

Real Brides

July 2021

South Africa's Exciting
Wedding Magazine

*Tiaras
Trending*

*Meeting
Regulations*

*High School
Sweethearts*

Real Weddings



TOP WEDDING VENUES

One of the most important decisions you will have to make when planning your wedding is to choose your venue.

Your choice of venue will help you determine a multitude of important factors such as a theme, number of guests, decor, food and drink and accommodation requirements.

Doing your research and looking for the right place to host your wedding is time-consuming and can be a difficult task because here are literally hundreds of venues to choose from countrywide.

To help you with your planning, Real Brides has launched a new series named TOP WEDDING VENUES.

In this edition we feature and highlight a number of top wedding venues that are rated as some of the top wedding venues in South Africa.

TOP WEDDING VENUES provides:

- A full overview of the venue
- Great photos of the venue
- A link to a virtual tour of the venue or to their website

Top venues featured in this issue of Real Brides will be branded with the TOP WEDDING VENUE emblem.

Visit www.realbrides.co.za



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On the cover:

Bride: Carla Tate

Photo: Daniel West Photography

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SHARE YOUR COVID WEDDING STORY

If you managed to get married amidst all the disruptions caused by the Covid restrictions and have lots of stories and ideas to share with brides-to-be then do let us know. We only feature “real” South African weddings in Real Brides – the weddings of real people like you, me and the girl next door. If you would like to be given the chance to share your wedding day, photos and ideas with us, write to our editor Robbyn on robbyn@topicpublishing.co.za and include a sample wedding photo and a list of your vendors so that we can add your wedding on our list for feature consideration.

To view back copies of Real Brides, visit our website on
www.realbrides.co.za.



CARLA & KEAGHAN TATE



Best friends since teenagers, this couple had plenty of challenges leading up to their nuptials!

How unexpected was your proposal?

We dated for two years and took a trip to Paris in September of 2019. On our second last day I was convinced it wasn't going to happen! We visited the Palace of Versailles and, with blistered feet after a 15km walk around the palace grounds, Keaghan proposed! He is obsessed with Pokemon. My ring "box" was a Pokeball and on the action card it said "Keaghan gets down on one knee to propose to Carla". He showed me the ring and smiled. On the train back to our accommodation, I realised he never verbally asked me the big question! So technically we got engaged on the train!

Drama planning your wedding?

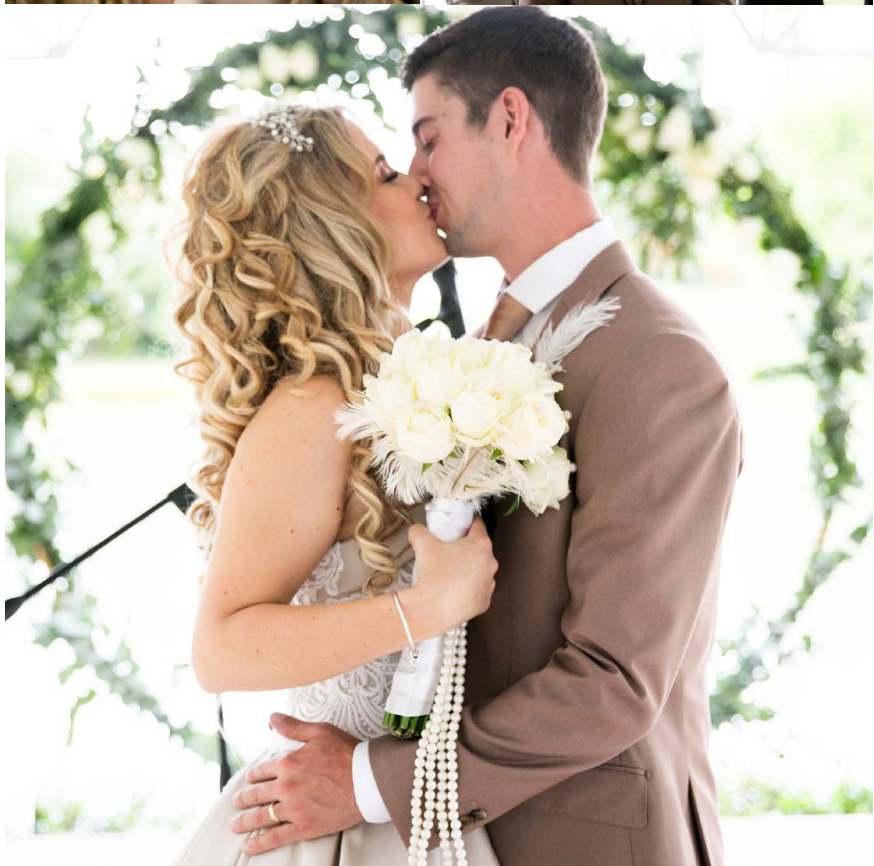
We had exceptionally bad luck with most of our suppliers! My designer dropped me a week before deadline (from our initial date). After we paid our first venue, something didn't add up so we cancelled, but they had already spent our money! We had to get the ombudsman involved and were only refunded in December 2020. The décor supplier was unresponsive and so the list went on!

You are well versed in event management?

I completed my BA in Film Arts and then did an event management course to help me with my business. Then and there I decided I would never do wedding planning! After everything with my suppliers, I should've trusted my gut! It is not for the faint-hearted. However, I think I managed in the end?

Your venue and why you chose it?

Initially I wanted to get married in an aquarium or elope but the family wouldn't have it! I viewed a lot of venues; it was pure luck that we found Oxbow Country Estate, which is a stunning venue.



“Oxbow Country Estate is a stunning venue.”



Venue: Oxbow Country Estate, Bronkhorstspruit.

www.oxbowestate.co.za

Dress: Belfaso, Russia

Hair: Bespoke Hair Nails & Beauty

Make-up: Private M Collection

Flowers: Callamia Floriography

Photography: Daniel West Photography

Would you recommend Oxbow?

Oxbow is a stunning venue. If it wasn't for TJ Swart and Sharlene, who planned and coordinated our wedding, it would not have happened! Right from the start presentation to the minute we left, they made us feel welcome and everything ran smoothly. It was an absolute privilege having the Oxbow staff members help us orchestrate this event. Because of their professionalism, we knew we could trust them and we had a fabulous time.

Tell us about your dress.

After the failed attempt with the first designer, I got many quotes, but no one really listened to what I wanted. I wanted an old gold dress. Eventually, I found a Russian designer and the closest to the colour I wanted, was the dress I ended up with. I asked that they mix 3 designs into one, so they customised mine completely, with the help of a boutique who handled the order and fittings. The white lace wasn't part of the plan but I learnt to love it. I promised myself I would not get married in a princess dress, because I do princess entertainment for children. Clearly, my fairy godmother didn't listen!

More guys than girls in your entourage?

Keaghan needed a team to be able to marry me! I could've pulled them to 'my side' as well, we are privileged to have such wonderful friends. We both had a best ma but neither could attend due to the pandemic. Dominique is my best friend and she was my maid of honour. We also had Keaghan's younger sister and my nephews in our entourage.

Ironic theme?

Yes! I wanted to host a masquerade ball like the Phantom of the Opera (since I was denied my aquarium) and bought masks. What's a celebration without a dramatic theme? I decided to still place them on the tables.

How many guests?

We had to cut down to about 70 guests.

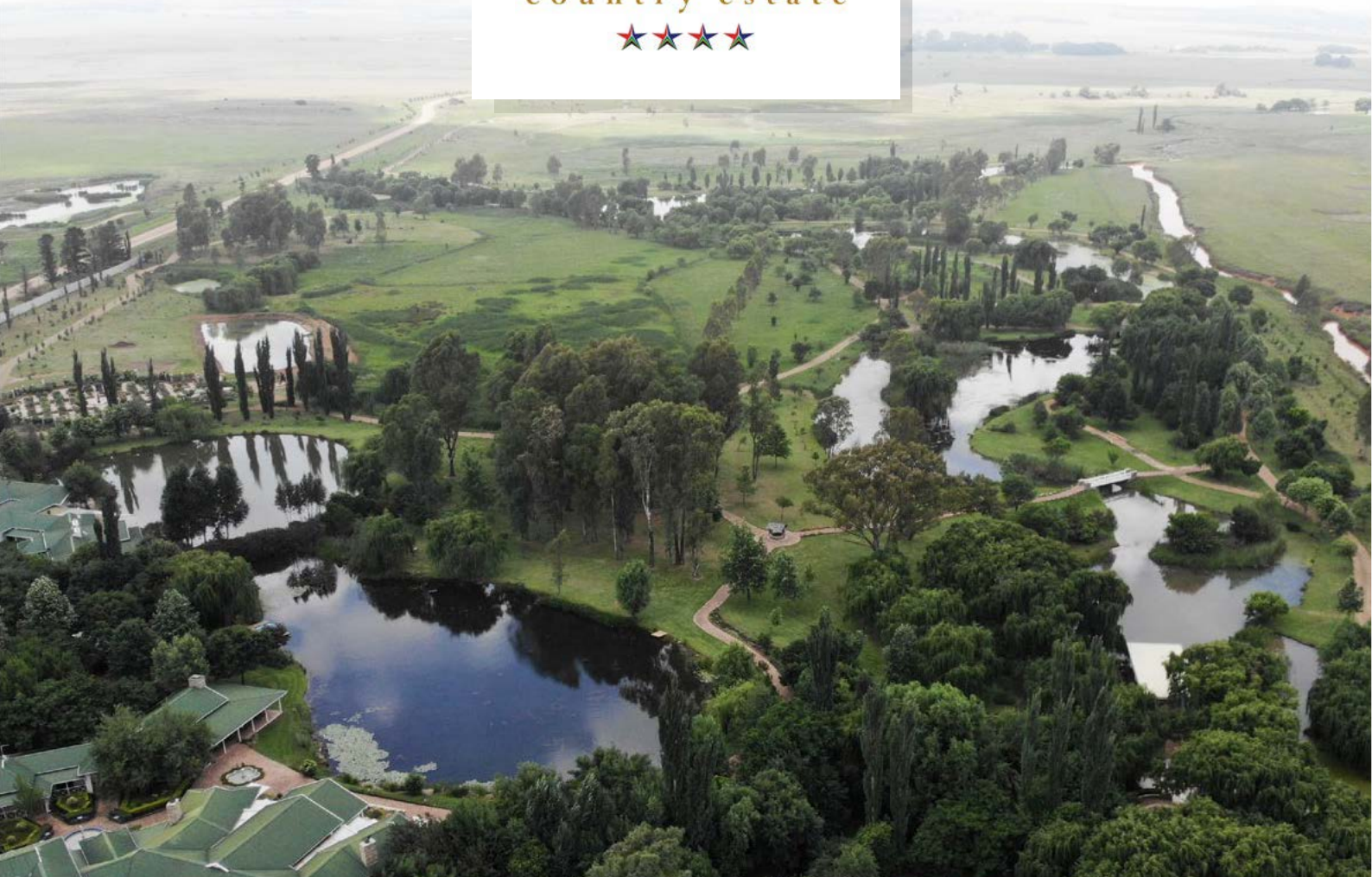
Your most special wedding gift?

The night before the wedding, my Dad bought me a charm bracelet and he wrote an incredibly beautiful letter giving the reason for each charm.

Honeymoon?

We moved from Gauteng to KZN in January, got married in Gauteng in March and two days after the wedding, I opened my first shop and Keaghan started at a new firm. We have been working non-stop and will go on honeymoon when we can travel more easily.





OxboW Country Estate

A chic country wedding venue set on the banks of the Osspruit River near Bronkhorstspuit Dam. 40 minutes from Pretoria, Witbank, and Benoni.

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NICOLENE & RISHEN REDDY



This couple have been together since Nicolene invited Rishen to her Matric Ball as a 17 year-old and the rest is history!

You dated for a long time before getting engaged?

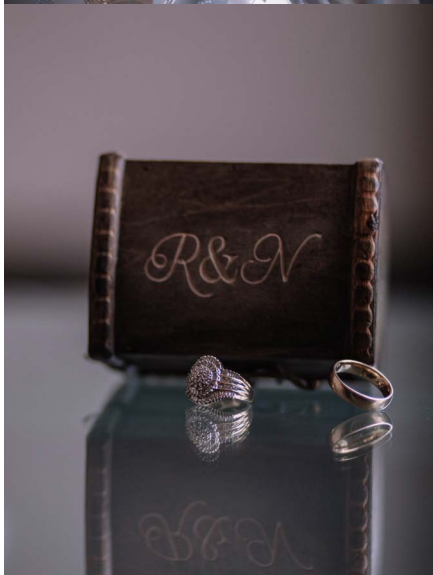
Yes, so much so that I even got to choose my own engagement ring! We've been together for 12 years now. In 2015, Rishen took me on holiday to Cape Town and that's when he proposed. Although I knew it was coming, it was still such a special moment that I will treasure forever. He knows exactly how particular I am so he allowed me to choose my own engagement ring (and wedding band) to ensure that I would be happy with the choice.

Covid complicated things a lot?

We initially planned our wedding for 28 March 2020. We'd paid all our service providers in full as it was already 30 days before our wedding but then the President announced the hard lockdown from the 26 March 2020. We literally had no option but to postpone. Our pastor then contacted us to let us know that he had all the paperwork ready if we still wanted to get registered. We were so uncertain of what was to come that we decided to just go ahead and get married on the 25 March 2020 with just our parents and the pastor present and then hoped to celebrate our marriage with friends and family at a later stage.

You eventually got to have your big day a year later?

When the lockdown restrictions eased, we took a leap of faith and set a new date for 13 March 2021. Though nearly a year later than we intended, we thank God that we were eventually able to have the wedding I had always dreamt of. All my service providers came through for us at no additional cost. It was everything I had planned for and even more.



"No princess is complete without a tiara!"



*Venue: Velmoré Hotel and Spa
Make-up: Makeup by Chanel
Hair: Siehaam Ebrahim
Dress: Bridal Wardrobe
Cake: Cakes by Kalay
Decor & flowers: Dolly Harichunder
Photography: Pioneer Studios*

Your venue?

Rishen booked a weekend away at Velmoré Hotel for my birthday. At the time we were just starting to plan our wedding. When he saw the venue he immediately said this was our wedding venue – one of the most important decisions of the whole wedding.

Décor?

We opted to have our own décor done. Everything was emerald green, white and gold. The décor coordinator made my dream a reality. She actualised everything I had envisioned for my wedding day. Having a variety of fresh green succulents (including indigenous Spekboom) as wedding favours for our guests was such a great idea and they matched the décor perfectly.

Your wedding dress?

I always had an idea of the style of dress that I wanted. I went to try on some gowns and the lady who attended to me was so helpful; she took pictures and videos of every gown I tried on so that I could share the experience with my Mum and aunt who were unable to be with me. Surprisingly all three of us chose the same dress as our favourite and that's the one I purchased.

You wore a tiara?

Yes, no princess is complete without a tiara! Right from the time I was a little girl I'd always dreamt of a fairytale wedding. I would browse through wedding magazines, cutting out pictures of dresses and accessories and compiled a scrapbook. My hairstylist sent me a video of all the tiaras available. She purchased the tiara I liked weeks before my original wedding date and, because of the lockdown, she had to keep it with her. I only saw it a whole year later when I eventually did my trial again for the wedding. I'm hoping to pass the tiara down to the next generation as a family heirloom.

How many guests?

We had to cut down to about 70 guests.

Who were your bridesmaids and how did you choose them?

My two best friends and my sister-in-law were my bridesmaids - they have always been there for me through all the good times and the bad times.

How many wedding guests?

We initially planned to have around 170 guests but had to cut down due to the Covid regulations at the time. Many declined our invitation, due to the risk of attending social gatherings, and some of our overseas family members weren't able to travel, due to the travel restrictions.



Your most treasured wedding gift?

Our pastor and his wife gifted us a silver marriage certificate holder box. It's such a lovely gift as it will be keeping one of our most treasured items in it.

Your first dance song?

Perfect by Ed Sheeran and Beyoncé. This song fitted our love story perfectly. "Cause we were just kids when we fell in love, not knowing what it was..."

Any advice for brides-to-be?

After all that happened to us, I would advise brides-to-be to definitely take their planning seriously but never to let it get the better of them. Yes, it should be perfect but it is only for one day; rather enjoy the process with your partner, have fun and work on strengthening your relationship, which is most important.

Honeymoon?

We had our flights booked and had already paid to travel to Mauritius on the 30 March 2020 but we obviously could not travel at all, not even locally, because of the hard lockdown. So we had a very special honeymoon. Rishen and I spent the entire lockdown at home together, cooking and watching movies - I think we had the longest honeymoon anyone has ever had! We spent the most time together as we couldn't even go to work. That time spent together really helped us to bond and it strengthened our relationship.



TOP WEDDING VENUES



The Silver Sixpence wedding venue offers you the opportunity to be part of an exclusive group who have embraced the magic of "The Silver Sixpence" experience!

Allow yourself to be seduced by the beauty and tranquillity of rolling grasslands, forests, and lakes – providing you with the perfect setting for a romantic weekend wedding experience.

The Silver Sixpence Wedding Venue is tucked away in the hills of the Mpumalanga Highlands, near the popular trout fishing village of Dullstroom – 2,5 hours from Johannesburg.

The stunning Architecturally designed Venue and Lodges, with luxurious en-suite accommodation for 38 guests - including a romantic Honeymoon Suite with a beautiful well-appointed Bridal dressing room, a Micro-Brewery for a Friday night get-together, and the option of either a forest or Chapel ceremony ensures the realisation of all your wishes and dreams!

A weekend wedding at The Silver Sixpence gives you exclusive use of the 300 Hectare Estate – for the weekend - Friday to Sunday - so you enjoy your wedding for 3 days, not 8 hours!

The excitement and exhilaration begins the moment you arrive at The Silver Sixpence – the spectacular natural beauty, along with the peaceful seclusion and tranquillity of the surroundings allows you to immerse yourself in the transformation of the estate into your own personal fairy-tale wedding venue.

Fly-fishing, mountain biking, hiking, bird watching, or relaxing in front of a log fire - your guests will be spoiled for choice!

To fully appreciate this exceptional environment of beautifully maintained landscaped gardens, paddocks with Friesian Horses, trout dams, as well as blue-gum and pine forests, a site-visit is essential!



Website: www.thesilversixpence.co.za
Email: lesley@thesilversixpence.co.za
Call: 082 557 3304

Our Microbrewery – The Old Oak Brewery - has proven to be the perfect “launch pad” on Friday evening for your weekend celebrations and catching up with family and friends. For those cooler evenings there is a large indoor fireplace as well as an outdoor fire pit and braai area.

We have a full liquor licence and our own unique craft beer is available in The Brewery on Friday night – along with our full bar list, - and, if requested, a keg or two of our craft beer can be available on Saturday too...(especially during the photo session time) in our quirky mobile wagon!

On your wedding day, wake up to the sound of birdsong, relaxed in the knowledge that you are already at your venue and can continue to enjoy the build-up to that magical moment when you walk down the aisle – either in the forest or our quaint country chapel!

Hairdressing and makeup in our well-appointed Bridal Dressing room adds to the excitement of the day!

Every bride is given a sixpence on her wedding day which is to be placed in her shoe... This age-old tradition ensures prosperity, health, and happiness for the newly married couple!

Arrive at your ceremony in our beautiful horse drawn carriage, and say your vows under a canopy of leaves in the forest, or candle chandeliers in our charming chapel.

After your ceremony, whilst you are having photographs taken, your guests can begin to enjoy the mouth-watering cuisine prepared by our in-house caterer. Canapés and refreshments are served on the patio and lawn in front of the large outdoor fireplace alongside the reception hall, and guests can entertain themselves by playing one of the lawn games, or fly-fishing in the nearby trout dam.

At the end of your photo session, the Chapel bell can be rung to remind guests they are at a wedding and need to enter the hall for the evening celebrations to begin!

Dance the night away under a sparkling galaxy of fairy lights and crystal chandeliers in our hall, with the cosy ambience of two large indoor fireplaces.



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Our luxurious on-site accommodation (all rooms are en-suite) ensures that the family and close friends of the bridal couple don't have far to walk after the party.

We currently have accommodation for 38 guests, including a complimentary romantic Honeymoon Suite adjacent to our beautiful bridal dressing room. All rooms are serviced by our dedicated staff.

Cairnfern Country Lodge, the Manor house, has accommodation for 8 guests in 4 ensuite rooms, and has a large lounge where family and friends can relax in front of a large log fireplace before the festivities get underway. All the bedrooms open up onto a large veranda overlooking the Friesian horse paddocks.

The Paddocks accommodation (approximately 150m from the hall) consists of 6 suites – all with fireplaces – and is ideal for bridesmaids and groomsmen. There are also two lovely rooms alongside The Brewery – in close proximity to the hall.

The Carriage House – an authentic log cabin – is a cosy romantic cottage for two guests.

The Highland Suites, our lodge which is situated on top of the mountain – ideal for pre-wedding photos – accommodates 10 guests in 5 ultra-luxurious suites, each one being a separate unit, all of them having their own private entrance off a central garden courtyard and linked via a covered walkway/patio. Each individual suite has a balcony with magnificent views towards the escarpment, a small lounge area, fireplace, tea and coffee station, desk, twin beds, dressing area with dressing table, full bathroom and heated towel rails.

For outdoor entertaining, there is a braai and wooden deck in front of the lodge...the deck is built over the edge of the mountain with magnificent panoramic views! Enjoy an early morning cup of coffee on your private balcony or on the deck whilst watching the mist slowly dissipate – anticipating the excitement of the day ahead!

Within an 8km radius, there is accommodation to suit all your guests – a 4-star hotel, B&B's, and self-catering cottages.

There are four stocked dams for the fly-fishing enthusiast (stocked with rainbow trout) – ideal for the men who want to escape from the wedding preparations for a few hours! For the non-fishermen there are lovely forest and mountain walks (to a waterfall), or just relax under the trees or read on the patio!

A memorable wedding weekend celebration at the exclusive Silver Sixpence wedding venue is a truly magical beginning to your "Happily-Ever-After"!



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Email: lesley@thesilversixpence.co.za
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THE
SILVER
SIXPENCE
~ WEDDING VENUE ~



ZINÉ & GERWI VAN HEERDEN



This couple were High School sweethearts who started dating in Grade 8.

Tell us how and where Gerwi proposed?

We completed our studies at the same university and after our graduation we applied for jobs in Cape Town. It had always been our dream to move to Cape Town and to start our life together there. This came true on 8 January 2020. I was on my way to Cape Town, very excited to see Gerwi, who was waiting to pick me up at the airport. We were supposed to be on our way to our new home, but instead he took me to a private beach. claiming that we were going to see the most beautiful sunset from there. Of course he was right about the sunset, but I could sense that something else was up! We went for a short walk on the beach and then it happened - right there, on that private beach, with the sunset right on point. He got down on one knee, and my little girl fairy-tale came true. Gerwi had even arranged a secret photographer to capture the special moment.

Did you know what you wanted for your big day?

"The best thing to hold onto in life is each other". This quote by Audrey Hepburn, spoke to my heart so many times during the planning of our wedding. Gerwi and I knew exactly what we wanted – a small, intimate wedding with our closest friends and family. We wanted our special day to take place somewhere on a wine farm, close to our new home town. We decided on a date, 20 March 2021, but then COVID hit and we had to pause our wedding planning until it was safe to continue. Restrictions were finally lifted one month before our next date.

What made you choose South Hill as your venue?

In the midst of the Covid restrictions we couldn't arrange to view any wedding venues so we did some searching online and saw some beautiful ones. South Hill was our favourite, and we decided that it would be our first viewing. On arrival we were in awe of all this location had to offer. Beautiful surrounds, accommodation, great hospitality and food and wine to die for! We immediately knew that this was where we wanted to get married.



*“We loved the idea of getting
married in a wine cellar.”*



*Venue: South Hill, Elgin, Western Cape - www.southhill.co.za
Flowers & Décor: Nadia, 4EveryEvent
Wedding gown: Cindy Bam, Smoorverlief
Hair & Make up: Marisa, Sketch&M
Photography: Elri Photography*

Tell us about South Hill?

South Hill is located in the beautiful Elgin Valley, near Grabouw in the Western Cape. It literally has it all! The venue offers multiple location options for your canapés and ceremony, a beautiful reception area, a stunning 16-sleeper guest house, a honeymoon cottage and a great wedding co-ordinator, Sandra King.

Fun or frustrating finding your dress?

Definitely fun! I was lucky to have my Mom and Grandma to help me choose. I had my first fitting at Smoorverlief, where I tried on a Cindy Bam readymade dress, and it was the perfect fit.

Where was your ceremony held?

On our first visit to South Hill, Sandra showed us all the ceremony locations and elaborated on their newly built wine cellar. We were immediately 'hooked' on the idea of getting married in a wine cellar. This did come with some challenges, as it was right before the end of harvest, but Sandra and Nick did an amazing job to set-up the perfect wine cellar ceremony.

How many guests?

Our intimate wedding idea only included our closest family and friends. We unfortunately had to cut back on about 15 guests and the curfew forced us to end all festivities at 23h00. We did however have a stunning day with 50 guests.

The funniest moment of your day?

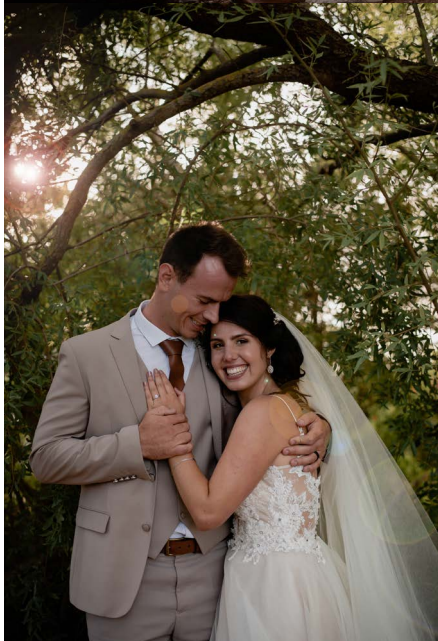
During the ceremony, the pastor gave Gerwi a bell to ring every time he does something good for his wife-to-be! This came with a good marriage lesson on how to score points and be a good husband! We all had a good laugh!

Any tips to share with brides-to-be?

You will never make everyone happy, and nor should you try. Do not lose focus on what your special day is all about.

Honeymoon?

We would've loved to have gone on an island getaway, but we were forced to stay local.





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TOP WEDDING VENUES



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THE ART OF DISTINCTIVE WEDDINGS

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The venue is covered in glittering fairy lights and can be draped in linens to create the perfect enchanting scene for your special day. The black and white marble tiled floors and octagonal skylight are the perfect backdrops for a show-stopping reception or intimate celebration. The choices for decor are endless. Let us plan your special day by offering the following services:

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- Personalized Wedding Coordination
- Tailored menu's & refreshments
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Facilities:

WEDDINGS & SPECIAL EVENTS	
Hall for reception/celebration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seats up to 350 without dance floor/stage and 300 with • Mood lights and fairy lights • Projector for pictures/videos
Spit Braai Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suitable for day Weddings/Celebrations
Garden for ceremony	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garden area for up to 150 pax for a ceremony
Hellenic Orthodox Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Orthodox clients

CORPORATE EVENTS	
Hall for conference/workshop/product launch/team building/virtual conferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seats up to 400 pax cinema style or cocktail style • Projector and sound system for presentations including microphones
Spit Braai Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For less formal events such as team building
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ample parking for attendees • Centrally located



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- 2) 2021 promotion: Book with us now & stand a chance to win or be entitled to a Luxurious Honeymoon /Getaway of your choice out of a number of 5-star destinations including top of the range Game Reserves.

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ZINNIA & SHAUN PEDRO



Choosing the beautiful and historic Vredenburg Manor House as their wedding venue was one of the best decisions this couple ever made.

How did you and Shaun meet?

Shaun and I met through mutual friends.

Exciting proposal?

On my birthday Shaun planned a date day with massages and dinner and made it extra special by proposing! He even arranged for my brother to meet us to capture the moment. It was most unexpected. Shaun had also made our immediate families aware of the proposal and they were all waiting for us to celebrate afterwards.

How long did you have to plan your wedding?

We got engaged 16 months before we got married in May 2021, but found our venue 9 months beforehand. We found the planning process mostly enjoyable and were very grateful for all the help given to us by Leon and Luke from our chosen venue, Vredenburg Manor House. They assisted us so much with menu planning, décor setups, flowers and even the tiniest of details like confetti.


Did the Covid restrictions hamper you?

Fortunately, Covid did not hamper us much as we did not have to change our wedding date or our guest list. We were very blessed that things worked out the way that they did.

You chose Vredenburg Manor as your venue. Why?

We visited two other wedding venues before going to look at Vredenburg Manor House. We fell in love with the stunning gardens and, considering the Covid restrictions, we loved that our family could use the house to stay over on the night of our wedding. Vredenburg's awesome team, led by Leon and Luke, also made it very easy to settle on choosing Vredenburg Manor House by answering all our queries. We loved the various ceremony and reception options that they offer because we chose a May autumn wedding date and the weather can be temperamental at that time of the year.





“We loved the various ceremony and reception options that Vredenburg Manor House has to offer.”

Venue: Vredenburg Manor House, Somerset West – www.vredenburg.co.za

Wedding gown: Bride&Co, Canal Walk

Hair: Celina Craig

Make up: OnQ Make-Up

Food: Vredenburg Manor House

Flowers & Décor: Vredenburg Manor House

Photography: Jilda G Photography

Outdoor ceremony?

It was our dream to have an outside ceremony in one of the many gardens because we both love being outdoors. Vredenburg Manor House very kindly set up in both the indoor Chapel and the outside gardens because it rained the day before our wedding and we were concerned that it would rain on the day. Luckily for us the sun showed up on our big day and our dream became a reality.

Tell us about your dress.

I wanted a timeless, elegant dress that I felt comfortable in. My Mom accompanied me to my dress fittings and on the first visit to Bride & Co, I fitted my wedding dress and immediately knew I had found the right one.

How many people in your entourage?

We had an official wedding entourage of two groomsmen, two bridesmaids, a flower girl and ring bearers.

Your celebratory meal?

Leon and Luke outdid themselves providing the most delicious a la carte dinner, served on the patio. The table setup was perfectly done and exactly what we had discussed and planned. It was all above and beyond our expectations.

Did you stay over in the Manor House?

Shaun and I, together with our families and friends, stayed over at the Manor House on the night of our wedding. Our rooms were stunning and immaculate and breakfast the following morning was beautifully setup and perfectly planned.

How many guests?

50 guests.

Photos taken in the gorgeous gardens?

Yes, they were taken all around the Vredenburg Manor House grounds - in the gardens, the herb garden, around the fountains, outside the Chapel and inside the beautiful Manor House.

Any handy tips for brides-to-be?

Make the decision to enjoy the process. Planning a wedding can be very stressful, but our advice would be to decide to have fun, laugh and enjoy it.

Honeymoon?

We really enjoy driving and exploring around our beautiful country and were lucky enough to be able to drive along the Garden Route and spend nights staying over at a couple of different places. Shaun is a big "foody" so we had many food experiences for the first time, like oysters in Knysna!





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SYMONÉ & PRINESH AJOODHA



This couple have known each other since they were children.

Tell us about your proposal.

Prinesh planned an engagement party with our families, which I obviously knew nothing about. My Mom however didn't know that I was in the dark about it and spilled the beans! To my surprise however, Prinesh still made it very special.

The most difficult part of planning in these Covid times?

Numbers and time were the most stressful parts of planning. We both come from big families and many relatives unfortunately could not make it due to the financial constraints of Covid.

Tell us a bit about your wedding venue.

Chez Charlene is honestly the perfect wedding venue. They are a fully inclusive venue, which means they take care of every small detail. I would definitely recommend Chez Charlene. The beauty - from the grounds to the rooms and the décor was exceptional. Charlene and Deone are so passionate and we were always in very good hands.

Your main reason for choosing Chez Charlene?

We put our wedding off due to the pandemic as South Africa was very up and down about the levels of lockdown and the restrictions. After our first visit to Chez Charlene our hearts were set on the venue. Charlene gave us three available dates and 12 December 2020 was perfect as it was the very same date that Prinesh had proposed to me the year prior. This was a sign that it was meant to be!

Nice backdrops for photos?

The grounds at Chez Charlene are spectacular I could not have pictured a more beautiful setting. It rained on our wedding day but our pictures were still amazing. The sky was perfect and the stables were so beautiful and suited us perfectly as we are both animal lovers.



*“Our hearts were set on
getting married at
Chez Charlene.”*



Venue: Chez Charlene, Pretoria – www.chezcharlene.co.za

Wedding gown: JS Collections

Hair & Make-up: Jessica Herman

Décor: Chez Charlene

Flowers: Caari Flora

Photography: Gareth Digital Photography

Your dress – specially made or bought?

As I only had 12 weeks before the big day I unfortunately could not have a dress made and had to buy something readymade as designers can take months to make a dress. At first I had no idea what I wanted or even where to look but, after a million fittings, the dress I chose was the one where I walked out of the fitting room and instantly had my Mom in tears!

Gorgeous tiara. You obviously did hair trials?

I saw an image on Pinterest, which was the inspiration for what I wanted. After searching far and wide I eventually found the exact one I was looking for. I actually only had one hair trial. Jessica Herman is an amazing hair and makeup artist and I have followed her on social media for a long time. As she had just relocated to Johannesburg, I just had to book her for my special day and she turned my inspiration into reality.

Tips for choosing bridesmaids?

Always select the special ladies closest to you as this makes your day even more meaningful. My girls were amazing. It really helped that we all stayed in one house, which made the planning a whole lot of fun. They shared in my journey from start to end and are still at my side today.

Your colour scheme?

Rose gold and blush are my two favourite colours. I wanted to keep soft tones and they were the perfect combination. My inspiration, which I sent Charlene, was nothing compared to what she created. I was totally blown away when I saw the soft pinks and the gorgeous little rose gold details.

How many guests?

We initially wanted 120 guests and had to cut down to 80 as per the Covid 19 regulations. But, we soon realised that we would be able to have intimate time to spend with each of our guests and it was definitely the way to go.

Your first dance song?

Bryan Nhira's 'Till death do us part'. We listened to hundreds of songs and this one just spoke to us. It was the perfect song for our love story.

Honeymoon?

We went to Durban for two weeks over Christmas and New Year. Our dream honeymoon destination is Thailand and we will hopefully soon be able to take the honeymoon trip we really wanted.



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LIZELLE & ANDRÉ RHEEDERS



A dance to a “boereliedjie” lit the flame of this romance.

Was your proposal a surprise?

I did not expect it at all. André phoned me and said he'd hidden a surprise in the car. I found a love letter and at the end, it said we have a reservation at a restaurant. He blindfolded me and I had no idea what was going on! We had drinks on the roof and went down for dinner, where a room was specially reserved for us. All surprised, I turned to look at André and found him on one knee popping the BIG question!

Postponements and a secret wedding?

Our wedding date was 7 May 2020, then Covid happened! When we realised that the lockdown would destroy all our plans, we secretly got married in my mother's house in front of the minister on a Sunday morning. Mom went the extra mile - she cooked and baked through the night making us a perfect wedding brunch. Only food products were available to buy so my sisters picked flowers out the garden for my bouquet and the table. I found a black dress and borrowed jewellery. My youngest sister even styled my hair perfectly. We then set another date for July 2020, which also didn't happen! We ended up having to postpone our wedding celebration by a year. Our final date was 27 April 2021

Your wedding venue?

I partly grew up on a farm and always wished for a farm wedding. Tsekama is close to our farm and I wanted to get married there one day. I only met with Marinda once to discuss everything and she exceeded my expectations and planned the perfect day for me. She specially made my table décor, made cloth napkins, printed my church leaf, made my wedding cake etc. She can do anything! The food was also outstanding. The chapel has big sliding doors and the ceremony was an open plan for air flow, so ventilation was not a problem. The tables were also made smaller. Marinda was very patient and supportive throughout.



“I’d always wished for a farm wedding.”



Venue: Tsekama Wedding Venue, Modimolle – www.tsekama.co.za

Wedding gown: Bridal Room

Hair: Knipit

Make-up: BDL Make-up

Photography: Let's Run Away Yesterday

What time of the day was your celebration?

We had it at 2.30pm - enough time to have a blast before curfew at 11pm.

Did you enjoy dress hunting?

My Mom and I enjoyed the hunt! My first fitting was a disappointment, so we went for a milkshake! Then we passed the Bridal Room and Mom just turned in and asked if we could fit without an appointment. They were so helpful. I knew it was the right dress when I turned and saw my Mom and sister crying like babies! That dress was however decided on before Covid hit and as everyone picked up weight during lockdown I stressed whether it would still fit after a year! I also broke my arm in December but luckily I healed and my dress still fitted perfectly!

Your bridesmaids wore flower crowns?

Marinda made the flower crowns. My bridesmaids designed their own dresses and the flower girls chose their own dresses. My flower girls however grew out of their dresses and we had to make a plan!

Explain your table names?

The table names have a lot of meaning in our relationship. Like "Weltenvrede" is our farm's name, where we made a lot of memories together, and "Droogesloot" was my grandfather's farm name.

How many guests?

We had to cut down to 68 – tinged with sadness as we lost our dearest Ouma Moekie to Covid on my wedding day.

Your wedding gifts?

Our wedding day was our biggest gift from our parents. After postponing so many times and getting excited and then disappointed we didn't really care about gifts, we just wanted everyone to enjoy our BIG day with us. Most guests gifted us money.

What worked best on your big day?

My mother's advice. She helped me plan and kept me calm through all the postponements. She is truly my best friend in the whole world.

Any advice for brides-to-be?

Go and look at where you want to take photos. It saves a lot of time.

Honeymoon?

We wanted to go to Bali, but obviously couldn't, so we travelled locally to Knysna and Danabaai.





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TARYN & JARRYD GREYVENSTEIN



After two postponements, this couple had a very happy ending when they eventually got to tie the knot at the spectacular Inkwenkwezi Private Game Reserve in the Eastern Cape.

How did you and Jarryd meet?

Jarryd and I both come from a very small town in the Eastern Cape but, strangely enough, our paths never actually crossed! I eventually met him many years later during a night out with the girls. This tall handsome man caught my eye - we met, we talked, we laughed and the sparks just flew!

Was your proposal expected?

I definitely did not know anything about the proposal; Jarryd did a really good job of keeping it all under wraps! We had been looking at rings for a long time; I saw a few that I absolutely loved and that was about as far as it went - at least that's what was in my mind! Jarryd completely knocked my socks off! We usually take morning walks on the beach with our dogs, and so one day we did as we usually did and he had somehow managed to set up a Message in a Bottle and had "Marry me" written in the sand. A beautiful breakfast picnic had also been set up for us. I was so surprised. It was a really beautiful proposal.

What was the most difficult part of planning your wedding?

The most difficult part was definitely having to postpone our big day, not once but twice, because of the Covid-19 lockdown and restrictions! It was not an easy process as we had to make sure that all our vendors could commit on the next chosen date. This was extremely stressful. Planning a wedding during a pandemic was no fun, but we ended up by having a truly spectacular day.

Were you familiar with Inkwenkwezi as a wedding venue?

Yes, Inkwenkwezi had always been the number one choice on my list of places to get married.



“A few curious Rhino photo-bombed our pictures!”



*Venue: Inkwenkwezi Private Game Reserve, East London
Bridal gown: Lady Marmalaide
Hair: Hair by Nicole Somaroo
Make up: Kelly May Make up
Photos: Paula Adams Photography*

What stood out about Inkwenkwezi?

We had our hearts set on Inkwenkwezi Private Game Reserve and so we didn't even bother to look at any other wedding venues. Inkwenkwezi is such a beautiful place, the nature and the wildlife is truly breath-taking. It's a very special place indeed.

Would you recommend Inkwenkwezi?

Without a doubt, we would definitely highly recommend Inkwenkwezi. We had an amazing time. Their food, hospitality and friendly staff gets a 10/10 from us.

Outdoor ceremony?

We had a beautiful outdoor ceremony and the weather was absolutely perfect on the day.

Did it take long to find your dream dress?

To be honest I had not a clue what type of wedding dress I wanted! This may sound crazy to some, but I went for one appointment, tried on a few dresses, really loved the first one I fitted and that was it for me. One fitting and I was the happiest bride-to-be.

Colour scheme?

Our colours were burgundy with olive green with a bit of peach and dusty blue thrown in.

How many guests?

We had 60 guests at our wedding.

What did you do about wedding gifts?

As Jarryd and I had already been living together for 3 years, we basically have everything we need for our home so we asked for money as gifts.

The most special moment of your big day?

It was seeing my handsome groom waiting for me up at the altar with tears in his eyes! In fact, every moment of our big day was just beautiful.

Any surprises?

Inkwenkwezi is a game reserve but we were still surprised to get a visit from a few curious Rhino that photo-bombed our pictures!

Any tips for brides-to-be?

It's so important to stick to a budget; don't overspend unless you really have to. At the end of the day everyone really only remembers how good the food was and not all the minor little bits and pieces!

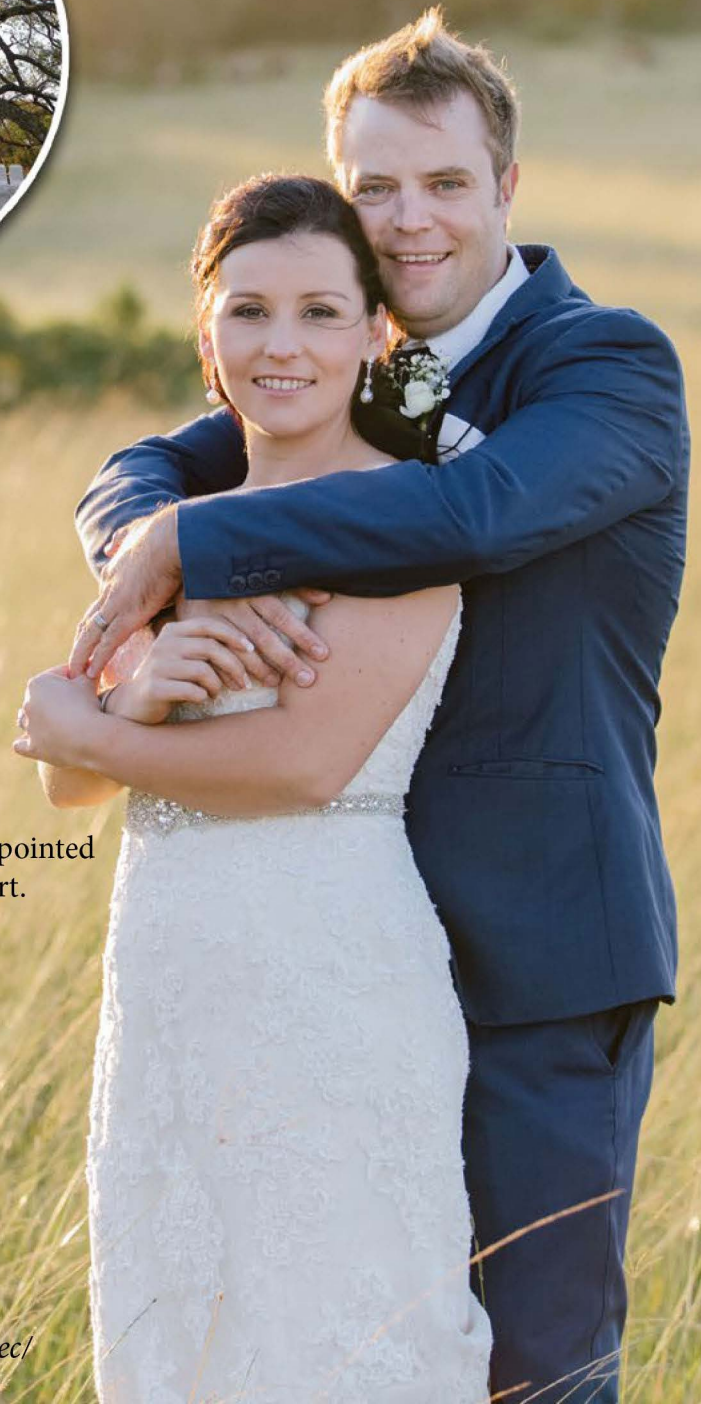
Honeymoon?

Unfortunately, COVID has not been very kind when it comes to planning trips and some time away! Our honeymoon is therefore still in the pipeline but we are hoping to make plans soon - even if it's just for a weekend away.



Inkwenkwezi

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