

The Wonderful World of Weddings

News and products from around the country

In the hen house

If you're looking something different as a last hurrah, help is at hand in the form of a rather beautiful box.

Finding hen party supplies that are both chic and affordable, especially when you still have a hundred other things to organise can be a nightmare – that's where HenBox comes in. It can help you plan your perfect party, and find the best accessories and decorations. It also has a supplier directory that lists hen party companies in the UK, so you'll be spoilt for choice. Check out www.henbox.co.uk to get inspired.



Wrap yourself in luxury

If you've not heard of it already, allow us to introduce you to Age of Reason, a luxury UK print label. Designer Ali Mapletoft creates striking hand-rendered scarves, clothing and lifestyle accessories.

"When a couple decides that they'd like me to create a bespoke silk design for their wedding, it's a real honour," she explains. "The most important thing is to fully understand what their vision is for the day so I can design something that fits in perfectly." The artwork is then scanned and the silk printed before it is later hand sewn. Finally, the finished piece is wrapped in a gift box and sent off to the couple. The whole process takes about 12 weeks and no two designs are ever the same. Check out the website www.age-of-reason-studios.com



Best foot forward

Alice Bow is an artisan brand that produces carefully handcrafted insoles in London from beautiful Italian leather that look and feel good underfoot while delivering breathable, anti-bacterial, long-lasting confidence. As a bride you'll have plenty on your mind during the big day, but at least you can rest assured that you'll be able to wear the shoes of your dreams in comfort. Available at Alice Bow's online store for £16.90 per pair, www.alicebow.com



BIRTHDAY DRINKS

Two leading champagne houses can drink to landmark birthdays this year. Thiénot is celebrating its 30th anniversary while Canard-Duchene is coming up to its 150th birthday. Here are our favourites: Canard-Duchene offers Cuvee Leonie (£29.49), which is the perfect drink for a light starter. The Authentic Rosé (£30) and the Charles VII Blanc de Blancs Grande Cuvee des Lys (£37.99). Thiénot boasts its Brut NV (£33) as well as the Brut Rosé NV (£40.49) – ideal with fruity dessert. Visit www.champagnesandchateaux.co.uk or www.waitrose.com



Discussion room

We love a good debate at *County Wedding Magazines*; let the battle commence!

Should your groom wear a man-gagement ring?



Yes, absolutely...

says **Jo Fletcher-Cross:**

If he wants to, then why on earth not? I hear the tired old line being trotted out that it's just a way for a girl to 'claim her territory'. If that's the case, is that what a woman's engagement ring symbolises too – that she's just chattel? Really? In 2015? Come on, people. As it happens, neither my husband or I have an engagement ring, but if either or both of you want one to show your commitment, then do it and don't worry about convention.



Absolutely not..

says **Annie Cannock**

I understand that it's a nice sentiment, however there's too much emphasis put on engagement rings, not just for men but women too; since when did an extremely expensive diamond solidify a relationship? Also, could someone please inform me what the etiquette of a man-gagement ring is – does it double up as a wedding band, or do you leave it in a jewellery box forever? It just seems like a step too far and I'd rather spend the money elsewhere; like on the honeymoon. Remember, it's your wedding, your rules!

Crowning glory

If you want to adorn yourself in new and innovative jewellery and hair accessories on your big day you might want to look at Ciao Bella Jewellery. Whether you want to embrace your inner Hollywood siren, drift down the aisle as an ethereal princess or are simply looking to be bold and beautiful there's sure to be something suitable.

The company specialises in AAA+ rated cubic zirconia – perfect for when you want to sparkle. See the full range at the website www.ciaobellajewellery.com



NEW RELEASES

Title: *Always the Bridesmaid*

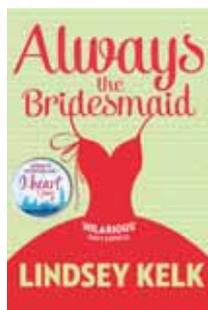
Author: Lindsey Kelk

Publisher: HarperFiction

About: Fans of Lindsey Kelk rejoice – she's managed to equal the sparkling wit of her hugely popular *I Heart* series with her new chick-lit offering, *Always the Bridesmaid*. If you're not familiar with her work, don't worry; this book is so easy to pick up you won't be able to put it down.

It follows lovable Maddie as she hears the news of her friend Lauren's engagement and Sarah's divorce.

What follows is a delightful look at female friendship, relationships and the full range of problems that comes with work, men and wedding planning – highly recommended.



Title: *The Date Night Manifesto*

Author: Sophia Ledingham

Publisher: Troubador

About: Can you really write a whole book on the simple premise of taking quality time out with your partner? It turns out you can, but before you roll your eyes, hear us out – this book's really good. Written by chartered psychologist Sophia Ledingham, *The Date Night Manifesto* provides a fun and informative 'booster shot' for relationships that you'll want to explore because, whether you've been together for two or 20 years, we're all guilty of the same bad habit – complacency. It's full of wise quotes, well-researched statistics and real-life examples. There's also a section on negative patterns, which was eye-opening rather than patronising. After you've got through that, you should both emerge stronger and more connected than ever – and then, all that's left to do is enjoy the list of fabulous and fashionable date destinations!



WHAT'S HOT

STYLISH STATIONERY

Don't let standards slip by signing the register with a boring biro. Check out Pilot's new Acroball range www.pilotpen.co.uk



PERSONALISED CUTLERY

What's better than a beautiful, customised keepsake from your day? The Cutlery Commission prides itself on its attention to detail and the quality shows. Check out www.thecutlerycommission.com



LASER CUT

We're still loving laser cut everything, especially these sculptures of your venue that can be used as centerpieces or a keepsake afterwards. Visit www.booyorkcity.com



THOUGHTFUL WEDDING GIFTS

Grahams has just launched a vintage port bond allowing you to gift wine from the year of the wedding while it's still on the vine for a truly thoughtful gift. Check out www.grahams-port.com



WHAT'S NOT



IMPRACTICAL SHOES

You need to be able to dance the night away so we recommend a photo pair and a dancing pair like this chic Havaianas pair in bridal white.

PHONES IN POCKETS

Nothing ruins a perfect picture faster than a mobile phone bulge in the groom's pocket.