

the wild orchid

WEDDING FLOWERS AND VENUE DECORATION



A VILLAGE WEDDING REQUIRES FLOWERS

I am sure that anyone who has been closely involved in planning a wedding in recent years will appreciate the thought that goes into the 'big day.' My son and his wife took the planning of their wedding day very seriously. Weddings, in my opinion, can be lovely whether small or large, budget or expensive but if both the bride and groom choose to have a particular type of wedding then they should go for it, well, that is if the funds are, or will be, there. My son and his then fiancée had both decided, soon after becoming engaged, that they wanted a traditional English village wedding. They are both teachers and because of their careers could only visit the wedding location during the school holiday times. Then the organising process began, well before the year of their wedding. They both wanted to marry in church; this was their first priority. Next on their list was the venue. My daughter-in-law hails from the county of East Sussex and so they searched for churches and venues in this area. Their travels around the county took them to the East Sussex village of Alfriston, with its beautiful and historic church of St Andrew. They visited here, early on in their engagement and both immediately fell in love with the church and the village. The idea of marrying in this church seemed as if it might work well, especially once they had found the very nearby, Star Inn. They were impressed with the 'olde worlde' charm to be had at this lovely hotel/inn. Before booking they asked both sets of parents to spend some time in the village to see if we approved of their probable choices. We most certainly did. We spent a weekend here. During our stay we visited The Star's wedding fayre and another fayre held at a different venue in the village. At both venues, as well as seeing the facilities available, suppliers of services such as wedding flowers, cakes and cars were on hand with a wealth of information to share. The church and venue were booked early on. Soon the couple began their church visits. It seemed as if the wedding was approaching in no time at all. As the date grew near it then became necessary for the smaller, but still very important details, to be thought about and then arranged for the big day.

FINDING THE WILD ORCHID

One very important detail was the wedding flowers. The couple had a good look at various websites. Eventually they decided that they liked the look of The Wild Orchid Wedding and Venue Decoration. This company offered many options for floral decorations, bouquets and buttonholes, which included packages and even special tailor made packages. My son and his fiancée arranged to visit Jeanne Picot, the owner of The Wild Orchid. They were invited to visit at her home on a weekend when they were visiting in East Sussex. My son and his fiancée spent over an hour with Jeanne, discussing possible floral packages, colour schemes, combinations of



flowers and everything necessary to help them decide on their flowers. They spoke of the colour scheme chosen for the wedding and where these colours would be incorporated, such as in the bride's gown, the bridesmaids' and flower girls' dresses, men's waistcoats etc. Jeanne advised on which flowers would look good in terms of colour and effective combinations of flowers which would all work well together. As no one package seemed to be quite the perfect fit for their wedding, the three spoke of what would definitely be needed and then included all likely possibilities. Jeanne outlined some examples of what they would need and gave them a good idea of the prices. At this meeting they were shown catalogues and photographs of wedding bouquets and table decorations made by this company at previous events. Wild Orchid can supply the flowers for the church but as the church of St Andrew was to arrange all of the flowers for the service, this particular service would not be needed from the florist. The couple were impressed with what they saw and, very importantly, felt that Jeanne, at the Wild Orchid, would be reliable. Therefore, Wild Orchid was asked to take care of their wedding flowers. In the months leading up to their wedding the couple had contact with Jeanne. They thought about their flowers and gradually put together their own personal floral package. My future daughter-in-law had decided early on in the proceedings that her wedding colour scheme would be a pale pink with champagne. As the wedding approached she had, long before, chosen her wedding dress. The wedding gown was of ivory with trimming in champagne. The three adult bridesmaids' dresses were purchased. These were of a pale blush pink. Four flower girl dresses were bought but nearer to the date of the wedding, because ten and eleven year old girls are known to have growth spurts. Indeed, one flower girl did require a bigger dress size as she had grown quite tall. The four flower girl dresses were champagne in colour. The underskirts had a slight pinkish tinge, similar to the colour in the adult bridesmaids' dresses; this really brought everything together nicely.



WHAT WAS REQUIRED

After some discussion it was decided that the floral package would include:

- ★ Bridal bouquet
- ★ Bridesmaid's/Flower girl's bouquets (Seven)
- ★ Buttonholes/Corsages for mother of the bride and mother of the groom
- ★ Buttonholes for- the groom, best man, father of the bride, father of the groom and two ushers
- ★ Table Decorations for the main table and guest tables.

Although my daughter-in-law had a good idea of what she wanted no firm decisions were made as to floral choices until closer to the wedding.

DECISIONS, DECISIONS (CORSAGES/BUTTONHOLES)

I was asked by my son and his fiancée if I would like my buttonhole to fit onto my jacket lapel (if I was intending on wearing a jacket) or made to fit onto my handbag or, even my wrist. I had only heard, prior to this, of a buttonhole that fitted (naturally so) in a buttonhole and so really I didn't know which would be best. Apparently some ladies prefer a spray or corsage to fit onto a handbag or their wrist as, if the chosen jacket is thin and has a small, or especially a thin lapel, then the flowers can pull the jacket or lapel down and spoil the look of the jacket. I hadn't decided on

my wedding outfit at this time but had decided that I did want to wear a jacket to the wedding. I didn't have to make a decision on my corsage until close to the time of the wedding. Eventually I decided that I would stick with tradition and wear my flowers on my jacket. The bride's mother made the same choice as I had and preferred to wear her corsage on her jacket. The mother of the bride had chosen her complete outfit before I had and her daughter had approved her outfit! I was asked what colour outfit I would be wearing and because of this I assumed that my son and his fiancée were trying to match buttonholes to outfits. Indeed they were and they did. My corsage was made up of a creamy champagne rose with a sprig of pale blue whereas the mother of the bride had the same colour of rose but with a lavender coloured sprig to match her lovely outfit. My son informed me that the florist would use a magnet to hold the flowers to my jacket lapel rather than the normal pin. This was essentially a good idea but I think I received so many hugs from family and friends so that before even reaching the church that the magnet must have been knocked off. I noticed that my flowers hung a little askew and unfortunately couldn't find one half of the magnetic device. My husband used two pins to re-attach the flowers to my lapel. The groom wore a pale pink rose to fit in with the colour scheme. The best man, ushers, father of the bride and the groom wore a creamy champagne coloured rose.



BRIDAL BOUQUET

The bride's bouquet was beautiful. It consisted of the palest pink roses blending wonderfully with the cream, along with freesias and tiny cream rose blooms. There were other flowers included but I'm not sure of all of the names. The stems were hand-tied with a pale pink satin ribbon with pearl detail on the ribbon.

PRETTY IN PINK (BRIDESMAID/FLOWER- GIRL BOUQUETS)

The three bridesmaids' and the four flower girls' bouquets were a smaller version of the bridal bouquet. The pale pink roses contained in their bouquets matched their palest pink dresses perfectly. The girls were all admiring of their flowers and I thought that the flower girls especially, looked very proud of having such pretty bouquets to hold. The bouquets looked good and coordinated well with the rest of the wedding flowers.

TABLE DECORATIONS

The table decorations were gorgeous. Again, these matched the bridal and bridesmaid's bouquets in choice of flowers and colours. The main table was decorated with a large oasis of mixed blooms in creams, pinks and a just a slight touch of greenery. This cascaded down the front side of the table beautifully. The seven circular guest tables looked extremely effective with the decorative birdcages which contained a mix of flowers. Again, these fitted in perfectly with the colour scheme. The cages weren't too high to block the view across the table and interfering with conversations across the tables. This was an important factor for the bride and groom. The flowers inside, I would say, came no higher than half way up each cage and



the candle a little higher. This did mean that visibility wasn't hindered. We had spoken several times about table decorations and that sometimes these can take up too much room and deter conversation when they are too high or too full of flowers. These were, in my opinion, just right. Inside each birdcage was a cream coloured church type candle which sat among the flowers. (We were given these candles to take home.) The flowers were arranged into an oasis which was placed, with the candle, inside the 'birdcages.'

THANK YOU MOTHER(S) (FLORAL GIFTS)

During the time of the speeches, myself and the bride's mother were presented with flowers as a thank you gift for our help and support. The flowers were lovely. I was truly touched by this gesture and the words that were said by my son as the flowers were given to me and to his mother-in-law. The flowers were in the same colour as the other wedding flowers (pale pinks and creams) and they were beautifully wrapped and then presented in a wide gift bag. The shape and fullness of these bouquets was gorgeous.

BLOOMING GOOD (PRICE)

I cannot give an exact price of the whole floral package down to the last penny (until my son digs out the receipt) but my son and daughter-in-law have said that the final bill was for less than £800. I think that this really is exceptionally good value for the large amount of flowers that were used (nothing looked skimmed at all) and the huge amount of work involved. Plus, all flowers were delivered to the venue. I would say that the bouquets and table decorations were all put together with an artistic flair and expertise. I know that the bride was delighted with the flowers at her wedding. I believe that they may have looked even better than she had hoped for.

OVERALL

All of the flowers for the wedding: bridal bouquet, bridesmaid's bouquets, sprays, buttonholes, gifts and table decorations were made with fresh flowers. I understand that the flowers used by the Wild Orchid are brought in from Dutch flower auctions and/or are seasonal English flowers from local suppliers. I believe that the couple received just what they had asked for can say that their expectations were met; probably even exceeded. The flowers really did add to the whole event; they looked so beautiful and went very well with the room decorations where the wedding breakfast was held. Looking at the eight bouquets, which were all hand tied, and all other floral decorations and sprays, I could see that a tremendous amount of work had gone into selecting and preparing the flowers for this special day. I would definitely say that Wild Orchid provided a reliable and quality service. I would recommend this company.



FURTHER DETAILS

The Wild Orchid Wedding and Venue Decoration Service is located in the county of East Sussex. Jeanne Picot is a freelance florist experienced in supplying all floral requirements for weddings.