

## **THE BIG PICTURE**

*By Chris van Zyl – Focal Fusion Photography*

The old cliché holds true – after your wedding, all that is left are your photos. A major concern is that many people book a photographer and yet don't have any idea of what they are going to get. Couples look at a portfolio, briefly speak to the photographer and then leave the rest in his or her hands!

The issues to explore with a photographer are as important as the menu, the décor or the design of the dress. Firstly, consider if you'd prefer the photos to be printed on gloss or matt paper – most photographers suggest matt so that fingerprints do not show if the photos are touched. White borders on the photos can make a marked difference – especially if the photos are mounted on black pages. The borders do not cost any extra and would display the photos better.

Make sure that you understand the structure of the package you have taken. Is there a good spread of enlargements, does the package include an album – if so, what album – and will the photographer compile the album as part of the package? If not, what additional cost can you expect? Find out what the costs for reprints for all the various sizes will be and ask the photographer to show you the sizes available. Black and white and sepia are very fashionable at the moment so find out if these are included in the package. Also query what the costs for digitally manipulated photos are. Be sure to find out how long after the wedding the photos will be ready and in what format you will be able to view them – some photographers work with jumbos and others use contact sheets (A page where the images are all postage stamp sizes).

If the photographer is going to put the album together for you, ask to have special items included such as your invitation, programme of events, hymn sheet, a copy of the speeches and to leave some space for honeymoon photos.

The album is the custodian of your memories, so make sure that it is a good quality album with acid free pages. The glue to be used must also be acid free glue to prevent the photos from going yellow with time. Although it is traditional to have a white album with white pages, it is not practical. You want to show your album off to your friends without being concerned that every time someone touches it, it might leave marks. Preferably go for a dark cover with black pages as the album is less likely to look grubby and white framed photos will display very well.

The best way to visualise what you want is to imagine yourself 10 years down the line sitting with your children and telling them about your wedding and showing them the album. Let your album be the record and “storybook” of your wonderful day!