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On the cover

Checkered Photography & Videography Collective located in the heart of Cornwall captured this cover image of Jess and Sam on their special day at Deer's Leap Retreat in South Molton, Devon. Turn to page 26 to see the wedding in full and visit checkeredphotography.co.uk to find out more.

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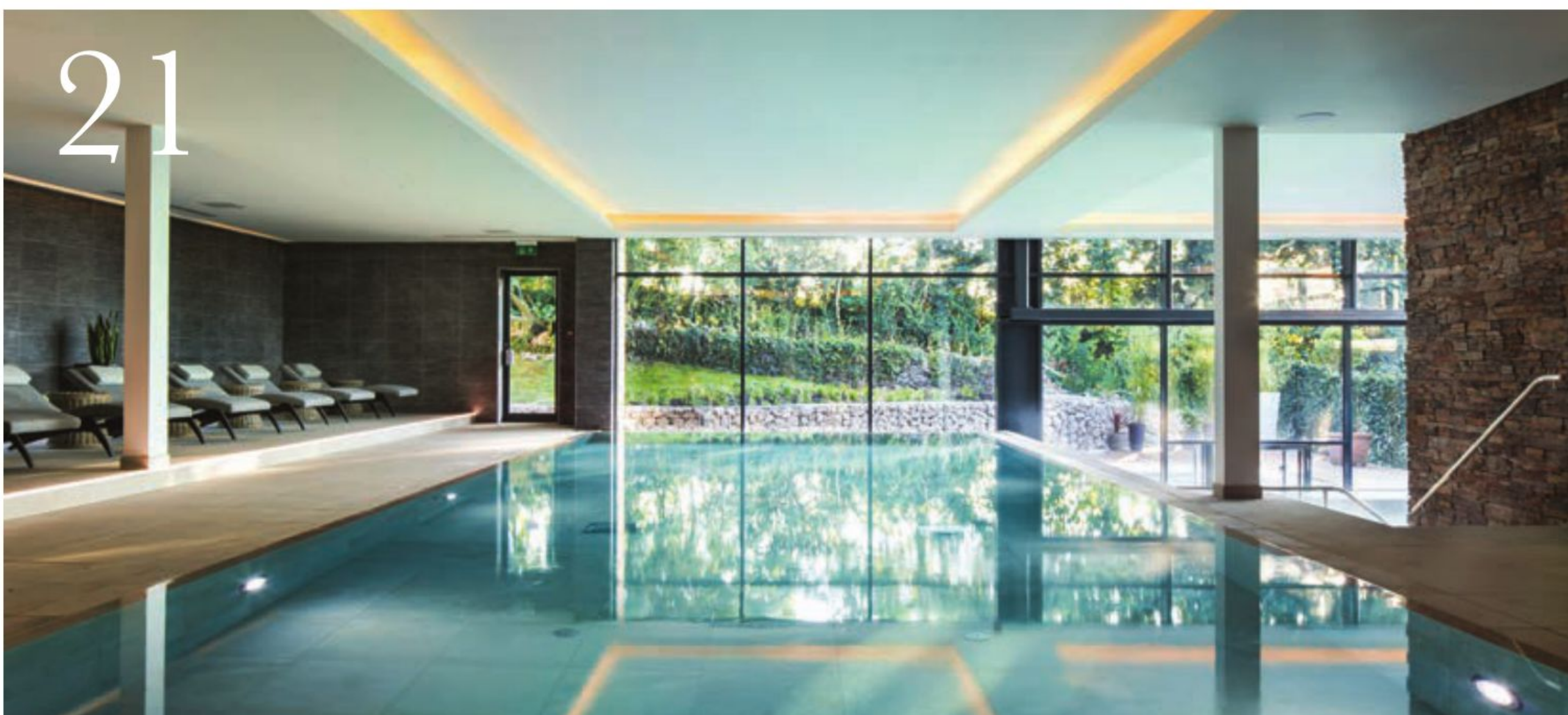
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NOMINATION

ITALY



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A mother's love



It's finally spring and the flowers are budding, the sun is shining, and the days are warming up. Not only do these things make me smile, I also love the fact that there are important dates in the diary to look forward to over the next couple of months. I can spoil my mum on Mother's Day and enjoy some chocolate goodies at Easter.

Whether you're putting some finishing touches to a spring wedding, or planning it for later in the year, you'll love this bumper issue packed with surf-inspired real weddings (page 26), fun and frivolous fashion (page 71), Insta-worthy beauty ideas (page 82) and honeymoons that'll ramp up your wanderlust like Anguilla in the Caribbean where I was invited to review the CuisinArt Golf Resort & Spa (page 94).

Happy Easter and until next issue...

Claire x

Claire Ridley,
Editor



WIN!

A HONEYMOON IN
OMAN WORTH £3,000.
TURN TO PAGE 97 TO
READ MORE.

Our fab beauty
section starts on
page 82.



Here at YDCW HQ we love this Peony bridal dress by award-winning bridal designer Suzanne Neville. It's taken from our fun and frivolous fashion story starting on page 71.

Our dapper grooms section starts on page 86.



These sparkling clips by Alice & Blair shown in our hair accessory feature on page 80 are top of my wish list for spring!

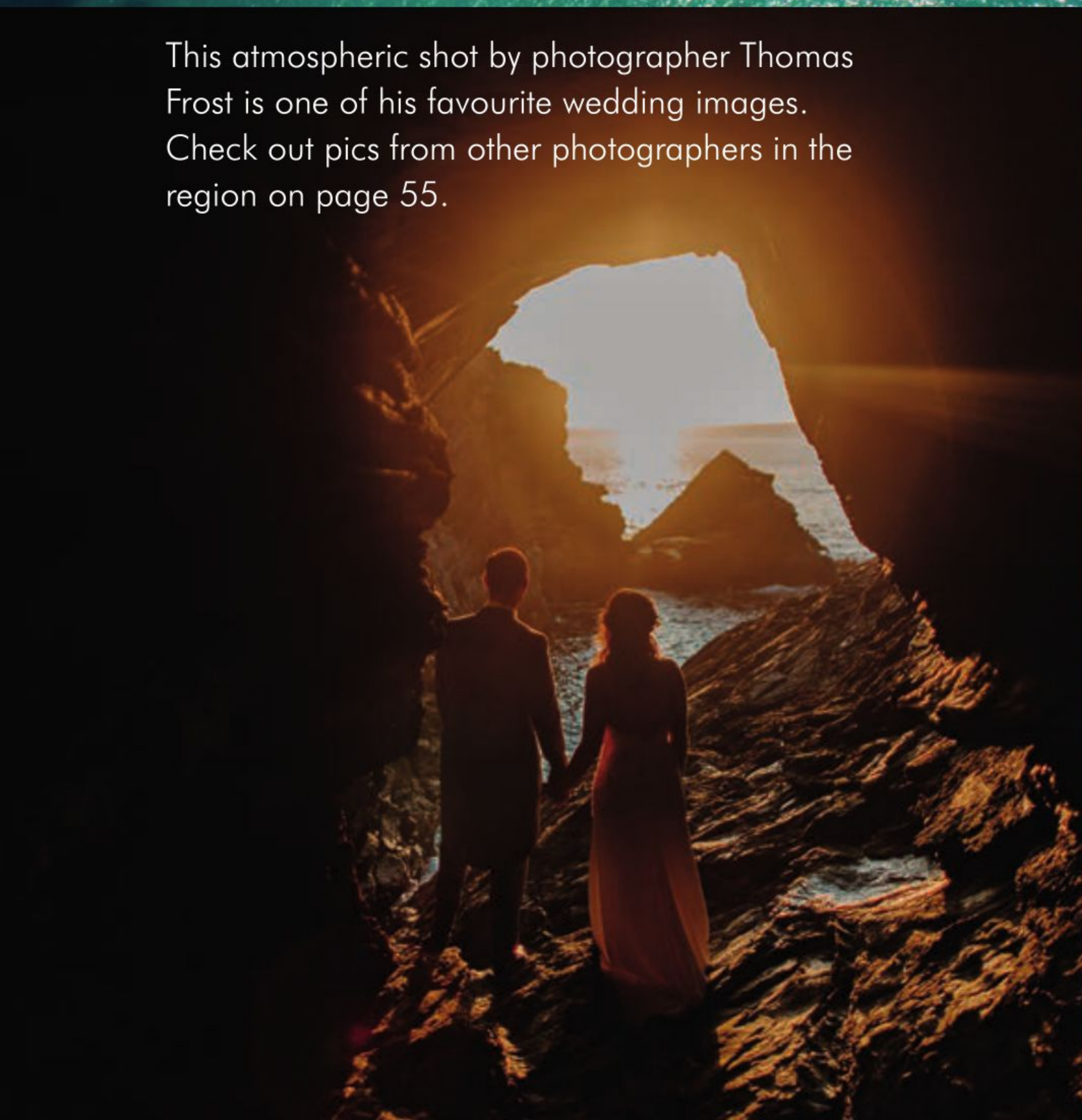




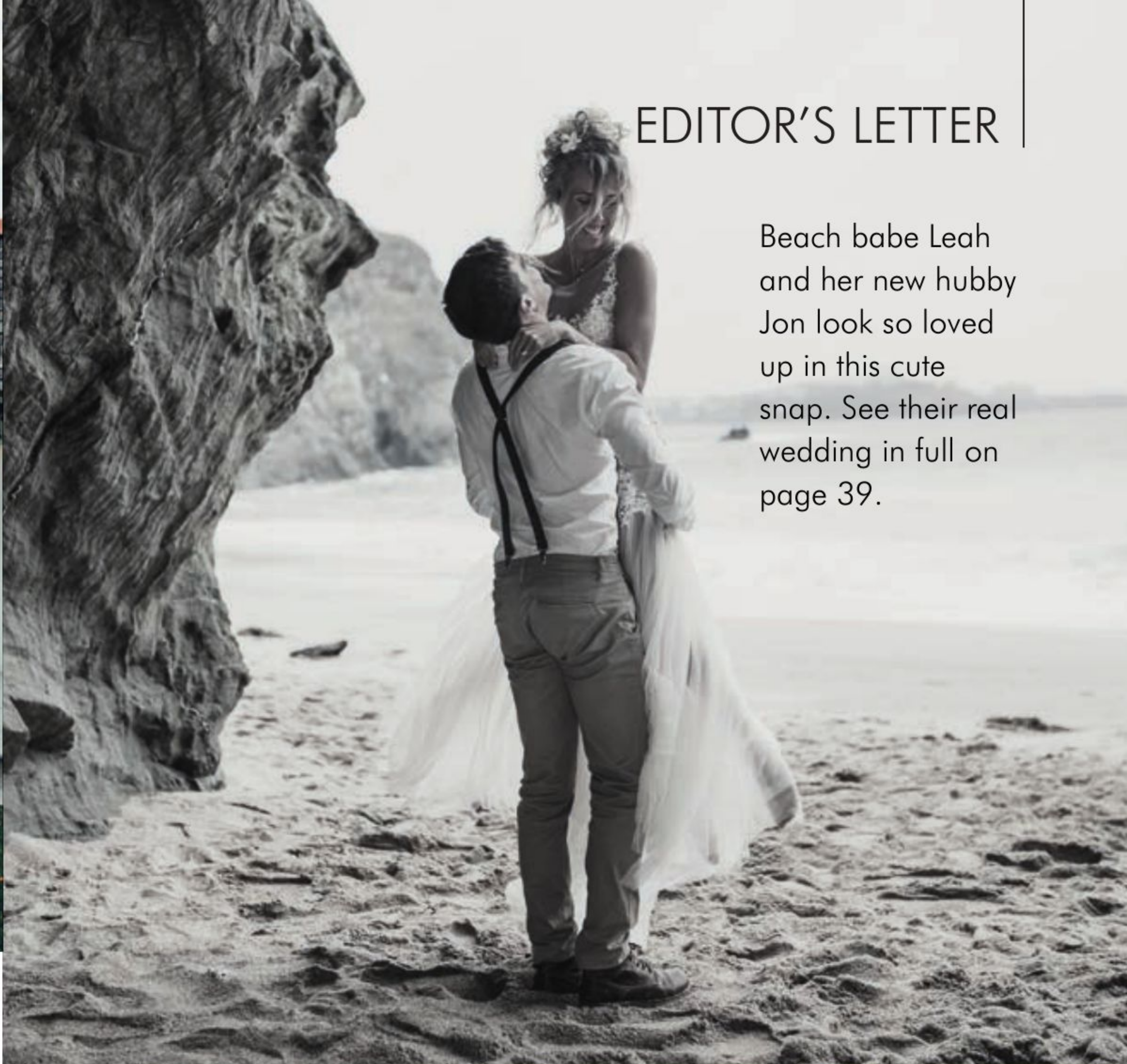
How pretty is this big-day backdrop at Tredudwell Manor photographed by the talented Toby Lowe? Turn to page 15 to read more.



The Headland Cornwall is a hotel and spa that's showcased in our Spa-tastic venue feature on page 21.



This atmospheric shot by photographer Thomas Frost is one of his favourite wedding images. Check out pics from other photographers in the region on page 55.



EDITOR'S LETTER

Beach babe Leah and her new hubby Jon look so loved up in this cute snap. See their real wedding in full on page 39.



How inviting does wedding venue Deer's Leap Retreat look in this image captured by the talented Checkered Photography & Videography Collective at the real wedding of Jess and Sam on page 26?



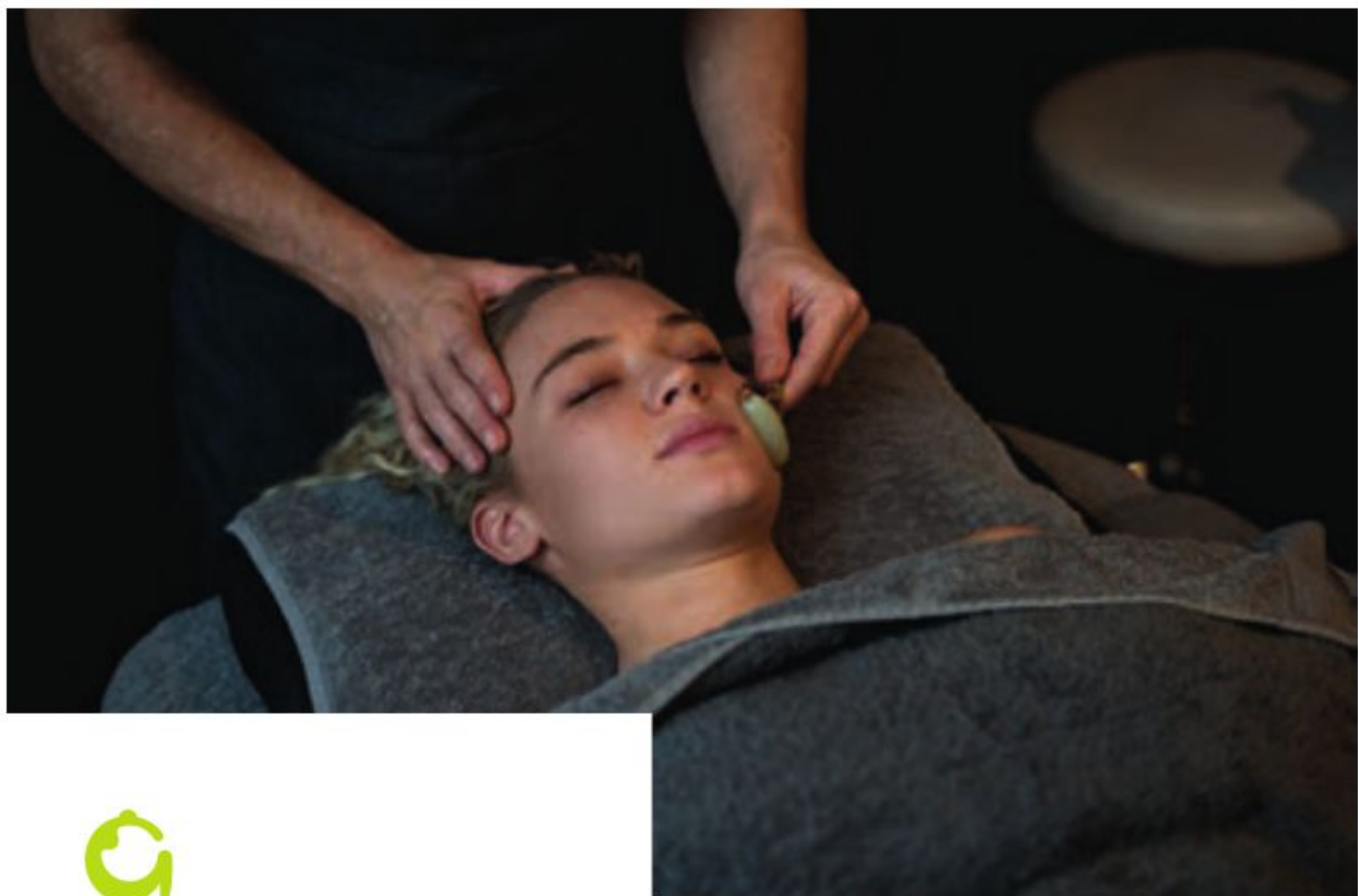
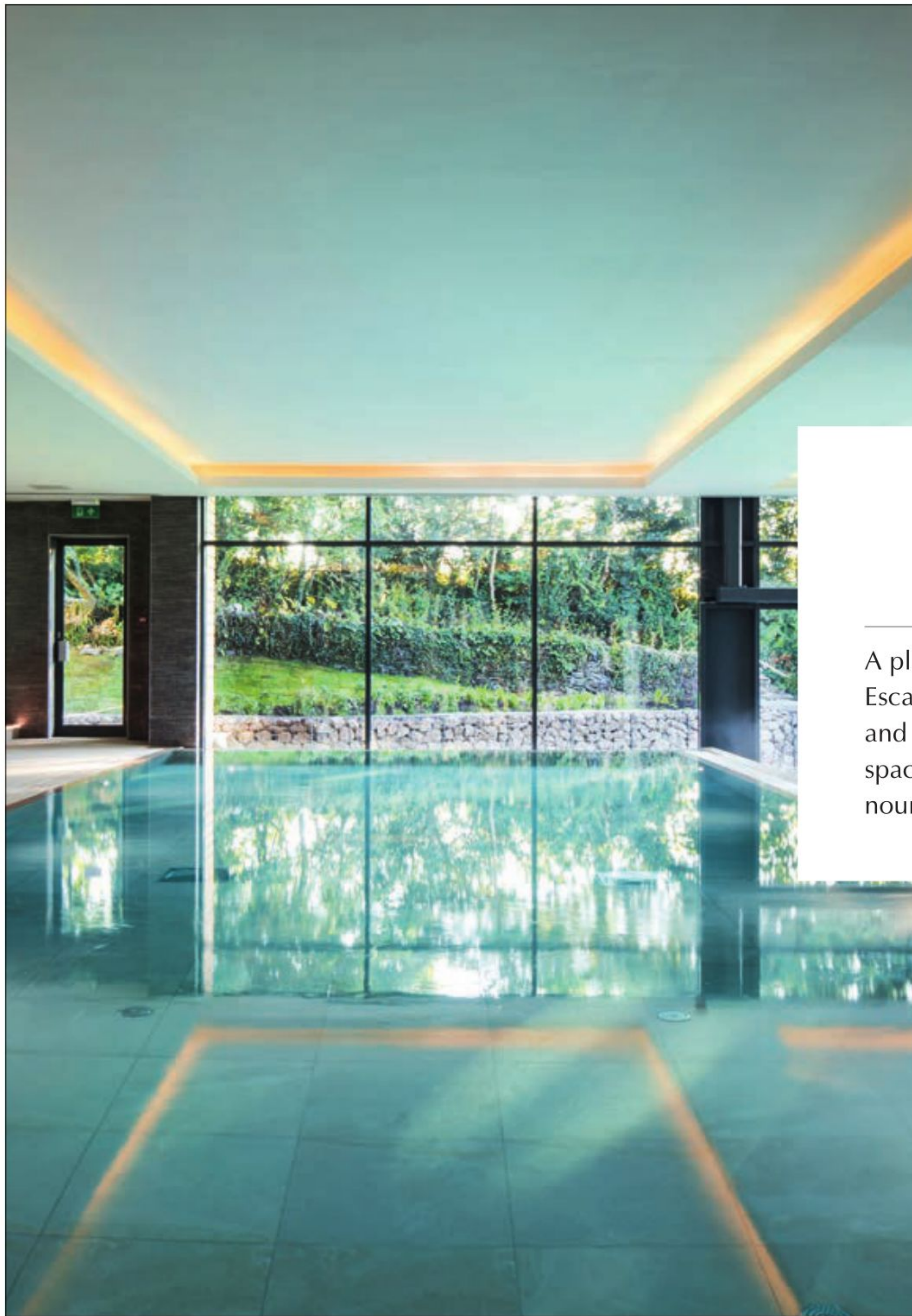
I was lucky enough to travel to Anguilla in the Eastern Caribbean to see what this honeymoon hotspot has to offer on page 94



PLANNING, STYLING & MANAGING EXTRAORDINARY WEDDINGS

I have been helping clients since 2016. A huge part of what I do is to create an outstanding transformation to venues from the roots of the client's ideas, interests, passions, vision, and personality. With an expansive local knowledge of suppliers and venues along with dedication and attention to detail for every special event, I aim to make the whole process as enjoyable and stress-free as possible.

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SALCOMBE DAIRY LAUNCHES MINIATURE CHOCOLATES

Salcombe Dairy has launched individual miniature versions of The Bar, their popular milk and dark chocolate, crafted from organic fair trade Peruvian cacao nibs. Ideal as wedding favours, each chocolate has been hand-moulded in Devon, and is wrapped in 100% compostable packaging.

The four irresistible flavours available in the new miniature size are dark chocolate, milk chocolate honeycomb, dark chocolate with peppermint and Evening Star which is a type of rich and smooth milk chocolate boasting stronger and darker flavours than standard blends.

Commenting on the products, managing director Dan Bly says, "First launched in 2017, The Bar has been a tremendous success. Customers love the unique flavours, the fact that it's hand-moulded, and that it's made using organic, fair trade cacao nibs. The introduction of a 25g size for the hospitality and catering trade seemed the next logical step and we're excited to see how it's received."

In addition to the flavours in the 25g size, Salcombe Dairy produces 11 other mouth-watering flavours, all available in 80g bars, including dark chocolate ginger, milk chocolate caramel with Devon sea salt and dark chocolate teamed with Salcombe gin, sloe and juniper.

To find out more, call 01548 843 228, or visit salcombedairy.co.uk @salcombedairy

Turn to page 13 to take advantage of our exclusive offer with Salcombe Dairy.

AWARD-WINNING ACCESSORY DESIGNER CLAIRE AUSTIN SCOOPS AWARD

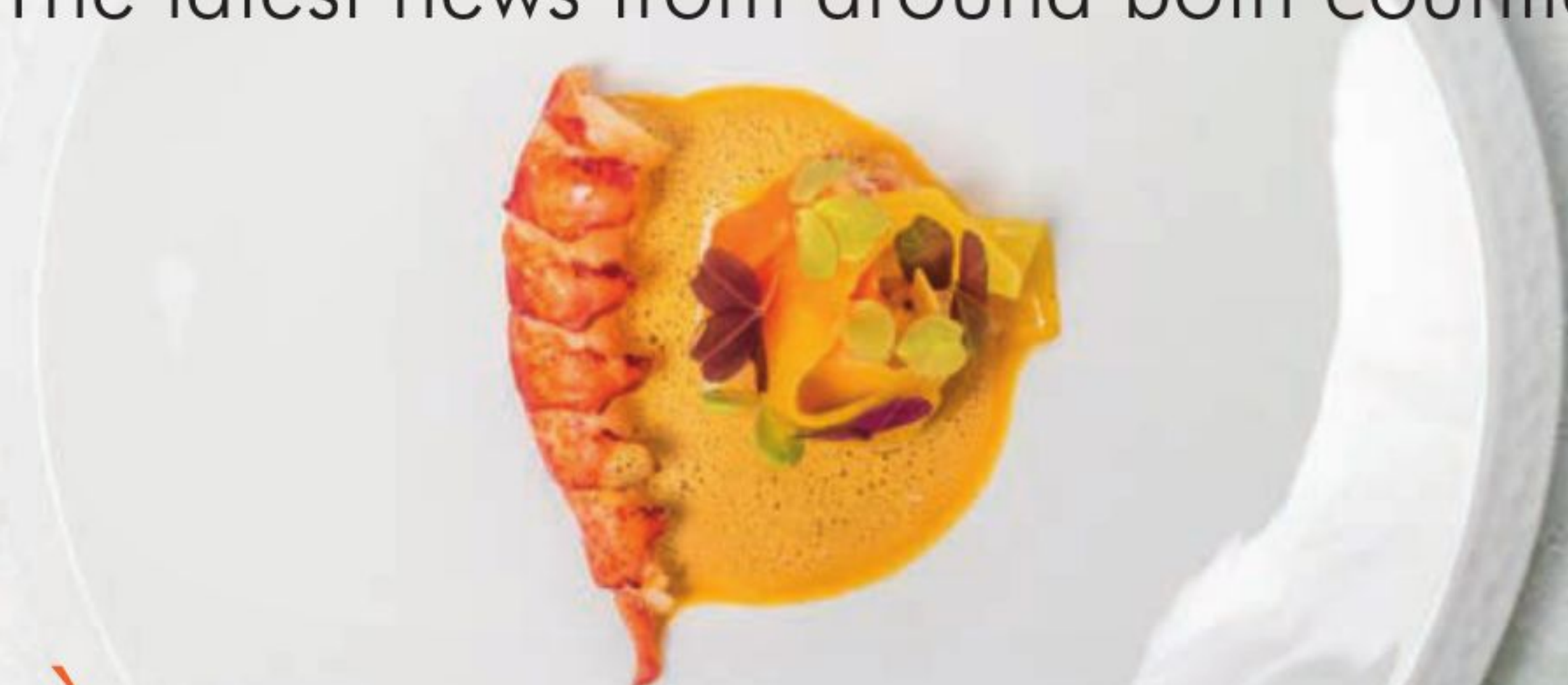
Congratulations to bespoke headpiece and accessory designer Claire Austin, winner of Best Accessories at The South West Wedding Awards 2020. Our stunning real-life bride and cover star last issue, Claire has just launched her poseys for bridesmaids made using hand-painted paper roses decorated with lace, ribbon and pearl appliques. To shop, visit claireaustinengland.com

📍 [claireaustinengland](https://www.instagram.com/claireaustinengland)



Nearlywed NEWS

The latest news from around both counties



ÀCLÈAF RESTAURANT OPENS IN BORINGDON HALL HOTEL

New restaurant Àclèaf has opened at the five-star country manor house Boringdon Hall Hotel. Located in the main house, it provides a dining destination experience showcasing the finest British produce, using many ingredients sourced in the South West, through a four-course Signature Menu (£80) and a six-course Tasting Menu (£95) complemented by an English-led wine offering.

Head chef Scott Paton comments, "I'm thrilled to be launching Àclèaf where guests can expect a culinary journey led by the bounties of produce available to us in Devon. Àclèaf hopes to present a uniquely immersive dining experience in the South West, a place where guests can feel at ease in the hands of the team in the hotel's historic surroundings." To book, visit boringdonhall.co.uk @boringdonhall

Turn to page 21 to read about Boringdon Hall Hotel and Gaia Spa as a wedding venue.

EDITOR'S PICK

This latest offering from Drakes jewellers based in Plymouth, Devon, including a rose gold watch by Olivia Burton, will add a touch of sparkle to any big day, drakesjewellers.co.uk @drakesjewellers





EDITOR LOVES

Why not hire a vintage American chauffeur-driven wedding car on your special day, like this turquoise convertible Chevrolet Chevelle? To book, call 07495 288 997 or visit exclusiveweddingcar.co.uk



KITLEY HOUSE HOTEL & RESTAURANT APPOINTS NEW WEDDING PLANNER

Award-winning South Devon wedding venue Kitley House Hotel & Restaurant is delighted to announce the appointment of a new wedding planner. Nicole West has recently joined the team and is looking forward to working closely with couples to create their perfect day.

Nicole has already set about creating new wedding packages to provide greater flexibility for couples to tailor their day. She says, "We're flexible here, not black and white like some venues. We try to work around each couple and my approach is for them to tell me how they want things and I will try my hardest to make it happen - that's the way I like to work."

Nicole previously worked at Woodbury Park near Exeter and St. Mellion in Cornwall. She has posed as a bride before by visiting a number of South West wedding venues as a secret shopper. She comments, "I had only been to Kitley House Hotel & Restaurant once before, a few months before I got the job, and I thought it was amazing. It offers different places where couples can get married including The Island by the lake and the Summer House in the garden."

For larger weddings, couples can choose to have exclusivity of the 19-bedroom hotel. It caters for more intimate celebrations midweek when the hotel is quieter. For further information, visit kitleyhousehotel.com  [kitleyhousehotel](https://www.instagram.com/kitleyhousehotel)



HUNTSHAM COURT IN DEVON LAUNCHES WELLNESS RETREATS

Huntsham Court, the Grade 11 listed manor house in the heart of Devon, has just launched its Rest & Restore midweek retreats curated by experienced yoga instructor Anoushka Emson.

Couples can escape to this country retreat, popular for exclusive-use weddings, for some rest and relaxation. The Rest & Restore retreat is the perfect pick-me-up and includes an overnight stay, gentle yoga practice, nutritional workshops and demonstrations, and an introduction to meditation and relaxation. There's also a Mother & Baby retreat on offer.

Damian Llambias, Huntsham Court's Owner, comments, "We're really excited to launch this new extension to Huntsham Court's offering. The beautiful, relaxed and luxurious feel of the house alongside the stunning grounds make it the perfect location for people to come and spend a few days to reset and recharge. We can't wait to launch and welcome guests, and for them to leave feeling fully relaxed and restored."

Anoushka Emson, creator & host of the retreats, comments: "When I first walked through the doors at Huntsham Court I instantly knew it was a perfect place for people to come and take time to focus on themselves, and in the case of our Mother & Baby retreats, focus on the new addition to their lives by bringing baby too."

To book, call 01398 361 277 or visit huntshamcourt.co.uk

 [huntshamcourt](https://www.instagram.com/huntshamcourt)





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Salcombe Dairy's South Devon premises produce award-winning ice cream, sorbets, frozen yoghurts and delicious milk and dark chocolate made using organic cacao sourced from the Peruvian rainforest. During processing, only the best local ingredients are added to create the finished product, with each dark chocolate bar containing a minimum cocoa content of 70%. Flavours include dark chocolate mango, milk chocolate orange and white chocolate raspberry.

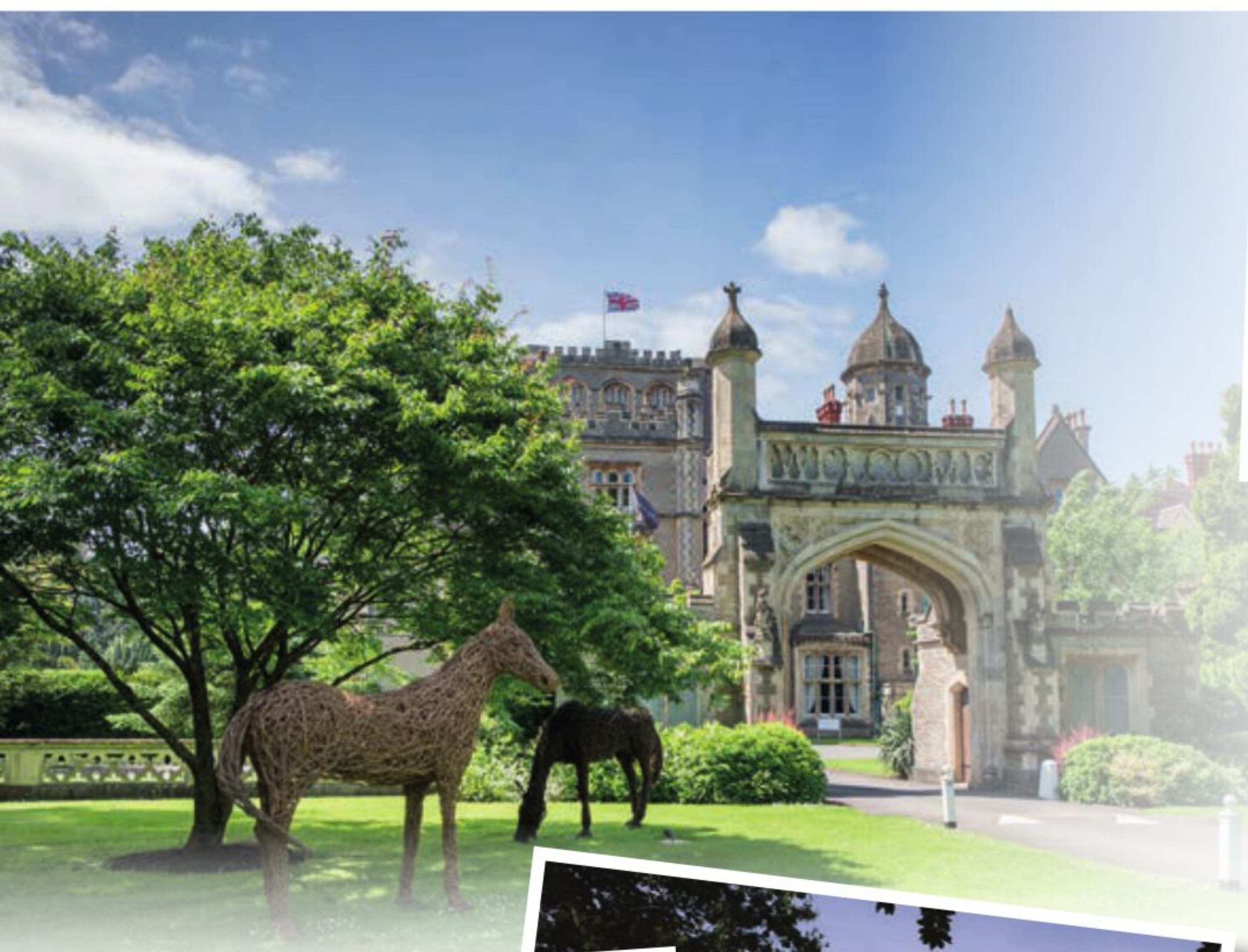
Their ice cream flavours include coconut, popcorn and Kenyan coffee, and the selection of delicious sorbets include lemon, raspberry and orange. For something a little more filling, the mouth-watering Salcombe Dairy frozen yoghurt is created using natural Devon yoghurt and double cream, and a honey version is also on the menu.

Your Devon & Cornwall Wedding has teamed up with Salcombe Dairy to offer readers 10% off any of their chocolate. To buy, visit salcombedairy.co.uk quoting 8R77QKUV.  @salcombedairy

Turn to page nine to read more about their latest offering, ideal for wedding favours.

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such as spas and golf courses to enjoy a relaxing stay.

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Spotlight on... SOUTH CORNWALL

Where to wed in this coastal part of the region

REGIONAL VENUES

Ceremony licence? Yes

Contact: 01726 870 226, tredudwell.co.uk

 [tredudwellmanor_wedding_venue](https://www.instagram.com/tredudwellmanor_wedding_venue)

We love... the grounds with their manicured lawns, flower-filled beds and a formal terrace garden featuring a pond – the ideal backdrop for photos.



TREDUDWELL MANOR, FOWEY

This spectacular house seamlessly marries history with contemporary features. The sweeping driveway reveals the Queen Anne manor house dating back to 1705 having been lovingly renovated using Cornish stone and slate. The south-facing views are towards the sea and the property is surrounded by the stunning Cornish countryside.

There's four rooms ideal for intimate ceremonies of up to 25 guests and for larger functions, the Tredudwell Pavilion offers the flexibility of a modern building with bi-fold walls that alter the size of

the rooms according to the number of guests. It can seat up to 150 loved ones and boasts traditional design elements including wooden beams, a draped canvas ceiling and glittering chandeliers. The outdoor temple, with its amphitheatre, seats up to 220 guests.

The wedding breakfast and reception takes place in the pavilion for up to 220 guests seated at round tables on Chiavari chairs, and there's luxury bed and breakfast accommodation available for up to 18 wedding guests.

Ceremony licence? Yes

Contact: 01326 231 302, cornishcamels.com



We love... the DIY wedding package available for creative couples, or the complete wedding package for those wanting a celebration with a handmade feel but none of the stress.

CORNISH CAMELS, HELSTON

Located on a working organic farm in the countryside, Cornish Camels is a beautiful and unique setting for bespoke wedding celebrations. Cottage gardens, orchards, woodland, natural heathland, courtyards, fields and meadows are just some of the outdoor spaces the venue has to offer allowing guests to mingle.

There are a variety of interior spaces licensed for ceremonies, including the Camel Centre that's a large, open-plan barn with plenty of natural light and views of the surrounding farmland accommodating up to 200 guests. The Wagon House is a snug indoor space seating up to 50 loved ones with a more traditional feel, and the Corn Chamber is a 16th-century thatched barn that's kept its original charm and can host up to 200 guests for an outdoor celebration, or a maximum of six people for an intimate indoor ceremony. Rosuick Cottage Garden is a popular space for drinks receptions and picnics. The Wagon House is also ideal for intimate dining for up to 60 guests and with the barn doors open, the celebrations can spill out on to the traditional courtyard. The Camel Centre has capacity for up to 160 guests seated for dinner, and 200 people for more informal gatherings. It also has an outdoor space ideal for barbecues and hog roasts.

Ceremony licence? Yes
Contact: 01503 263 273,
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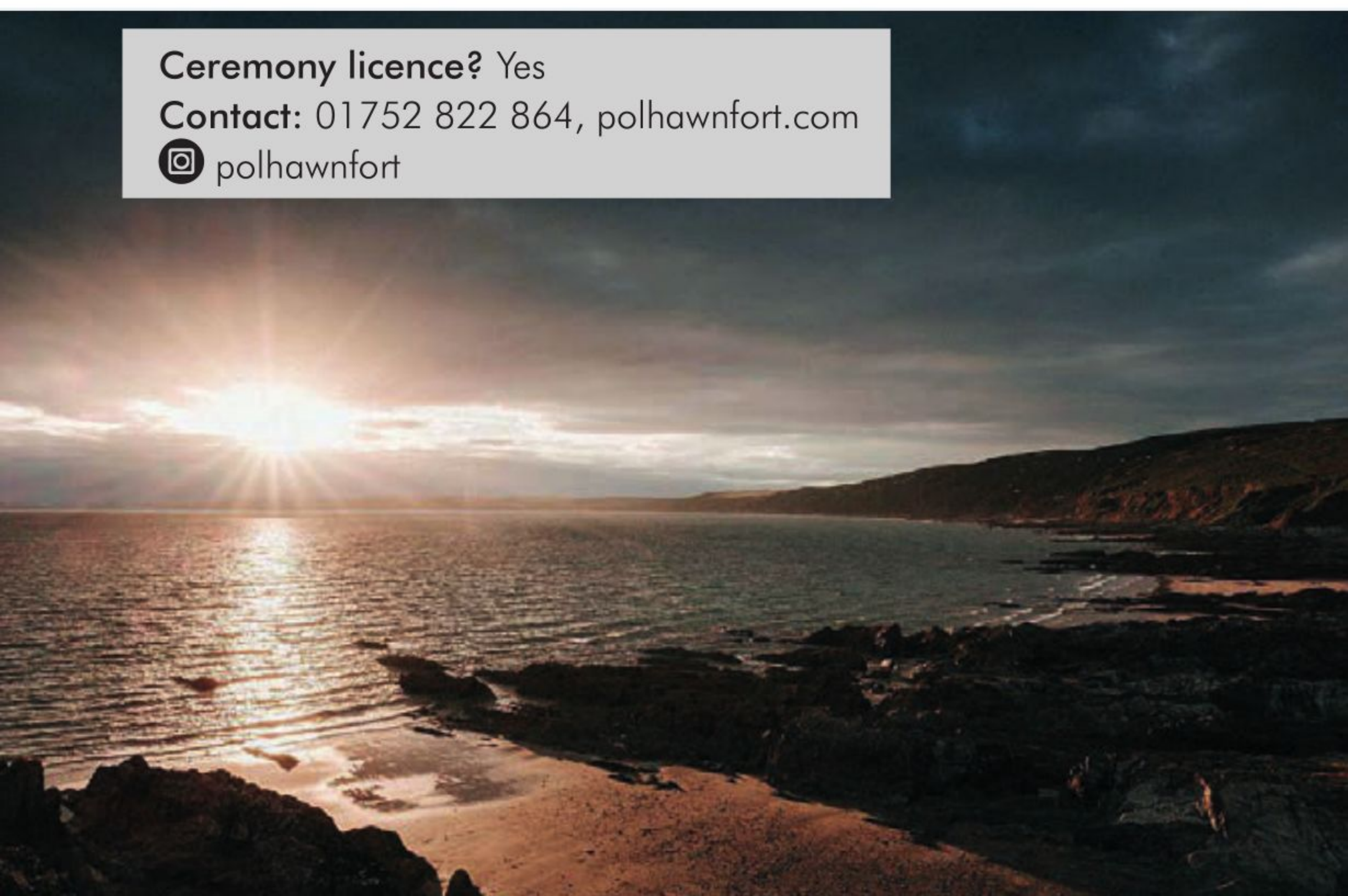
HANNAFORE POINT HOTEL, LOOE

This waterside wedding venue situated in South East Cornwall is perched on the rocks, just 20 yards from the water's edge. It offers excellent facilities for informal and formal celebrations, with the ability to cater for between two and 180 guests and also host the ceremony. The stunning location with its panoramic

views stretching across the Looe Bay and St. George's Island provides the perfect backdrop for big-day photographs.

The hotel prides itself on its personal and professional service, traditional hospitality and menus that can be tailored to suit each couple's requirements. It also offers well-appointed accommodation for guests.

Ceremony licence? Yes
Contact: 01752 822 864, polhawnfort.com
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POLHAWN FORT, NEAR TORPOINT

This historic Napoleonic fort located on a Cornish clifftop overlooking the sweeping Whitsand Bay offers exclusive use for extended stays. It boasts pretty gardens, ideal for outdoor games, and its own private beach.

A sweeping stone walled garden reveals indigenous plants as well as bright flower displays throughout the year including spring bulbs and vibrant poppies. The Mediterranean garden situated on the roof terrace; the New Zealand garden located behind the fort and the living wildflower wall on the lower lawn are also great spots for photo opportunities.

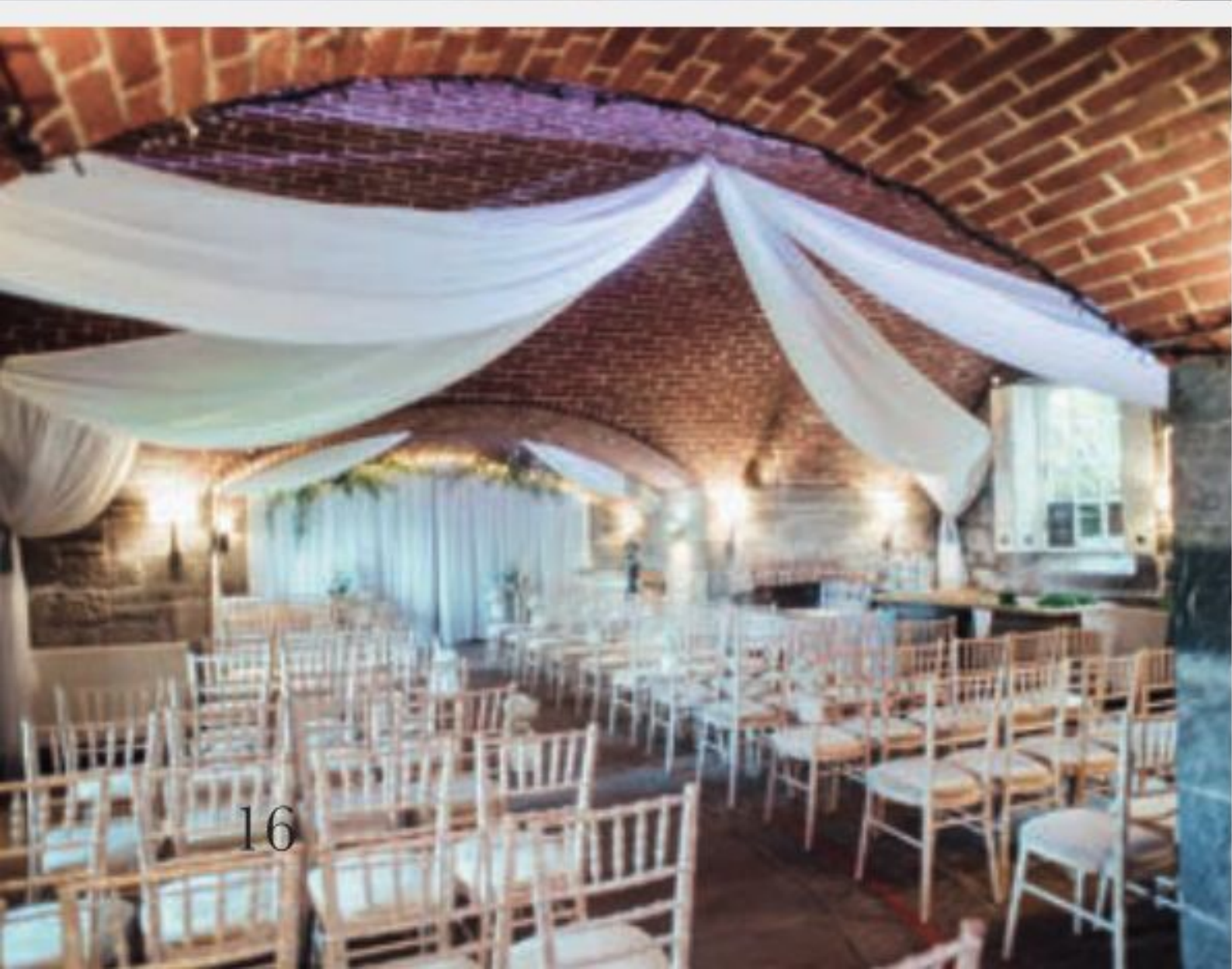
It's home to a dry moat and drawbridge and has been sympathetically and creatively restored with a large Napoleonic hall to accommodate ceremonies and receptions of up to 120 loved ones. The Emperor Suite is also available for an intimate group of 35 guests.

Ceremonies also take place in the summerhouse for up to 120 loved ones overlooking the sea, and new for 2020 is a hand-crafted oak structure.

There's accommodation for up to 24 guests across the light and spacious bedrooms, all furnished with luxurious linens and comfortable beds.

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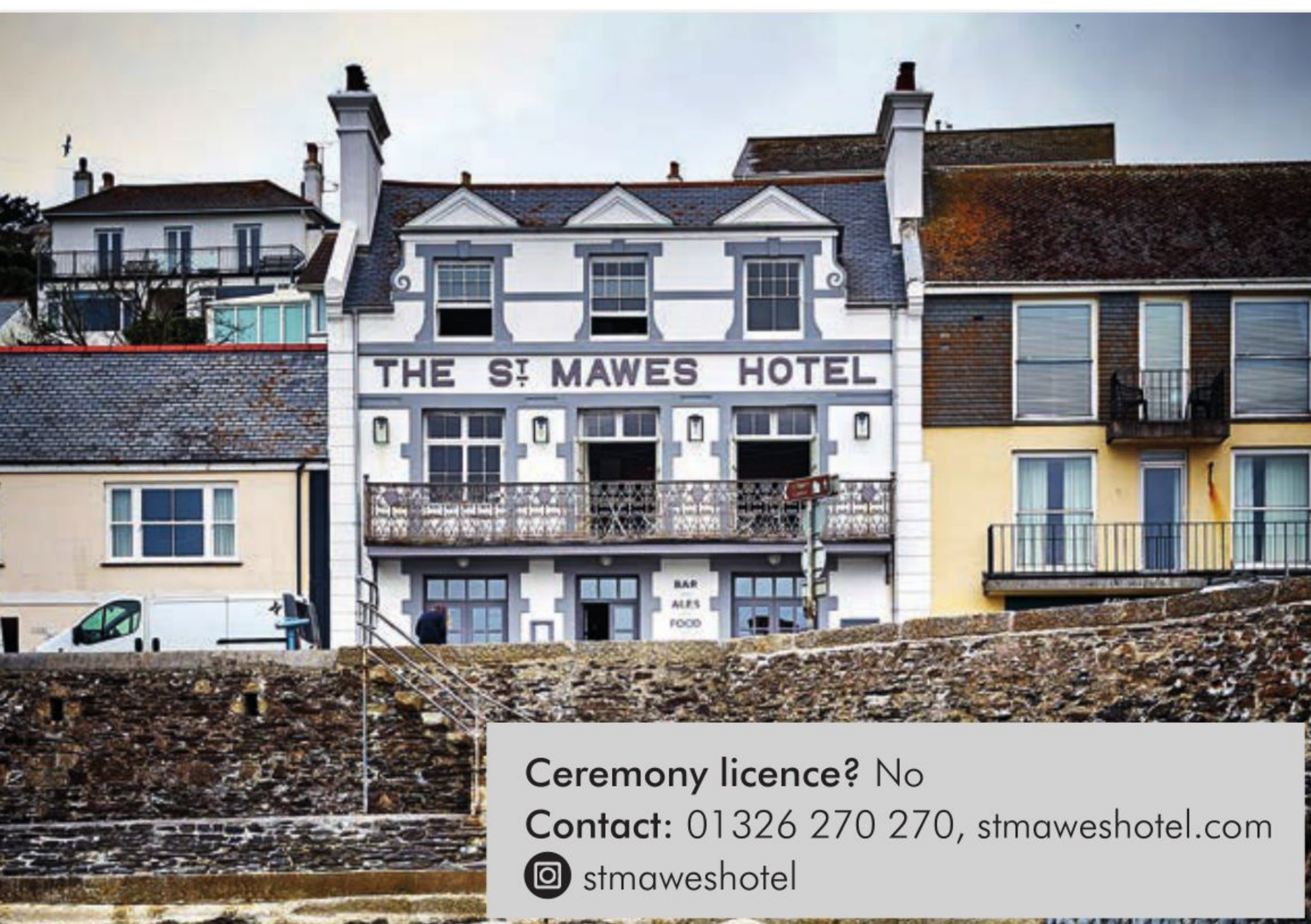
We love... the uninterrupted views of the Fal estuary and the chic, colourful furnishings.



THE IDLE ROCKS ST MAWES

Recently re-opened in February this year, this Relais & Châteaux property is located on the harbour of this picturesque, cobbled fishing port against the rugged Cornish coast. It's home to 19 bedrooms, each one individually designed to complement the surroundings.

It's the ideal setting for a drinks reception or a post-vow wedding celebration in the multiple award-winning restaurant with views across the water. Couples can dine at the chef's table or outside on the waterside terrace. New head chef Dorian Janmaat heads up the kitchen team, serving dishes that champion the freshest local ingredients and produce.



Ceremony licence? No
Contact: 01326 270 270, stmaweshotel.com
 @ stmaweshotel

ST MAWES HOTEL CORNWALL

This luxury seaside boutique hotel, the sister property to The Idle Rocks, sits on the Roseland Peninsula. Its seven charming bedrooms are all individually designed with their own sense of style. Fresh Cornish food is served in The Lower Deck Bar and also in The Upper Deck Dining area with views out to sea.

The Courtyard Room is a bright, airy space available for private hire seating between 20 and 40 guests depending on the room layout. It's ideal for a wedding reception and has its own private outdoor courtyard perfect for summer drinks.

We love... the luxury cinema room complete with 25 leather reclining chairs, fluffy blankets and refreshments including popcorn and ice cream. It can be used for a family gathering to host a screening of wedding pictures and videos.

Photography of lower deck bar, exterior and seafood courtesy of davidgriffen.com



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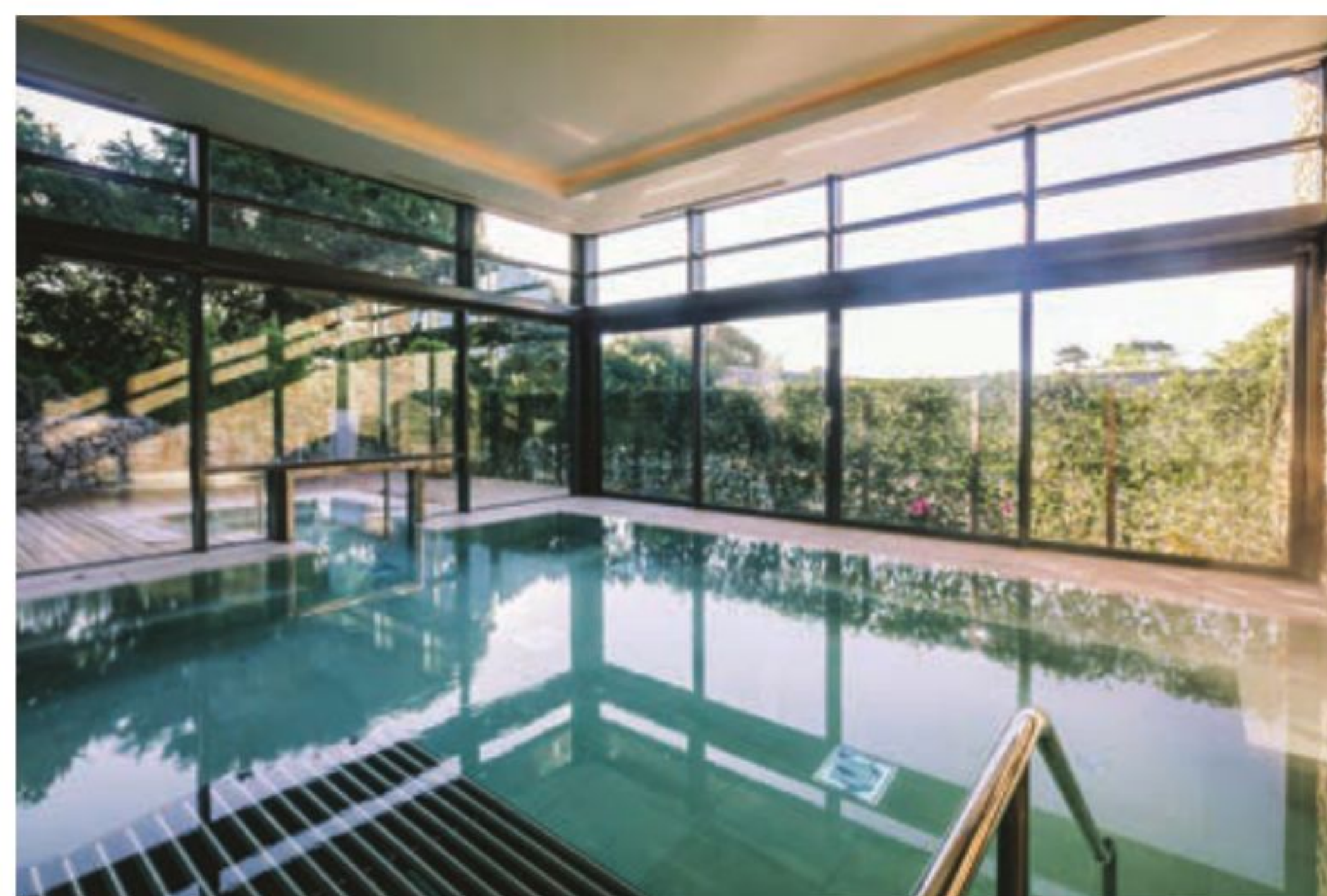
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This award-winning, five-star spa is located in the picturesque grounds of Boringdon Hall Hotel, an elegant manor house with fire-lit lounges, two stylish restaurants and 42 sumptuous bedrooms. With an emphasis on wellbeing provided in a natural environment, the facilities are set against a backdrop of countryside views and include an indoor pool, a hydrotherapy pool with an outdoor swim-through, experience showers, a Finnish sauna and a crystal salt steam room. There's also a herbal sauna, outdoor hot tubs and a deep relaxation room offering a wide variety of treatments positioned overlooking the wildflower meadow.

Ceremonies take place in a variety of areas, from the Parker Suite for up to 100 guests to the Great Hall for up to 120 loved ones, and the Grenville Suite for a more intimate 80. There's also the outdoor gazebo seating up to 120 guests.

Ceremony licence? Yes

Contact: 01752 546 196,
boringdonhall.co.uk  @gaiaboringdon

We love... that couples can arrive at Boringdon Hall Hotel by a vintage car, a horse and carriage or even by helicopter.

ANOTHER OPTION

POLURRIAN ON THE LIZARD, CORNWALL

This award-winning seaside hotel set in 12 acres of clifftop gardens offers spectacular views, 41 boutique bedrooms and luxury villas decorated with Cornish-inspired artwork and designer pieces.

There's great food and wine on the menu, from tasty tapas to wood-fired pizzas and steaks with most ingredients sourced from local suppliers.

The hotel puts a huge emphasis on wellbeing, with its Health Club featuring an indoor pool, hot tub and a gym. There's also an outdoor tennis court, an outdoor pool and activities such as early morning slow yoga available. Much-needed

me-time can be found in the treatment rooms offering an array of Elemis treatments including an age-defying facial and a lime and ginger salt scrub.

Ceremonies take place in the Vista Lounge against the backdrop of the Atlantic Ocean and there's also the White Space event area best suited to smaller, intimate weddings. The entire hotel is available to hire exclusively, with the exclusive-use package including access to all facilities, a bespoke dinner for guests the evening before, the wedding breakfast and a drinks package with evening nibbles.

Ceremony licence? Yes

Contact: 01326 240 421,
polurrianhotel.com
 polurrianonthelizard

We love... that the hotel is dog-friendly.



ABBEY SANDS HOTEL, TORQUAY, DEVON

This beautiful hotel, part of The Richardson group, is located on the English Riviera. Originally two villas, it's a Victorian building retaining much of the original architecture with most of the 47 bedrooms still home to period features.

The property sits in manicured gardens, ideal for big-day pictures, and is situated less than a one-minute walk from the beach and close to the town.

Leisure facilities include an indoor and outdoor heated

pool, a gym, hot tub and 15% off treatments in the spa at sister property, The Grand Hotel (also in Torquay).

Ceremonies take place in a choice of beautifully appointed ceremony rooms or outside in the secret garden. There's flexible, bespoke packages available for the wedding breakfast and reception, from the Elegant Package for 40 day guests and 80 evening guests, to the Fairytale Package for 60 day guests and 100 evening guests.

Ceremony licence? Yes

Contact: 0800 005 2244, abbeysandshotel.co.uk

We love... the cosy restaurant serving seasonal dishes, and the Devonshire cream teas on the menu.



GRAND HOTEL TORQUAY, DEVON

This elegant Victorian property, Torquay's landmark hotel (and the sister one to the Abbey Sands Hotel, above, The Royal Beacon in Exmouth and The Falmouth Hotel), sits pride of place on the seafront. Steeped in history, it has retained many of its period features across its 132 individually styled bedrooms and is home to an AA rosette fine dining restaurant, 1881, and The Spa at the Grand.

This tranquil spot uses organic and ethical Caudalie products, with manicures and pedicures using Jessica nail polishes and HiBrow and Lashbase treatments available. Spa packages include Total Time Out for Men, ideal for small stag groups, and the Hen Day Spa package. The Sheer Indulgence package for two includes a full afternoon tea, a Caudalie facial and a relaxing and nourishing body wrap.

Ceremonies take place in a choice of stylish rooms including the Chatsworth, ideal for intimate groups, and the Cavendish Suite and the Devonshire.

We love... the superb sea views from the 1881 restaurant and the coastal-inspired menu including king scallops and locally landed lemon sole fillets.

Ceremony licence? Yes

Contact: 0800 005 2244, grandtorquay.co.uk

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THE HEADLAND CORNWALL, NEWQUAY

Perched on its very own private clifftop overlooking the golden sands of Fistral Beach, one of the best surfing beaches in the UK and Europe, this opulent five-star hotel offers panoramic views spanning the Atlantic Ocean.

It's home to individually designed bedrooms and suites, one of which is offered complimentary to the newlyweds on the night of the wedding, and a new leisure complex, The Aqua Club, opening in late spring 2020. This five-star destination will house a 25-metre swimming pool and four others including a hydrotherapy and a

vitality pool. There'll also be an ocean-facing sun terrace and a stylish new restaurant, The Deck.

Ceremonies at The Headland Cornwall take place in a choice of four private suites: Little Fistral; Morning Room; Fistral Suite and the Half Ballroom with capacities ranging from 12 to 80 guests. Receptions take place in the Half Ballroom with access to an outside veranda and a stage perfectly suited for a DJ. The Fistral Suite is better equipped for a more intimate gathering of up to 40 loved ones and features a large bay window with a bar adjacent to it.



Ceremony licence? Yes
Contact: 01803 853 225, berryheadhotel.com
 @Berryheadhotel



THE BERRY HEAD HOTEL, BRIXHAM, DEVON

This family-run hotel nestled on the water's edge in six acres of grounds enjoys seaside views across the Torbay coastline. It's positioned in six acres of pretty gardens offering plenty of photo opportunities.

Facilities include comfortable bedrooms, an à la carte restaurant

for fine dining, and a more relaxed menu available in the brasserie. Leisure facilities include an indoor pool, Jacuzzi and sauna.

The hotel caters for between two and 200 wedding guests, with menu choices that can be tailored to suit each different celebration.

Ceremonies take place both indoors and out, and the wedding breakfast and reception can be enjoyed in a choice of two rooms.

We love... sister property Hannaford Point Hotel & Spa located in Looe, Cornwall, that also hosts weddings.

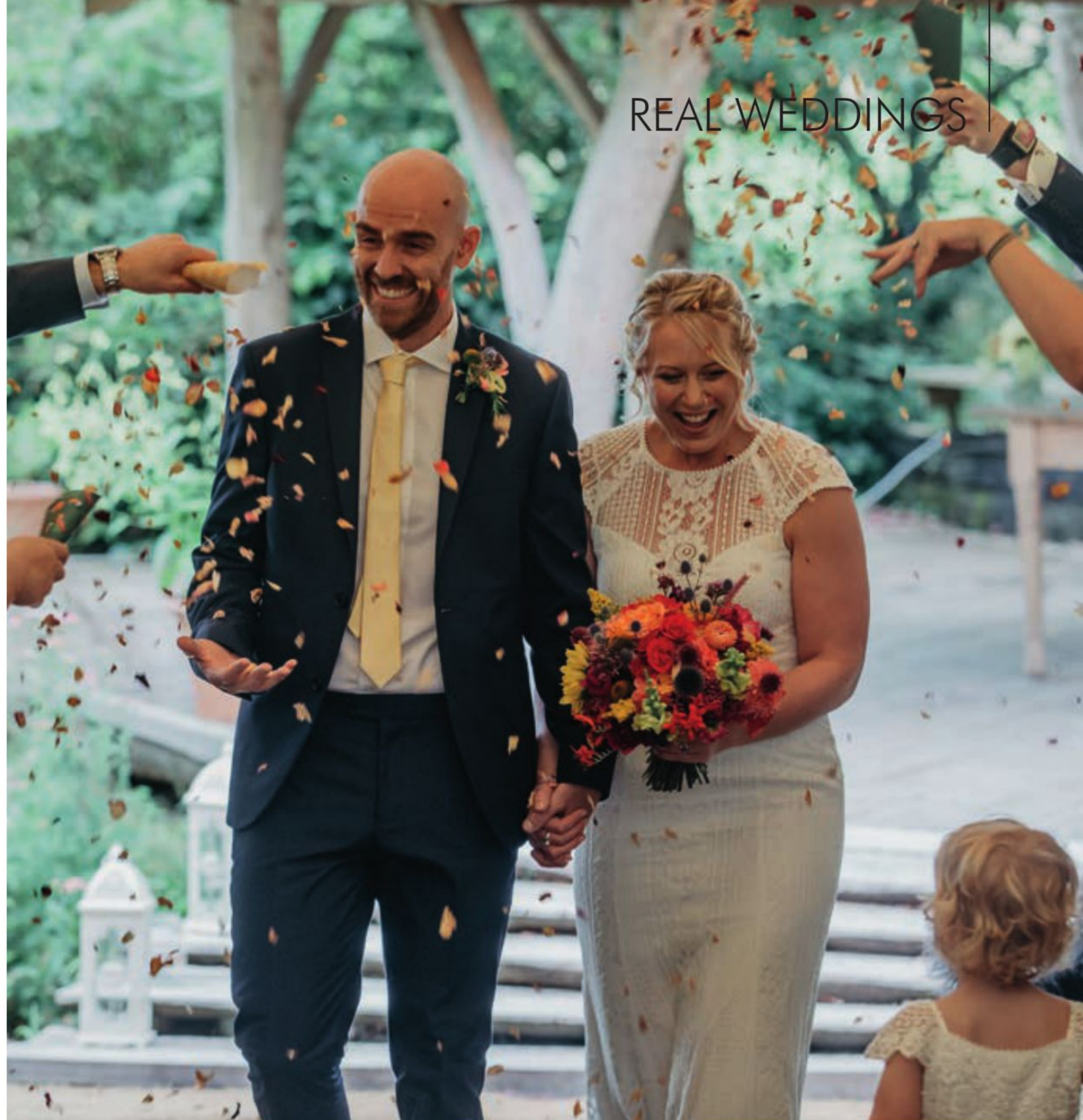
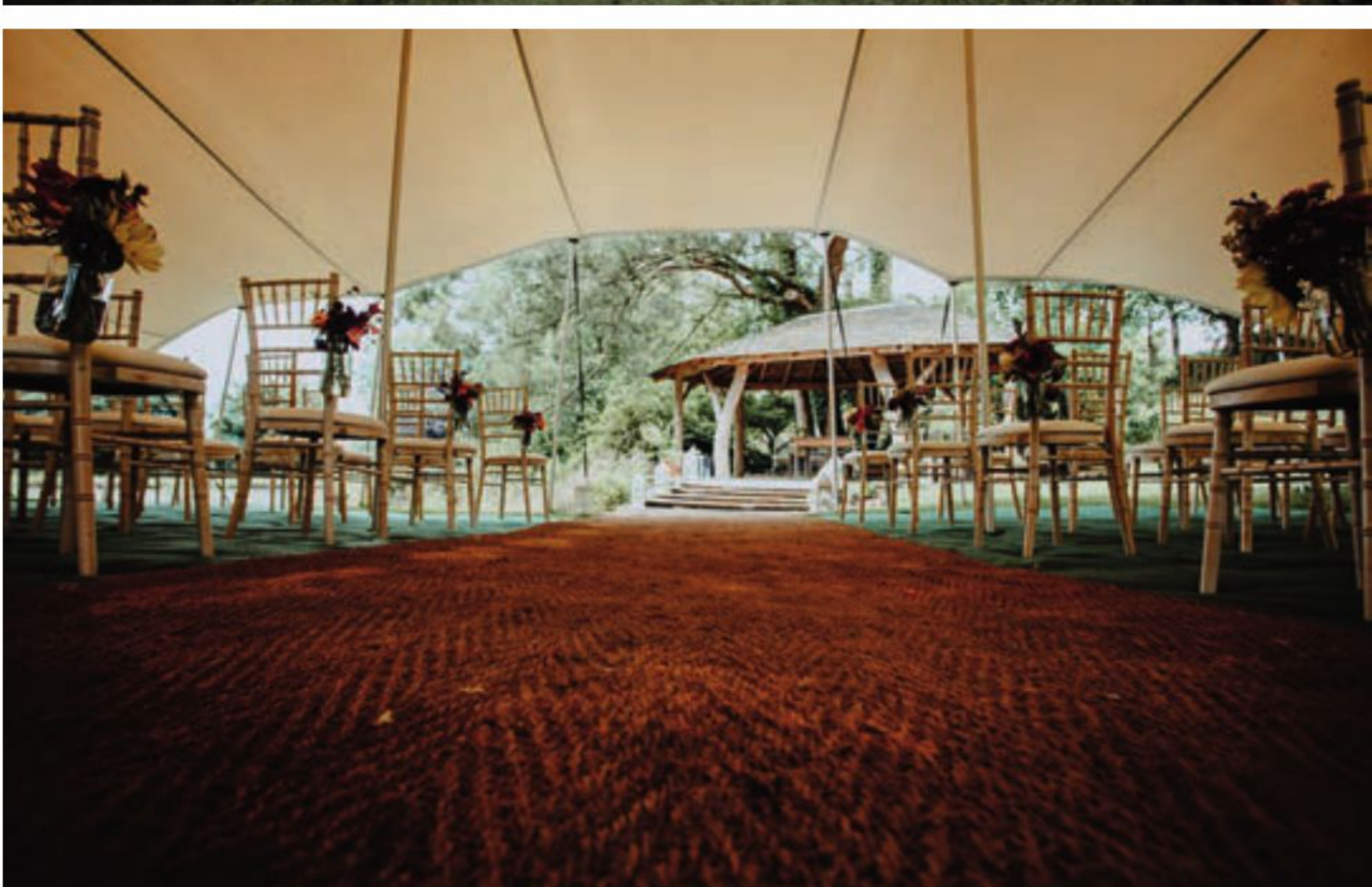
Riding THE WAVE

Jess and Sam's wedding followed a surf theme with lots of other personal touches

Images courtesy of Checkered Photography & Videography Collective



Jess and Sam Watson married on 3rd August 2019 at Deer's Leap Retreat in South Molton, Devon.



Jess and Sam met at university but didn't become a couple until four years after graduating when Sam gatecrashed a Game of Thrones weekend that Jess had planned with a friend. "We soon had a second date alone and this is where our new relationship began," Jess tells us. "When he braved the cold water in South Wales and Denmark to learn how to surf, I knew it was serious!"

The couple became engaged during a trip to Martinique in the Caribbean. "Sam got down on one knee on a quiet section of the beach and asked me to marry him," Jess tells us. "It was such a special moment."

SETTING THE SCENE

The couple wanted to incorporate this memory, and other personal touches, into their special day. "We chose to get married at Deer's Leap Retreat because we loved that it was an exclusive venue and it offered the backdrop and flexibility that we wanted to keep our wedding really personal," Jess tells us. "We also wanted to have an active, outdoor celebration with a relaxed atmosphere in a beautiful setting and Deer's Leap Retreat offered us this laid-back vibe."

"Our artistic sides definitely shone through during the wedding planning," Jess tells us. "We had personalised surfboard key rings as place names and used our beloved campervan as a photo booth. We also entertained our guests with homemade garden games and our menu featured Caribbean dishes." The couple even made their own wedding cake at Deer's Leap Retreat the afternoon before their big day which featured a lime and coconut tier and a cherry bakewell layer which is one of their favourite flavours.

What Jess and Sam didn't know when they booked their wedding was that they would be puppy parents by the time it came around. "As soon as Bodhi entered our lives, we knew it wouldn't be the big family day that we wanted without him there," Jess tells us. "He ended up sharing all of our special moments throughout the day and had a blast!"

LOOKING THE PART

"I loved my fitted dress as soon as I saw it," Jess tells us. "I teamed it with my grandmother's ring as my *something old*, a crystal hair accessory as my *something new*, my mum's bracelet as my *something borrowed* and my opal engagement ring as my *something blue*. Sam looked so handsome in his blue suit, braces and yellow tie, and his bright buttonhole complemented my bold, seasonal blooms."

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TIME TO CELEBRATE

"Our garden games were a huge hit with our guests, especially the space hoppers!" Jess says. "We had a sweetie station for the children which resulted in some very hyper little ones and some comical photo booth pictures!"

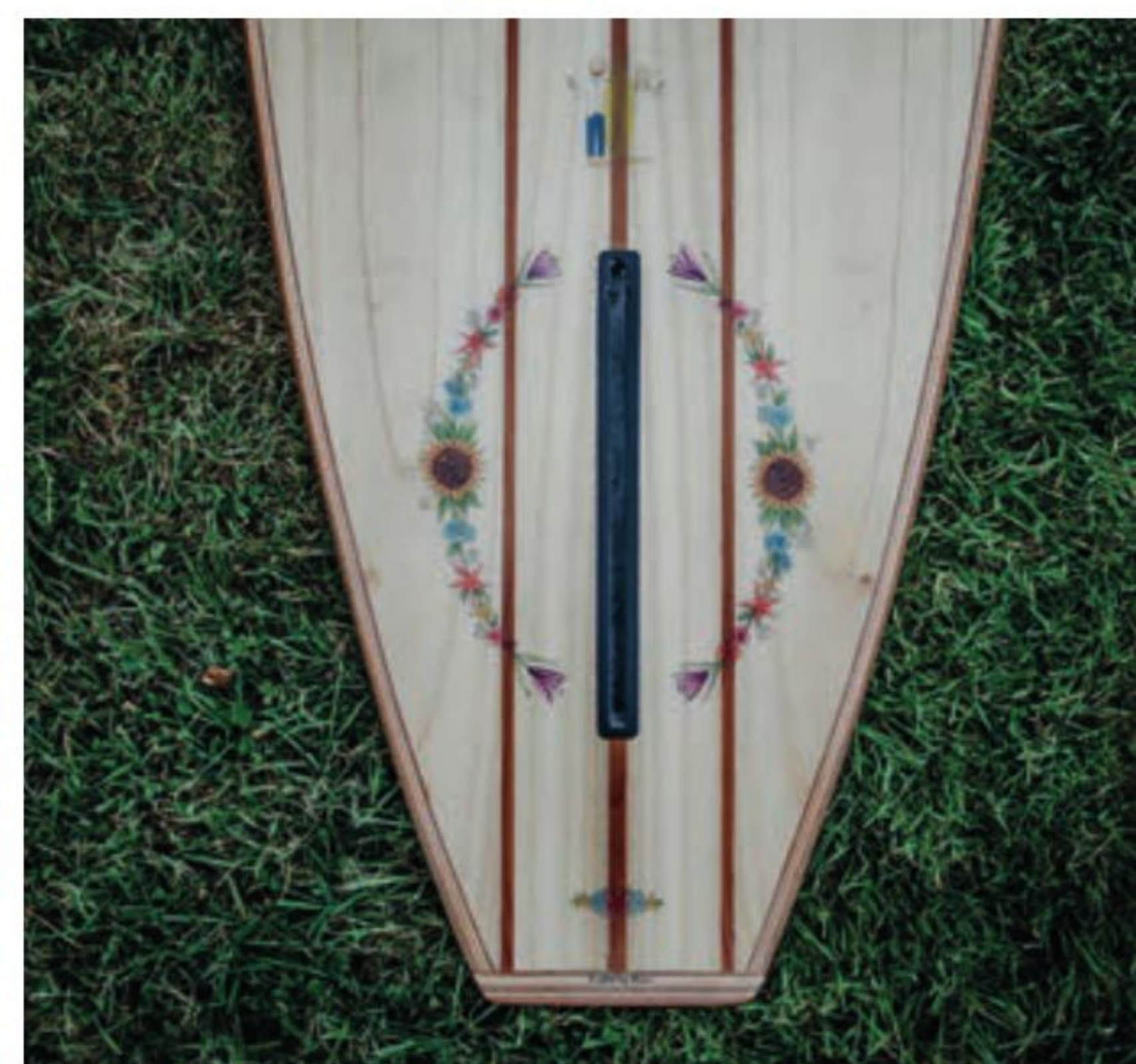
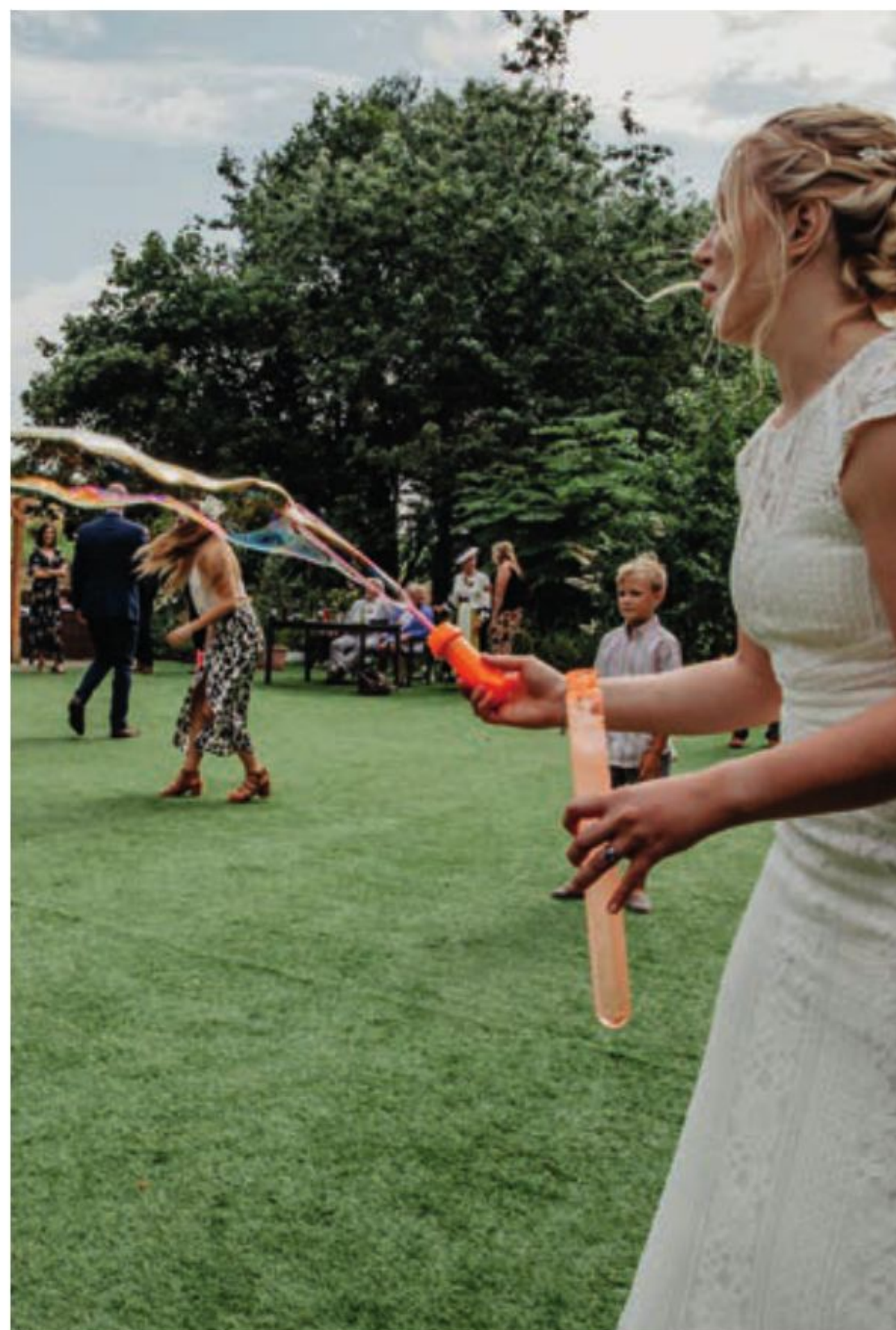
A really good thing about the venue was that the kids could go to bed in the farmhouse with a babysitter while the parents re-joined the party. "Both of us have brothers and sisters with young ones so this was really important to us so that they didn't miss out," Jess says. "The farmhouse was also really useful for older family members who wanted a break from the partying."

"Our celebrations were concluded with a firework display over the lake," Jess tells us. "We had a mix of our favourite songs played that reflected us as a couple during it that including *Thunderstruck* by AC/DC and *Wipeout* by The Surfaris."

MEMORABLE MOMENTS

One very emotional moment came as a huge surprise for the couple on the day. "During Jess's dad's speech, he gifted us a handmade wooden surfboard that he'd spent months making in his workshop in Australia," Sam explains. "He had inlaid the wedding invitation artwork that Jess had drawn into the board and arranged for it to be shipped over to the UK in secret. We were both totally blown away by it."

The couple had lots of friends and family who had flown over from Australia to join them on their wedding day. "My 85-year-old grandmother had travelled from Melbourne," Jess tells us, "and it meant the world to us to have everyone there. Big family celebrations are made all the more special by the personal time spent between loved ones which is why sharing the whole venue for two nights and three days created so many incredible memories."





THE DREAM TEAM

Venue | Deer's Leap Retreat | 01398 341 407 | deersleapretreat.co.uk

Photographer | Checkered Photography & Videography Collective | 07866 109 506 | checkeredphotography.co.uk

Bride's dress and shoes | Monsoon | 0844 811 0068 | uk.monsoon.co.uk

Bride's hair accessory | Lottie-da Designs | etsy.com/uk/shop/LottieDaDesigns

Hair and make-up | Iconic Hair & Make Up | 07557 341 946 | iconic-hairandmakeup.co.uk

Bridesmaids' dresses | Victoria Lou Bridal | 07714 715 269 | victorialou.co.uk

Groom's suit | Next | next.co.uk

Wedding cake of cheese | The West Country Cheese Co | 01271 379 944 | westcountrycheese.co.uk

Flowers | Sarah Hill Flowers | sarahhillflowers.com

Entertainment | The Jacks | 01270 501 164 | thejacksband.co.uk

Catering | Deer's Leap Retreat | 01398 341 407 | deersleapretreat.co.uk

Fireworks | Sonic Fireworks | 01884 849 222 | sonicfireworks.co.uk

Bread selection for canapés and Bridal Party breakfast pastries |

Bawdens the Bakers at Lucy Lous | 01398 331 426 | lucy-lous.com

DIY Photobooth camera system | Myselfie | 07413 120 101 | hiremyselfie.co.uk

Rings and bridesmaid gifts | Lindsay Pearson | lindsaypearson.com





Image by So Belle Photography

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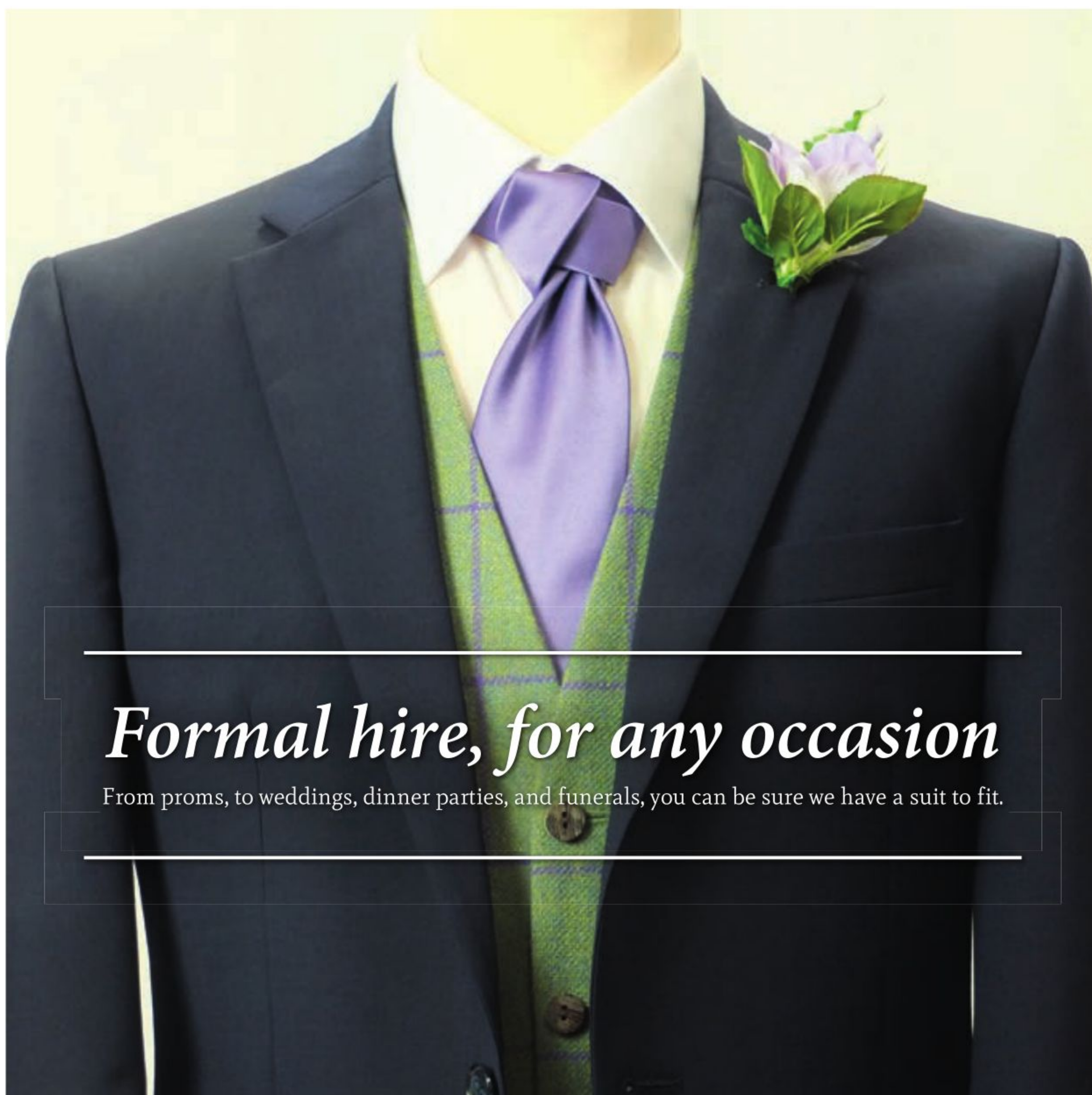
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Surf's up

Stacey and Gary's coastal day was decorated with seaside-themed trinkets and guests were invited to join them in riding the waves

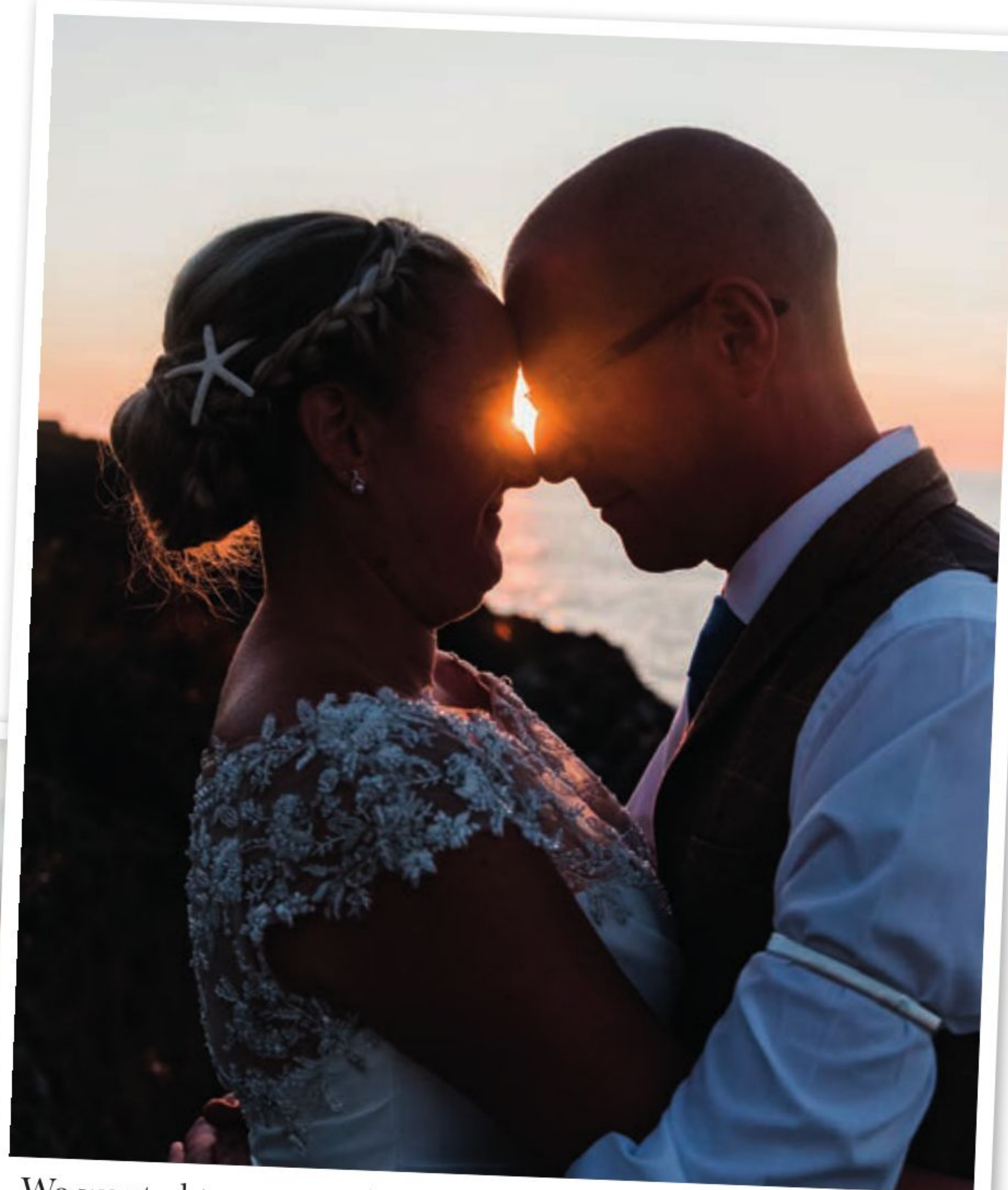
Images courtesy of Hannah Barnes Photography

Stacey and Gary Clark-Allan married on 14th September 2019 at The Pier House, Westward Ho!

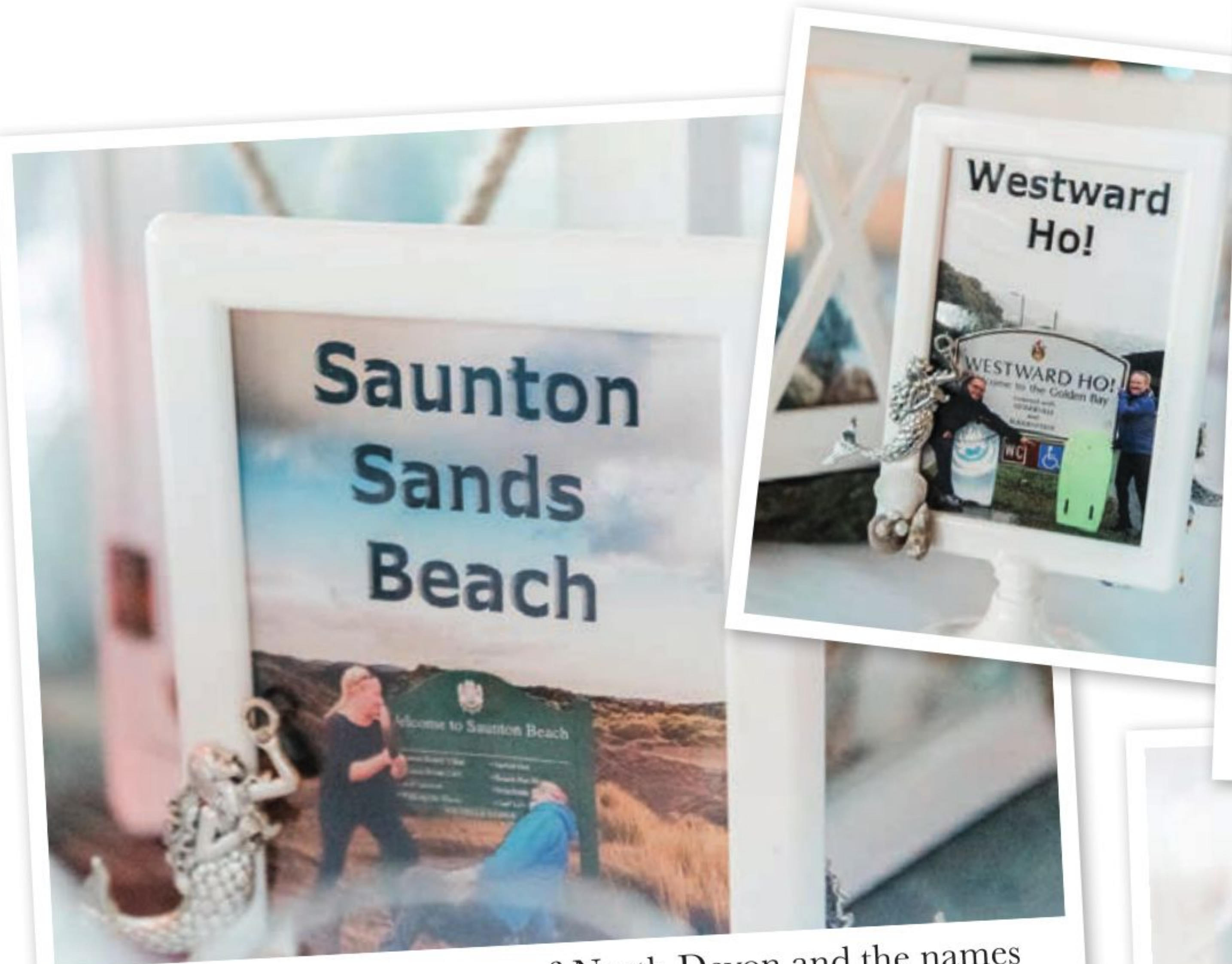
Stacey and Gary first met at work but it wasn't until her leaving party that they spent any quality time together. "I went round to Gary's flat and never left!" Stacey tells us.

The couple became engaged in a surprise proposal on her birthday. "We had gathered all of our friends and family together for breakfast at Watkins & Faux in Southsea and Gary had created a word game that involved six teams being given a set of letters to decode a word and then form a sentence," Stacey tells us. "It finally read 'Stacey Allan will you marry me' to which he got down on one knee and proposed to me! It was a total surprise and there were plenty of tears."

Here, Stacey tells us about their seaside-themed celebration.



We wanted to get married at Westward Ho! We surf there four to five times a year as well as visit it to walk our dogs and my parents live close by in Bideford. The Pier House enjoys views of the beach and has a holiday park adjacent to it that was ideal to accommodate all of our guests.



Our table plan was a map of North Devon and the names were specific places in the region that we had visited together. We framed photographs of us acting silly against road signs in each of these locations.



Our centrepieces were handmade nautical-themed displays with flowers, candles and decorative shells sat on a piece of slate. Each guest was given a hand-crafted surfboard decoration and a nautical wine charm with their name on at their place setting.



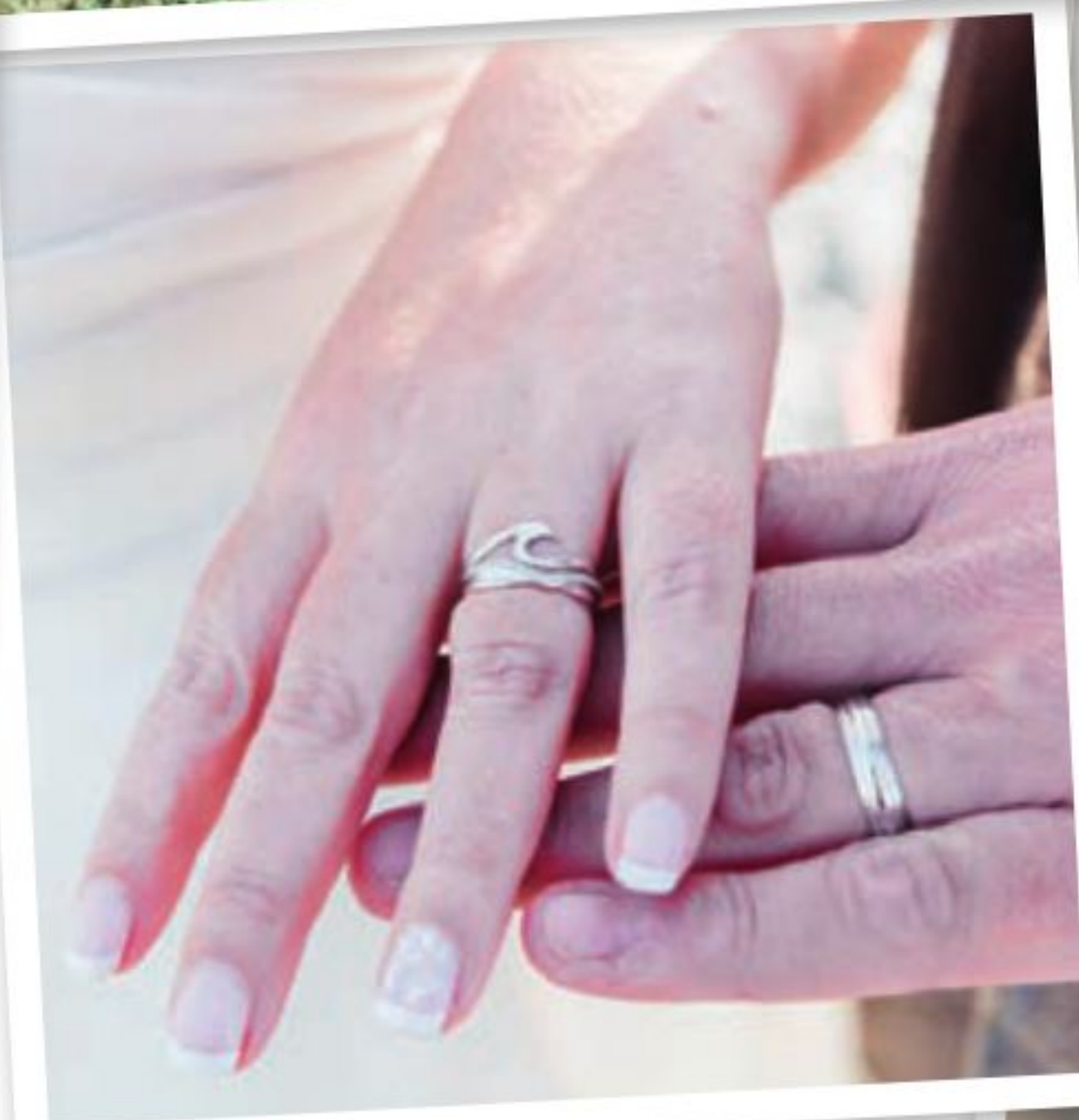
Our cake was a multi-tiered display of cheese and our guests baked some extra puddings for us that we labelled with surfboard-shaped tags.



My parents surprised us with their speech portrayed through a Punch and Judy show! The children were invited to the front to watch it and we were sat on deckchairs. All of our guests were laughing at their performance!



Our wedding chairs featured a hessian bow with individually designed hand-crafted surfboards hanging from the back of each one. The high chairs featured hessian bows with small cuddly sea creatures suspended from them.



I loved my elegant off-the-shoulder dress and teamed it with some silver shell jewellery, starfish-shaped hair accessories and our beautiful new wedding rings.



Gary chose to wear a light brown tweed three-piece suit that had a Peaky Blinders feel to it. He added a flat cap, pocket watch and braces to complete the look.



My bridal bouquet of blue and white natural flowers styled with shells and sea holly and tied with blue ribbon was so pretty. We also had horseshoes for luck.



Our best man and the ring bearer both wore matching outfits to the groom. They each had individual accessories as a personal touch including a Pokémon pocket watch, Ironman cufflinks and Deadpool cufflinks.



Our two bridesmaids looked so beautiful in their midnight blue dresses teamed with elegant hair accessories and seaside-themed jewellery.



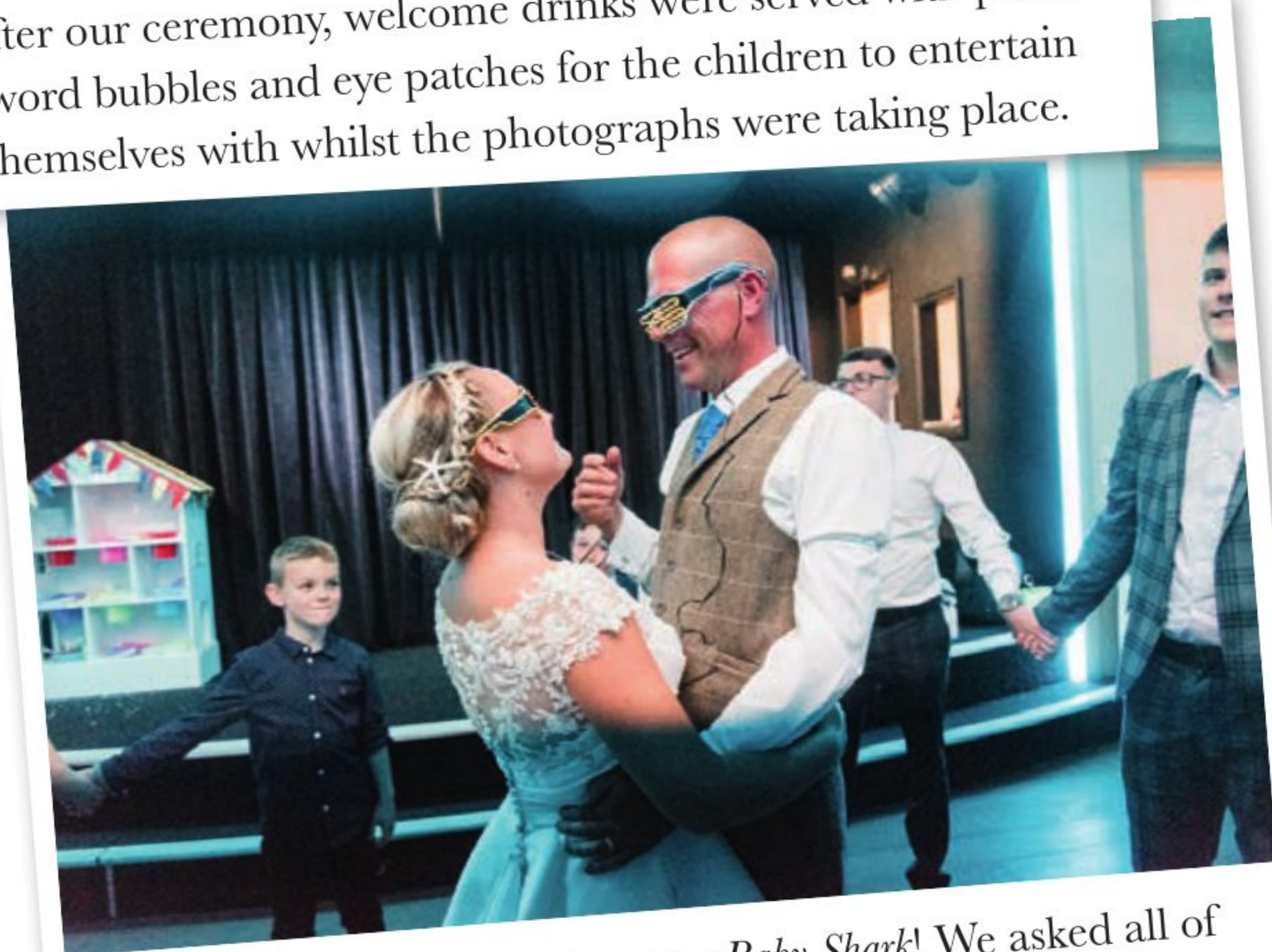
My father wore a Scottish kilt.



After our ceremony, welcome drinks were served with pirate sword bubbles and eye patches for the children to entertain themselves with whilst the photographs were taking place.



We arranged to get married late in the afternoon because we wanted as many of our guests as possible to meet us on the beach at 9am to do some surfing and play some games. Almost 60 of them attended and the weather was amazing! Many of the little ones got to experience surfing for the first time courtesy of The North Devon Surf School. We wanted to have a fun family day that everyone would remember.



Our first dance was to the song *Baby Shark*! We asked all of the children to join us on the dancefloor and join hands while we pulled out some flashing glasses to wear during it. We had a disco in the evening and the playlist was a mix of requests from each of our guests. This was followed by a rave for the adults complete with glow sticks, glasses and foam tubes.



We took a bit of time out from everyone and headed to the beach for some couple shots that looked beautiful. I suddenly realised I wouldn't be able to walk on the rocks in my wedding shoes so a stranger kindly lent me their flip-flops!

THE DREAM TEAM

Photographer | Hannah Barnes Photography | hannahbarnesphotography.com

Venue | The Pier House | 01237 477 777 | thepier-house.co.uk

Catering | The Pier House | 01237 477 777 | thepier-house.co.uk

Guest accommodation | The Pier House | 01237 477 777 | thepier-house.co.uk

Bride's dress | Creatiques Bridal Boutique | 02392 826 622 | creatiques.co.uk

Groom's suit | Astares Menswear | 02393 072 095 | astares.co.uk

Cake | South West Cheese | 01271 321 859 | southwestcheeseuk.com

North Devon Surf School | 01237 474 663 | northdevonsurfschool.co.uk

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Leah McHardy married Jon Cook at Lusty Glaze Beach in Newquay, Cornwall on 11th August 2018.

Leah and Jon first met at a beach barbecue and instantly discovered that they shared a common interest in outdoor pursuits. "Leah had just arrived back from a trip to Australia and was looking super tanned and pretty," Jon says. Leah adds, "Jon caught my eye when he decided to go skinny dipping with his mate for a laugh!"

Jon proposed to Leah in Oahu, Hawaii on Sunset Beach in the middle of a three-month surf trip. "He had secretly planned a luxurious break for us and rented a beachside cabin," Leah tells us. "After a day spent surfing and messing around in the water, he went off to get us some dinner and wine to enjoy on the beach. He came back with a bottle of champagne and as we watched the sunset, he got down on one knee in the sand and asked me to marry him!" Jon had been planning to propose for a few months and had managed to keep the ring quiet. "He had a beautiful engagement ring made several months before the trip by Tegen Jewellery located in Cornwall," Leah tells us. "He designed it, it's a wave curling over a diamond and is stunning."

Here, Leah tells us more about the couple's celebration at Lusty Glaze Beach...

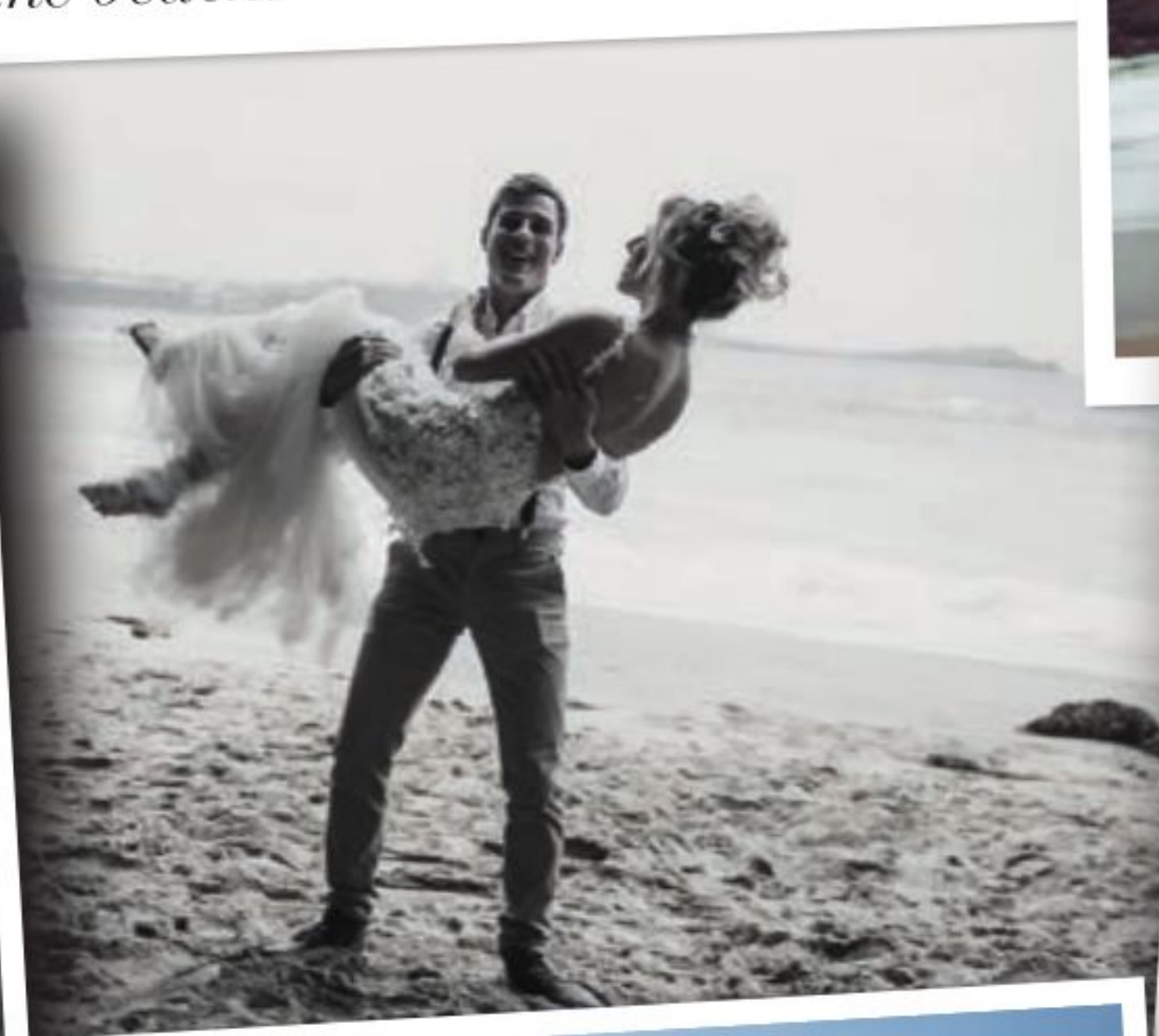
LIFE'S A BEACH

Leah and Jon enjoyed a barefoot beach wedding

Images courtesy of Robin Kitchin Photography



We had to get married on the beach! We are both water babies so it just felt right. I had always wanted to say my vows barefoot on the sand. Lusty Glaze was the perfect choice – it's a beautiful private cove and you can have the ceremony right on the beach.



We wanted to bring a bit of Hawaii, where we got engaged, to Cornwall so the theme of our wedding reflected our love of the sea. I personally designed the decorative touches adding a tropical vibe with lots of greenery and flower varieties from the pacific.

Our table plan was very relaxed – we didn't have named spaces, just round tables seating 10 guests at each one. We did name each table after our favourite surf spots around the world.

“THE STAFF AT LUSTY GLAZE BEACH WERE SO WELCOMING AND HELPFUL IN CREATING OUR PERFECT DAY WITH US.” – LEAH



My bouquet complemented our centrepieces of tropical flowers and foliage displayed in old glass bottles.



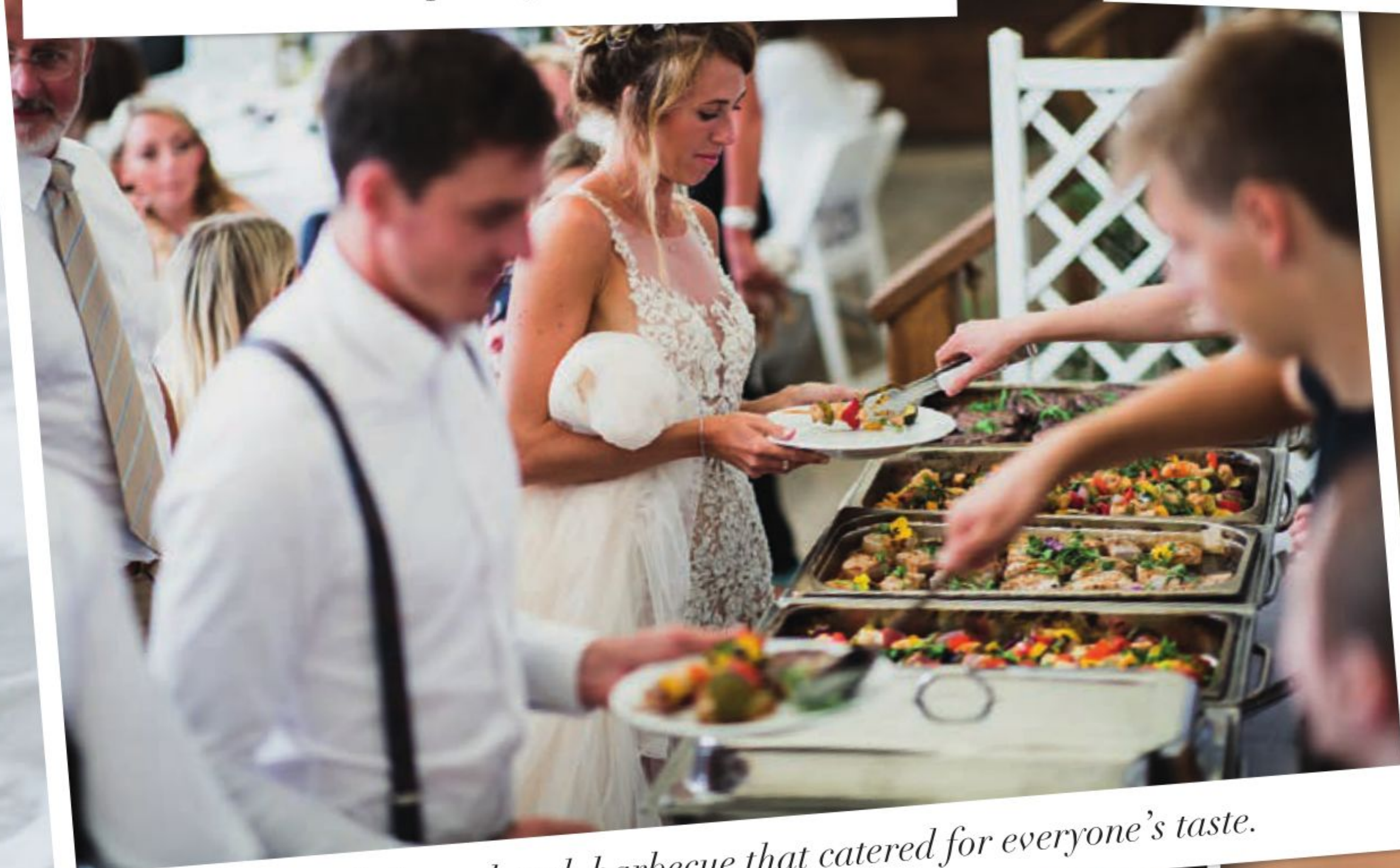
Our delicious cake was a lemon sponge flavour decorated with tropical leaf icing – it looked and tasted amazing!



Our guests loved our 'Get Lei'd Bar' which consisted of a basket of Hawaiian leis for them to wear and take some photographs with.



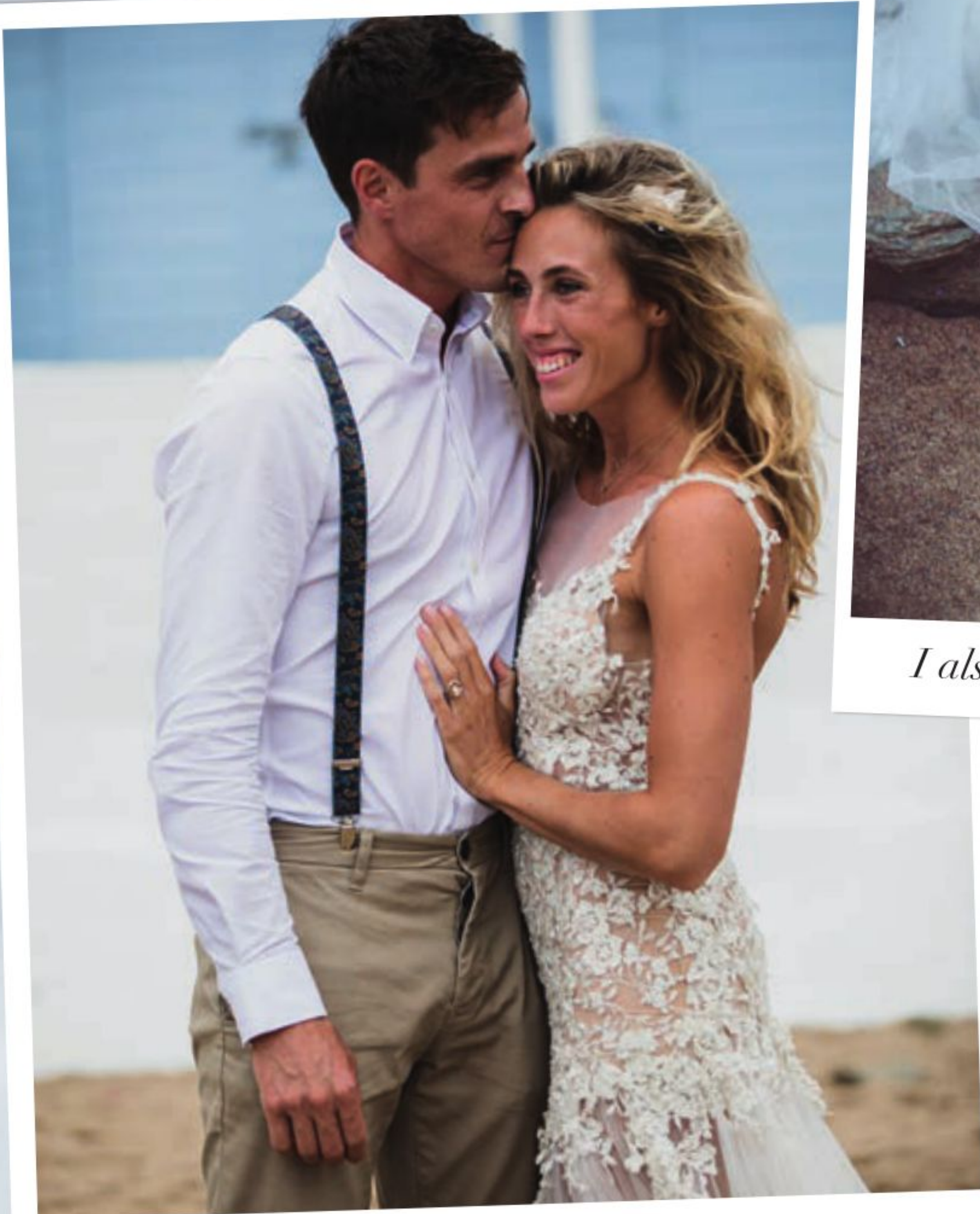
We displayed a fishing basket to hold the cards and a beautiful wooden surfboard made by my brother for our guests to sign and write a short message to us on.



We decided on a beach barbecue that catered for everyone's taste.



I accessorized my dress with a simple three-tier gold necklace featuring a small diamond, an elegant bracelet, and a flower accessory in my hair.



I was looking for a fitted yet relaxed dress that would feel light and effortless to wear and allow me to dance! I knew I wanted to wear a champagne-colour gown so I sketched the style I wanted and Ruth Milliam made it for me. It featured a stunning detachable tulle train and delicate, intricate beading.



I also wore some barefoot beaded sandals.



Jon kept his outfit relaxed for the beach and wore a pair of chinos with a white shirt and braces. His groomsmen also wore braces and chinos.



Our three bridesmaids wore pale green silk dresses that could be tied in different ways so they each styled them differently. As a gift, we gave each of them a fishtail ring to remember the day.



We hired a fantastic funk soul band called The Soul Strutters who played a hand-picked selection of disco, soul and funk tunes – they were a huge hit with the guests and everyone danced until the end of the night!



My bridesmaids and myself played beach volleyball in our dresses and my dad ended up losing a dance off with an eight-year-old!

“WE ENJOYED A MINI-MOON AT THE SCARLET, A LUXURY, ECO HOTEL IN CORNWALL WHERE WE COULD JUST UNWIND AND RELAX TOGETHER. WE LOVED THE CLIFFTOP HOT TUBS, NATURAL SWIMMING POOL AND SPA.” – LEAH

THE DREAM TEAM

Photographer | Robin Kitchin Photography | 07834 590 139 | robinkitchin.com

Venue | Lusty Glaze Beach | 01637 872 444 | lustyglaze.co.uk

Catering | Lusty Glaze Beach | 01637 872 444 | lustyglaze.co.uk

Flowers | This Rugged Coast | thisruggedcoast.com

Bride's dress | | Ruth Milliam | 01243 575 980

Wedding ring and jewellery | Tegen Jewellery | tegenjewellery.com

Band | The Soul Strutters | 07742 399 760 | soulstrutters.co.uk

Groom's outfit | T.M.Lewin (shirt) | tml Lewin.co.uk and Mrs Bow Tie (braces) | mrsbowtie.com

Event Design and table decoration | Westwind Drift | 07824 511 970 | westwinddrift.co.uk

Mini-moon hotel | The Scarlet | 01637 861 800 | scarlethotel.co.uk

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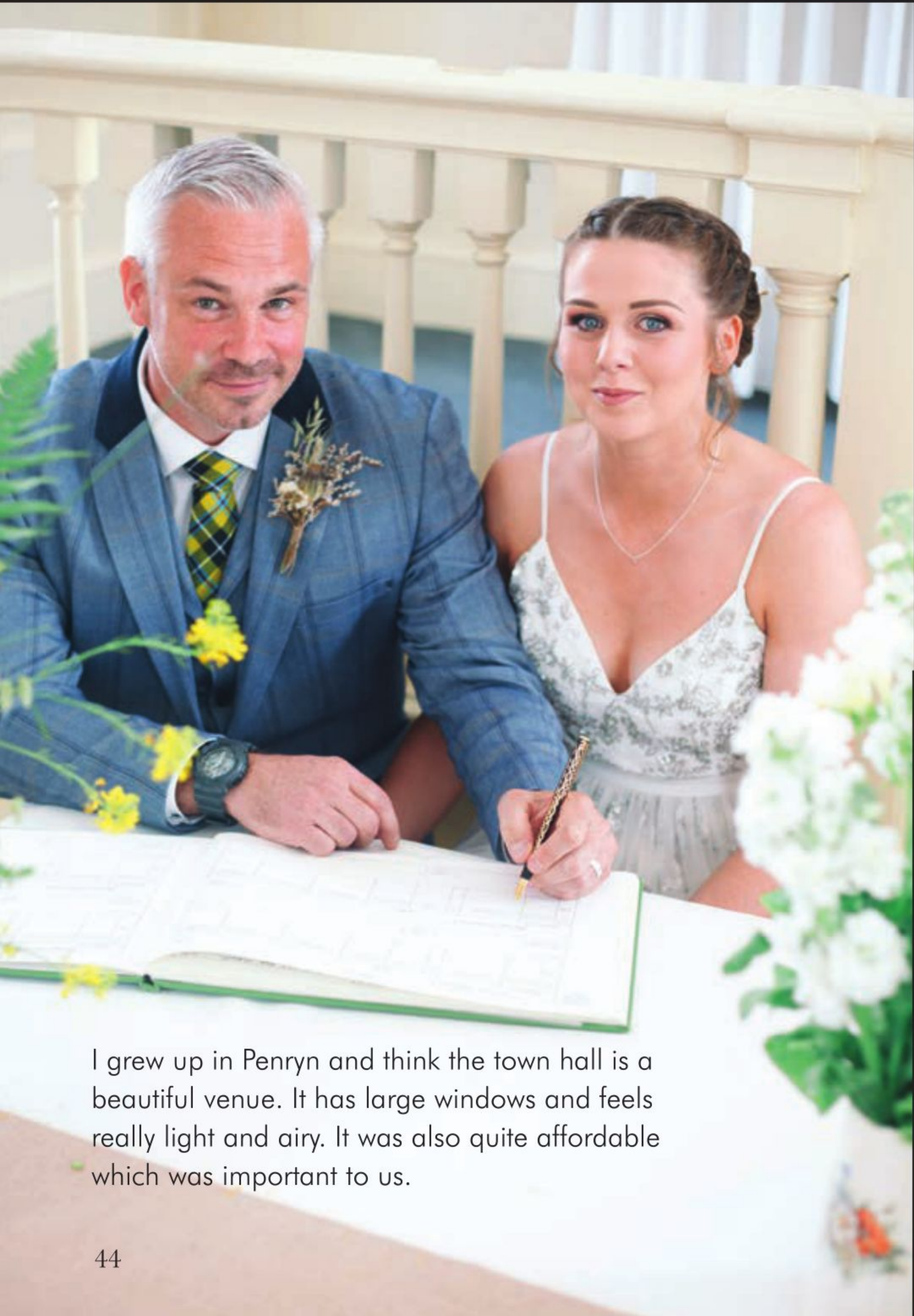


CORNISH charm

Bethany and Justin celebrated with a relaxed, rustic day

Images courtesy of Isabella Banks Photography

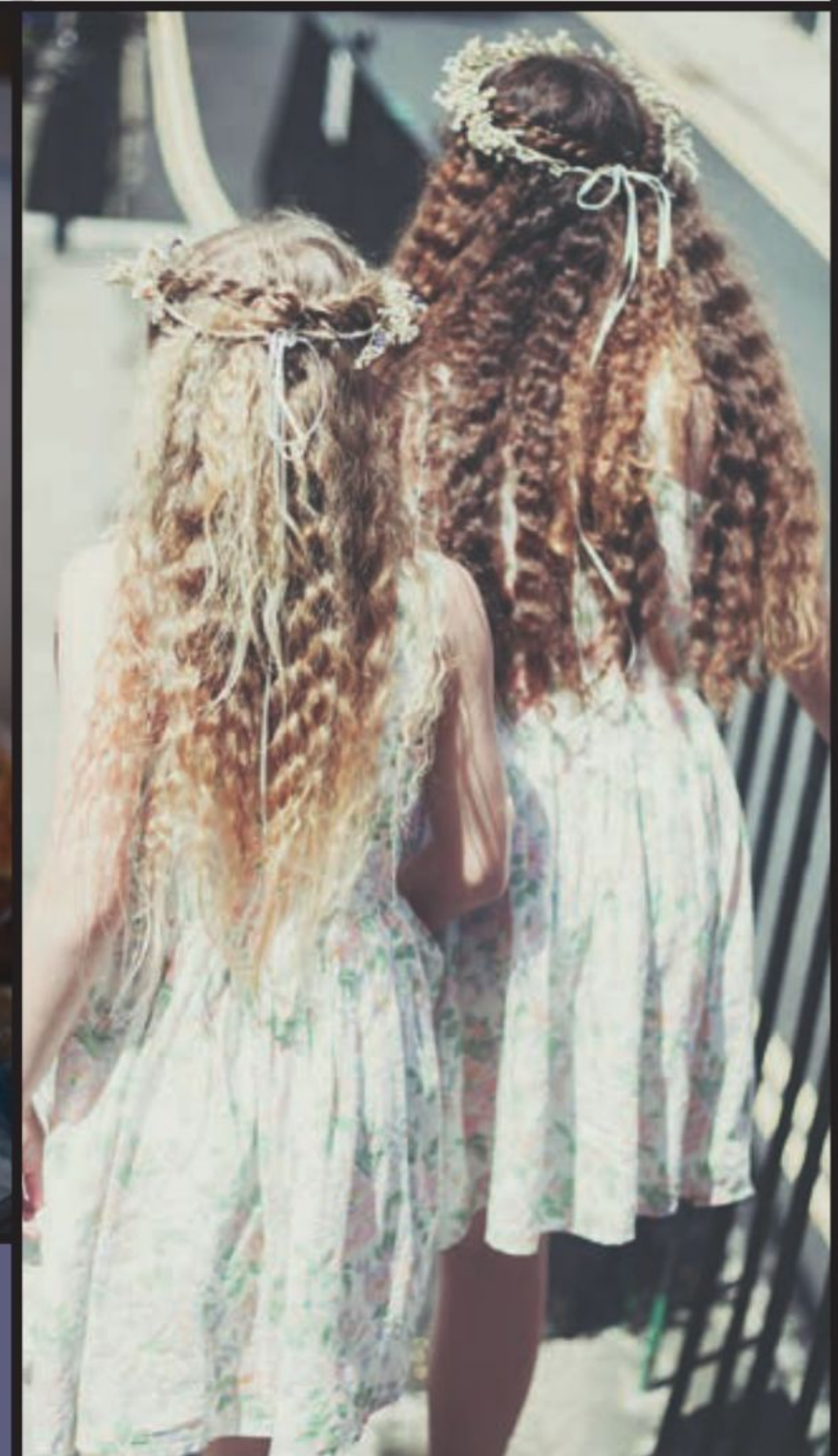
Bethany Churchill, 28, and Justin Churchill, 44, married on 8th June 2019 at Penryn Town Hall followed by a reception at Ponsanooth Hall in Truro, Cornwall.



I grew up in Penryn and think the town hall is a beautiful venue. It has large windows and feels really light and airy. It was also quite affordable which was important to us.



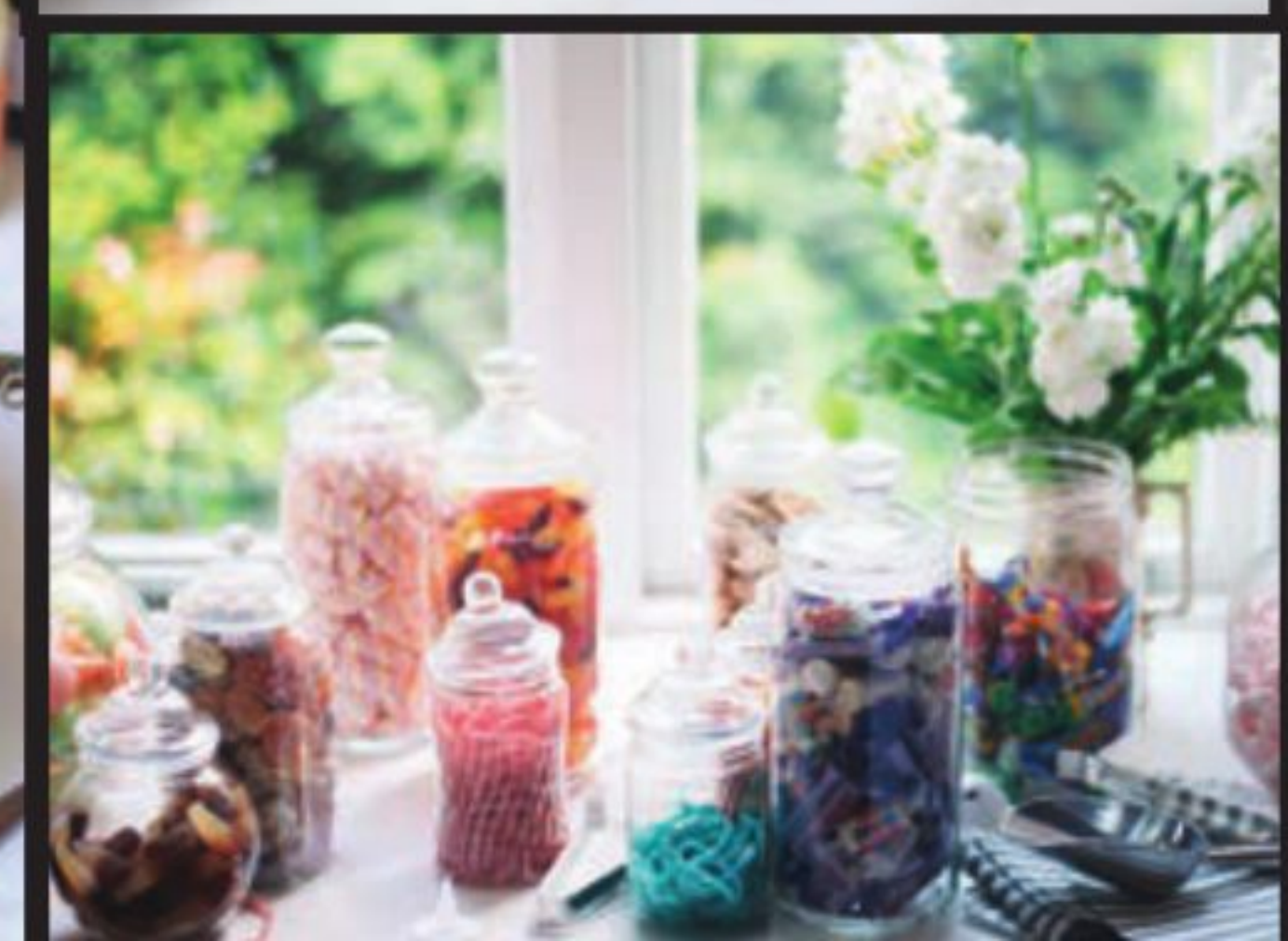
We had a three-tier Victoria sponge cake with Italian icing and fruit coulis. It was decorated with the same dried flowers that were used in the bouquets. My brother Oliver is a chef so he cooked all of the meat and made the cold salads and chutneys, and we also had a sweetie table.



Our bridesmaids looked so pretty in their pastel floral dresses and hair circlets. We gifted them a few little keepsakes including candles.



We gave our guests packets of wild flower seeds as favours.



We didn't use a set table plan, we just wanted people to sit wherever they fancied. We wanted the tables to look rustic so used hessian runners down the centre of each one. My mum and I collected vintage pots, vases, and bottles for the wild flowers to be arranged in. We picked flowers from mum's garden and bought some from local suppliers. I wanted them to look really natural, like you would see in a hedgerow in Cornwall.

REAL WEDDINGS

"We hired a Mercedes C-class as our wedding car. They even put a bottle of champagne in it for us!" – Bethany



I found choosing my accessories really hard! In the end I picked a simple necklace and earrings made using Cornish metals. My shoes were from ASOS - I wore a silver satin style with a high heel and open toe. The beading on the dress was silver so it emphasised that.



Justin wore a blue checked suit with a Cornish tartan tie and his best man wore the same.



I wore the Astral dress by Needle and Thread after falling in love with it. When I decided to buy it, it was half price! It was floaty and comfortable and featured a pretty open back. I had to have a couple of adjustments made.

THE DREAM TEAM

Photographer | Isabella Banks | 07975 726 316 | isabellabanksphotography.com

Ceremony venue | Penryn Town Hall | 01326 373 086 | penryntowncouncil.co.uk

Reception venue | Ponsanooth Hall | 01872 863 103 | ponsanooth-hall.co.uk

Florist | Kayla Prior at Roamer Rose | 07908 711 759 | roamerrose.com

Make-up artist | Jenna Jazz | jennajazz.co.uk

Wedding dress | Needle & Thread | needleandthread.com

Bride's dress alterations | Roamer Rose | 07908 711 759 | roamerrose.com

Bride's jewellery | Wearnes | 01326 572 154 | wearnes.co.uk

Bride's engagement ring | Hannah Batstone | 07817 035 578 | hannahbatstone.com

Bride's shoes | asos.com

Groom's suit | Little Anne-Maids | 01209 613 366 | littleanne-maids.co.uk

Transport | Enterprise rent-a-car | 01326 373 355

Children's entertainer | Tarq's Ark Childrens Services | 07866 055 401

Band | Strange Almond | facebook.com/strangealmond

South West Discos | 07936 526 599 | Southwest Discos | facebook.com/SouthwestDiscos

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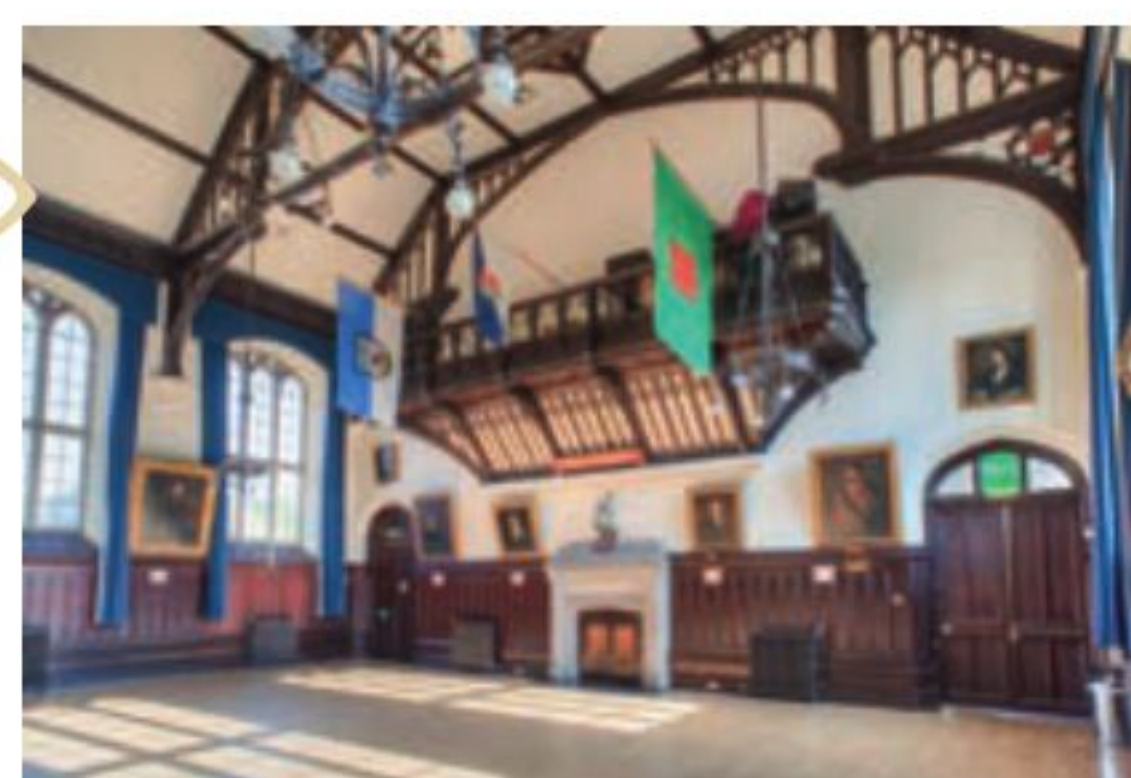


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- Abby & Joe

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HOT TOPIC

Our regional experts share their top tips

FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD

CAN YOU INSPIRE US WITH SOME FRESH AND EXCITING IDEAS FOR OUR WEDDING MENU?

Meet the expert: Sarah-Jane Payne has been running West Country Caterers located in Umberleigh, Devon for 23 years. It's one of the leading Devon-based catering companies and is a family-run business, covering all occasions.

Sarah-Jane says: I find it interesting how food tastes and trends have evolved over the years. It's quite often celebrity influenced, with brides looking to them on Instagram and in magazines for ideas in choosing their wedding day menu. Also, group weekends away in a hired holiday home are now more popular for intimate wedding celebrations.

We are continuously researching and following the different trends and food varieties. More recently, there has been an increase in requests for vegetarian and vegan dishes. We have been catering for all-vegan menus which has been both challenging and rewarding, using seasonal vegetables and fruits.

Although some traditional ideas are still popular, we are now specialising in more street food for weddings such as paella and curry. Our sharing platters are ideal because they help create a social atmosphere, as are the more casual ideas such as barbecues and hog roasts.

West Country Caterers
01769 560 473
west-country-caterers.co.uk
f @WestCountryCaterers



Meet the expert: Eran Hovav is the managing director and head chef of Eran's Kitchen that was born out of his passion for food, travel and life, with flavours from around the world being at the core of every dish.

Eran says: I'm always experimenting with new dishes and flavours using fresh raw ingredients from the West Country. I like to fuse modern British cuisine with traditional recipes from global cultures. For couples wanting something a bit different for their wedding, I particularly like the Argentinian Asado that's a wonderful experience for gathering guests together, plus the authentic, popular barbecue experience that can cater for vegetarian and vegan guests, as well as meat eaters alike. Other ideas I see regular requests for at weddings are bowl food, street food and even a Moroccan tagine feast.

Eran's Kitchen | 07723 323 536 |
eranskitchen.co.uk | f @eranskitchen





YOUR DAY, YOUR WAY

We want to book a really good independent celebrant for our Devon-based wedding. Can you advise us on the types of ceremony we could consider, and some great locations for it?

Meet the expert: Sarah Chapman is a professional independent celebrant based in the South West. She helps couples create their individual ceremony by guiding them with their vows, readings and word choices. They can include symbolic and traditional rituals and spiritual or faith-based beliefs.

Sarah says: Choosing a celebrant to deliver your wedding ceremony gives you a range of options that a registrar can't. Firstly, you can hold your ceremony anywhere, not just in a licensed venue. I have performed them in couples' favourite places, for example on the beach, in the woods, on a boat and cliff top, and even in their own garden.

I do also work with wedding venues. For great flexibility and a good choice of areas to hold a ceremony I often recommend Middle Coombe Farm in Tiverton, The Barn in South Milton, Putsborough Beach in North Devon and Bovey Castle in Dartmoor.

Secondly, your ceremony can be bespoke to you both, from the giving and blessing of the rings, exchanging of vows, lighting candles, a personal choice of poetry, and religious or spiritual words. Symbolic Rituals to unite you both can include a Rose Ceremony, Sand Ceremony, Hand-Fasting Ceremony and Jumping the Broom - often couples choose all of these! I have even written Cocktail Rituals and Chocolate Ceremonies to make the wedding personal. Part of the fun is choosing which ideas suit you both best.

Sarah Chapman | 07870 763 304
celebrationceremoniessouthwest.com

@CelebrationCeremoniesSW



THE GREAT OUTDOORS

We want to find a place in Devon where we can plan a relaxed, festival-style blessing outdoors and create the day we want without the restrictions of a more formal wedding venue. Where do you suggest?

Meet the experts: Ian and Nicky Richards are the owners of Little Oak Meadow located in Colyton, East Devon. The couple decided to follow their dream and open it to the public as a wedding venue after being inspired by their own daughter's wedding. It's a lovingly maintained site with plenty of options for celebrations.

Ian and Nicky say: Little Oak Meadow is situated in a private, secluded location with plenty of possibilities for an outdoor celebration. We offer couples and their guests overnight glamping accommodation

in tipis, yurts or bell tents. This means that a wedding can be a weekend affair rather than lasting just one day. If you're feeling adventurous, you're more than welcome to bring your own tent, campervan, caravan or motorhome for a rural wedding retreat. We are very relaxed, so whatever your requirements we will listen and help create your dream day. Unlike other wedding venues in Devon, we don't offer a standard wedding package. Instead, we build them specifically tailored according to your needs and requirements, resulting in a beautiful wedding in the Devonshire countryside that you and your guests will never forget.

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HOME FROM HOME

We're planning a wedding in Devon and want to book a venue where we can invite our loved ones to spend the entire weekend with us and have a house party-style celebration. Where do you suggest?

Meet the expert: Hannah Evans is the joint owner of Hallsannery with her husband Charles. It was closed in 2012 for refurbishment where it was restored to its former glory as a late Georgian, early Victorian property and reopened in 2013 as a wedding venue and holiday destination.

Hannah says: Why not consider hiring a large house where your loved ones can gather for a weekend (or even a week) and where there aren't the restrictions that many wedding venues impose? That way, you can create a home away from home atmosphere and host an informal, intimate celebration. Hallsannery House located just outside of Bideford and approximately five miles from the sandy shores of the North Devon coast offers an exclusive, flexible wedding venue. With 11 en suite bedrooms and a sumptuous Bridal Suite home to a four-poster bed and roll-top bath, the property offers plenty of spaces for wedding celebrations including three reception rooms (one with a fire), a dining room featuring a glistening chandelier



that's ideal for the wedding breakfast, a farmhouse kitchen large enough for a group brunch or lunch, an indoor and outdoor games room, and even a tennis court.

With a choice of indoor and outdoor ceremony locations and a selection of gorgeous spots for big-day photographs, this Grade II listed manor house provides an elegant backdrop for a house party-style wedding. It can be themed for weddings in all seasons - think twinkling candles and a roaring fire in winter, and flower-filled gardens and croquet on the lawn in summer. Keeping everything under one roof is simple and budget friendly because most things are included and there's no corkage fee.

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Together we will create vows, readings and words so that they are perfectly suited for you, your family and your friends. You can include symbolic and traditional rituals and also spiritual or faith-based beliefs in your ceremony including giving and blessing of rings, exchange of Vows, Hand Fasting, Cocktail and Chocolate Ceremonies, Candle and Sand Ceremonies....the list is endless!

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PARTY

HEN DOS

IN THE CAPITAL

We put two London hen dos to the test

Whatever your taste, there's not much that the capital can't offer in terms of hen do celebrations. Hannah Faulder got to check out two of the best experiences – oh, the hardship – one you can invite your nan along to and the other, well, maybe not...

Helen Maybanks



MAMMA MIA! THE PARTY

I'm a firm believer that there are two types of people in this world: people who love ABBA and people who won't admit they love ABBA. I am well and truly in the first camp – in fact, obsessed is probably the correct term for my adoration of the Swedish fab four – so my expectations were very high for this event.

Billed as an immersive entertainment experience that puts guests at the heart of the action, I couldn't quite picture how this was going to pan out and all I knew was that we would be getting dinner while watching a *Mamma Mia*-inspired show. Arriving at the O2 with my sister (another ABBA nut), we walked through the big blue doors and suddenly we were on a Greek island in a pretty courtyard complete with fountain, olive trees and walls draped in bougainvillea, instead of London on a dreary Monday night. From the moment we took our seats in Nikos' Taverna, that was it; I was swept up in the brilliant and slightly ridiculous magic of it all. The free-flowing wine probably helped.

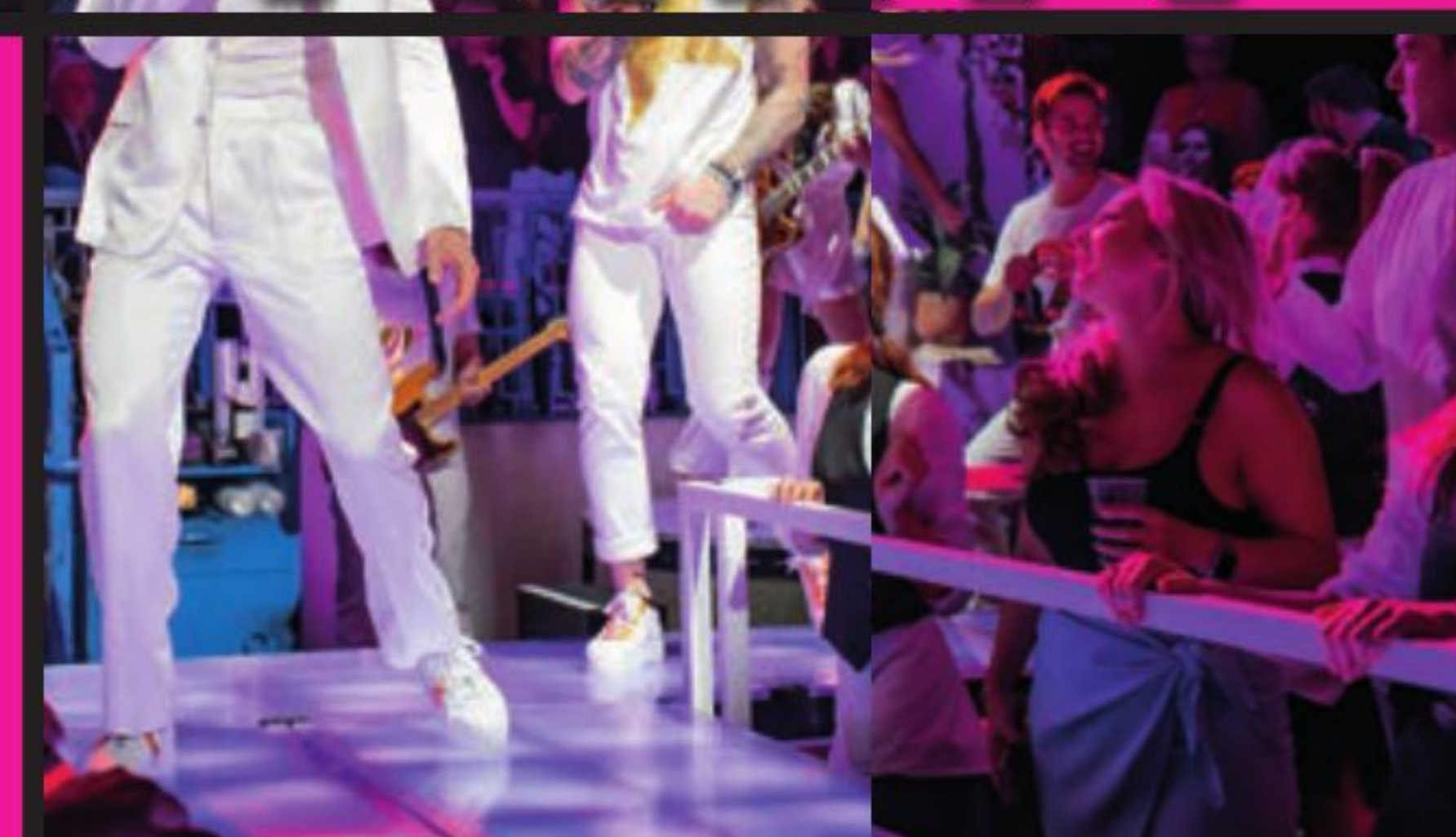
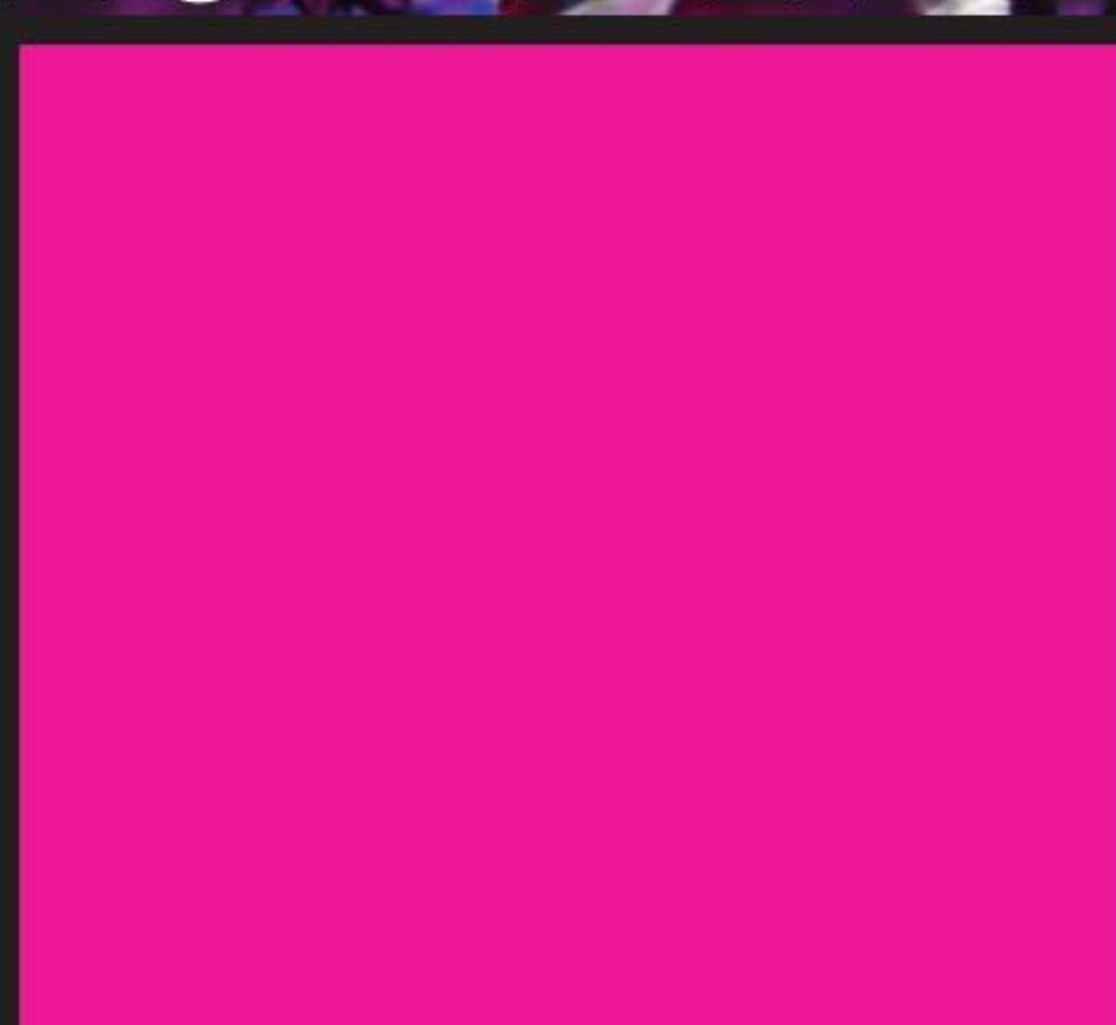
Everyone was so into the show that they probably could've got

away with mediocre food, but in truth it was delicious. The four-course gourmet meal of tasty Mediterranean fare was incredible – the bread and olives alone were to die for. And as for the show, it was just one huge incredible party – we all laughed, cried and sang along with our new found friends – and we weren't just observing, everyone was part of the action. I challenge anyone to not start dancing; we were up mid-mouthful at many points if *Gimme! Gimme! Gimme!* or *Dancing Queen* were somehow shoehorned into the plot. The joyous atmosphere was totally infectious.

At the end of the show, they roll out a huge stage and a disco starts up. My sister and I were devastated to leave but we had to get the last train home, which we soon found out had been cancelled, and with that we were back down to earth with a thud. If you don't like ABBA, the price tag may terrify you. If you do, it's worth every penny.

Visit the website
mammamiatheparty.com

Helen Maybanks



When I told people I was going to see Magic Mike Live I got a lot of giggles and some funny looks. If you're a millennial woman, there's a good chance you've seen the film (or at least, fast-forwarded to the good bits), so you probably have an idea of what the live show will entail. What Channing Tatum's extravaganza actually provides though is a somewhat more friendly experience. I won't give the premise away (although let's face it, we're not here for the story), but let's just say that the female MC is very much in charge of the situation, and we as audience members are reaping the benefits of a more feminist approach to a traditional strip show.

We arrived at the Hippodrome Casino, which is perfectly located in Leicester Square for those who want a night on the town afterwards, and are directed to the venue and order a drink right to our seats. The show is around an hour and a half, but it goes by in a flash of tanned skin and oiled muscles. The dance moves range from a bit saucy to one routine with a female dancer that verges on indecent, but the general feel-

good vibe of the evening and the comedic styling of the host stop it from careering into tacky.

I have to say, I haven't laughed so much in a long time. My friend and I were screaming and whooping along to the show – and this was a school night! I can just imagine a Saturday night with a group of your best girls and you could bring the house down. I have to mention the audience participation, as it is a big part of the show. I was slightly terrified at the prospect of this beforehand, but when you're in the moment the nerves go out the window. My friend even sat on a piano and had a hunky man serenade her! It feels like a totally safe and inclusive environment, but if you're really not up for a lap dance, just say the safe word "unicorn" and you'll be passed by. Not that we saw many people using the safe word, except for a very embarrassed looking Alex Jones from *The One Show*. All in all, this is riotous, naughty fun best consumed with copious cocktails and your best friends by your side.

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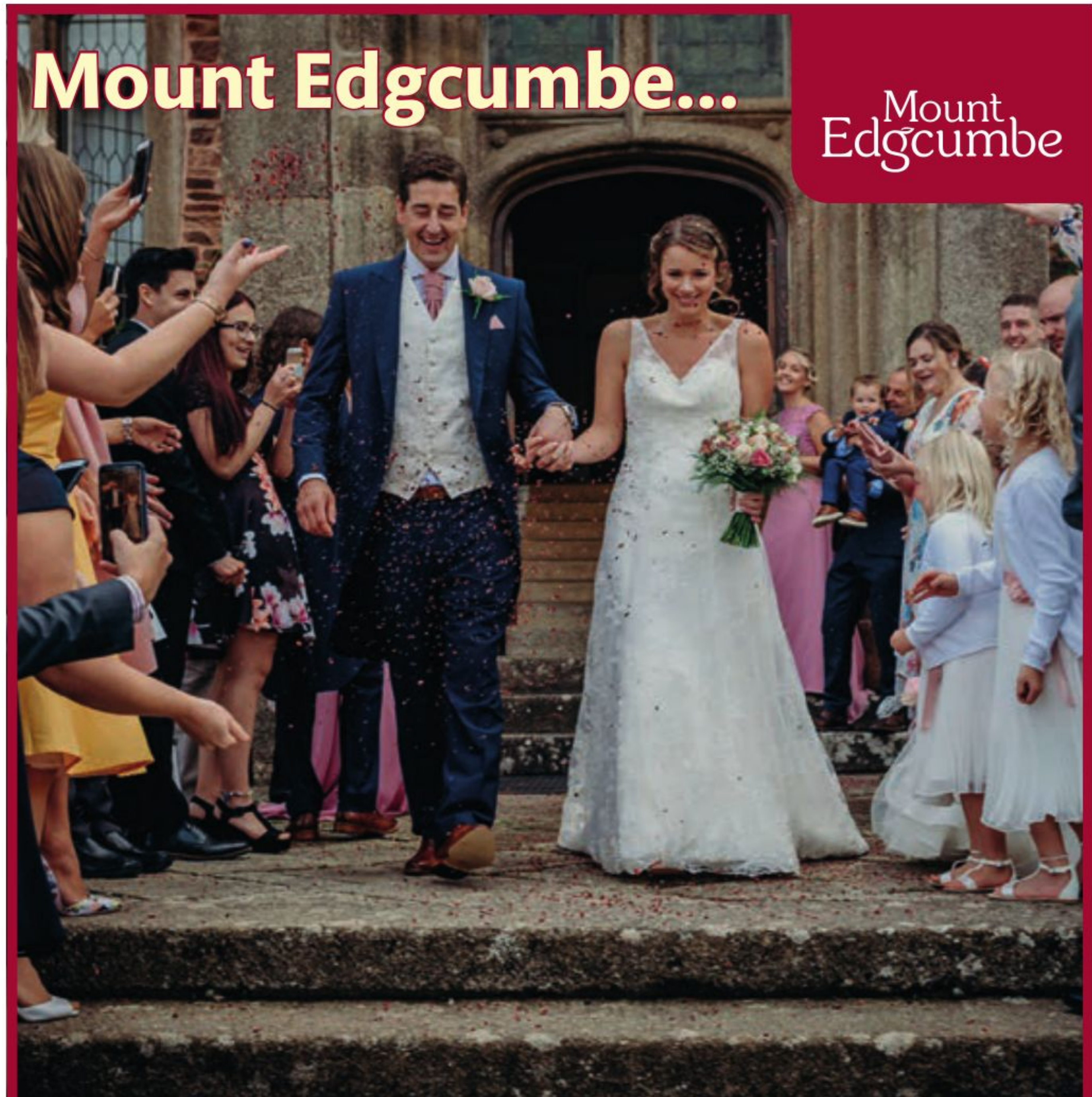


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THE TALENT BEHIND THE LENS



We speak to videographer Sean Hodge about tips for booking this essential part of the day and ask some of the region's finest photographers to reveal their favourite summer wedding snaps



Sean Hodge runs Sean Hodge Wedding Films covering celebrations throughout Devon and Cornwall. He explains how videography is essential for any wedding day and that it should be one of the first things that the couple books, especially with the easy access to video now available through smartphones. Sean tells us, "My clients often say that the wedding video is the thing they use most to relive their day." He continues, "Photographs often tell the story of the day with everything perfectly visible to see in bright, beautiful colours. With videography you can create a much more compelling story using images that don't need to be perfectly exposed or visible. You can use interesting light, camera angles and composition to create something beautiful that can add suspense and drama. It offers a different vibe that photographs might not be able to capture and telling the story is key."

Sean is passionate about his work and tells us how he loves filming people and capturing true mannerisms. "The way someone laughs or dances can all be shown with video. This is one of the main reasons why hiring a videographer is so important. Having all of your loved ones close to you in one place is a very rare moment and may only happen once in your life. Make sure that you get their interaction between each other documented to relive the memories."

He explains how couples often overlook the importance of audio and capturing the sounds of the day. "These are vital aspects that help in being able to relive it," Sean tells us. "Imagine being able to revisit the speeches with the voice of your dad telling you how much he loves you. We often look back at pictures of the people close to us and miss the way they sound so you'll be so happy that you have access to that."

Music also plays a big role creating a great wedding film. "Something to bare in mind when choosing a videographer is whether they have access to non-copyright music or whether they have the adequate copyright to use certain songs," Sean points out. "You don't want to share your wedding film on social media with copyright infringement notices showing because you've used your favourite hit song. Most videographers do have subscriptions to music copyright websites that allow you to use great choices so it's always worth asking."

Sean explains that another thing to consider is the use of drones. "They're becoming more and more popular and add impressive footage to your big-day film," he states. "The regulations for drone usage are always changing which makes it very difficult for videographers to stay compliant with the law. It's important that your videographer has the right permissions to work commercially and holds the correct insurance. The drone

regulations are going through a big change in July 2020 so make sure that your videographer is aware. Check caa.co.uk for more details."

Sean tells us how smartphones and social media make it very easy to share videos. "Rather than guests having to flick through your wedding album, you can show them a five-minute video featuring all the best bits of the day," he says.

Videography and photography are completely different remits that complement one another but often, people feel that because they have hired a wedding photographer, a videographer isn't needed. Sean suggests how it might be worth making a conscious effort to choose a videographer that has a different style to the photographer. "I always try to work in sync with the photographer on the day, making the experience easier and enjoyable for the couple, but I try and produce a different product. I don't want to duplicate the photographs in video format. Instead, I want to create something beautiful and cinematic that tells a story in a unique way. The video doesn't have to be perfectly in focus like the photographs do. Sometimes, the blemishes in the footage make the story greater."

Sean Hodge Wedding Films
07525 179 386
seanhodgeweddingfilms.co.uk
 @seanhodge_weddingfilms



Jess Chu of MaddieLili Photography located in Altarnun, Cornwall, covers weddings across Devon and Cornwall, 07974 701 716, maddielili.co.uk,  @Maddielili

“I love the feeling of secret intimacy in this shot, like I've stumbled across a moment meant just for the bride and groom.” – Jess

“Fun was at the centre of Claire and Neil's wedding at Higher Eggbeer in Devon and they ended their incredible day by jumping into the pool with some of their guests at midnight. I hopped in too (I shoot with water housing) and caught this tender moment at the end of a wonderful, whirlwind wedding day.” – Kathryn



Kathryn Clarke-McLeod of Kathryn Clarke-McLeod Photography is based in the South West from March until November every year and covers weddings across Devon and Cornwall, kathrynclarkemcleod.com  kathrynclarkemcleod



Ian Worrell of Focus Weddings based in Plymouth, Devon, covers weddings throughout both regions, 07722 317 053, focusweddings.net  @ian.worrell.7

“We created the illusion of rain in this shot by using rice! It looks like rain but can sting a bit!” – Ian

“Jess and Dale's wedding was full of love, it was the happiest day with the most wonderful people. For me, this picture encapsulated their celebration. I love the connection between the couple with Jess radiating happiness as Dale gazes at her adoringly. I also love the beautiful light that was captured.”

– Louise



Louise May of Louise May Photography based in Tiverton, Devon, covers weddings throughout Devon, Cornwall and the UK, 07738 278 020, louisem.co.uk  @louisemayphoto



Adam Annoui

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Megan Harris of Heather Photography based in Devon covers weddings throughout Devon and Cornwall, 07766 782 915, heatherphotography.co.uk  [heatherphotographyuk](https://www.instagram.com/heatherphotographyuk)

"I love this image captured at Trevenna Barns in Liskeard in Cornwall because it's simple, summery, bright and they just look so happy!" – Megan



Thomas Frost of Thomas Frost Wedding Photography based in the South West covers weddings in Devon and Cornwall, 07584 906 088, thomasfrostphotography.com  [t.frost.photography](https://www.instagram.com/t.frost.photography)

"This is one of my favourite photographs. It was a mix of good planning, a fun and relaxed couple and some good luck. I had scouted this area on the coast near Newquay and found that amazing sea cave. The couple were up for climbing down it and we had timed it for the magnificent sunset. There was this amazing light that blew us all away! It was such a special and amazing moment."
– Thomas



"I love photographing weddings on a farm, there is something very different about them. There's usually a real sense of community at each one." – Mike



Mike Lister of Mike Lister Photography based in Plymouth, Devon, covers weddings throughout both regions, 07815 141 779, mikelisterphotography.co.uk  [@MikeListerPhotography](https://www.facebook.com/MikeListerPhotography)

Will Reddaway of Will Reddaway Photography based in Torquay, Devon, covers weddings in Devon, Cornwall and throughout the South West, 07828 490 382, willreddaway.co.uk  [willreddaway](https://www.instagram.com/willreddaway)



"For me, this picture oozes summer vibes with the bright colours, smiles and lots of energy." – Will



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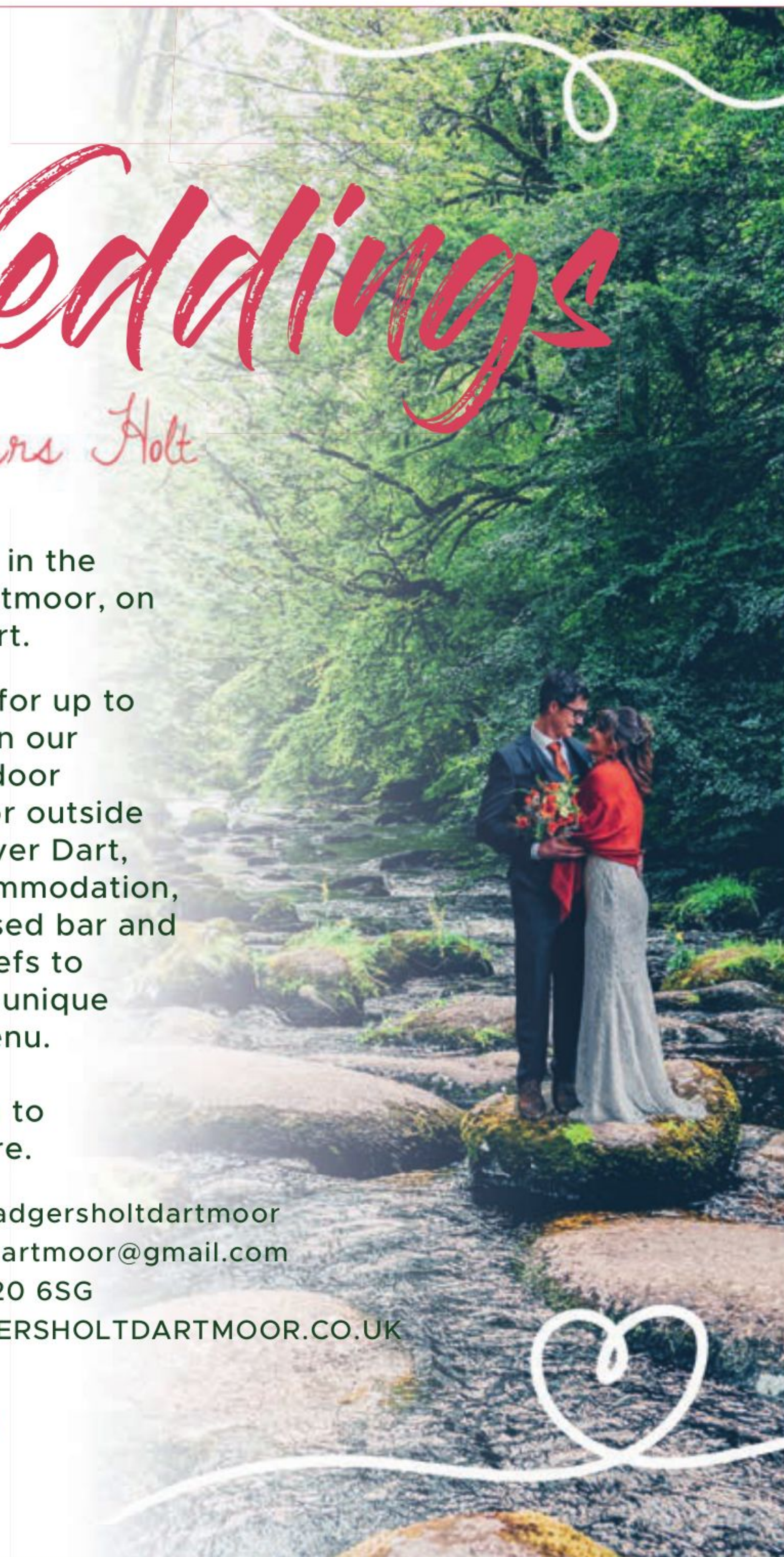
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- Ask us anything, whether you're on the hunt for a local venue or simply looking for ideas and advice
- Find local suppliers
- Top planning tips from the pros
- Tell us about your big day for your chance to appear in the magazine
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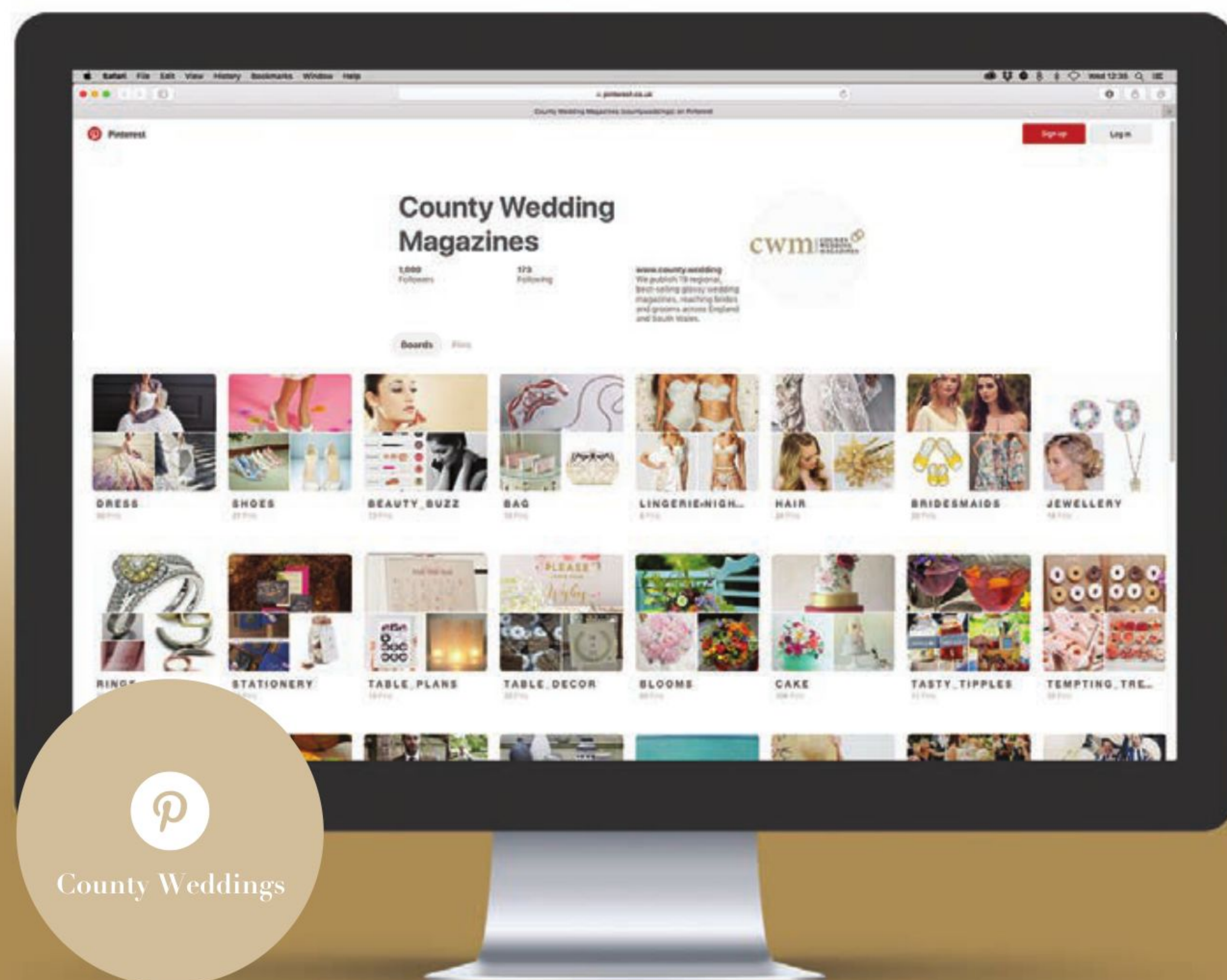
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LET ME ENTERTAIN YOU

We speak to some of the region's finest entertainment suppliers about trends for weddings in 2020, and bring you an A-Z of inspiring ideas!



Kate Grayshan is one of the founder members of the Exe Valley String Quartet, a group of classically trained and experienced musicians based in Devon. She plays the viola and enjoys performing folk music and popular tracks. She tells us how more and more couples want to hear their favourite song or piece of music played on their wedding day. "We're happy to create bespoke arrangements and entertain with all sorts of music, from the Game of Thrones theme tune and *Rather Be* by Clean Bandit, to numbers by Coldplay and Ed Sheeran. Some pop songs lend themselves really well to a string quartet so almost anything is possible!" She also states how couples usually have a few special requests. "When thinking about a playlist for their wedding reception, many couples opt for a good variety of classical, jazz and folk as well as pop and rock tracks. This works really well and provides something to suit all tastes."

Exe Valley String Quartet
07852 314 708
exevalleystringquartet.co.uk



Andie and Phil own Flicksbox, a stylish, handmade retro photo booth complete with a high resolution camera, professional lighting and a studio-standard printer. "Here at Flicksbox HQ, we're seeing couples becoming far more relaxed about their weddings, worrying less about the formal traditions and more about having a good party with those they love," they tell us. "Our recommendations and predictions for weddings during 2020 are to keep the entertainment bold and quirky. Think neon signs, live bands, games and plenty of music."

flicksbox.co.uk | 07853 710 795 | @ flicksbox



Ben Wilson is the talent behind DJ Copycat, a fun entertainer available for all types of celebrations based in Cambourne, Cornwall. He is still seeing requests for songs from different decades at weddings because it resonates with every generation, with tracks from the 80s being very popular, especially songs by Level 42. "I will play any special request and can even provide karaoke equipment which always goes down a storm with guests – I just need this clarified at the time of the booking and it's included in the price," he tells us. "I'm also seeing social media as the way in which couples view material and contact me now. On my website, I provide a link for people to listen to my work on a Copycat Radio broadcast and also ask me any questions they might have via my live chat service."

DJ Copycat | 0800 861 1354 | djcopycat.biz
f @djcopycatuk



Simon James JSX is another Cornwall-based DJ who stresses the importance of choosing a DJ with many years of experience. "This is key because a love of music isn't enough, they need to read the crowd and have an understanding of what will work and what won't," he says. "A good DJ will have a high-quality sound system and lighting that's PAT-tested, plus back-up equipment and a vehicle incase anything goes wrong. They should also have public liability insurance and employer's liability insurance if they employ somebody." He describes how karaoke is enjoying a resurgence while video is becoming more involved. "Photo booths are still popular but the giant illuminated letters aren't so much now with more couples opting for relaxed, rustic festival-themed weddings."

Simon James JSX | 07866 269 888
facebook.com/SimonJamesJSX

OTHER FUN IDEAS!

A IS FOR ALPACA HIRE – Little Orchard Alpacas, 07855 553 737, littleorchardalpacas.co.uk

B IS FOR BAGPIPES – Spirit of Skye Piping, 07817 037 936, spiritofskypiping.co.uk

C IS FOR CHAMPAGNE AND CHOCOLATE FOUNTAINS – Celebration Balloons and Events, 01752 251 061, celebrationballoonsandevents.co.uk

D IS FOR DJ – DJ Copycat, 0800 861 1354, djcopycat.biz and Simon James JSX, 07866 269 888, facebook.com/SimonJamesJSX

E IS FOR EDIBLE TREATS – Cornwall Candy Carts, 01566 779 292, cornwallcandycarts.co.uk

F IS FOR FUNFAIR – The Old Barn, 01237 431 255,

oldbarnwedding.co.uk

G IS FOR GO KARTING AND DODGEMS – The Old Barn, 01237 431 255, oldbarnwedding.co.uk

H IS FOR HOUSE MUSIC – DJ Copycat, 0800 861 1354, djcopycat.biz and Simon James JSX, 07866 269 888, facebook.com/SimonJamesJSX

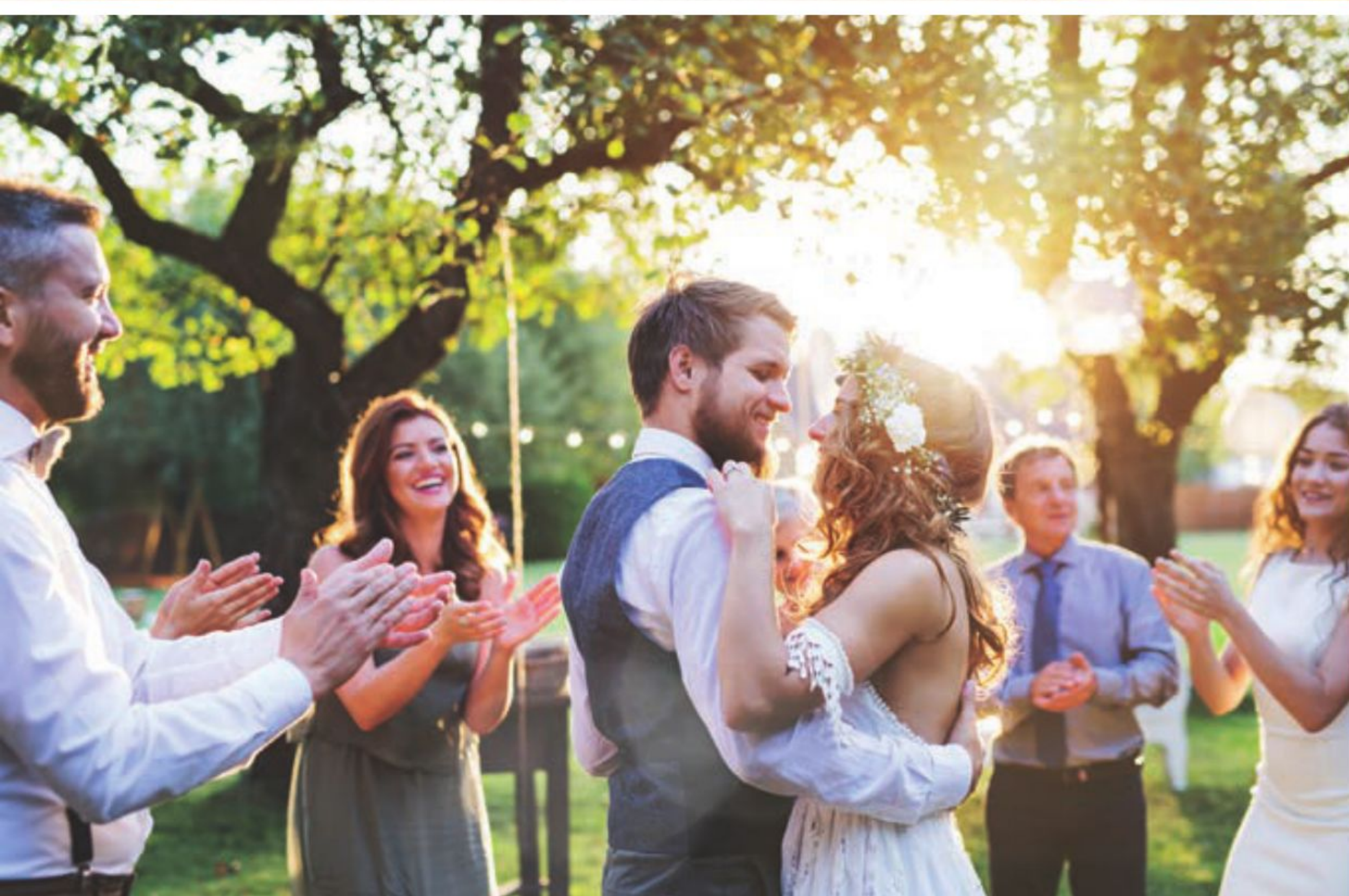
I IS FOR ICE SCULPTURES – Celebration Balloons and Events, 01752 251 061, celebrationballoonsandevents.co.uk

J IS FOR JOKES – alivenetwork.com

K IS FOR KARAOKE – DJ Copycat, 0800 861 1354, djcopycat.biz

L IS FOR LOOKALIKES – warble-entertainment.com

M IS FOR MOBILE DISCO – DJ Copycat, 0800 861 1354, djcopycat.biz



N IS FOR NON-ALCOHOLIC (AND ALCOHOLIC!) BARS –

Bars with Legs, 07771 650 117, barswithlegs.co.uk

O IS FOR OPEN-MIC NIGHT – Hand the microphone to your musical friends!

P IS FOR PIANIST – Matthew Lane Pianist, matthewlanepianist.co.uk

Q IS FOR QUARTET – Exe Valley String Quartet, 07852 314 708, exevalleystringquartet.co.uk

R IS FOR RETRO PHOTO BOOTH – Flicksbox, 07853 710 795, flicksbox.co.uk

S IS FOR – SURPRISE! Ask your best man to arrange a flashmob on the night!

T IS FOR TRIBUTE ACT – poptop.uk.com

U IS FOR UNIQUE WEDDING DISCO – 07515 883 895, uniqueweddingdisco.com

V IS FOR VINTAGE PHOTO BOOTH – Booth Nineteen Boutique Photo Booth Hire, 01173 320 091, booth19.co.uk

W IS FOR WAITERS WHO SING – singoutwaitressesandwaiters.co.uk

X IS FOR XBOX – Set up a chill-out area for gamers

Y IS FOR YOUR WAY – Personalise your day with a temporary tattoo or glitter station

Z IS FOR – ZZZZ – Ensure your guests sleep well after all of the partying in a cute bell tent, Devon Belles, 07988 693 747, devonbelltent.com



LET'S celebrate!



Jane Barbeary, Member of the Associations of Independent Celebrants, shares what's new in this increasingly popular service

You've named the date, booked the venue, and decided what to call your twitter hashtag for the big day... but the important bit, the actual promises you make to the love of your life, are pretty much the same words used by every other couple getting hitched.

There's not a lot of wriggle room for clergy or registrars to really personalise a ceremony to reflect you, as a couple. The laws that govern marriage date back to 1836, and the language used in ceremonies remain in line with those traditions.

There's something comforting about familiar wording and ceremony and, if that's what you prefer, then that's a great choice. But if the words don't feel personal and relevant to you, there is an alternative. Modern celebrants write and deliver bespoke ceremonies that tell your story as a couple. We can't legally marry you – yet – the Law Commission is currently looking into that – but what we can do is give you a truly unique and personal ceremony that you, and your family and friends, will remember and cherish for many years to come. We can also write and deliver civil partnership ceremonies, wedding vow renewals and baby naming ceremonies, to your specifications.

It's worth knowing that the Law Commission has decided that the

marriage laws are not keeping pace with modern Britain, and need to change. They're looking at making the system simpler, fairer and cheaper. As it stands you can only marry in a church, register office or approved venue. The commission says this can be restrictive and expensive, and it's looking to remove some of the red tape to give couples more choice, whilst still maintaining the dignity of marriage. If the changes go ahead, you could get married on water, in a field or in your own back garden!

They're also considering changing the rules to allow humanists and independent celebrants to conduct legally binding ceremonies in England and Wales. That's hopefully to come but right now, once you've done the legal bit which can be inexpensive at a register office midweek, you can go ahead with your ceremony your way! It's also not a requirement to exchange rings when you complete the legal formalities, so that can also be done with your celebrant.

Your ceremony can be as simple or as extravagant as you'd like it to be. If you're stuck for inspiration, celebrants have lots of it. You can have guests giving readings, live music or favourite songs played. You might want to include children, pets or join the latest

trend of hiring in alpacas as ring bearers!

We will write your entire ceremony, including your vows or promises to each other, once you've told us all about your story. Some couples prefer to write their own vows, but would like the celebrant to read them aloud. It's entirely up to you, there are no hard and fast rules. We can deliver a ceremony anywhere that's special to you both. It could be a forest glade, a stately home or the pub garden.

There are many 'symbolic actions' you can include in your ceremony, if that's what you'd like. These are becoming increasingly popular and are a great way of getting your guests involved too. Here are just a few examples you might want to ponder over...

JUMPING THE BROOM

This is an ancient tradition used in many cultures in past centuries, when couples literally jumped over a broomstick together to marry. The 'leap of faith' symbolises how much you love each other, as you jump into your future together. Two guests can hold the broom a few inches off the ground. The couple close their eyes, everyone counts to three, and the guests lower the broom to the ground as the couple jump over it.

SAND CEREMONY

This symbolises the coming together of two individuals to make one loving couple. Two glass vases of coloured sand are poured into a third vessel to symbolise the blending of your lives together. Just as the coloured grains can no longer now be separated, so your lives are now as one.

HANDBASTING

This is a traditional Celtic ritual and it's the origin of the expression to 'tie the knot'. You hold hands, usually at the pulse points, and the celebrant ties them together, loosely, with ribbons or braids. This signifies the binding

of your lives together. The type of braid used can be very personal, so for example if you met at school, you might want to use an old school tie, or particular colours that have significance to you. This can be a good point in the ceremony to make promises or vows to one another.

LOVE LETTERS

You put your feelings for each other on paper. You then read it aloud or give it to your partner or celebrant to read. Alternatively, you could put them in a memory box, seal it, and open it on your first anniversary. A lovely way to remember your special day.

RING WARMING

Before rings are exchanged they can be passed around your guests on a small cushion or in a box. Each guest holds them for a few seconds and makes a silent wish for the couple. When the rings are returned, they hold all the love and hopes for the future from family and friends.

STONE CEREMONY

In past centuries couples couldn't always afford wedding rings, so they cast a stone into a nearby river or ocean to symbolise staying together as the water ebbed and flowed throughout their lives.

In the absence of any handy water nearby, you can toss stones with your names etched on them into a bowl of water. They can be retrieved later and taken on honeymoon where hopefully you'll find some water!.

UNITY CANDLES

Candles represent light and hope, and lighting one together symbolises your union, and hopes for the future.

So it really is all up to you. Working together with a trained celebrant can make your day unique, personal, fun and best of all a memory to live with you, your family and friends forever. The Association of Independent Celebrants list celebrants across the UK. Most will be happy to talk through your ideas free of charge before you make your decision. Let's do it..... let's celebrate!

TOP 10

10 tips for planning your dream sustainable wedding

Celia Gaze is the founder of The Wellbeing Farm, and says, "As we're getting more conscious about our environment and how we can protect it, the idea is also flooding the wedding market, as brides are looking for a lush wedding day that doesn't cost the planet. As a venue that has always had a green centre, here are our 10 top tips if you're planning a sustainable wedding..."

1

DITCH THE PALM BEACH WEDDING IN FAVOUR OF SOMETHING LOCAL

This may be an obvious one, but it's a good starting point. As nice as those pictures of destination weddings look, think of all the air miles to fly everyone over, and then transport from the airport... that's a lot of CO2 emissions. With that in mind, if your venue is accessible by public transport, even better.

PLAN A VEGETARIAN OR VEGAN MENU

One of the biggest trends is cutting out a lot of meat and other animal products from your diet. Whilst your wedding has been considered the one day you can indulge, this now doesn't mean that you can't splurge on taste without cutting out the meat. Even as an omnivore, some of the nicest food I have had is vegetarian and vegan. If your menu is seasonal, organic, or uses fair trade ingredients, or a mixture of all three, even better!

2

SPEAKING OF SEASONAL, KEEP YOUR FLOWERS SEASONAL TOO

Seasonal flowers save the air miles, there's no need to import tulips from Holland in the middle of September. Also start thinking about what you are going to do with the flowers afterwards, and if your florist avoids using foam in their arrangements, that's a big fat green thumbs up. If they are also supplying confetti, look at a kind that is bio-degradable.

3

Think about transport

If your venue isn't easy to get to via public transport, instead of a million cars arriving at your venue, think about hiring a coach from a suitable meeting point e.g. the hotel your guests are staying at; this will hopefully cut down a lot of emissions even before your big day starts.

4

USE RECYCLABLE MATERIALS OR SECOND-HAND PROPS FOR YOUR DÉCOR

One of our biggest features for our brides is our Prop Shed, which holds every kind of decorative prop you can imagine: saving time, money and the planet as everything is reused from couple to couple. Some brides like to use bits they've picked up themselves – afterwards, think about donating to other brides for their day.

5

SUSTAINABLE WEDDINGS



6

ASK YOUR VENUE ABOUT ITS GREEN POLICY

A big note when looking around venues is looking at its bar – if they are still using plastic straws, that's a big no-no! Do they recycle everything on-site, use local suppliers, grow their own produce and have they cracked down on single-use plastic, among many other measures.



DRESS UPCYCLE

Why not donate your dress to a charity shop to make an impact long after the big day – this also applies to the bridesmaids' dresses too if you're looking for a green wedding! Also, keep away from silk and other materials that come from animals.

9

CONSIDER SUSTAINABLE FAVOURS

Think about not just what you want them to be, but also how they are packaged. Stay away from the plastic toys and trinkets, and cellophane wrapping that cannot be recycled. If there is an animal, environmental or sustainability charity that means something to you and your partner, a donation favour to that charity would be a good choice.

8



7

Find local suppliers

From your cake to your DJ, using suppliers who are local to you/your venue is key to making your wedding sustainable and keeping your wedding's carbon footprint down. Venues should have a list of recommended suppliers on their websites, who are all local to the property.



10

IS YOUR STATIONERY SUSTAINABLE?

As pretty as the save-the-date invitations and other stationery looks, think about using invites made from an ethically sourced or recycled material.

TO FIND OUT MORE GO TO: THEWELLBEINGFARM.CO.UK

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We've teamed up with Matthew Calvin to give County Wedding Magazine readers the chance to claim a pair of Allied Square Studs in sterling silver – worth £24 – when you take out a year's subscription.

These gorgeous Allied Square Studs, in sterling silver, gold and rose gold plate, use a special hand-finishing technique using different tools and hand-textured lines. These square studs are part of a tradition of the studio's pieces which are delicate enough to be layered up with other pieces from its collections, or will make an elegant statement piece by itself – perfect for your bridal look!

Matthew Calvin has become synonymous for contemporary jewellery design. Each piece is individually handmade to the highest standard with great attention to detail and finishing. All jewellery is complemented with clean and minimalist packaging that makes for the perfect gift for your bridal party!

Matthew Calvin also creates bespoke pieces, designed for his customers' most special life moments.

Visit matthewcalvin.com to view all the collections or to book a consultation for creating your own bespoke pieces.

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Shoes by Dune London, pink dress by Phase Eight and ivory dress by Warehouse.



HIGH STREET HOT LIST

Fashion favourites Warehouse has announced the launch of an exclusive bridal edit for the new season. The 19-piece collection offers a range of silhouettes in soft chiffon and satin fabrics using a muted colour palette of baby pink, navy, and ivory. They feature simple yet chic details, with vintage-inspired dresses, floral prints, fluted sleeves and back details. Prices range from £79 to £89. To shop, visit warehouse.co.uk

[warehouseuk](https://www.instagram.com/warehouseuk)

Phase Eight has revealed a new capsule bridal collection consisting of luxury designs with affordable price tags all under £500. There's a nod to the glamorous era of the 1920s with an ivory fringed dress, and this pretty blush tulle style, plus coordinating hats and fascinators. To shop, visit phase-eight.com

[phaseeight](https://www.instagram.com/phaseeight)

Shoe experts Dune London unveil the new 20-piece footwear collection alongside an exclusive range of matching clutch bags. Brides will love the jewel trims, ribbon ankle ties and sparkling details. Prices start from £130 for shoes and from £60 for bags. To shop, visit dunelondon.com

[dune_london](https://www.instagram.com/dune_london)

SAY 'YES' TO THE DRESS

Contemporary fashion brand KITRI has launched its debut bridal collection, a nine-piece selection of fun, feminine dresses and jumpsuits. Prices start from £195 for this *Fontana* style, and range up to £245. The pieces feature draped hems, exaggerated sleeves and cascading ruffles. There's choices for an engagement party or pre-wedding dinner too, and bridesmaids will also love the fashionable styles. Designer, founder and creative director of the brand Haeni Kim says, "We received requests for playful, wearable and affordable bridalwear from our customers since the launch of the brand so I'm very excited about our capsule bridal collection. We have designed a selection of dresses and jumpsuits that will be perfect for many occasions surrounding a modern wedding. It's such an honour to be a part of someone's wedding and we can't wait to see how our customers will wear them."

To shop, visit kitristudio.com

[kitristudio](https://www.instagram.com/kitristudio)



FASHION

focus

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

EDITOR'S PICK

This dusky pink ribbon and lace bodysuit is from the new Muse by Coco de Mer collection and is the perfect pick for your wedding night and honeymoon. Prices range from £20 for a thong to £120 for a slip, and pieces are available in sizes 30D-F to 36B-F. To shop, visit coco-de-mer.com

[cocodemeruk](https://www.instagram.com/cocodemeruk)



Editor's choice

Dress your little ones in the latest styles from French designer childrenswear brand Marie-Chantal.

This blue floral printed dress called *Eve* is the perfect pick for a spring wedding, and others include pretty pastels in gingham and tweed.

To shop, visit mariechantal.co.uk

[mariechantalchildren](https://www.instagram.com/mariechantalchildren)



Sisterhood

Kate Halfpenny, the talented designer behind the luxury Halfpenny London bridal brand has launched Sister, a bridesmaid collection with prices ranging from £70 to £295. Multiple styles are available in soft fabrics and three colourways – pink, pewter and navy. Kate says, "The Sister collection has something for everyone – from my signature separates to dresses and even a jumpsuit. They've all been designed to wear again and again, styled in your own way." To shop, visit halfpennylondon.com

[halfpennylondon](https://www.instagram.com/halfpennylondon)





ELFORDLEIGH *weddings*



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Plymouth, Devon PL7 5EB

01752 336428
events@elfordleigh.co.uk

celebrate

www.elfordleigh.co.uk

One-shoulder
suzanneneville.com



Fun and frivolous

These flirty styles are setting the trends for 2020

Long sleeves

adriannapapell.com



Halterneck

catherineparrybridal.com



Short and sassy

justinalalexander.com

Oversized bow

alanhannah.co.uk



*Embellished
back detail*

clairepettibone.com

*Vintage-inspired
sleeves*

kitrystudio.com

Short sleeves

elbethgillis.com

Bib-front

katyakatya.co.uk

Slip dress
warehouse.co.uk



Shirt-style jumpsuit
kitristudio.com



Plunge neckline
jesuspeiro.com



Feathers
demetrios.com

Chic jumpsuit
charlottebalbier.com



Fringing
phase-eight.com



Elegant cape
jennypackham.com



Tulle detail
kelseyrose.co.uk





Blue organza silk dress, from a selection, mariechantal.co.uk

Teal top and matching skirt, from a selection, isabelmanns.com

Blue jewelled headband, £30, chichiclothing.com



Something blue

With classic blue being named Pantone Colour of the Year for 2020, flowergirls and bridesmaids will love these navy, teal and powder-blue pieces



Navy pleated dress with crystal trim, £325, phase-eight.com



Navy off-the-shoulder dress, £85, warehouse.co.uk



Two-tone dress, prices from £70 to £295, halfpennylondon.com



Satin shoes, £99, rainbowclub.co.uk



Pale blue lace dress, £210, thandth.com

These elegant styles can be worn as they are, or teamed with pretty shrugs or statement chokers for maximum impact

Madelyn dress with collar by elbethgillis.com

CHIC AND *strapless*

Aerial by charlottebalbier.com



Anais by clairepettibone.com



Style no 014 by demetrios.com



Margot by Kelly Faetanini at elliesanderson.co.uk

Bianca by jennypackham.com



Fern by alanhannah.co.uk



Style no 058 by jesuspeiro.com



Rose by whistles.com

HEADLINERS

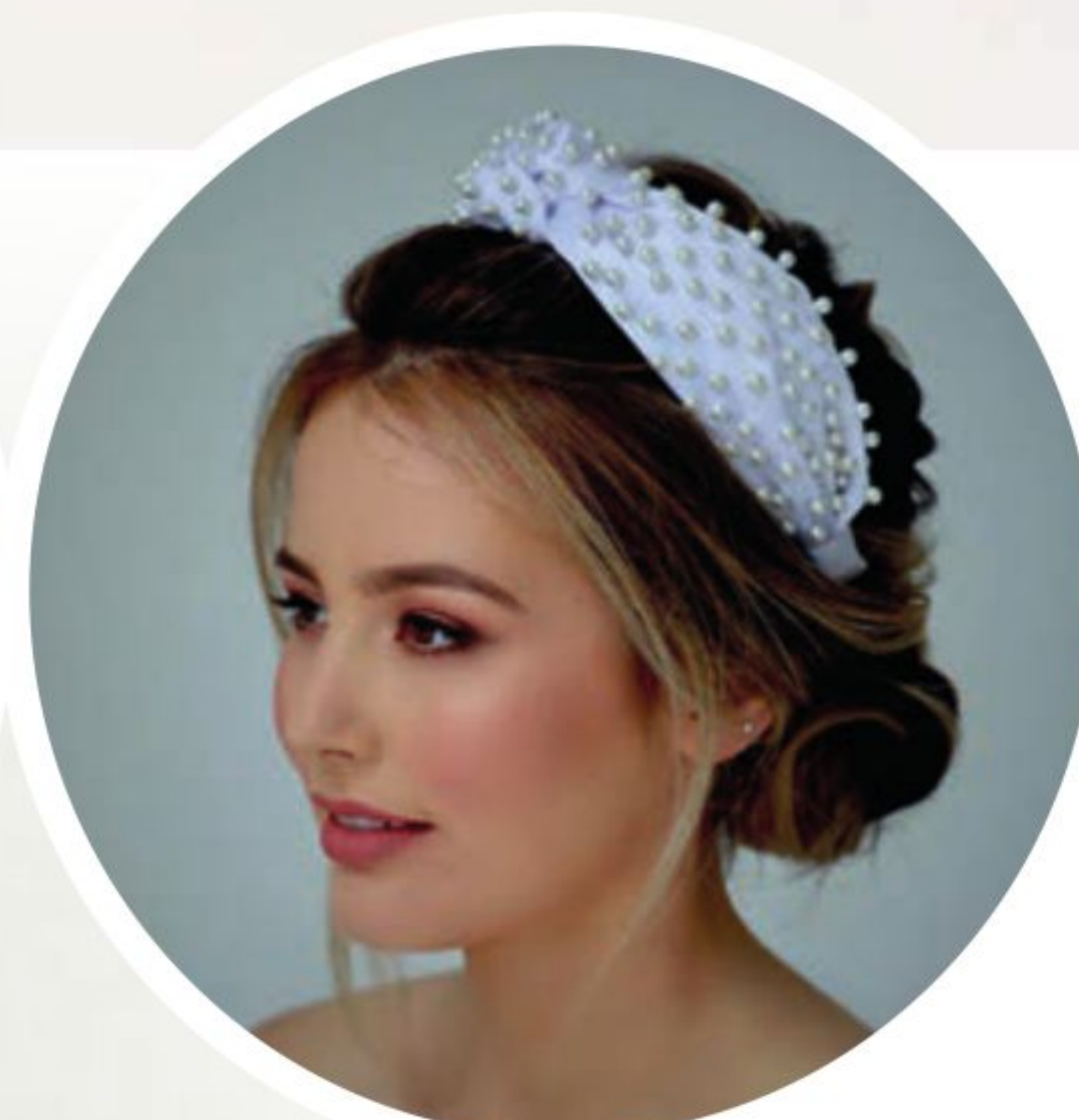
Hair clips, bands and accessories were spotted at the recent bridal catwalk shows. Get the look with our Insta-worthy selection



Headdress, from a selection, mervebayindir.com



Tiaras and veils spotted at demetrios.com. For similar, try richard-designs.com



White silk pearl headband, £59, alicandblair.co.uk



Veil, £175, rainbowclub.co.uk



Pearl-encrusted headband, £23, chichiclothing.com



Fascinator with ivory flowers, £35, phase-eight.com



Hair slides, from £19 for set of four, alicandblair.co.uk



Set of three hair slides, £15, oliverbonas.com



Headband featuring large flower, from a selection, uk.accessorize.com



Cream knot headband, £4.99, newlook.com



Pearl-effect beaded hair clips, £12 for set of two, crown-love.com





ROCKBEARE MANOR



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From the glorious setting and beautifully appointed interiors to the welcoming team,
every aspect of this exquisite, exclusive use Regency country house is dedicated to delivering
the highest possible level of service - because we never forget,
it's the little things that make a big difference.*

Rockbeare Manor, Nr Exeter, Devon, EX5 2FE Telephone: 01392 797444
www.rockbearemanor.co.uk





IN PURSUIT OF WELLNESS

STILL London, the non-toxic, cruelty-free, vegan and environmentally friendly nail studio, has now launched a regenerating and protecting hand balm. With marine algae extract, lupine peptides, olive oil derived squalane, shea butter, cocoa butter and soya wax this potent formula regenerates, protects, moisturises and firms the skin.

There's also a new cuticle oil available where grape seed and evening primrose oil work seamlessly with a Norwegian algae extract, vitamin E and tea tree to absorb quickly and heal the skin naturally.

The hand balm is priced at £23 and the cuticle oil at £18. Both are available from still-london.com



Glow-givers

Blending natural extracts and cutting-edge science, Scientia Skincare utilises no less than 23 oils sourced from all around the world, including morning seed oil from Uganda, and wild carrot oil from France, which deliver maximum skin health while boosting wellbeing. The first exciting products to launch from this brand are the Dawn and Dusk Elixirs, formulated to give you your daily and nightly dose of radiance.

Priced at £32 each from scientiabeauty.com

WELL LIT

This highly-pigmented, three-in-one highlighter creates a perfectly radiant glow that will take you from ceremony to celebrations. This super-versatile micro-fine powder is easy to apply to cheeks, brow bones and décolletage for a quick all-over radiance. You can play it safe with a natural shimmer or make a statement by creating a multi-dimensional strobing effect.

This convenient make-up bag hero in Sahara is actually an ombre of Kevyn Aucoin's three best-selling highlighters, Candlelight, Starlight, and Sunlight. In this case, three is most definitely not a crowd!

Available from spacenk.com, priced at £30.



Beauty editor Kelly Andrews shares her latest beauty must-haves for the bride-to-be

Crystal clear

If hours of traipsing around wedding shows and agonising over budgets has left you in need of a bit of R&R, this will come as music to your ears. LLIO's Crystoil helps with those little moments in life where you can finally enjoy some you-time, aiding sleep, boosting energy and enhancing the mood. You can invoke Crystoil's power in two ways: shake the bottle and add a few droplets to a bath, or massage all over before stepping into a warm bath or shower. The lush passionflower, apricot and rosehip oils make for deliciously soft nourished skin.

LLIO will be donating £1 of every sale to Winston's Wish, a charity giving hope to grieving children. Priced at £45, check out llo.love



Beauty BUZZ



A ROSY GLOW

Looking to achieve that natural dewy flush of colour for your wedding day? The folk at Beautaniq Beauty have just the thing. Introducing the Butter Cheek & Lip Balm. This cream blusher blends seamlessly into cheeks using nothing more than the warmth of your fingertips, and doubles up as an effortless lip colour. Crafted with 90% natural plant-based oils to nourish, condition and hydrate the skin, it simultaneously bestows a gorgeous, creamy radiance.

Available at beautaniqbeauty.com it's priced at £12.50.



Sustainability, solved

Disposable face wipes are a thing of the past with the sustainable, vegan-friendly and cruelty-free Face Halo. These microfibre pads remove your make-up and lightly exfoliate the skin in just seconds. Face Halo works with water helping the clever HaloTech fibres, which are 100 times finer than human hair, to get to work on removing even the most stubborn make-up. Reusable, the Face Halo can be machine washed up to 200 times, meaning it's a cost-effective way of looking after your skin and it helps the environment. Around these parts we call that a win-win!

The Face Halo Original is priced at £17.99 and is available from Beauty Bay, Boots, Selfridges and Harrods. Check out facehalo.com



COLOUR WITH CARE

Founded by French sisters, and beauty experts, Hamida and Yasmine Smatti, L'Atelier Green is a breathable and bio-sourced polish that cares for your nails. After helping countless beauty fans to repair nails damaged by acrylics, gel manicures and toxin-filled varnishes, they saw first-hand the need for a product that not only gave the desired colour, shine and long-lasting effect, but that also nurtured nails and cuticles.

The debut Naked Nails collection boasts breathable properties, which help to bring your nails back to full health. Enriched with high-performance, organic and active ingredients, the lacquers stimulate nail growth and repair damage without sacrificing glossiness and longevity.

Priced from £15.99, see the website lateliergreen.com



FAREWELL SPLIT ENDS!

Let's be honest, a dry and damaged barnet is not the look for your wedding day, so, now's the time to banish split ends for good. Check out BondiBoost's Rapid Repair range. Start your haircare routine with Rapid Repair Shampoo (£22.50). Formulated to repair split ends, reduce breakage and seal cuticles, it delivers a boost of essential oils rich in antioxidants, vitamins and amino acids. Follow with Rapid Repair Conditioner (£22.50), which improves signs of damage. Then, finish by applying 1-2 pumps of the Rapid Repair Serum (£22.50) for softness and shine. Hey presto – damaged hair is a thing of the past. Easy. Available at boots.com

Step it up

If you simply don't have time for a complicated multi-step skincare regime, help is at hand. Designed to streamline your routine in a fast-moving world, Frances Prescott's multitasking natural skincare will have your complexion big-day ready in no time. With the Tri-Balm (£46) and Tri-Spritz (£45) all you need are two simple three-in-one steps.

The luxurious facial balm cleanses, exfoliates and moisturises in one solid stick bursting with botanical oils. Meanwhile, the spritz works to aid cellular repair, protect against pollution and set make-up.

For further information see francesprescott.com



BEAUTY SLEEP

The must-have beauty accessory for flawless skin and hair is a pillowcase, but not just any. The Gingerlily Beauty Box contains a 100% silk pillowcase for the ultimate in luxury that allows you to reap beauty benefits while you sleep. Soft and seamless, the A-grade mulberry silk adjusts to the temperature of your body and is naturally hypoallergenic, ideal if you suffer with allergies or have sensitive skin. Thanks to its high protein content, this fabric doesn't absorb moisture, so it helps to prevent wrinkles, while keeping skin hydrated and hair glossy.

Available in silver grey, nude, ivory and white, they're priced at £59 each and available from gingerlily.co.uk



BEAUTY NEWS

STRESSED SKIN SOLUTION

Cannabooster Detox from French holistic skincare brand Ho Karan (meaning "I love you" in Breton) is a clarifying, brightening and energising serum – a real skin saviour. Rich in potent terpenes, it helps to detoxify, clarify and create a formidable shield against the harmful effects of pollution. It's gentle on stressed skin, hydrating, nourishing and protecting.

As its name implies it contains the trending plant extract CBD, which has calming, anti-inflammatory and sebum balancing effects. So unsurprisingly this wonder-ingredient is being championed as the latest wellness hero.

Find out more at hokaran.com



Sanda Aromatherapy Eye Pillow, £22, sandafeelgood.com

"I'm in love! The eye pillow is simple, yet so versatile, and great to have on hand for times when you feel like you need to stop and take a few moments. I put it through its paces and tried it warm first of all. Just 30 seconds in the microwave is plenty. The heat releases the amazing aroma (mine is rose and cardamom), which enhances the whole experience. I popped on a five-minute mindfulness meditation and shut out the world."

"The next night I tested the cold experience – 20 minutes or so in the freezer does the trick. After a tense day it calmed my head and soothed my tired, contact lense-wearing eyes. I can't wait to try it in the summer when itchy hayfever eyes kick in."

– **Kelly Andrews**

A CALMING influence

We put these soothing saviours to the test, perfect for beating wedmin stress



Amphora Aromatics Relaxing Bath Oil 100ml, £6, amphora-aromatics.com

"I love a bath. Any excuse to get me in the tub, I'm there, and I have to say, I've tried a lot of bath oils. So, I was eager to dive right in with this Relaxing Bath Oil from Amphora Aromatics."

"I truly believe this is the best bath oil I've ever tried. It has exactly the right combination of a heavenly aroma that's not too overpowering, and nourishment, without being greasy. My skin felt instantly balmy and fragrant, which lasted throughout the following day to boot."

– **Danielle Harvey**

Sanatio Naturalis Frankincense Essential Oil 10ml, £26, sanationaturalis.com

"I had to dig deep at the back of the cupboard to find my essential oil diffuser to test out Sanatio Naturalis' Frankincense Essential Oil, but I'm glad I did! Distilled from wild-growing tree resin in Somalia, it has an exotic, spicy scent. Without being overbearing, it filled my room with a deliciously heady fragrance that was the perfect backdrop to some me-time. The strong smell is brilliant for focusing the mind and it's been shown that inhaling frankincense reduces your heart rate and blood pressure – so if you're feeling the stress of wedmin, it's definitely worth a whirl."

– **Hannah Faulder**



Kyushi Jasmine, Lavender & Cedarwood Face Oil 30ml, £39, kyushi.co.uk

"The first thing I noticed about this face oil was the earthy smell that filled the room. Kyushi recommend placing three drops into the palms of your hands, gently rubbing them together and cupping over your nose and mouth before taking some deep breaths, as the mindful application is as important as the product itself. I did find it had a calming effect, and it smelled divine. It also made my skin feel incredibly soft and hydrated. I recommend using it before you go to bed for a long, restful sleep."

– **Melissa Barker**

Tisserand Aromatherapy Total De-Stress MoodFix Mist 100ml, £9.45, tisserand.com

"I can't promise this handy spray will work miracles when it comes to tackling a hectic lifestyle, but what it does do is allow you to stop, if only for a minute, and just breathe. A quick squirt provides a comforting mist of calm when the going gets tough and the blend of geranium, orange and nutmeg natural pure essential oils smells great too!"

– **Sarah Reeve**



Beauty Q&A

Our experts solve your problems



HAPPY HAIR

What are the latest trends for bridal hair worn up?

Samantha says: A ballerina bun with a few loose tendrils at the front to soften the look is a classic style that's always in fashion. A high bun is an alternative way to wear it and adds a special twist.

A boho-inspired style that never dates is a high ponytail with strands falling into a loose, natural curl at the bottom. It looks set to be a popular choice throughout 2020 with the rise in outdoor, festival-style weddings. Try decorating it with coloured ribbons in different widths to add a soft, romantic feel. A satin or velvet bow will also finish it nicely.

If you prefer to keep things natural then leave a few strands of hair loose in any style that you choose, or wear it down and scoop a section halfway up at the back, secured with a piece of lace, small decorative clips, hair pins or flowers.

CONTACT THE EXPERTS

Kimberly Holland, KH Bridal Hair & Makeup Artist, 07748 847 055, khbridal.com @ kimberly_holland_bridal

Samantha Cowell, samanthacowell.com @ samantha_cowell_

Flush of colour

I wear make-up on a daily basis but I'm not overly confident at applying it. I usually stick to neutral colours, such as brown and cream, but it always seems to look the same. How can I change my look for my wedding to be more modern and glamorous without venturing too far out of my comfort zone?

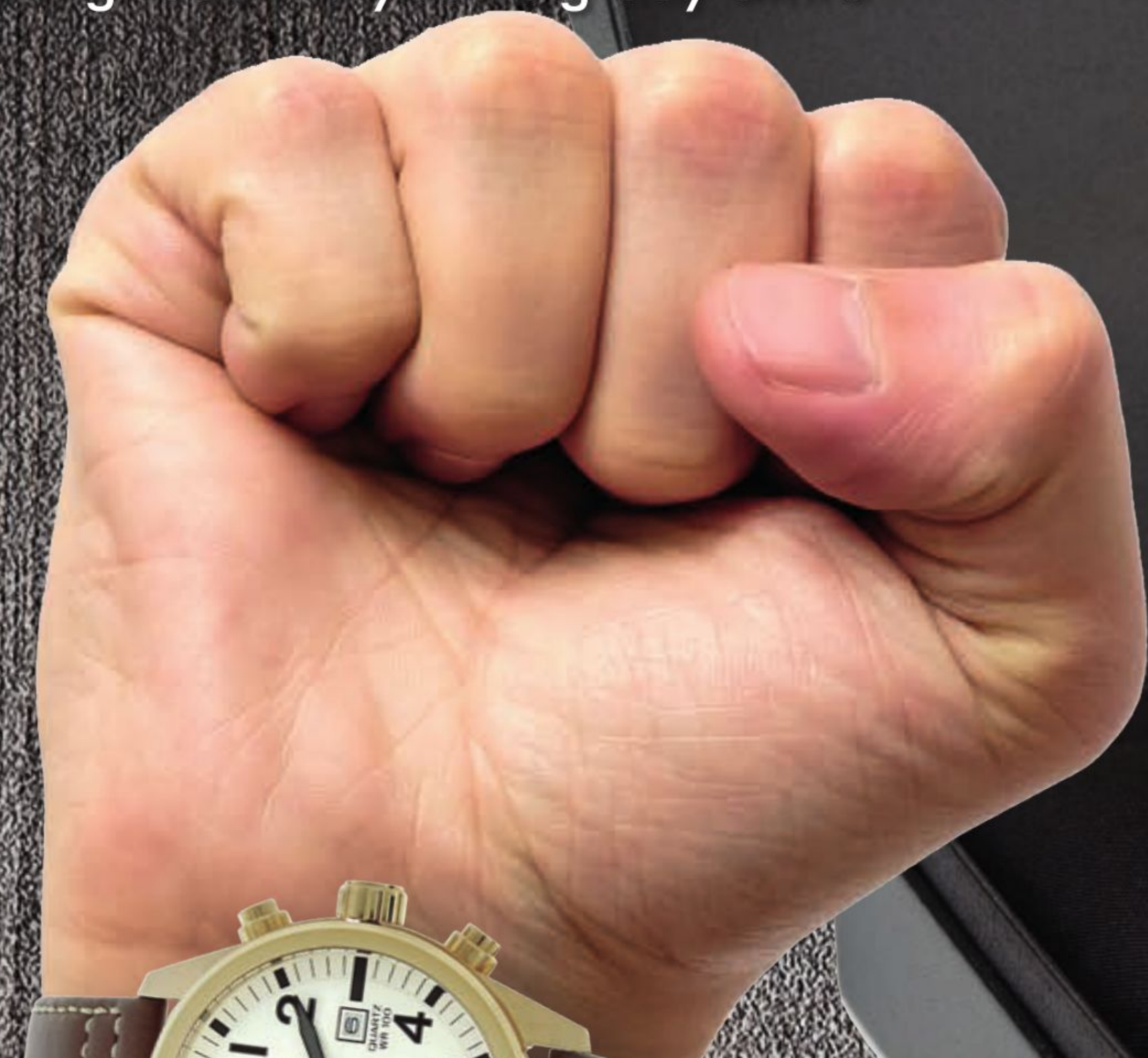
Kimberly says: The mistake that many brides make is applying their eye make-up darker or heavier in order to make it appear more glamorous when it's actually about the colours that you choose. This spring, pretty pink shades are popular because they add a fresh feel without looking too dark, and they work very well with rose gold that's a popular colour choice because it adds a subtle glow and tends to suit most skin tones. Rose gold also complements brown so brides can team it with their regular colours.

By wearing pink eye make-up, you can repeat it in your blusher and lip colour. Whether it be a rosy shade or a rose gold tone, a subtle dusting on the cheeks looks really pretty and is easy to achieve. Start with a small amount on a fluffy make-up brush and apply it, building up to the desired colour that you like. This will give it a modern edge rather than the heavily contoured look that isn't as popular anymore. A soft rosy lip will also appear very current, especially when worn without lip liner.

Most importantly, have fun with your make-up. Buy a couple of shades and experiment by mixing them with your usual colours. You'll be surprised at the difference that just a little change can make.

TIME'S TICKING

Add the finishing touch to your big-day attire



1. £59.99, gettingpersonal.co.uk
2. £89.99, tkmaxx.com
3. £30, riverisland.com
4. £250, newgateworld.com
5. £240, thewatchhut.co.uk
6. £449, hugoboss.com
7. £690, mauricelacroix.com
8. £224.99, timex.co.uk

ONLY TIME WILL TELL

BOSS Watches has launched three new products. The Vela Collection includes statement-making timepieces that were inspired by open skies, urban streets and broad horizons.

Each watch seamlessly combines aesthetics with performance and signature features such as water resistance, glow-in-the-dark markers and engraved backs. Designed to accompany grooms-to-be on the biggest day of their lives, each one has a stainless steel chronograph with a masculine bracelet.

To find out more, visit bosswatches.co.uk



Read all ABOUT IT!

Grooms editor Melissa Barker shares the latest best buys and product launches

DRESSED TO IMPRESS

Chester Barrie has launched a new range of men's formalwear. The AW19 Collection features old classics and new and improved accessories, including bow ties, evening suits, shirts and handkerchiefs. The semi-bespoke gentleman's tailor is located in London and offers both ready-to-wear and made-to-measure options.

To see more, visit chesterbarrie.co.uk



Grand plans

Award-winning suit company, Master Debonair has unveiled plans to open six new stores across the UK in 2020.

The fashion firm currently has boutiques in Bolton, London and Chesterfield and a separate showroom in Tyneside. It's become a favourite with grooms-to-be looking for stylish yet affordable suits and accessories.

Check out masterdebonair.com for more.

GOING GREEN

London-based company, Bluebuck has released a new collection of sports trunks and briefs manufactured using Seaqual – an eco-fabric made from recycled plastic waste.

The collection combines the brand's eco-sustainability mission with green fashion. The range has a sleek, sportive cut, and is designed for more adventurous men who want a durable undergarment without compromising on comfort.

Priced from £22–£29 from bluebuck.net



Oh-so handsome

We love Murdock London's latest range of gift sets. Ideal for grooms-to-be, each collection is made in England using the finest products. The range is designed to offer quality and effective daily essentials that encapsulates the heritage of Great British grooming, along with the sought-after style of the modern gentlemen.

Our favourite is the Bailey set, priced at £50, it comes with a beard shampoo, moisturiser, oil and luxurious comb.

To see more, visit murdocklondon.com



STEP INTO *spring*

We've rounded
up our favourite
products to
help you create
the ultimate
seasonal look

£110, burton.co.uk



£35, foxandchave.com



£45, davidwatson.uk



£59.95, remusuomo.com



£100, joebrowns.co.uk



£99.99, tkmaxx.com



£199, newgateworld.com



£22, villageleathers.com



£24.99, gettingpersonal.co.uk



£110, dunelondon.com



PICTURE-PERFECT PARADISE

The private Maldivian-owned boutique island resort of Baros has won the title of World's Most Romantic Resort for the seventh consecutive time at the annual World Travel Awards. Voted for by industry professionals and travellers from across the globe, it certifies its places as one of the top honeymoon destinations. General manager Ibrahim Shijah says, "This award maintains Baros' status as a Maldivian legend and furthers the significant impact of the resort within the international luxury market around the world."

To highlight its romantic offerings, the resort has launched its Romantic Moments package. Including a private candlelit beach dinner, a couple's massage and a spectacular sunset cruise, it makes the ultimate honeymoon retreat. Visit baros.com



A WILD MINI-MOON

You can journey across South America, Asia and Africa at Kent's authentic safari park Port Lympne Hotel & Reserve. We love that guests can now enjoy some peace and tranquility under the stars in The Bubble, a 180-degree panoramic lodge with stunning views across the 600-acre reserve. Couples can also take their romance to new heights with a once-in-a-lifetime hot-air balloon ride over Port Lympne and the surrounding countryside. After a day exploring the reserve, why not enjoy a romantic dinner at its Moroccan Courtyard or Bear Lodge Restaurant before heading back to your quirky accommodation. For more information, head to aspinnallfoundation.org

HONEYMOON

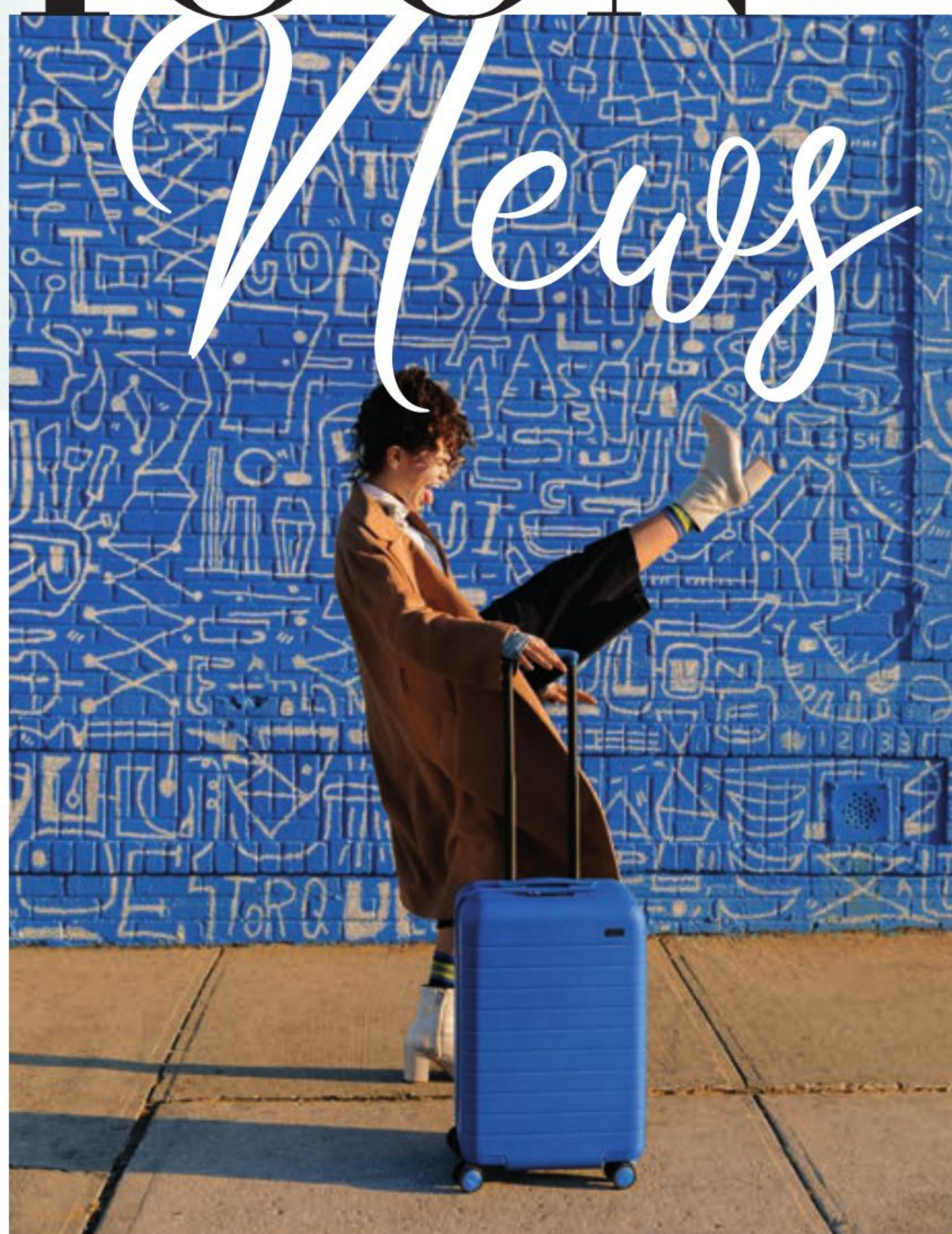


Travel editor Hannah Faulder reveals her top honeymoon destination picks and travel essentials

HOT HOTEL OPENING FOR 2020

I love a short-haul flight, so MarBella Collection's MarBella Elix on mainland Greece is a 2020 hotel opening I'm very excited about. The third hotel to join the portfolio and the first outside of Corfu, it will be perched above the beautiful Karavostasi Beach in the Parga region, looking west towards Corfu and Paxos. Couples arriving after the June 2020 launch will be able to marvel at the outstanding natural beauty, the inviting golden coastline and crystal-clear waters.

Within an hour's drive of Preveza Airport, the hotel can also arrange boat transfers from Corfu, which is ideal for those looking to twin with the MarBella Collection's two properties on the Ionian island. Book your honeymoon here, and you can expect luxurious accommodation, incredible scenery, exhilarating activities and delicious dining. Check out marbellacollection.gr



A classic case

Anyone else loving the 2020 Pantone Colour of the Year Classic Blue? It's evocative of vast skies and deep blue waters so it's ideal for travelling, and Away have hit the nail on the head with its limited edition Colour of the Year Collection. See the range at awaytravel.com

WINE TIME

Legacy wine estate Boschendal in South Africa's Cape Winelands introduced the country's first tented wine experience in March 2020. Wine-loving honeymooners can stay in one of seven luxury serviced tents in the heart of the 4,500-acre working estate and vineyard, offering a one-of-a-kind perspective on its staggering landscape.

The property is dedicated to conserving its natural biodiversity and guests have the opportunity to become a part of the landscape that cultivates the exquisite produce found in its restaurants and wine cellar. To find out more, visit boschendal.com



MARRY, GO

St Lucia is one of my favourite holiday spots, and I'm not alone as it's consistently voted as one of the most romantic destinations in the world. The fabulous Marigot Bay Resort has come up with a dreamy new honeymoon package called Marigot Moments, which includes a full week of experiences and the seventh night free.

Experiences include spa treatments, wine delivered to your door, yoga, meditation or pilates, an insider view of the marina, a cooking demonstration and other options. Head to the website for more information, marigotbayresort.com



HONEYMOON NEWS



KEEP ON MOVING

With the Olympics just around the corner, you might be getting in the sporty mood. If you and your partner are more likely to be running on the beach than snoozing on it, then these active honeymoon picks are for you...

- ♥ Mountain biking in Mauritius. The Mauritius Tour Beachcomber 2020 is held 30th April to 2nd May and consists of four stages over a total distance of 195km. The challenging route allows cyclists to soak in their stunning surroundings. Book at beachcombertours.uk
- ♥ Running in Victoria Falls. The Victoria Falls Marathon in Zimbabwe is definitely a bucket-list event. Taking place in July, participants will be running alongside incredible scenery, amazing wildlife and one of the seven natural wonders of the world. Book at africaalbidatourism.com
- ♥ Diving in Fiji. Sign up for the THIRDHOME Adventure's Jean-Michel Cousteau's Fiji Island Hideaway Adventure in September to spend a week on a private island with guided diving and snorkelling alongside the world-famous oceanographic explorer and his expert marine biologist. Book at adventures.thirdhome.com
- ♥ Wild swimming in the Seychelles. Eager to try the wild swimming trend but the cold UK water's not for you? Dip your toes in at the five-star Hilton Seychelles Northolme Resort & Spa and swim or snorkel along the 650-metre coral trail. Book at seychelles.hilton.com
- ♥ Stay active at sea. The launch of Blue World Voyages in 2021 will see the world's first active lifestyle cruise take to the Mediterranean with two decks dedicated to fitness, sports and wellness. There will also be a seawater pool, which will be lowered into the ocean so guests can swim alongside the ship. Book at blueworldvoyages.com

MOROCCAN *magic*



Hannah Faulder discovers that whatever you want from your honeymoon, you can find it at Mazagan Beach and Golf Resort in Morocco

If, like me and my husband, you want to spend your holiday ticking off activities but your partner wants to lounge by the pool, then Mazagan Beach and Golf Resort in Morocco might just be your ideal honeymoon destination. Year-round sun: tick. Action-packed activities: tick. Fun with the kids: tick. Luxury: tick – there's not much this place doesn't offer. And it's not by accident. Everything is meticulously planned and designed to cater to your every need within its 250 hectares of paradise.

A snappy three-hour flight, plus a one-hour transfer from Casablanca Airport, and you'll find yourself winding down Mazagan's grand driveway and seeing the resort emerging from its lush grounds in all of its decadent Moorish glory. As the only destination of its kind in Morocco, you might just find yourself rubbing shoulders with royalty and celebrities – I'm basically BFFs with Dougie from McFly now.

You can expect to find traditional Moroccan influences alongside contemporary luxe – think ornately carved doors, colourful lanterns, textured rugs and mosaic tiles. There are 13 restaurants and bars, a huge spa, the most glamorous gym imaginable, an 18-hole golf course and North Africa's biggest casino.

STAY

It's always a little disorienting arriving somewhere after dark, and the stylish but seemingly endless corridors of Mazagan heightened the confusion. I didn't need to worry; within a couple of minutes, a friendly chap with a walkie-talkie (who had clearly been sent to find the lost Englishwoman with too much luggage) was guiding me to my room. This was the level of service I came to expect here. Once inside, I was met with the most enormous marshmallowy bed, a spacious bathroom and floor-to-ceiling windows – in





HONEYMOON

the morning, these revealed incredible views across gardens and the secluded 9km beach beyond. I was told that if you're awake early enough (I wasn't), you can watch the resort's herd of rescue horses take their morning gallop across the deserted sands. Beautiful (I imagine).

Within the walls of Mazagan, you feel untouched by the outside world. The feeling of serenity is in every corner of the resort, which is especially incredible considering there are 500 rooms here. Sometimes I could walk around for 10 minutes and not bump into another soul.

EXPERIENCE

This place goes all out when it comes to experiences and activities. I'll confess that I'm a total wuss, so looking at my itinerary and seeing quad-biking, zip-lining and horse-riding did send me into a mild panic. However, I'm pleased to report I stepped out of my comfort zone – and I'm so glad I did! First up, I was introduced to the sassy Caramel, my noble steed for the hour. We rode along the practically deserted beach in the sunshine with the sound of the waves lapping on to the shore – what an incredible moment and an absolute must-do for honeymooners.

Next up, we jumped on some quad bikes and whizzed along the beach in hot pursuit of our guide, who took us to see an incredible shipwreck protruding from the water. He was also our personal photographer, getting snaps that made my group look like the most badass girl band of all time! After this, I had caught the action bug, and flinging myself down a zip line at high speed through the trees was the next logical step.

Bringing things back to my normal pace, we wandered through the

idyllic grounds to the spa, where, in a moment of madness, I decided against the planned full-body massage and instead opted for the hammam. The authentic Moroccan bathing ritual was certainly an experience! First off, you sit in an incredibly hot steam room where a lady washes you down with eucalyptus oil. Next, she showers you and lays you on a huge marble plinth and scrubs your skin with a mitt, which is akin to sandpaper. Then you're showered again, smothered in a mud mask, wrapped in a towel and left to bake on the plinth. The end result: seriously smooth skin! I felt like a newborn baby, and I've been recommending a – frankly bizarre – hammam to anyone who'll listen.

EAT

Foodies will love the choice of 13 restaurants and bars here. There are two huge buffets offering everything you could possibly want alongside high-end eateries that specialise in different cuisines. For breakfast, it's worth heading to Olives and sitting by the pool, where fresh food, soft music and elaborately served mint tea all add to the chilled-out vibe.

One evening, we opted for the elegant Sel de Mer, which serves the finest seafood. Fellow veggies, don't despair! They whipped me up a yummy quinoa stack and vegetable pasta. I'd also recommend the rustic charm of La Cave for warming French fare.

LOVE

The final evening was spent looking out at the setting sun, cocktail in hand, watching the golden rays twinkle across the waves. It was a perfectly romantic time to reflect on a trip that offered everything honeymooners could want: adventure, luxury and unadulterated romance in equal measure.



For more information, and to book your stay, visit mazaganbeachresort.com

A TASTE OF PARADISE

Editor Claire Ridley travelled to the island of Anguilla in the Caribbean to discover what this popular honeymoon destination has to offer

When the opportunity arose to experience what's new for 2020 on this luxurious island in the Eastern Caribbean, I packed my passport and bikini and was ready to fly! The lure of its 33 pristine beaches with powder-white sand and clear turquoise sea – regularly voted some of the best in the region – along with the promise of some winter sun had me jumping on board the Virgin Atlantic flight from London Gatwick bound for the British West Indies.

It's a good idea to break the journey with a one-night stopover in Antigua. Curtain Bluff is a spectacular all-inclusive resort set against the backdrop of not one but two palm-fringed beaches – Bay Beach and Surf Beach. I stayed in a stunning one-bedroom, split-level Bluff Suite boasting panoramic sea views from the terrace.

Honeymooners can while away the day in a hammock or snorkel around the reef to discover a rich variety of sea life. For active types, there's scuba diving, waterskiing and basketball, all included in the room rate, while those wanting something more relaxing will love the spa treatments available in the private couple's treatment room.

The Seagrape restaurant offers beachfront dining, while the plantation-style Tamarind Restaurant is located in a more secluded setting, both served by the most extensive wine cellar in the area – be sure to ask for a private tasting.

Wish you were here

Boarding the inter-island Trans Anguilla Airways flight (prepare for a very small plane!), I was excited to touch down on this small yet perfectly formed jewel of the Caribbean where I was greeted by Colwayne from the Anguilla Tourist Board and whisked off to visit the Valley Street Festival, a vibrant introduction to the local arts and crafts scene. A 20-minute massage here from Big Joe really helped me to recover from the flight and relax into island life where, as the locals say, you should 'make time to lime' (hang out!)

Next up was a scenic tour of this honeymoon hotspot pointing out areas of interest including The Valley (the capital city) and Crocus Hill (the highest point). Lunch at the Bayside Grill beach bar at

da'Vida Restaurant & Spa was my first introduction to Johnny cakes – a doughnut-like savoury snack – and the local mahi-mahi fish giving me some much-needed energy for a two-hour afternoon kayaking tour from Crocus Bay to Little Bay with Liquid Glow. Through the clear-bottom kayaks I spotted tropical fish and even a turtle as we paddled along the sapphire shores, stopping for a snorkel around the cliff edge at the secluded Little Bay. Honeymooners will love the romantic night kayaking tour they offer, where you get the chance to see turtles sleeping at the bottom of the ocean.

It was soon time to check into the redesigned, award-winning CuisinArt Golf Resort & Spa located on Rendezvous Bay that was to be my home for the next three nights. It's a glamorous white building with azure blue touches and a Mediterranean feel mixed with Caribbean flair (think of the architecture in Santorini and you get the idea). KazBar, the lounge area in the lobby, is a Moroccan-inspired space furnished with pops of bright colour, ideal for relaxing with rum and tapas while enjoying the live music. All 91 suites (including the Beachfront Junior Suite where I stayed), seven villas and two penthouses have been recently renovated and boast a bright coastal feel.

This super-stylish resort promises a gourmet-dining scene where guests can enjoy tastes from around the globe, including authentic Anguillian food created by new executive chef Juan Bochenski. He uses local ingredients and sustainable practices, and dishes include sushi and sashimi at the award-winning Japanese restaurant Tokyo Bay.

After a dip in the pool and some much-needed sunbathing time in a private cabana, it was time to get ready for dinner at Maundays Club located at dreamy resort Belmond Cap Juluca. Here, I sampled the tasty Peruvian menu including the mouth-watering Caribbean fish ceviche.

This romantic hideaway nestled on Maundays Bay offers Insta-worthy snaps at every turn and by day, the resort's turquoise VW Campervans and vintage-style bicycles allow for easy viewing of the grounds. A horse ride along the beach at Meads Bay on Tosh, proudly led by owner Zambezi, was a highlight and is suitable for riders of all levels. Check out the sunset excursions; great for honeymooners.

Enjoying #qualitytime at Curtain Bluff #curtainpics

Drinking a #coconutcocktail at da'Vida Restaurant (left), and the #infinityedgepool and #cutecampervans at Belmond Cap Juluca (right) #anguilla #beyondextraordinary

#horseriding on the #beach #meadsbay #belmondcapjuluca



Admiring the #seaviews
and #infinitypool at Zemi
Beach House Hotel &
Spa and CuisinArt (left)

Beyond the beach



Breakfast at Mosaic at CuisinArt certainly didn't disappoint, with the banana bread, coconut muffins and reviving smoothies so delicious I just had to order seconds. The restaurant features an open kitchen and wrap-around bar and is also open for dinner. After a swim in the ocean and enjoying the soft sand between my toes, it was time to be transported to the jaw-droppingly beautiful Shoal Bay East. (The easiest way to travel around the island is with Premier Taxi and Tours). This stunning stretch of sand is home to the Zemi Beach House Hotel & Spa boasting infinity pools and picturesque vistas. To say I ate well here was an understatement, with mahi-mahi tacos and hand-crafted coconut mocktails on the menu at the Zemi Beach Club. This was followed by a therapeutic massage at the zen-like Zemi Thai House Spa before enjoying the spectacular sunset that this island is well known for.



That evening, I headed for dinner at Café Celeste inside the colonial-style Malliouhana resort simply oozing with glamour and Caribbean charm, perched on the stunning Meads Bay. Highlights on the menu include red snapper, conch curry served with coconut dumplings and yummy plantain fritters.

Another day in paradise



Fully immersed in island life, I enjoyed an early morning yoga and meditation session followed by a refreshing dip in the healing waters pool in the Spa by CuisinArt. This tranquil spot is home to 16 treatment rooms, including a couple's suite featuring an outdoor Jacuzzi, where a heated bamboo massage and aqua massage are on the menu. The Scrub Blend Bar experience isn't to be missed, giving guests the option to make their own spa product to take home with them, and other more adventurous activities include aquatic kickboxing, stand-up paddleboard yoga and tennis (with lessons available). There's also a fun cookery class to learn how to make Portuguese petiscos and a rum and cocktail-making lesson.

Golf enthusiasts will love the 18-hole Greg

Book it



Tropic Breeze offer holidays to Antigua to stay at the Curtain Bluff resort, 01752 880 880, tropicbreeze.co.uk, @ tropicbreezeholidays curtainbluff.com @ curtainbluffresort



Norman Signature Design Championship course, the only one on the island, situated close by on the resort's sister property, The Reef by CuisinArt. This oceanfront boutique hotel boasts 80 rooms and suites built across four beachfront buildings and an open-air lobby. Foodies will love The Yacht Club Restaurant, opening on to the feature pool, serving breakfast and dinner while Breezes Beachfront Restaurant & Bar offers a lounge-style atmosphere for lunch and dinner. Sundowners are a must-try at Santorini at the Clubhouse, also open for lunch.

There's a cool party vibe at this hotel with regular live DJ sets around the pool and poolside treatments available to book through Spa to You.



Next up was a visit to the colourful Arts & Crafts Center in the West End, a treasure trove of island trinkets including conch shells to take home. From here, I headed to the Sunshine Shack beach bar and grill perched on Rendezvous Bay, a short stroll along the beach from CuisinArt, where I tucked into the delicious grilled lobster accompanied by the local Carib lager. It's well worth the walk and you're encouraged to scribble a message with your name on the shack before you leave.



Coming to the end of my magical trip, as the sun went down, the wonderful team at CuisinArt arranged for me to experience some private dining at the water's edge at the Beach Bar & Grill where I enjoyed an amazing array of food and live music. I departed Clayton J. Lloyd International Airport with a smile on my face that lasted the entire way home – this tropical paradise, one of the best-kept secrets in the Caribbean, will always hold a special place in my heart ❤️

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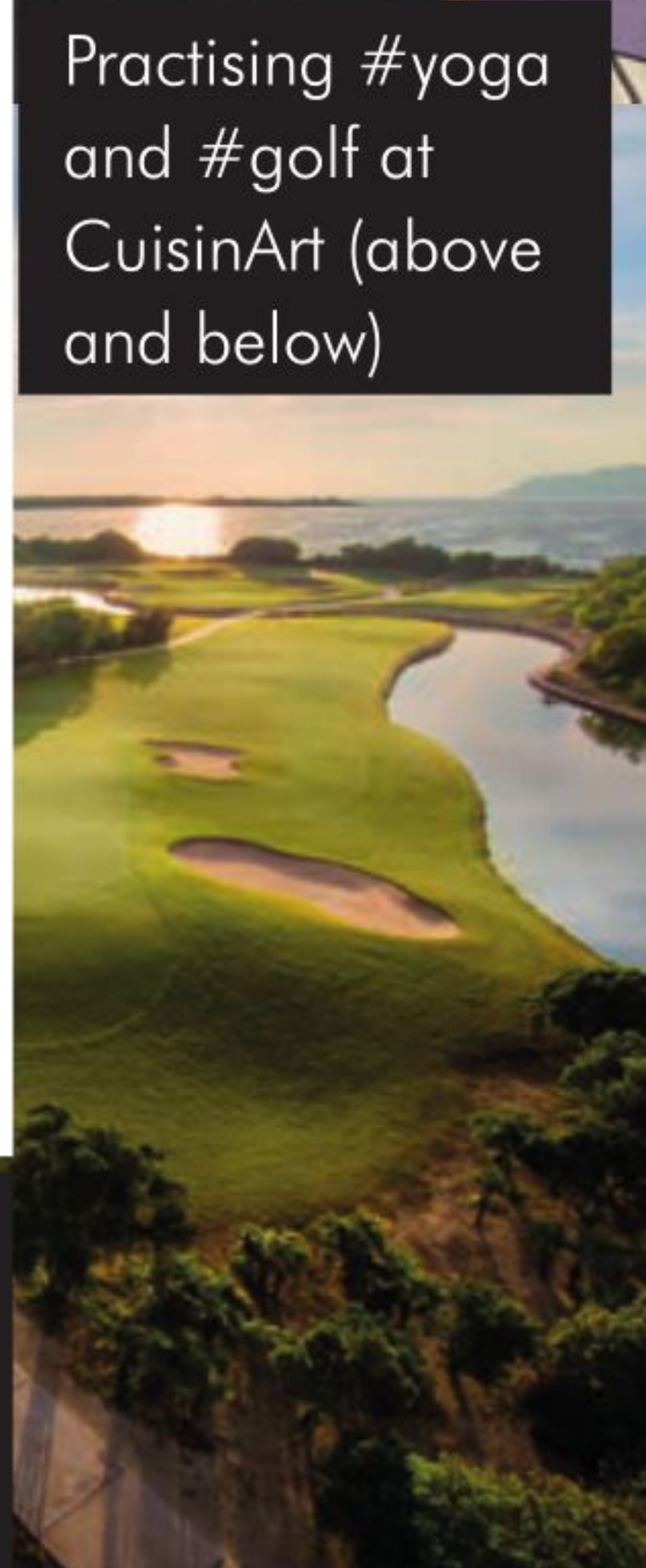
#freshseafood
and a #romantic
ambience at Café
Celeste (above
and below)



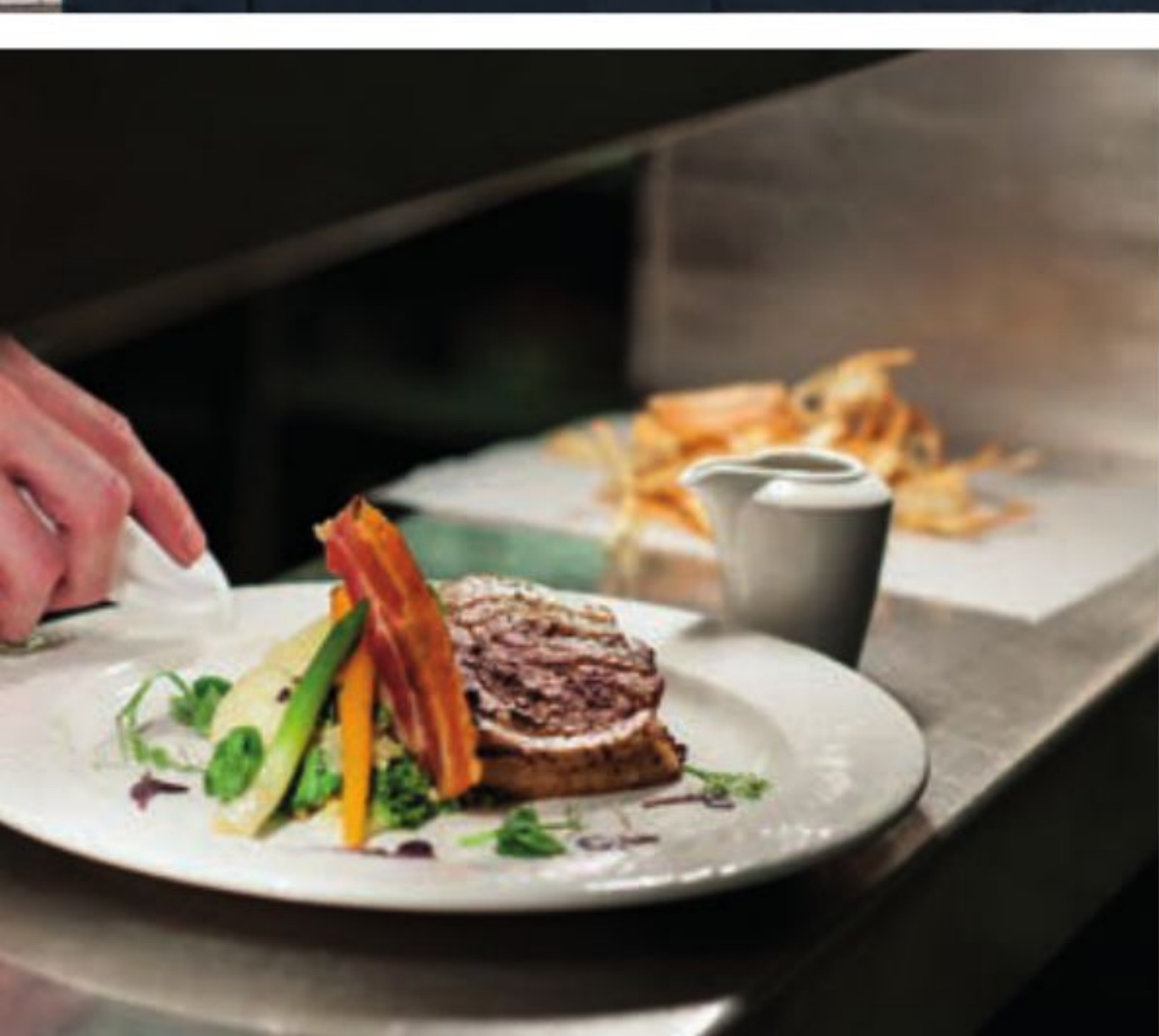
#donotdisturb in
the #stylishrooms
and #spa at
CuisinArt (below)



#grilledlobster at
the Sunshine Shack



Practising #yoga
and #golf at
CuisinArt (above
and below)



Olivia Gibson reviews the Castle Hotel Windsor

I didn't quite realise how incredible my stay would be at the Castle Hotel Windsor, throughout the trip my partner and I created amazing memories full of happiness, laughter and relaxation. Maybe it was the charming décor, impeccable service or the fact that Windsor Castle is nestled right opposite the hotel – creating the perfect backdrop.

When the chance to visit the establishment first arose, I immediately jumped at the opportunity. For a while, it's been on my bucket list to visit the UK town but something would always come up. But not this time, the stars aligned and next thing I know, my bags are packed and I'm on my way.

The hotel was first built in 1528 and was previously known as The Mermaid Inn serving as a bar for the town's 1,000 residents and is now one of the oldest buildings in the area. After being lovingly restored, the hotel still boasts elegance of its rich and fascinating history left behind.

Throughout the hotel, many features highlight the venue's story such as the Pennington Penny which was an in-house token issued by George Pennington back in 1656. I loved how the authentic essence of the venue has been kept and highlighted with some original features, when you look closely stories start to come alive.

PURE INDULGENCE

When stepping through the doors for the first time – and thinking how amazing everything looked – friendly staff quickly greeted us and took their time to explain the local area with the best places to see – they couldn't have been more helpful!

With 108 rooms available ranging from suites, superior and the classic rooms, there's something for everyone. Inside our room we found a 40-inch flat-screen TV, White Company toiletries, minibar and iron. After a long week, I was very excited to try out the queen size bed

which was covered with Egyptian cotton. It was so comfortable that I ended up having a nap! Once I had awoken from my slumber, we headed off for a romantic walk around the area and discovered plenty of independent boutiques, clothes shops and cafes – we walked around in comfortable silence just enjoying each others' company. As we visited in winter, the night drew in early leaving the dark streets beautifully lit.

TO DINE FOR

We couldn't fault our dining experience at The Marco Pierre White restaurant located in the hotel and I must say, it's one of the best meals I've ever had – and I'm not exaggerating! The service was faultless and I have told everyone about it. For starter I had Mr White's Scotch Egg which tasted divine, the egg inside was cooked to perfection. For main I opted for The Governor's Fried Haddock and Triple Cooked Chips, a simple dish which is my personal favourite and I wasn't disappointed.

After dinner we headed off to the bar where we enjoyed plenty of cocktails, my favourite was the classic daiquiri and spent our time relaxing on the comfortable chairs, it was so lovely to be able to spend time together without any distractions.

After having a lovely rest, we started our day with a great breakfast. It was a buffet-style set-up with choices of hot foods or continental. My partner says the blueberry muffin was his favourite, I would have loved to try some but I was so full-up!

While eating, guests could watch the changing of the guards right outside the window, it was impressive and there was an excited buzz all around – it was like a movie scene!

It was sadly time to leave; we both loved this hotel so much and will be booking our next trip back later this year!

Discover more about the venue here: castlehotelwindsor.com

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Rotana Hotels & Resorts has partnered with County Wedding Magazines to offer one lucky couple a luxurious five-night honeymoon at Salalah Rotana Resort in Oman.

Set against a beautiful backdrop of lush vegetation, rolling mountains, golden sands and crystal-clear waters of the Indian Ocean, the five-star resort provides a tranquil setting that's ideal for those looking to unwind.

Whilst staying in one of the resort's Deluxe Ocean View rooms, the lucky couple can wake up with spectacular views across the water and enjoy coffee in the sun from their very own private terrace or balcony. Complimentary half-board dining will ensure the winners are spoilt for choice at both breakfast and dinner at Saffron restaurant.

As well as relaxing on the private golden beach, the newlyweds will also be treated to a couple's spa massage at Zen the Spa, the

perfect way to unwind after a hard day spent in the sun.

Salalah Rotana Resort is ideally located in the Salalah Beach destination – one of the most breath-taking natural settings in the Sultanate, between spectacular mountains, freshwater springs and tropical scenery, where wildlife and frankincense trees can be marveled.

The waterfront resort's 422 rooms and suites are built around waterways, whisking guests away to a coastal utopia. The resort prides itself on providing five-star opulence synonymous with the Rotana brand, infused with traditional Omani hospitality. With four restaurants, the resort offers the perfect mélange of East-meets-West hospitality.

With its state-of-the-art facilities, couples can keep fit at Bodylines Fitness & Wellness Club, take a dip in the swimming pool or relax and rejuvenate at Zen the spa at Rotana.

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