

Ask the Expert: Are wedding planners only for the rich and famous?

12:11pm Monday 23rd November 2009

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This is a common misconception in wedding world – and it's certainly not true!

Wedding planning in the UK is steadily growing as the savvy bride learns the huge advantages of having a planner on board to assist with their wedding.

The US are certainly still the market leaders when it comes to hiring a wedding planner – they have been doing it for years and in the US its considered a necessity and not a luxury.

Planners across the UK are on hand to offer a wide range of services to couples for all kinds of weddings and for lots of reasons.

Some couples hire the services of a wedding planner because they are busy people and simply do not have the time to dedicate to all the demands which planning a wedding requires.

The average wedding is said to take around 200-300 hours to plan from start to finish which is a lot of time and busy couples who work full time can struggle to find the time to fit it all in.

Some couples opt for a planner to help them because they appreciate the experience which a planner can bring to the couple.

An experienced planner will be on hand to assist with things such as budget advice, where to make savings, how to stick to budget, how to negotiate better rates/deals with suppliers. She can often advise on design ideas and offer inspiration for the big day including theming and colour schemes and how to pull the whole day together perfectly.



A planner can also offer emotional support and etiquette and traditions and be on hand to discuss ideas.

Planners offer a variety of packages – most include the planner actually being at the wedding from early in the day until after the first dance or later into the evening if required.



This means that not only have the couple had help and support all the way through the planning process but also help and support throughout the day which is extremely important.

The planner can then be on hand to trouble shoot, liaise with the suppliers and ensure that the day goes without a hitch! The greatest part of having a planner on hand on the actual day is that if there any on the day issues which arise the bride and groom will not usually know about them – the planner will deal with any issues so the bride and groom don't have to!

This leaves the couple to simply enjoy their day - which, after all, is the most important part of any wedding.

The typical packages offered by wedding planners would be:

Full planning

This means that the services of the planner would be employed from the outset. The planner helps organize the whole wedding, from sourcing and choosing a venue right through to finding all of the suppliers from photographers, videographers, caterers, transport, wedding cake, music, entertainment, flowers and even the favours on the tables.

You can usually include RSVP management with this package as well as help with table plans and seating. This is the most comprehensive service and planners usually charge on a percentage of the wedding budget – normally around 10-15% – but most planners will be able to save you money by passing on preferential rates and helping you save by advising you where you can make changes to save money.

Partial planning.

This service is great for the couple who would like to plan some of the wedding themselves and then add in the services of a planner for certain things such as sourcing some of the suppliers. This is usually priced based on how much help the couple would need but for help with sourcing around 3 suppliers and attendance on the day you may look to pay anything around £600-£800.

On the Day Management.

This is a great little planning service which couples can add fairly close to their wedding day. Usually a few weeks before the wedding the planner will meet the couple and take details of all of their plans and suppliers.

The planner would then be on hand between the meeting and the wedding ensuring a schedule for the day is created and all the suppliers are aware of the timings. The planner would be there on the day to help the day run smoothly. Typically you should look to pay around £300-£400 for this type of service.



Overall, its important to remember that whilst you may think the costs of a planner will be out of your price range give a planner a call and arrange to have a consultation to discuss your wedding plans – you may be pleasantly surprised!

Most planners offer an initial consultation free of charge and will usually come to your home to discuss.

If you hire the services of a planner for full planning services you will usually find that the planner can negotiate better rates for you with suppliers and can often save you money. Sometimes a planner will be able to save you more than you pay them to help you - which means you have saved money AND had their expert advice and help!

Whilst the planner takes the strain for you, the final decision always rest with the bride and groom, so this still leaves the couple firmly in the driving seat.

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