



A fine vintage

Hilary and Alex went for old-time elegance as their wedding theme and were the centre of attention



Clockwise from top left: the ivy covered archways at the wedding venue provided artistic photo opportunities; a touch of blue; the dress is on, just a few last-minute adjustments; glittering hair jewellery of diamante and three-petal flowerbeads; rose petals with pink tips made the vintage bouquet; the bride's in make-up; perhaps he should have practiced tying the cravat...

Hilary Smart & Alex Tapp

Chewton Glen Hotel and Spa

15th September 2006

Photographer: Mason Photography

Alex seemed very friendly when I first met him at a mutual friend's 30th birthday party five years ago. However, he was on another date at the time! A few weeks after we first met I received an email at work asking for a date; unfortunately, I couldn't really remember what he looked like so I guess our first date was more like a blind date. It was a very unromantic proposal – we'd just moved in together and we were at home for the evening sorting things out when he asked me out of the blue, I made him get down on one knee and ask me again. We chose Friday to get married because we wanted to make a weekend of it with friends and family. We chose a country/vintage theme for our wedding and I wanted the colour scheme to fit so, for the bouquet, I chose a mix of Cezanne vintage pink roses with deep raspberry. I felt it was important that the colours suited the venue as well.





Clockwise from top left: check out the rock; the groom, all smiles; like the wedding itself, the bouquet was simple yet elegant; male guests in perfect step; putting their names, and commitment, to paper; stargazer lilies have a heady, perfumed scent

“At the reception, Alex and I were seated at a table in the very centre of the dining room”

The bride's outfit...

Hilary's dress was by Vera Wang from The Wedding Shop in Selfridges, London. The bride chose it for its simplicity and elegance and the fact that it was unique. "The design had a lovely 1920s, 1930s feel which I really loved." The wedding shoes, a pair of gorgeous, platinum, metallic slingback sandals, came from Gina.

The groom's outfit...

Alex wore a made-to-measure, three-piece suit by Gieves and Hawkes in London.



The reception...

Hilary and Alex opted to have the ceremony and reception at Chewton Glen Hotel and Spa because it was not too big and relatively informal. It also had fabulous grounds and scenery, the Spa was excellent and the food fantastic. The couple invited their close friends and family to stay for the whole weekend. The weather was lovely in the afternoon, so the wedding party relaxed on the terrace, sipping champagne and nibbling canapes, followed by dinner and dancing in the evening. The tables at the reception were all round and Hilary and Alex were seated at a table in the very middle of the room - the centre of everyone's attention.

The flowers...

Hilary chose a simple bouquet of a large posy of Cezanne soft pink roses. The posy was tied with a wide piece of white gauze ribbon, which was secured with a line of pearl-headed pins. The reception flowers were a beautiful mix of roses and lilies. The roses were in full colour and some with white petals with colour edges. On each table there was a vase of romantic red and cream roses. There were also fabulous stargazer lilies which filled the room with their heavenly scent.



Countdown from top left:
nuptial passion; say 'cheers';
there was some fine headwear
on display; the bride's sisters
played the music; romantic
roses; Hilary's brother-in-law
on the cello; a happy guest;
the cake was topped with
fresh flowers; dining by
romantic candlelight; guests
milling about on the terrace;
the guests were all smiles;
confetti cones; a helping hand



“We made champagne truffles as favours for all the guests”





SPECIAL DETAILS

Your best idea?

Our parents each hosted a family table, which worked really well.

What were big expenses?

My wedding dress.

What pleased you most?

We decided to have photographers who would capture the moments as they happened rather than have formal photos. We love the end result.

What was a godsend?

Without a doubt, our friends and family. On the morning of the wedding, they were running around making confetti cones and writing place name cards.

Best money-saving tip?

We brought our own champagne and just paid the corkage charge.

Your advice for brides?

Don't get stressed out about having everything coordinated and matching, it really doesn't matter and nobody will notice on the day!

The favours...

With the help of her best friends, Hilary made champagne truffles as favours for all the wedding guests.

The cake...

On the outside, the cake looked like the traditional wedding cake, with its three tiers and white icing, decorated with bands of white satin ribbon and delicate piped icing detail. On the inside, the bride and groom's personal preferences came to light – one layer was a traditional fruit cake, the other two tiers were carrot and lemon cake.

The entertainment...

A local DJ played music all evening; the first dance was *The Way You Look Tonight* by Rod Stewart. "I wish I'd practised my first dance!"

Special touches...

Hilary comes from a musical family and, for her wedding, four of her family created a musical quartet comprising her three sisters and brother-in-law. The family quartet played as they walked up the aisle. After the ceremony, when Hilary and Alex walked down the aisle as husband and wife, the quartet played a specially arranged version of *Fly Me to the Moon*.

The most special moment...

Hilary says that walking down the aisle and seeing her husband-to-be was fantastic, and knowing all their friends and family were there was unforgettable. After the ceremony, Hilary and Alex went to have some photographs taken on their own. "It was lovely to be able to spend a short amount of time when it was just the two of us."

STOCKISTS

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