

Romance all around



Laura Noonan and Ian O'Connell have really set the bar very high when it comes to the perfect wedding.

Laura from Carraig na Bhfeair and Ian from Albert Road in Cork city, tied the knot in front of their friends and family on 1 September 2018 and what a wonderful day it was. We just had to find out all about their big day so we asked Laura to give us the low down on the couple's wedding day.

Where did ceremony and reception take place?

"Our wedding ceremony was a civil ceremony officiated by Rose Mummery of Spiritual Ceremonies and it took place at the Kinsale Hotel & Spa overlooking beautiful Oysterhaven Bay. We really wanted everything under the one roof. It made such a difference to just arrive the day before and enjoy the lead up to our big day. Spiritual Ceremonies and Rose in particular were wonderful to deal with. We chose a civil ceremony as it gave us the freedom to have elements in our ceremony that you would not normally have in a traditional wedding ceremony. The ceremony was very personal and captured us as a couple perfectly.

Following on from the ceremony, we also had our reception in the hotel. Ian had only one stipulation about a wedding venue and that was that it needed to be by the sea. I had been to the hotel once before and there is something serene and idyllic about the location. The venue is surrounded by a patchwork of fields and overlooks Oysterhaven Bay. It was the first (and only) venue we visited. We knew instantly it was for us."

And the dress?

"My dress was an ivory, strapless and lace detailed gown by an Australian designer named Sophia Tolti. I had booked in to three bridal boutiques for wedding dress shopping and tried on about five in each shop. I would 100 per cent encourage any brides to be to make an occasion out of the wedding planning experience.

I brought my mum, my mother-in-law and my sister. We all went for lunch and made a day out of each dressing shopping experience. The first experience was not ideal. I tried on what seemed like a lot of dresses and none were 'the dress' or even close. I felt a bit rushed out of the boutique which is not what you would expect when you are potentially making a big purchase for your big day.

The second experience was at Cinderella's Closet at North Point



PHOTOS: KLICKAPIC PHOTOGRAPHY

Business Park. From the moment I walked in the door, my party and I were given a warm welcome. Karen was my consultant and she went above and beyond for me. I was certain I would not choose a strapless dress but my mum picked one that ticked most of the boxes, apart from straps so I agreed to try it on. After much deliberating about adding straps, it was agreed it looked better without. The strapless dress, a Lady Pia gown, was hard to beat. After a wonderful experience at Cinderella's Closet, we went for lunch and I couldn't get the dress out of my head.

After lunch, we moved on to another bridal boutique but the Cinderella's Closet dress had set the bar very high. Everything paled in comparison to that dress. When I got home after a lovely day, I rang Cinderella's Closet and made an appointment to go back in the following Monday. My consultant Karen came in especially on her day off.

Karen has exceptional attention to detail and recollected every minute detail of what we had discussed during the appointment. This is something that really blew me away. My sister could not make

it to the initial consultation at Cinderella's Closet, so she, along with my mum, dad and my niece Caoimhe came to help me 'say yes to the dress'. There were tears all round!"

Lets rewind for a little bit. Where did the two of you meet?

"Ian and I met in February 2014 when we both worked for a well-known retail chain of stores. We met briefly while he was visiting from another store to oversee a stocktake. I had worked with a friend of his at the time, so I knew of him but that was the first time I had met him. We met again a few weeks later and the rest, as they say, is history.

Ian proposed on Sunday 27 March 2016 - it was Easter Sunday at the time. We were together two years to the day when we got engaged. Ian had booked the romantic cottages for couples in Drinagh, West Cork. I had no idea that he was going to propose that weekend.

He sent me out to the car to get something and when I came back in to the cottage, he was on one knee with a beautiful engagement ring in his hands and asked me to marry him. I was in total shock. We

had a lovely day celebrating drinking prosecco in the hot tub in the Easter sunshine.

The engagement was just under two and a half years. This gave us plenty of time to save up for our special day without incurring loans as a wedding can be an expensive day."

What was the memorable part of the day?

"It was the 'first look' we had on the grounds of the Kinsale Hotel & Spa before the ceremony. We both agreed it would be a lovely experience to capture and would settle the emotions before the ceremony.

Ian had his back to me as I walked out to meet him. I put my hands over his eyes and when he turned around to look at me I will never forget his reaction. We loved the idea of the first look as it is a private moment for us as a couple before the celebrations start. This was captured by our talented photography and videography team Darren Byrne Photography and Film.

The rest of the day passed in a beautiful blur as it went so quickly. We thoroughly enjoyed our day from start to finish."

Any advice?

"I would advise couples planning a wedding sit down together and make a list of the things you want and can afford for your big day. Do a budget and stick to it where possible. However, I would not compromise on quality. We certainly did not go with suppliers because they were the cheapest, and we chose our suppliers based on quality.

We were resourceful and we shopped around for what we wanted. I do love a bargain so I would recommend going to a few wedding fairs as you might get a further discount on the day. Don't be afraid to ask if there is any flexibility on the price as my philosophy is 'if you don't ask you don't get'.

I would advise couples to do research on your prospective suppliers and be confident in the choices that you make. It can be a long stretch from the planning process to the big day, so try not to second guess yourself and the choices you make.

I would recommend have a written record of all agreements with suppliers. Even if you have a phone conversation with a supplier, follow up with an email to have it all confirmed in writing. It makes things straight forward for everyone.

Finally, I would also suggest listening to your own preferences over other people's opinions as it's your day and do it your way. Everyone will mean well with suggestions but stick to your guns."

What was the hardest part to organise?

"The finalised wedding invite list was the hardest to organise because you are waiting for people to RSVP. We made it as easy as possible by giving either text option or an email to RSVP to. Even a week before the wedding, we were still waiting on people. This can be frustrating as it is out of your control."

A special mention to

BRIDESMAIDS

Amy Noonan, the maid of honour
Karen Brosnahan
Claire Brosnahan

GROOMSMEN

Jonathan Galvin, the best man
Stephen O'Connell
Martin McGreevy

FLOWERGIRLS

Caoimhe Noonan-McGreevy
Aoibheann Noonan

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Front page photo: East India dress available from Cinderella's Closet. See page 4 for more.