

The First Dance

By Barry De Vaal

The first dance is a memorable part of your wedding filled with romance and flair. Unless well planned your vision is unlikely to happen and your wonderful moment could fall flat. This means that all aspects of the first dance need to be planned and practiced in order to make it, for all the right reasons, a memorable experience.

The Moment

This is all about timing. You want your guests to appreciate the moment and not be distracted by a scrumptious dessert. The lighting needs to be dimmed in advance of the music to enhance the atmosphere. This must be co-ordinated with the videographer whose spotlight will create a dramatic staged effect. Similarly, the photographer needs to be primed to capture the dance and also the expressions of delight of the couple and their families when the DJ makes the formal announcements. "Ladies and gentlemen, please put your hands together and welcome the bride and groom onto the dance floor for their first dance as husband and wife".

The Music

The choice of music must be something you love, but also something that your guests can relate to and enjoy even if they have not heard the cut before. Obviously it has to be something that the newly weds can dance to so trust your DJ's experience to make a wise choice.

The Match

Your guests will expect something romantic and traditional for the first dance. If you are unable to do this go for professional lessons. (I promise you this will be the most wonderful time together. It will heighten your anticipation of your big day and you will enjoy it so much more as you dance together with confidence). Otherwise, spend time together practicing your own routine. Always do what you can do well, but don't be too ambitious. If you love something more feisty and modern the music can easily change after the waltz and, if you are both good dancers, don't hesitate to swing into a dance that you love even if not traditional.

The Masses

Watch the formal dances that follow yours as part of the show. Even better, go for one big lesson together prior to your wedding. Practicing together will be great fun and make your opening dances spectacular and truly memorable. Also, everyone will be encouraged to join in when the floor is opened so that the dancing starts with a bang and you don't start and finish the set alone or with only one or two old faithful friends. The videographer must be careful with lighting at this point as people may feel they are in the spotlight. This can be done later when the party has revved up.

This might sound contrived but it makes a huge difference. The old adage of, "If you're going to do something then do it well" is seldom more appropriate than your first dance. One word of caution, not everybody at a wedding will want to dance. If everybody is not on the dance floor don't think for a minute that they are not having a great time. For this reason the music should not be so loud that guests cannot talk to each other. Good equipment is essential as one can still enjoy a full disco without the sound levels being unpleasant.

It should be obvious that the DJ is a critical part of the function so make your choice carefully.



Photo Ryan Graham

Barry De Vaal

Ten years ago, the love of music and entertaining drew Barry de Vaal from a part-time passion to the establishment of Soundworx Entertainment. Soundworx is now a leading entertainment company and a member of SADJA and SAMRO. See advert on page 51.