

Real Brides



August 2021

South Africa's Exciting
Wedding Magazine

*Changing
Wedding Plans*

*Lockdown
Blues*

Pops of Colour

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 there 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



Contents



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Photo: Brightgirl Photography

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4. LINDY & BRANDON RUDDLE

7. Real Brides takes planning to another level

8. CARIANNE & GREGORY VAN ZYL

12. Top Wedding Venue – INKWENKWEZI

16. Magical Memories are made of this – Vredenburg Manor House

20. Top Wedding Venue – Estia Events

24. MIKHAILA & Wendell SPANNEBERG

28. LINDIE & SMANGA CEBEKULU

32. LIZE & NELIS ERASMUS

36. Top wedding venue – Welgevreden Manor

40. BEVISHKA & SHELDON PETERS

45. ALLICIA & RUAN DE WET

SHARE YOUR LOVE STORY...

Our "real" brides featured in Real Brides hail from all walks of life. Each wedding is unique in its own way and offers something different.

If you would like the opportunity to share your photos and your wedding story with our readers, send a sample wedding photo and a list of your service providers to robbyn@topicpublishing.co.za so that we can put your wedding on our list for consideration.

REAL BRIDES is produced monthly. For more info visit www.realbrides.co.za. You will also find us on Facebook.

LINDY & BRANDON RUDDLE



Good things come to those you wait – this couple were engaged after dating for 9 years.

Unexpected proposal?

I was completely shocked. After being together for so long you hope for it, but you never expect it to happen. We travelled to the USA on a trip we had been planning for years and when we left everyone suspected that Brandon would propose in New York but, he had other plans! When we returned we planned a weekend with family to do a belated Christmas. We headed to a game lodge for what was meant to be a game drive with the whole family. I was however told that their flights were cancelled due to bad weather. When we stopped for coffee, overlooking an incredible view, I turned around and there was the love of my life on bended knee. We don't remember exactly what Brandon said except "I have loved you from the moment I saw you & I have asked your Dad". I'm not even sure I said yes! We headed back to the lodge to find our entire family waiting to surprise us!

The most difficult part of planning?

Never knowing if our day would actually go ahead! Originally scheduled for November 2020, we had to postpone to March 2021. We decided not to downscale or elope. We had waited to get married for so long that we wanted to be able to share our day with those closest to us. Our suppliers had also put so much into our day and we wanted the magic they had created to come to life.

Your dream dress?

Completely different to what I imagined myself wearing. A simple design with some sentimental elements added. The lace at the bottom was from my Mom's aunts wedding dress, my Mom's dress and my aunt's dress, so it was very special to me. My veil was embroidered with the initials of the special women in our lives who we had lost. I don't think I could ever part with it.



“We had our Moms as flowergirls!”



*Venue: Seaton Manor House
Dress: Janita Torien
Hair: Kate Style
Make up: Nixon Make Up
Décor & Styling: Oh Happy Day
Bouquets: Oh Happy Day Everlast
Flowers: Joni K
Photography: Brightgirl Photography*

Big entourage?

I had 5 bridesmaids - my sister and girls I have been friends with for over 28 years. Brandon also had his childhood friends. Our entourage was 11 bridesmaids and groomsmen plus our Moms were our flower girls! It was so important that our Moms were involved in the day. We wanted them to be a part of the bridal party and to have a bigger role to be able to celebrate them and all that they have done for us.

Your flowers/bouquets?

Joni K did a fantastic job! We wanted a neutral feel so opted for palms, pampas grass and all dried flowers so we could have them last after the wedding was over. Some guests have them in their homes, and so do we. I wanted each girl to have a personal Everlast bouquet to match their homes so they could keep it as gift.

Did you have to restrict numbers?

We had an outdoor wedding so our guest list could be 200 - we had below what was allowed so didn't have to restrict numbers. Curfew cut the evening short but we had the best time.

Anything save you a chunk of your budget?

We made our own champagne wall and table numbers, which we are going to hire out.

Did you meet your photographer in advance?

Absolutely! The moment we started talking to our photographer we knew we were going to be comfortable and felt 100% at ease and she understood our expectations.

Would you recommend a wedding planner?

Oh Happy Day was one of the first suppliers we booked! Planning a wedding in lockdown is stressful and having a team like OHD took the stress out of this. They took care of every detail/need and the care and love they showed is indescribable. Their contribution was immeasurable.

Your first dance song and why?

Tequila by Dan & Shay. Not a traditional first dance song but it has been our song for years. During the first dance, we had trays of tequila come out to enjoy with our guests.

Honeymoon?

A mini moon due to COVID and we love the bush so decided on two days at Leopard Mountain.



Real Brides Takes Planning To Another Level

Real Brides magazine has taken its service to brides-to-be to another level.

VIRTUAL WEDDING EXPO

Real Brides launched South Africa's first Virtual Wedding Expo. Visit the EXPO www.realbrides.co.za

Enter the Real Brides *VIRTUAL WEDDING EXPO* and you will find an audio visual presentation for each Exhibitor together with a full overview of what they have to offer brides-to-be.

PLUS – You will find a link to take you directly to the Exhibitor's website.

FULLY MOBILE

The Real Brides *VIRTUAL WEDDING EXPO* is fully mobile. You can view it on your Computer, Tablet or Cellphone.

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To view their audio visual presentations or to visit their websites, click on the links below:

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Welgelegen Cherry Estate
Vredenburg Manor House
Sugarbush Hill
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Black Horse
Drostdy Hotel
Klip River Country Estate
Zorgvliet Wine Estate
Oxbow Country Estate
Mistico Equestrian Centre
Buccara Wildlife Reserve
Dunkeld Country And Equestrian Estate



CARIANNE & GREGORY VAN ZYL



This couple met at a dog training school and found that they had plenty of common interests.

How romantic was your proposal?

My proposal was quite romantic - I had no inkling about it! "We" planned a day to explore Haartebeespoort. We went for breakfast at a beautiful restaurant, with me thinking this was just some fuel for the adventurous day ahead. Our first stop was the Haartebeespoort Aerial cableway. We got up to the top and then hiked further up to the place where people paraglide. Finally, at the edge of the cliff overlooking the stunning view, Greg got down on one knee and asked me to marry him. I was in such shock that I forgot to answer him! It was such a spectacular day and one which I will remember forever.

The most difficult part of planning your wedding?

Having to deal with the pandemic and planning a wedding with restrictions became somewhat challenging. We had to postpone our wedding from February to April and the most challenging part was the guest list. Having big families, we had to reduce numbers. Each section of planning had its ups and downs but we remained positive and had very supportive friends and family.

Did you know what wedding dress you wanted?

I had ideas of what I wanted but never really decided on a set dress. I went dress shopping when we were lifted out of the lockdown but unfortunately couldn't have my entourage with me so just my Mom and Mom-in-law accompanied me. But, we made a plan for my bridesmaids to be there one way or another. We had a Zoom meeting to say 'yes to the dress!' I finally found the right one at Bridal Wardrobe in Centurion.

Big entourage, including children?

I knew I needed all those important women by my side for such an important day in my life. They were my sister and three friends that I hold so dear to my heart. I had Greg's nieces as my flower girls and our godchild as our ringer bearer.



"We had a Zoom meeting to say 'yes to the dress'!"



Venue: Ox Bow Country Estate, Bronkhorstspruit. www.oxbowestate.co.za

Make-up: Amy Sprawson

Hair: Deidre Green

Dress: Bridal Wardrobe, Centurion

Cake: Cake Genie

Photography: Chillipix

Much choice when it came to a wedding venue?

We looked at 8 venues in total and then stopped looking after narrowing it down to three. When we got to our viewing appointment at Oxbow Country Estate my heart immediately knew that this was the venue!

What did you like most about Oxbow Country Estate?

The visual aesthetics of Oxbow is beyond words - lush green gardens, the chapel and the pavilion stood out. But, what helped make up our minds was the coordinator TJ Swart who is the most authentic person I met on the wedding venue-hunting experience. I loved his personality, his kindness and the passion for what he does. Through the whole long journey of planning our wedding we became such great friends. The Owners and staff of Oxbow are friendly and helpful, the food was outstanding and the venue is exquisite and just speaks for itself.

What cost more than you thought it would?

The décor cost a lot more than I expected but, for the amazing service and stunning setup we received, we were privileged to have them.

Your theme?

Our theme was aimed at a classical bright, minimal look.

How many guests?

75.

Any hilarious moments?

Though it wasn't exactly very funny at the time, the one amusing moment was when there was a fly trapped in my train. My sister was trying to get it out while I was standing up at the altar and her shoe strap hooked on my veil and tugged on it pulling my head back! It's a moment we will forever share and laugh about in the years to come!

Any tips for brides-to-be getting married during these strange Covid times?

Stay positive and remember that if something goes wrong or is not where it should be, only you will know.

Honeymoon?

My parents booked us a surprise honeymoon for our original wedding date and we had to use it or lose it. So, we had a spectacular honeymoon in the tranquil Drakensburg ... before our wedding!





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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TOP WEDDING VENUES



Inkwenkwezi Game Reserve's prime location in the malaria-free Eastern Cape offers many unique opportunities, as it encompasses five different regional ecosystems and a tidal estuary.

This rich diversity of landscape offers unparalleled wildlife viewing. Inkwenkwezi Game Reserve is just five minutes from magnificent beaches and a short, convenient drive from the East London airport.

Weddings at Inkwenkwezi Private Game Reserve are as romantic and unique as the Wild Coast itself; as unforgettable as the love that brought you together.

Contemporary and yet, authentically African, the perfectly-appointed venue is the ideal mix of wild beauty and modern comfort.

Inkwenkwezi Game Reserve's has a charming open-air chapel with

its red carpet laid out for the bridal couple to walk down to say "I do". The chapel is situated at Emthombeni (under the old wild fig tree) and paradise garden settings with water features incorporating waterfalls and small ponds.

Walking down the red carpet to take your vows in Inkwenkwezi's charming open-air chapel, nestled in the gardens amongst the trees, is the beginning of your happily ever after dreams. To capture this beauty way into the night, strategically placed lights light up the garden.

After the service the couple may wonder into our paradise garden for their photo session. The variety of breathtaking scenes and interesting features will give you the opportunity to have a range of unique photographs to keep as mementoes of your special day. During the photo session your guests are invited to have pre-arranged welcoming drink and snacks or cocktails and canapés – depending on what you have chosen for them – provided by Inkwenkwezi.





Inkwenkwezi focuses on attention to detail so that your wedding is everything you ever dreamed of. Prior to your big day you are invited to meet with to discuss, in detail, the various options available to you.

Once you have taken your vows and are ready to celebrate, you and your guests will enjoy a banquet of a lifetime – made from the freshest, hand-picked ingredients, accompanied by a selection of the finest wines.

You will dance your way into a new life together as music and laughter echo into the starry skies.

On walking into the thatched Emthombeni, you are welcomed and become one with the enchanting gardens when the big sliding glass doors are opened.

Your unique table décor and artistic displays will ensure that your special occasion is not short of being exclusively to your needs. The most magical setting with fairy lights- Tiffany chairs-and soft flowers and fabrics to create the elegance and charm of a romantic fairy tale wedding.

The beautiful, well-designed and equipped bar is operated as per your instructions. You are offered a Cash Bar or a Tab Bar. You are required you to hand in your Tab Bar requirements prior to your special day.

The kitchen will cater according to your requirements and only the finest and freshest ingredients are used. On the buffet, more than generous portions are served.





Inkwenkwezi Game Reserve is a world-class game reserve with an emphasis on luxury and thoughtful details.

Inkwenkwezi has three types of accommodation to offer you and your guests:

- Bush camp tented accommodation: Situated in the reserve.
- Bush Camp offers accommodation for 12 guests (sharing).

All tents have electric lights and twin beds with comfortable Cloud 9 mattresses. From the hilltop site the camp overlooks a valley and each safari tent is positioned on a raised timber deck offering you your own private viewing. Each tent has its own private bathroom resembling a cave.

- Valley Camp Tented Accommodation:
Also situated in the reserve
- Valley Camp offers 12 guests accommodation in 6 custom designed luxury tents, the bathrooms are ensuite with a slipper bath and shower.

Tents are furnished with twin three quarter beds. (The Honeymoon suite has a queen size bed). This tent is situated within the reserve. Guests are welcome to contact Inkwenkwezi if accommodation

is needed for out-of-town guests. We will gladly assist you and arrange special accommodation rates at the 3* Bush Lodge, 4* Valley Lodge, 3* Chintsa Sands Guesthouse and 3*Umnenga Lodge.

Bookings must be made in advance in order to avoid disappointment, and all accommodation is subject to availability
To take a Virtual Tour of Inkwenkwezi – Click on this link
<https://realbrides.co.za/inkwenkwezi-game-reserve/>



Inkwenkwezi

PRIVATE GAME RESERVE



Weddings at Inkwenkwezi Private Game Reserve are as romantic and unique as the Wild Coast itself; as unforgettable as the love that brings you together.

Contemporary and yet authentically African, our perfectly-appointed venue is the ideal mix of wild beauty and modern comfort.

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Please watch our latest video on You Tube:

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MAGICAL MEMORIES ARE MADE OF THIS

Vredenburg Manor House is situated in the heart of the Cape Wine-lands just 14.8 km from the town of Stellenbosch. The Manor House was built in 1800 so this grand old lady is 221 years old and still holds much of its yesteryear charm.

There are 5 bedrooms in the Manor House and two self-catering cottages. Plans are afoot to build some more cottages in the near future in order to increase the accommodation to at least 40pax.

First and foremost, we are a 4-star guest house but do give every wedding that we host, our utmost attention. During our peak season, we do not encourage weddings because we have a lot of long-staying guests from Europe. The average European returning guest will book for two to three weeks.

The minimum stay, between 15 December and 30 March, is 7 nights. Should brides want to get married here during that time, we require them to book all the accommodation too making it the perfect destination wedding. This is subject to change and at our discretion. We are far more accommodating and flexible for morning or afternoon weddings during this time.

All rooms are a carefully blended combination of contemporary that complement this grand old lady. All rooms have modern full bathrooms, air-conditioning and underfloor heating for the colder winter months. The lounge, breakfast room and library all have fireplaces, so you can put your feet up and enjoy good conversation, a lovely glass of red wine or a good book. We also have pyjama lounge for the 4 rooms upstairs in the Manor House. This is a perfect area for the bridal party to get ready if you book the whole house.

Please visit www.vredenburgmanor.com to download our wedding packages.

We make sure that our guests leave with the stuff that magical memories are made of and with the intention of returning. We often have guests who book for one night and then end up staying for a week!

Our two managers are the resident chefs. The fact that they love what they do can be tasted in their food because they cook with pure love and attention to detail.

We have our own wine labelled under the name of Vredenburg Manor House. We do not sell it to the outside public, so you have to either be a guest or attend a function here to enjoy the privilege. The wine is not produced on the farm. The grapes are from our sister company, Helderzicht.

Our beautiful pocket gardens have the most amazing views of either the old Manor House or the Helderberg mountains. There are endless options to choose from for your reception and ceremony. We also have a back-up plan for rainy weather.

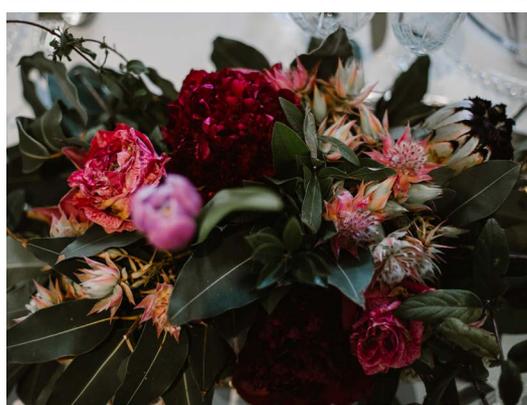
The old winepress was built in 1818 and has that old rustic charm that is very in fashion at the moment.

The latest addition is our enchanting Boma that is perfectly situated and sunken. One can enjoy the most amazing sunsets and views of the mountains. Apart from the Boma/Fire pit, it offers a bar, dance-floor and braai. The perfect space to end off your wedding function.



Please visit www.vredenburgmanor.com to download our wedding packages.







Vredenburg MANOR • HOUSE

GUESTHOUSE, CONFERENCE AND FUNCTION VENUE

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TOP WEDDING VENUES



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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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MIKHAILA & WENDELL SPANNEBERG



Choosing a venue with a very efficient wedding coordinator made planning this wedding look like the proverbial walk in the park!

How did you and Wendell meet?

We first met at his nephew's birthday party. I am good friends with Wendell's sister-in-law and she invited me to her son's birthday party.

Tell us about your proposal and how long you were engaged.

Wendell took me out to a fancy restaurant and then he popped the question. He proposed in August last year and we got married in December of the same year. Wendell and my late Mom did not want to wait - they were both so excited. I'm so glad we did not wait and that I could have my mother at my wedding as she very sadly passed away shortly after our wedding.

Tell us about choosing your wedding venue?

I joined a lot of wedding groups on Facebook prior to getting married and they recommended a lot of different venues. We viewed three venues in total, but my heart was already set on the first one that we viewed and that was Chez Charlene. From the moment I walked into Chez Charlene I fell in love with the place. The venue just ticked everything on my checklist. My favourite part of the venue was the chapel.

Did your venue provide a wedding coordinator?

Yes, they did. Deone was my coordinator and she's amazing. She's so friendly, professional and most importantly she's also very patient! We could not have done it without her.

Did you face any Covid restrictions?

Fortunately, there was no having to change our wedding date and postpone or anything dramatic like that, but we did have to put a limit on the number of guests attending in order to comply with the regulations.



A close-up portrait of a bride. She is wearing a white lace wedding dress with a scalloped neckline and a white tulle veil. She is holding a large bouquet of white roses. The background is softly blurred, showing what appears to be a white door or wall.

*“My heart was always set
on getting married at Chez
Charlene.”*

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

Wedding Dress: JS Collections, Centurion

Hair: Hair by Rose

Make-up: Chermene Borens

Décor: Chez Charlene

Flowers: Family friend Daphne Reid

Photographer: Reagan Adams

You got married just before Christmas, was this a good or a bad thing in terms of suppliers etc?

We did not encounter any problems with the suppliers. Our wedding venue mostly supplied everything and we just had to take care of the cake and our photographer. All went smoothly.

Your dress?

We bought my dress. Initially I thought of hiring one, but my mother convinced me to purchase one instead. My mother, mother-in-law, aunt and maid-of-honour helped me choose and I will never forget the look on their faces when we had found the right one!

You included children in your entourage

Yes, we included our nieces and nephews. The children were all very excited to be part of the wedding day, they had lots of fun and did a great job.

You carried a special photo in your bouquet?

The special photo that I carried with my bouquet was of my late grandmother. Though she's no longer by our side, she will forever be in our hearts. She was definitely with us in spirit.

Rain on your wedding day?

It only rained for a little while when we were cutting the cake. Ironically we had everything planned indoors ... except the cutting of the cake and then of course it had to rain! But, it didn't last long.

How many guests?

We had 76 guests made up of 71 adults and 5 children..

How much practice went into your first dance?

Wendell and I attended dance lessons every Wednesday for about a month. The song we danced to was the still popular Thinking out loud by Ed Sheeran.

Who won the "shoe" game?

Me of course! Two words - Girl power - even though Wendell won't admit it!

Anything you wish you had done differently?

No I don't think so, everything worked out perfectly for us on the day.

Honeymoon?

We went to Mount Amanzi at Hartbeespoort Dam for a week and had such a wonderful time. We would definitely love to go back there again one day.



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Perfection is the only option

LINDIE & SMANGA CEBEKULU



A love of beautiful music and singing in their church choir brought this lovely couple together.

How did you and your husband meet?

We met through a church choir where Smanga was a conductor and a soloist in classical music. There was a spark of interest from him and two years later we began preparing to get married.

Were there any traditional/cultural aspects to your marriage?

We went the traditional route of lobola being paid and so on and this took about a year. During these negotiations a marriage date was set for December 2020.

How many wedding venues did you consider?

We actually found and chose a wedding venue, which then unfortunately closed due to the Covid lockdown. This meant that we obviously had to find another venue. So, we didn't have to change the date of our wedding, just the venue, which was Brahman Hills in the Natal Midlands. We got married on 4 December.

Did Smanga get involved in the planning of your wedding?

There were a few things that he had to do but he mostly left it to me. It was easier that way.

Your dress was specially made?

I had my dress made by a designer called Agape Designs by Ntokozo at Gateway. I had some ideas and she drew it from there and then made it. I loved my dress. The same designer also made the dresses for my three bridesmaids.

Your main colours?

There was gold organza and avocado green with bright yellow for pops of colour.

How many guests?

We did have to cut back on numbers to comply with Covid restrictions and ended up hosting around 100 people, which included members of the live band.





“Beautiful gospel music in the chapel and then beautiful smooth jazz at the reception.”

*Venue: Brahman Hills, Natal Midlands
Wedding dress: Agape Designs by Ntokozo
Bridesmaids dresses: Agape Designs by Ntokozo
Hair & Make-up: Lungi & Phumzile
Flowers & décor: E by A Wedding & Function Décor
Marriage Officer: Pastor B.G. Gazu, Covenant Fellowship Church
International
Videographer: Videoccasions
Live Band: Ubizo and Qhubekani Mthwetwa
Stationery: Faschia Design Stationery
Photo Booth: South Coast Photobooth
Photography: Chris McCabe Photography*

Any special guests?

Special guests included Princess Phumzile Buthelezi and Prince Bongimpumelelo Khumalo Buthelezi of Kwa Phindangene; my Mom and my brother; my CEO and Medical Manager and their spouses and Smanga's Principal and her husband.

Tell us about your live band.

They were wonderful and played beautiful gospel music in the chapel and then beautiful smooth jazz at the reception. There were 9 of them in total including Xolani Mdlalose from Joyous Celebration. Xolani sang a beautiful song as I entered the chapel and then also sang at the reception.

Horse & carriage?

Due to time constraints I didn't arrive for the matrimonial in the horse and carriage but we used it to go and have our photos taken after the ceremony, which was exciting and lovely.

Your service providers?

Most of them were recommended by our venue.

Kids in your bridal party?

We had four flowergirls and two page boys, who all behaved very well indeed.

The highlights of your wedding day?

The fantastic chapel overlooking the lake; my beautiful dress with its 3 metre train; the moment I entered the chapel to the most beautiful song and then the horse and carriage. These were just some of the many highlights of my day.

Was curfew an issue?

Not really an issue. Our marriage ceremony and all the formalities took place in the early afternoon and then dinner was served quite early so everything was done by around 8pm. The entire bridal team stayed overnight at the venue and we had our own cottage.

The song you chose for your first dance?

It was "I Don't Want to Miss a Thing" by Aerosmith.

You won a Bride of the Year competition. What were your prizes?

I did. I won a holiday at game lodges in Timbavati plus numerous other super prizes such as cash, cosmetics and clothing vouchers – it was a wonderful surprise.

Honeymoon?

Covid put paid to our original plan of wanting to go to Mauritius for our honeymoon – maybe we will be able to go some other time. Instead we went to Joburg for a week and then spent a week in the Kruger Park.





LIZE & NELIS ERASMUS



This beautiful couple got a wonderful second chance at happiness.

Second marriage for you both?

Not many people get this lucky! I feel like starting with "Once upon a time" as our wedding still feels like a magical fairy tale to me! I like to believe we do truly have something unique. Our wedding reflected this - from my wedding dress to the wedding cake!

Your proposal.

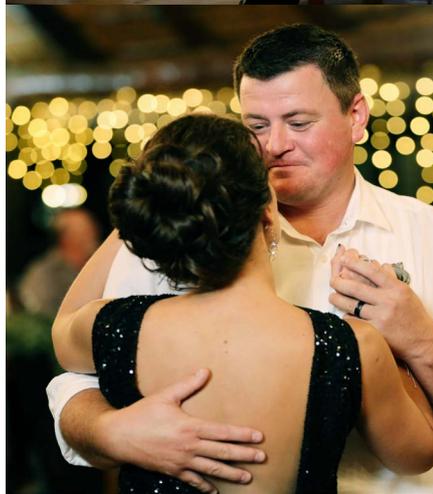
Nelis: I kept trying to plan something big but just could not come up with something that felt right. Being with Lize and the two children is my happy place so, one evening while we were relaxing at home, I just had a feeling that this was the moment I had been waiting for and I was not waiting any longer! Lize: It was an amazingly special moment as Nelis promised to always love all three of us.

You wore a black dress?

Black is my new pink, red, white, purple...you name it, black is my go-to colour for all outfits! Dr. Seuss said: "Today you are YOU, that is truer than true. There is no one alive who is youer than YOU!" This was behind my decision to wear a black dress. I kept true to MYSELF. I proudly walked down the aisle in a magnificent pitch-black dress, shimmering with black sequins. I also had a 5m veil. Wearing that black dress made me feel majestic on our magical wedding day!

Unusual engagement ring?

I wanted something unique - to reflect the beauty and uniqueness of our relationship! We chose a salt and pepper diamond, as every single one cut, is unique. A designer made both my engagement ring with the salt and pepper diamond and small clear diamonds, and my wedding ring with small black diamonds. Unique and perfect.



"Black is my go-to colour for all outfits!"



*Venue: Tsekama, Modimolle – www.tsekama.co.za
Hair: Marieta Fourie, Salon Marieta, Nylstroom
Make-up: Thelma Botha, Beautiful Beginnings, Nylstroom
Flowers, décor & cake: Marinda Turvey, Tsekama
Music: Schalk Burger
Photography: Matthew de Jager, Impact Photography & Motion Studios*

Bridesmaids also wore black?

Yes! They complemented my dress perfectly? My sister, Madeleen Willemse; my sister-in-law, Elzette Botha; my best friend and cousin, Michelle van der Merwe and my gorgeous daughter, Zelri van Dyk. They surrounded me like a cloud of love, laughter and encouragement keeping me perfumed and powdered from dawn till after dusk! We laughed and cried together, drank champagne, had our hair and make-up done and so enjoyed the togetherness as they supported me emotionally and shared in my happiness.

Your children were involved?

Zelri and Zian were involved from day one. It is as much a change to their lives as it is to Nelis and I. We wanted them to feel included in building this new family and they were both part of the wedding entourage.

Did Covid interfere with your plans?

We got married under lockdown Level 3 with restrictions on the number of guests. But, that had no impact on our wedding. Close family and friends made up the 54 hand-picked guests. Nelis thanked every single person attending by name! You don't get to do that with a big guest list!

You were in good hands at Tsekama?

Tannie Marinda is one of those people who turns into a friend! They helped with plans and ideas and made everything gorgeous and perfect! Without them I would have been lost. Marinda and her team hosted our dream wedding – down to the smallest detail.

Did you stay at Tsekama?

Our entire bridal party and all our guests stayed over at Tsekama. We made an entire weekend celebration of it, starting with a braai on the Friday night; the wedding on Saturday and ending with breakfast on the Sunday.

Your first dance song and why you chose it?

Nobody but you by Blake Shelton. Listen to the entire song ... to understand why we chose it.

Unusual "cake"?

It was a dry wors, biltong and cheese cake. The irony is, I am a vegetarian! But, Nelis and our families love biltong and dry wors. The cake was a big hit!

Your most sentimental wedding gift?

With the help of my mother, Zelri and Zian gifted us a Bible. Very precious, coming from our children being the solid foundation we want to build our marriage on - the Word of God.

Honeymoon?

We to the Sabi Sands Game Reserve. We were spoilt rotten and had some magnificent game viewing..





Tsekama Lodge

Wedding and conference venue

www.tsekama.co.za



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The Lodge is a mere 130 km north of Pretoria near the Kranskop Toll plaza and offers the ideal location for a wedding with a difference.

Imagine your ceremony in the natural splendor of the African bush with buffalo, giraffe, zebra and a wide variety of antelope partaking in your wedding celebration.

Please note we have a 80 guest minimum and a 300 guest maximum.

Contact Marinda: 082 416 2363 or Ilze: 084 497 8388
e-mail: info@tsekama.co.za



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It is called Cosmos Country because it is this area that annually explodes with varying pink and white cosmos flowers during autumn, a breath-taking sight for any visitor.

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Welgelegen Manor is equally a perfect wedding venue option near Johannesburg, or as a romantic honeymoon choice for couples looking to make their new beginnings extra special.

The four suites in the manor house are exceptionally large and overlook the pool and side rose garden whilst the four suites in the carriage houses offer two twin suites on the upper level and two garden suites with entrances to the inner rose courtyard.

All of our luxury accommodation options at the Manor stay true to Welgelegen Manor's classic English residential style. The eight suites fuse contemporary comfort with the timeless glamour and heritage associated with this historical property.

Hand-in-hand with the luxury of your rooms and facilities, the extraordinary dining at Welgelegen Manor is an experience on its own. Welgelegen Manor's resident chefs ensure luxury dining experiences during your stay.

Whether it's a picnic in a secluded spot on the estate or gardens, a lavish celebration dinner in the private dining room, or dinner a deux in your suite, our passionate staff will ensure your meal is a special experience.

After your gourmet dining experience and a day spent exploring the beautiful sights and scenery the Manor has to offer, we welcome you into your classic, elegantly perfected accommodation for the night. All of our luxury accommodation options at the Manor stay true to Welgelegen Manor's classic English residential style.



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The eight suites fuse contemporary comfort with the timeless glamour and heritage associated with this historical property. Each suite offers exceptional grace and comfort with views over the landscaped terraces, pool or rose gardens.

The bathrooms are welcoming and spacious, offering a unique combination of style and function. The four suites in the manor house are exceptionally large and overlook the pool and side rose garden whilst the four suites in the carriage houses offer two twin suites on the upper level and two garden suites with entrances to the inner rose courtyard.

The Carriage House Suites (Luxury Suites), the twin suites on the upper level of the Manor House, offer beautiful views of the grounds. These rooms accommodate either single beds or a king size bed, and all rooms have en-suite bathrooms.

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Contact us today for more information on booking your escape, your wedding and conferencing facilities, or about our current specials and packages. We will tell you how we can help you create the perfect day – we promise to give all our attention to every detail, and that we will sure that the day goes as smoothly as possible.

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Welgelegen Manor is situated 30km south of Heidelberg, Gauteng. Please see our map for more information on the best possible routes from your side of the country, or contact us directly for assistance.



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BEVISHKA & SHELDON PETERS



Chatting on the pioneering Chat App Mxit as teenagers led to this gorgeous couple becoming an item back in 2010 and they've been together ever since.

How did Sheldon propose?

We went on a road trip to the Drakensburg - under the false pretense that we were going to celebrate my father's upcoming birthday! Once we arrived, I was in awe of just how beautiful the scenery was - lush green mountains surrounded the hotel in every direction. Sheldon convinced me that my father was waiting for us at the hotel's clubhouse on the golf course and that we needed to take a golf cart to get there. He had pre-arranged for the golf cart to stop at a spot he had picked out and had a picnic basket and champagne hidden. Once we got to the spot Sheldon told me to climb off the golf cart to get a better view of the stunning scenery. As I walked to the edge of the putting green, Sheldon marked a spot for the driver to stand in order to capture the moment and then got down on one knee and waited for me to turn around so he could ask me to marry him.

Did you choose your own engagement ring?

No, I didn't. Sheldon knows exactly what I like and I trusted that, when the time came, he would (and did) choose the perfect ring.

You had to postpone your wedding?

Initially we wanted to get married on our 10-year dating anniversary, which was 25 July 2020. That gave us around 4 months to prepare. However, due to Covid, we had to postpone to 26 April 2021.

How many wedding venues did you consider?

I lost count! Beautiful scenery was a prerequisite. Many viewings later, my sister-in-law suggested that we have a look at the Bell & Blossom Wedding Venue in Montana, Pretoria. We were truly blown away and decided then and there that it was the perfect venue for us.



“Marrying my high school sweetheart was the highlight of my day.”



Venue: Bell & Blossom, Montana, Pretoria

Wedding gown: The Bridal House SA

Hair: Pelos Bonita Hair Studio

Make-up: Raeel Amod

Cake: Edgar Francis Peters, my Father-in-law

Photography: Salt & Pepper Photography

Where did your ceremony take place?

Our ceremony took place in the beautiful Nazareth House Chapel in Waterkloof, Pretoria. The charming architecture, coupled with white marble and gold-trimmed finishes, made us feel like we had stepped into a church you'd find anywhere in Europe.

Easy to find your dream dress?

I found a dress with ease and just changed a few elements of the original design to give it an extra special touch.

Did you and your girls do hair trials, and did they help choose their dresses?

Due to Covid it was difficult to assemble all the ladies to plan these elements. So, the majority of this planning happened on our WhatsApp group. I provided the colour scheme and let them each decide on what hairstyles, dress styles etc. they wanted to have on the day.

Wedding favours?

A wooden jewelry box, painted gold, with our wedding logo lazer-cut onto the lid. Placed in the box, were customised face masks with the guest's name and our wedding date and logo.

Special four-legged member of your entourage?

Our fur baby, Jasmine, was the co-ring bearer and was walked down the aisle with our rings attached to her collar! She also had a special place at the reception, reserved just for her.

How many guests did you have?

We had to cut back numbers from 160 to just 60 guests.

What did you do about gifts?

The pandemic has created financial difficulties for many, so we decided not to ask for any gifts.

Something you will always remember?

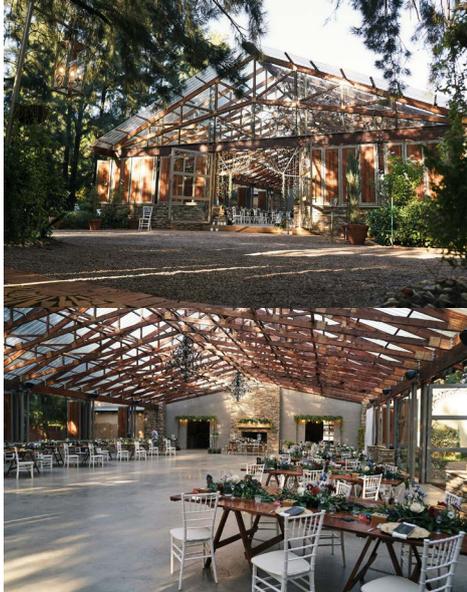
My father-in-law and I baked novelty cakes together as a hobby. We were honored to have him make our wedding cake for us but he sadly passed away shortly after our wedding. When I look back at pictures of our wedding cake, I have treasured memories of all the fun we had baking together.

The highlights of your day?

Marrying my high school sweetheart. That's all that really mattered in the end.

Honeymoon?

We first went to Timamoon Lodge in Hazyview then travelled to Thonga Beach Lodge in Manzengwenya and had the best time.





Bell & Blossom Wedding Venue is a one-of-a-kind venue in Pretoria, nestled in a forest like surrounding with stunning evergreen gardens.

Our unique reception hall with a translucent roof, exposed timber trusses and impressively large chandeliers creates a magical and unforgettable evening with friends and family. Hundreds of fairy lights and a large cosy fireplace makes the venue come to life at night.

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ALLICIA & RUAN DE WET



A long distance relationship culminated in a beautiful scaled down wedding for this couple, which had to be postponed not once but twice!

Was your marriage proposal a surprise?

I knew it was coming because I visited Ruan in Taiwan at the proposal stage. But, the moment was still a surprise. He was very determined to go ahead with his proposal plan despite the fact that on the evening of our engagement the country was given warning that a Level 5 typhoon was approaching and that everybody should stay indoors! Ruan still managed to get his friend's whole restaurant for the evening - just for the two of us.

Did you choose your own engagement ring or did you drop big hints about it?

Funny story... I actually had to go and pick up my own ring to take it with me to visit Ruan in Taiwan. We looked at rings in both Taiwan and South Africa and found the perfect ring in South Africa. But the ring wasn't ready for collection before Ruan left SA at that time.

Invitations – how did you send them out?

All invitations were sent out using a wedding website - except for close family who received their handmade invitations personally.

Did the Covid restrictions interfere with your wedding plans?

Yes, they did. We were supposed to get married last year and we had to postpone our wedding not once but twice! In the end we decided to postpone until this year and, lucky for us, our next date landed right between two lockdown levels.

Which service providers did you find the most difficult to choose and why?

I would say our venue. We had to change venues because of Covid and the wedding taking place in a different season.





*“Our wedding car
was a 1957 Austin
A35 inherited from
my grandfather.”*

*Venue: Bell & Blossom
Hair: C_morr.hairart
Make-up: Alienka Artistry
Bridesmaid's dresses: Ciska Barnard Couture
Flower girl dresses: Made by my Mom (Crystal Linings)
Décor & flowers: Crystal Linings Party Hire
Cake: Licique Cupcakes
Photography: Ross Images Photography*

More guys than girls in your entourage?

We just felt that we wanted to choose those people closest to us, no matter the number.

Two different dresses?

The dress I chose at the end of the day is not what I thought I wanted at all. I wanted to have the 2 in 1 dress feeling. My initial idea was to have one fitted dress with a ball gown skirt over that dress. But when trying on dresses I kept going back to the style that I ended up choosing. But, I still wanted two dresses. Thus I had one completely different dress for the reception part of the wedding. The second dress was for that Wow factor when we opened the dance floor. The colour was an "in the moment" decision and it happened to match our wedding colours. And I am so glad I chose it because it was much easier to dance in and to enjoy the rest of the evening without have to carry around a heavy wedding dress.

Explain the toppers on your cake?

We chose Marvel characters that we thought best suited us as cake toppers and personalised them. The Lego was just because I also love building Lego! It was also part of our 'something borrowed'. Borrowed from my nephew, who loves building Lego even more than I do!

Quaint old bridal car?

Our wedding car was a 1957 Austin A35 inherited from my grandfather who was an avid collector of old cars. My father even got offered a ridiculous amount for the car on his way to our wedding venue. The offer was obviously declined!

How many guests?

We originally planned on having 100 guests with us but, because of the fluctuating Covid regulations, we decided to invite 60 of our closest family and friends.

The best piece of advice you could give to a bride-to-be?

Your wedding planner book/file is your best friend. Being well organised is key. On your big day however just forget all about everything and everyone. It's your special day so just go and enjoy it.

Honeymoon?

We have actually booked our honeymoon in Greece and are just waiting for it to be safe to travel again.





The Clarendon

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