

Patrick Furter

Photographer of the Year

Runners' Up



Adam Hilton



Christiaan David



Trene Quist



Photo: Patrick Furter



An interview with Patrick Furter

By Matthew Stubbs

Patrick Furter left a career in aviation to follow his passion as a wedding photographer 18 years ago. As one of the foremost photographers in South Africa, he is highly sought after and a worthy winner of our competition.

So Patrick, you made our 'Hall of Fame'. Seriously, tell us what is it that makes a good wedding photographer?

Photography is an art and nothing can change that. The photographer must be able to see the picture in his mind. Even in the digital age the composition of the picture is still everything. Confidence is crucial. The photographer should know what the client wants and know how to get it, irrespective of the conditions of the day.

Are you saying that only photographers with experience can do the job—after all, you were once new?

No, I recently saw the work of an up and coming photographer that was brilliant, but to be good, you will need to be gifted, passionate, and also willing to learn everyday. Experience obviously makes a difference. A wedding photographer must be able to shoot brilliant pictures within a very short time, without a warm up. It is no good spending hours on the photo shoot, because it spoils the wedding for the guests and ultimately for the couple.

Yes, I was once new, but I only considered myself a professional when I felt confident enough in my ability to become a fulltime wedding photographer. Even now, I think my work is still improving, but I have always charged clients a price that I feel is consistent with my ability.

Tell us about Photoshop?

Photography and Photoshop are two different skills, however they run hand in hand. Both are very important and every photograph chosen will need subtle corrections. I personally make use of a professional editor as editing is time consuming and my passion is the photography itself. It is best to capture the moment as it is on the day and not add it in later.

Clients seem to wait for months for their photographs—why?

Unless a photographer has confidence in his ability, he will end up shooting thousands of pictures which will need a long time to edit. Post production is a lot of work, but I think the bride should get her pictures within two to three weeks, print ready.

What do you charge?

My entry level packages start from R7 500. Irrespective of what has been paid, the client is assured of outstanding images, service and quality of work. The cost difference will be the packages, determined by the clients needs. I give the clients a low resolution disc of all the pictures, from which they can choose the number as specified in their package. My most expensive package costs around R18 500 and includes a storybook and various other add-ons.

What about the high resolution disc?

The ownership of the edited images generally belongs to the photographer. This is up to each and every photographer's own discretion. My packages can include the hi-res images if the client wishes.

How can the bride be sure that the photographer will deliver?

Be careful of salesmanship. Personality is important because you need to get along well with your photographer, but make sure the portfolio presented is not a few carefully selected pictures. I am a big believer in references. My clients can pick any date in the past and view these images. They are also free to contact the couple for a personal reference.

Also be careful of the cost of packages you are offered. For example a storybook can vary a lot in quality. My storybooks cost me around R4 500 to print, depending on size, excluding the layout and editing, which every client will want. There is no way a book of this quality can be included in a R7 500 package.

Good images are essential, you can always purchase the storybook later, but you can not repair bad pictures.







Photo: Adam Hilton



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