

THE UK'S BEST MONTHLY WEDDING MAGAZINE

# Perfect Wedding

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**“I've got too  
many guests!”**

How to solve those  
big day dilemmas

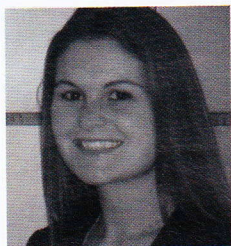
**THEMES for 2011**

RECEPTION TRENDS \* HOT NEW INVITES  
HEN PARTY IDEAS \* STATEMENT DETAILS



# HOT TOPIC

## Can I ask my guests to help pay for the wedding?



**LISA SABIN**  
IS DIRECTOR OF BOUTIQUE WEDDING PLANNING CONSULTANCY JUST BESPOKE (JUST-BESPOKE.COM)

### YES, SAYS LISA SABIN

"In the current climate people are more mindful of the expense of a wedding and are often prepared to chip in. With this in mind, I don't think it is unfair to ask guests to contribute to the day in one form or another."

However, I would avoid asking for money outright as weddings can be expensive for guests too! Instead, have a look at your guest list and identify people who can help in other ways - perhaps you have an artistic friend who could make your invites, or someone who is a dab-hand with flowers to create the bouquets. In return, you could buy them a present, it will still be cheaper than paying for professional help.

You could also instigate a 'bring your own' policy for drink (if your venue allows) so guests can avoid having to pay on the night and you don't rack up a hefty bar tab.

Small measures like this will all help to reduce costs and you will probably find that your family and friends are flattered to have been asked to contribute to your special day and relish the opportunity to get involved and help."

### NO, SAYS NIKKI FOSTER

"Asking people to pay for the privilege of attending your big day is a very contentious area - and in our view it's a big 'no no'."

Our advice is always to arrange a day that suits your budget for the number of people that you want to attend... if you can't afford a huge, lavish wedding you shouldn't have one. Either make it a smaller, intimate wedding or have a small ceremony and a big party afterwards, which eliminates expensive food costs.

You don't have to offer a free bar or pay for accommodation but you should fund everything else yourselves.

It is an honour to be invited to a wedding. People appreciate how expensive it is and feel very carefully selected.

If you start asking guests to pay then some really important guests may not be able to afford it. Don't forget that they will also need to pay for outfits, hats, presents, often accommodation and sometimes even take time off from work. Make your wedding day as lavish as you can afford but keep it real, it is about love." ■



**NIKKI FOSTER**  
DIRECTOR OF I DO DESIGNER WEDDINGS, WEDDING PLANNERS (IDODESIGNER WEDDINGS.CO.UK)

### Over to you...



**MARY O'MALLEY**  
**27, LONDON**  
"ASKING FOR A CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS YOUR HONEYMOON IS FAR POLITER!"



**GEMMA SMITH**  
**23, BERKSHIRE**  
"I WOULDN'T FEEL COMFORTABLE, IT'S YOUR DAY THAT NOBODY'S ASKED YOU TO HAVE."



**SAM WINDSOR**  
**34, HAMPSHIRE**  
"IF YOU'RE ON A BUDGET, IT'S FINE TO ASK GUESTS TO CONTRIBUTE IN OTHER WAYS."