



Photo Irene Oujst

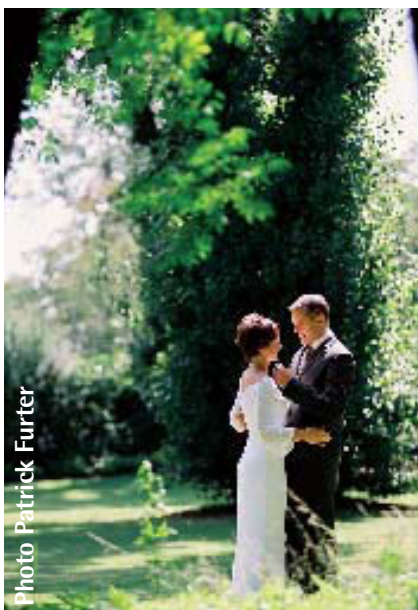


Photo Patrick Furrter

Fabulous Venues

By Karin White

Karin joined Oakfield Farm in 2002. She quickly rose through her ranks to Maitre 'd and currently manages the booking and co-ordination department. She is married with two children, and has a diploma in Conference and Event Management.



Photo Michelle Loukidis

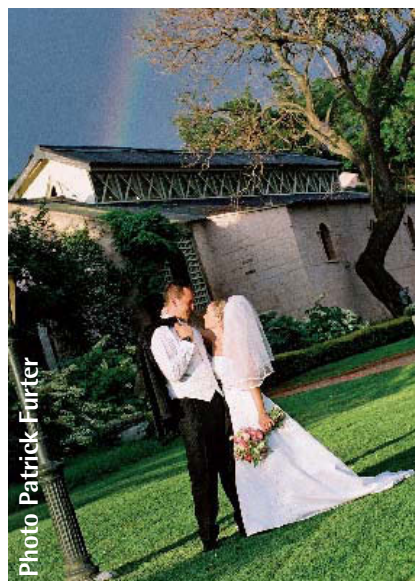


Photo Patrick Fürter



Photo Adam Hilton

Finding the perfect venue is an exciting journey but not without hurdles. You will drive from venue to venue and will find yourself spoiled for choice. You will soon fill a notepad with cost comparisons, menus, décor options and the like. It will not take you long to discover your heart overruling your mind and, having fallen in love with a venue, you may well find yourself dismayed by the unavailability of dates or the cost of the venue. You will need to have an open mind because as with most things in life, there is a certain amount of give and take before you get to a perfect result.

Take care that you don't get so wrapped up in your dreams that you forget that the celebration is about family and friends, not dresses, décor and cakes. Look after

your guests. There is really very little point in having your wedding on a wine farm in the middle of the Cape if your entire guest list is based in Gauteng. Consider the setting in terms of your style, the size of the venue, facilities available and menu options. With regards to service, this should be outstanding from the moment you enter the venue. If at this stage you are not made to feel special, if things appear disorganised and you have difficulties getting clear and concise answers to questions, take heed. Little is likely to change on the day.

With this said, many of your choices will be determined by your budget. Again, flexibility is important. A winter wedding, for instance, allows you the opportunity to stretch your budget further to include the special touches you have been dreaming about. With any choice that is emotional you need to keep your head on your shoulders and stay focused. Pay

careful attention to what is on offer at the venues. All will package their product differently and you will need to process the information carefully. If certain items are not available find out exactly what these extras will cost. Décor in particular can be expensive and, if not adequate, may cost more than the venue hire that seemed expensive to begin with.

Having looked around you will have a clearer idea of the various costs involved, and you may find it all rather depressing. Step back for just a moment and make a list of priorities in order of importance to you, making sure that some items do not "hijack" your budget. Don't let all the details detract from the fun you will have organising your wedding. These moments are the building blocks of a successful marriage. Above all, irrespective of where, when, how and how much, the marriage of two people celebrated by family and friends, is always a memorable day.