



Cocktail Weddings are a direct result of the increasing popularity of weekday weddings. This provides minimal inconvenience to guests while allowing the happy couple to score great deals on food and flowers and first crack at prime locations. A cocktail wedding is more cufflinks and couture, less crinoline and cummerbunds. Your guests won't mind cutting the workday short when they're munching upgraded caviar in a fabulous setting.



Evan & Carla Darcy
Friday 17th July 2009 at 11h00

The Cocktail Wedding



The Dream

Asking your bride to marry you under the sea in Zanzibar, suggests two people who are not run of the mill! We are both quite informal people, and a lot of family members, both Aussie and SA parents and Evan's kids were going to have to meet each other for the first time at our wedding. Our only expectation was that it had to be a relaxed and fun atmosphere and it was exactly that that formulated our ideas around the atmosphere we wanted to achieve. We wanted everyone to have fun and enjoy themselves and not just come for the cake and leave! We wanted people to freely socialise with family and friends. We wanted people to move around the room—what better way than to have a cocktail with a lounge/bar style setting. We both knew that we wanted the wedding to be special and what better time to hold it than in the fresh, crisp and still winter air in Johannesburg. The colours of winter were also going to work. We loved the idea of a morning wedding with a high tea set-up instead of the traditional dinner dance weddings.

The Destination

At first I thought of a wedding in a winery—although I was living and working in South Africa for over a year, I'd never been to Cape Town. When Carla and I went there together, I was dropping hints and thinking—let's get married in Cape Town. But, after Carla kept saying wait until I show you this place in Johannesburg first, and after visiting Oakfield Farm, there was no other



choice to make. It was only after that, that we started to work out the 'logistics' that most of our friends would be coming from Johannesburg or from overseas, and Johannesburg was the most logical location to hold the wedding. The Summerhouse offered such a fantastic atmosphere for what we had in mind and it was the perfect size for our small guest list.

The Date

Both our birthday's are in July, we got engaged in July and Evan's kids have their school holidays in July which meant that we could have them with us. Carla felt that a Friday morning, instead of a Saturday night felt a little more special and out of the ordinary at the time, but also, we had a lot of family and friends come from abroad and this gave us a whole weekend together. When we



started to talk about the time and day—I can't remember who suggested a dawn/early morning wedding, but I do remember we looked at each other and instantly agreed on the idea—we didn't even consider having the ceremony at any other time.

The Décor

We loved the idea of coats and fireplaces, and added as part of our décor, beautiful earthy coloured blankets for people to snuggle under (even though it turned out to be a nice, warm winter's day!) The fact that the décor was exceptionally beautiful and that there were such fine details on the little things, was a bonus for us.

The Dress

Winter allowed me to have a winter dress that was unique and I wore a full length coat and boots.

The Day

The family spent the entire week in the Guest House at Oakfield, with the wedding as the finale to a lovely week in the country. Apart from the somewhat unexpected starting time, the ceremony was traditional, with The Vienna String Quartet lending

a lovely, classy feel—with time honoured traditions respected in every way. In contrast, the reception was entirely different—no formal tables—just a love fusion of winter colours in the décor, cocktail tables, leather lounge suites and roaring fires. By offering different food styles in different parts of the room, the guests were encouraged to move around. The international guests enjoyed this immensely, savouring the lovely winter day. Speeches were very informal, the groom had a roving mic, which allowed speeches to happen at any part of the venue—the speeches just merged into the day, the same as the cutting of the cake.

The Delicacies

The food was essential to the mood and style that we wanted to achieve. Siann, our co-ordinator suggested that we place food stations with differing food styles around the room to encourage people to get to know each other. It also looked amazing.

The Difference

This wedding was entirely different. Although the ceremony was traditional in every way, the whole idea of a 'cocktail party' on a crisp, winter morning on the Highveld, was in itself an absolutely unique idea. Carla's intention for people to come and go certainly was not observed—they all came on time and all enjoyed such a special time, nobody wanted to leave. As a co-ordinator, I think this style of wedding was terrific. People are bored with the traditional style of weddings. —Siann Backhouse, *Wedding Guru*

SUPPLIERS

Photographer
Patrick Furter
Décor & Flowers
Erna, Café Fleur
Furniture Hire
SA Wedding Décor
Minister
Jaco Geldenhuys
Invitations
Sanet, Paper Rose
Wedding Cake & Desserts
Natalie, So-De-Lovely
Make Up
Lyn Reece
Hair
Janine, Art of Hair
Co-ordinator
Siann, Wedding Guru
Music
DJ Blast & Vienna String Quartet