

# Our Guide for Holding a Sustainable Wedding

With weddings often being extravagant affairs, many couples wanting to tie the knot are looking towards making their nuptials more environmentally friendly.

Weddings are generally a consumption nightmare and produce a great deal of waste. There's invitations, decorations, gifts, travel, clothing and the list goes on. Many of the items used at a wedding are only used once.

There's an old saying in connection with weddings believed to have been coined in the Victorian era. It refers to the bride and how she can bring good luck to her marriage by wearing:

*"Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue and a silver sixpence in her shoe".*

Superstition perhaps.....but there's some very green advice in that, and with that in mind, here's some green wedding tips!

## Invitations and paper

Use recycled paper wherever possible for wedding invitations; most companies can offer this option. Even the type of ink used for the invitation should be taken into account as some inks can be toxic.

Weddings can generate a huge amount of paper consumption, so give careful thought to items that can be reduced. For example, instead of a program for everyone, perhaps one per couple or group.

## Communications

Throughout the lead up to the marriage ceremony, you'll no doubt have news to communicate with your guests about progress, venues etc. Instead of mailouts or bulky inserts accompanying the invitation, consider starting a web site or blog. This can also be very cost effective also as services such as Blogger.com can provide a blog for you for free. If you've had no experience with setting up a site or blog, companies such as Blogger provide easy to use tools. If you can use a mouse and a keyboard, you can run a blog!

## Catering

Here at the hotel our chefs use the very best of local, seasonal ingredients, which reduces the impact on the environment by reducing food miles.

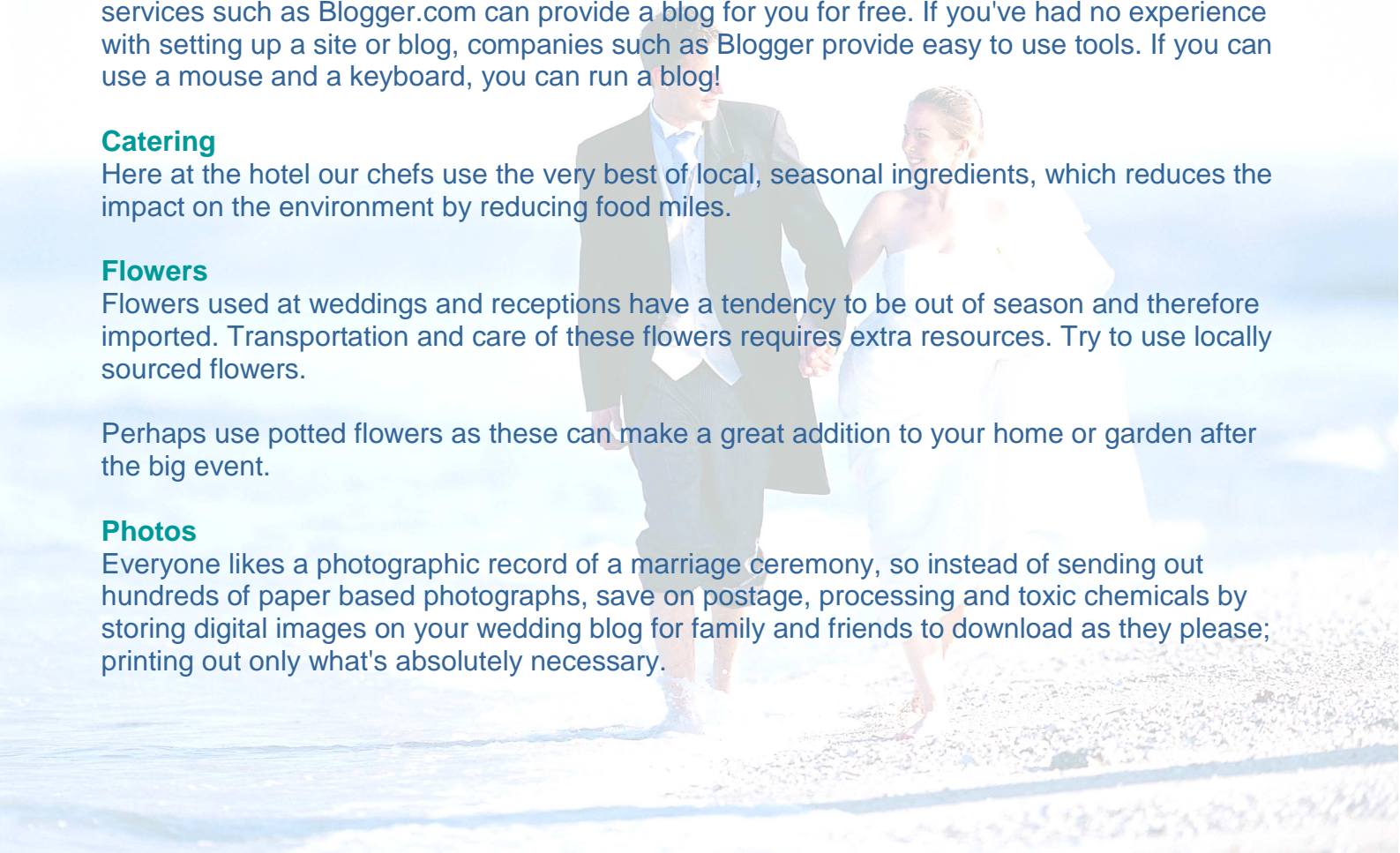
## Flowers

Flowers used at weddings and receptions have a tendency to be out of season and therefore imported. Transportation and care of these flowers requires extra resources. Try to use locally sourced flowers.

Perhaps use potted flowers as these can make a great addition to your home or garden after the big event.

## Photos

Everyone likes a photographic record of a marriage ceremony, so instead of sending out hundreds of paper based photographs, save on postage, processing and toxic chemicals by storing digital images on your wedding blog for family and friends to download as they please; printing out only what's absolutely necessary.



### **Wedding dresses and clothing**

Does your wedding dress really need to be new? Consider a pre-owned dress you can save a on budget too. Also, if you have no desire to keep the dress after the wedding, donate it to a charity who can sell it, creating funds for them and perhaps saving someone else from needing to purchase a new dress.

### **Gifts and Favors**

Weddings can generate all sorts of well-intentioned but unwanted gifts. Consider setting up a green wedding gift registry; which is basically just a wish list of earth friendly products you'd like.

Ask for no gifts be purchased, but donations made to your favourite charities or environmental groups.

For wedding favors, i.e. gifts you give to guests, make those earth friendly too. It could be a carbon offset to go towards their travel, a donation on the guest's behalf, a tree planted in their name or a gift basket of green products.

### **Wedding rings**

The amount of natural resources and energy that go into creating wedding rings is incredible. Consider very simple rings, or perhaps a re-fashioned pre-owned ring and for the truly adventurous; maybe a wooden wedding ring - that may sound a little strange, but these are amazing and very individual creations!

### **Confetti**

Instead of having paper confetti, rice or seed, use flower petal confetti as a beautiful and easily biodegradable option.

### **Wedding cake**

Ask your baker to use organic ingredients only. This shouldn't present too much of a problem and is unlikely to increase the cost of the cake considerably.

Greening your marriage ceremony and reception is sure to be a talking point among your guests, so it's also an opportunity to educate your family and friends about earth friendly living!

Good luck in planning for your green wedding, and if you have any queries just ask our dedicated wedding co-ordinator.

