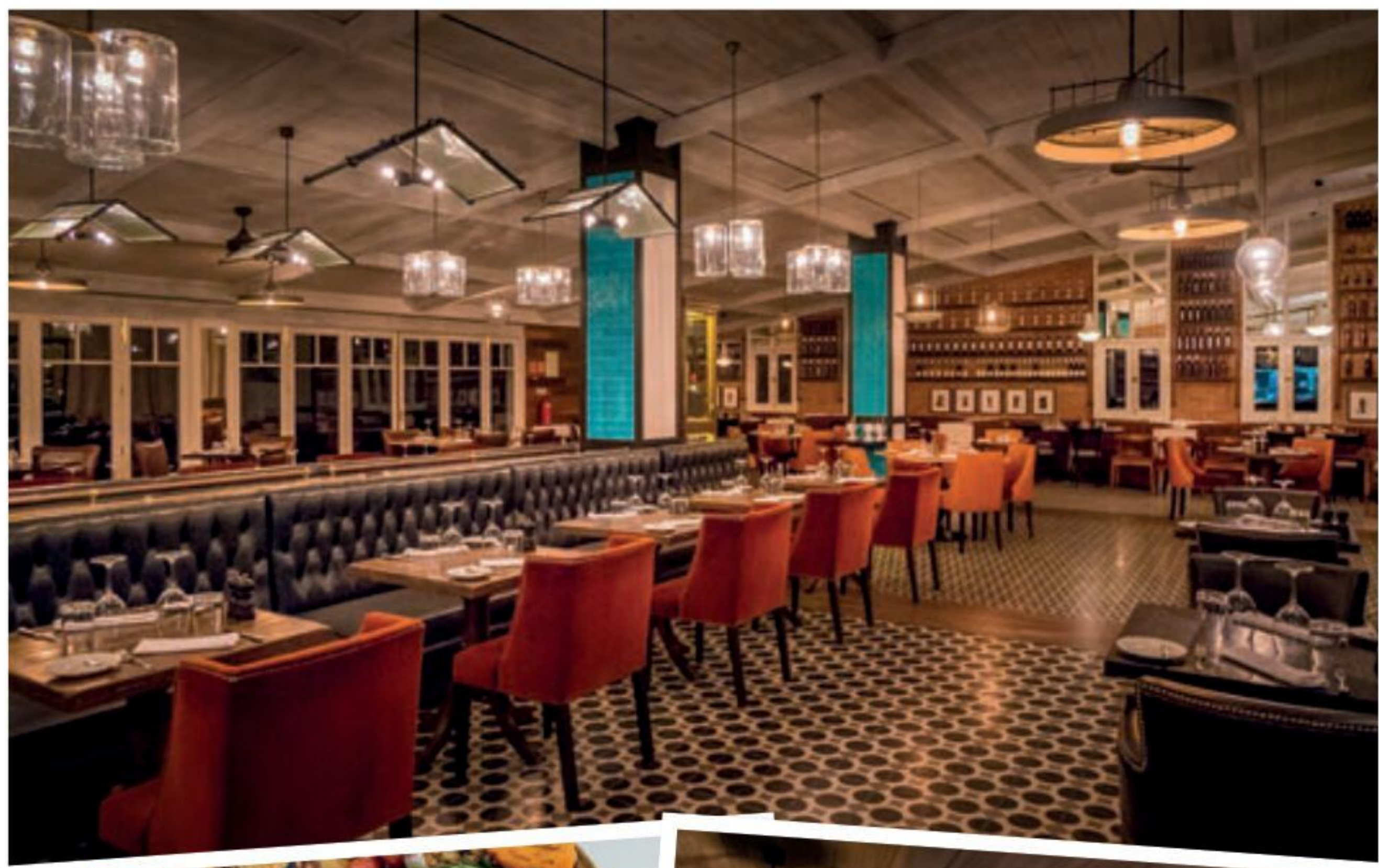
ESTAMINE

Possibly the Algarve's best kept secret – an incredible restaurant located on Isla Deserta, only accessible by boat. Few places come close to this family-run gem, where you can enjoy fresh fish and seafood along with other Algarvian specialities on your very own deserted island with 360 degree ocean views. When seen from above, the restaurant itself takes the shape of a crab among the sand dunes, an architectural tribute to their neighbours scuttling along the shoreline.

Clams 'Bulhao Pato-style', prawns, deep fried in a delicious secret spice and its charcoal grilled catch of the day, simply can't be beaten.

Visit: www.ilhadeserta.com/estamine-restaurant





AMARA

If you're looking to stay close to home one evening Amara, Four Seasons Fairways' à la carte restaurant, doesn't disappoint and boasts one of the finest views in Quinta do Lago. The concept of Amara is to twin intimacy with sophistication and Portuguese traditions with contemporary cuisine to give guests an unmistakable and memorable experience. The head chef, Nelson Candeias, is just one of a number of talented cooks whose genuine love for gastronomy shines through in every dish.

Visit: www.amararestaurant.pt



BOVINO

Bovnio Steakhouse can be found within Quinta do Lago itself and serves some of the finest steaks and wines around along with an apothecary-themed cocktail menu. The décor is stunning, staff charismatic and it always has a good vibe. For two, the Chateaubriand is well worth it, or the Bovino signature cuts where you get to try filet, rump cap and ribeye. The seafood is exquisite too and don't forget to add a side of triple-cooked chips or mac'n'cheese.

Visit: www.quintadolago.com/en/restaurants/bovino-steakhouse



DOS PASSOS

Another beachside delight located on Ancão Beach in the Ria Formosa Natural Park and boasts uninterrupted sea views with the dunes as a backdrop. They serve Mediterranean and regional Portuguese cuisine using fresh fish and shellfish sourced daily from the local markets in an Algarvian 'tapas' style so super fresh and the octopus salad and grilled sole comes highly recommend.

Visit: www.restaurante2passos.com/home/eng



TOP TIP: When staying at Four Seasons Fairways, if all you want is actually a cosy night in, they have a 'Drop & Scoff' service meaning you can order a delicious meal from the VIVO Bistro and have it delivered straight to your door – they drop, you scoff!

For more information visit www.fourseasonsfairways.com

Next Issue

MAY/JUNE 2022

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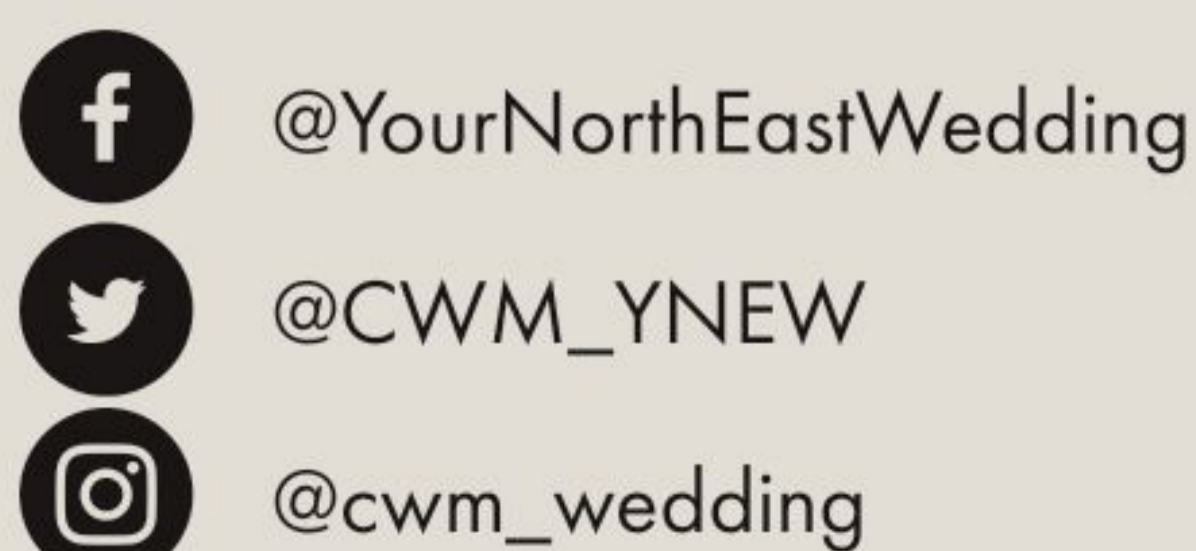
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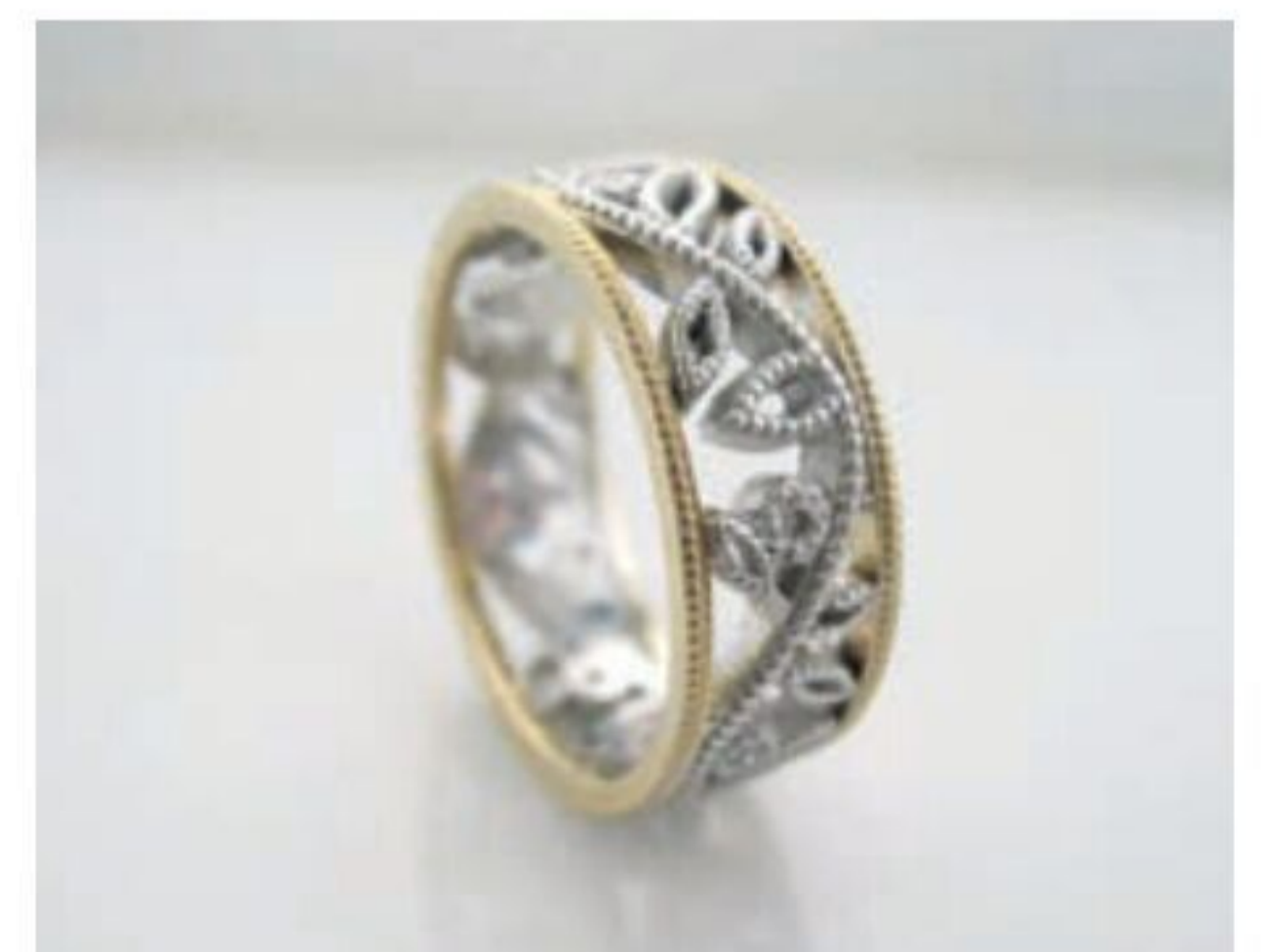
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