

and the answer is...

To ask Debbie a question, simply email her via www.youandyourwedding.co.uk



ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Debbie Codd

Q I'm worried that only meeting a wedding photographer once or twice before the day means they won't achieve what I want. Can you put my mind at rest that this won't be the case? Jan, Poole, Dorset

You should trust your instincts when meeting photographers and go for someone you gel with and who knows exactly what you expect of them. Also make sure you look at a full selection of photos from their previous weddings, not just the best ones from a number of weddings. One great service I recently came across by Mason Photography (01264 712135, www.masonphotography.co.uk) offers customers a pre-wedding shoot. "For us, the key is getting to know and understand our clients and what they really want from the day," says Louise Mason. "We work with them during the planning stage, so we can create wedding images that will knock their socks off." The two- to three-hour shoot allows everyone to get used to working together and following the photo session your images are presented to you for feedback. Wedding packages start from £1795.

Q I'd like to give my bridesmaids and pageboy a memento of the big day. Can you recommend anything suitable? Alison, via email

You should take a look at 2 Little Boys (www.2littleboys.com), which does great scrapbooks for both children and adults. The *This Is My Day As A Bridesmaid* and *This Is My Day As A Pageboy* books, £14.99 each, would be particularly suitable. They have colourful backgrounds, spaces for photographs and sections for them to write in their favourite moments, the food they've eaten, and so on. The books include a reusable camera with a flash and come in a handy carry case.



Q My partner and I live together and we'd like to get parts of our house redesigned. Is there anyone who offers this as a gift list service? Cassandra, London

Get in touch with top interior designer Katharine Pooley (above) who has a home interiors shop on London's Walton Street (020 7584 3223, www.katharinepooley.com). As well as traditional wedding list items, such as china, glass, linen, larger items such as sofas and individually commissioned artworks and sculptures, she is offering bespoke interior design as part of her gift list service. After an initial consultation, Katharine and her team of experts will work with you to propose a suitable gift list. They will study the floor plans of your home for possible amendments, advise on the style of the items you choose and even suggest flooring, wall and ceiling finishes.

Q I don't have the budget to hire a wedding planner but I would like a bit of expert guidance. Who can offer this service? Tracy, East Grinstead, East Sussex

Take advantage of the experts at your venue and suppliers such as photographers and florists. They're likely to have done lots of weddings and can give you tips and ideas. Or why not sign up for a workshop? Eleganza Weddings (01273 480022, www.eleganzaweddings.com), based in Lewes, East Sussex, runs courses for brides who want guidance but still want to plan the day themselves. The workshops are informal and anyone involved in your wedding can attend. You'll be able to ask questions and suppliers will be brought in to give an insight into their area of expertise. Workshops cost £65 per person.

Q I'm not keen on clubs so for my hen weekend I prefer gentle activities.

Any ideas? Jenny, Worcester

The Hen House (01584 819868, www.brookfarmberrington.com), close to Ludlow in Shropshire, is the for-

stable block of Brook Farm and offers country hen weekends with a difference. Owner Sarah Wirt offers two-day parties where up to six hens learn how to create flower arrangements, give an aromatherapy massage or make jewellery – even their wedding rings. Other activities on offer include hill-walking, sightseeing and beauty treatments. A two-course costs £180 per person, including breakfast, lunch, dinner and wine on the first night and a visit to a restaurant on the second night.

