

HOT

Tying the knot in our sunniest season?
Our experts answer your dilemmas

TOPIC:

summer style

This issue's
experts



Andri Benson
Wedding planner



Isabel Smith
Wedding planner



Joanna Moody
Caterer



Joanna Rhodes
Florist



Rachel Hill
Cake designer

We're stumped for
summer themes



Q My partner and I want a memorable theme or colour scheme for our summer wedding but are struggling for ideas. Can you help us?

A *Andri says:* The most memorable weddings are those filled with personal touches so I would suggest that you and your fiancé think about what you love most about this time of year. Perhaps there is somewhere you like to go to together during the summer months, or an activity you like to do. Do you love picnics in the park, music festivals or beach holidays?

Once you have narrowed it down consider colours, for example bold, hot tones for a bright feel or cool pastels for a fresh and pretty look. Consider the sounds, foods and smells you associate with summer too. You can then select particular foods in your menus, use certain scents to influence your choice of flowers and let songs provide the inspiration for your entertainment. By doing these things you will begin to build up ideas of what can be incorporated in your big day and such elements will not only reflect a summer feel, but you as a couple.

If you are having trouble visualising your final theme then I recommend spending some time looking through magazines and tearing out any images that represent your idea of summer. Once you have finished it will be easier to pinpoint any dominant themes or colours and you can use this as a mood board of ideas which you can refer to when planning your day.



After a bright colour scheme for summer dates? We say go all out with hot, bold hues

COCKTAILS GALORE

Q I'm currently planning an al fresco drinks reception and want a summery alternative to champagne. Do you have any suggestions?

A *Jo says:* The simple answer is to serve a selection of fabulous summer Bellinis – colourful, beautiful cocktails. They not only make a statement but are great for budgets too as they can make a bottle of cheap bubbly taste sensational – and stretch a little further.

The classic Bellini is peach flavoured but for a twist on tradition, why not serve it in a champagne saucer? Alternatively you could opt for a more unusual variation. Try rose petal Bellinis using an Italian rose syrup topped up with ice cold bubbly, finished with a pink rose petal. A lychee Bellini using lychee purée, champagne and a frozen lychee, which can double up as an ice cube on a hot summer day. I also love Rossini Bellinis, which consist of raspberry purée and bubbly with either a fresh raspberry or red rose petal.

If none of these tickle your tastebuds you could make your own Bellini mix. Try gooseberry and elderflower. Simply stew some gooseberries and caster sugar over a low heat until soft. Strain through a sieve, stir in some elderflower cordial and top up with fizz – summer in a glass!

