



A publication inspired by the
Association of Bridal Consultants
July/August 2014 Volume 4 Issue 3

Wedding

PLANNER MAGAZINE

the publication for wedding planners, professionals, and designers

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Wedding PLANNER MAGAZINE

Volume 4 Issue 3
July/August 2014

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Letter

"Love recognizes no barriers. It jumps hurdles, leaps fences, penetrates walls to arrive at its destination full of hope."

- Maya Angelou

When Maya Angelou died in May, the world not only lost an amazing poet and activist, it lost someone who learned a lot about love over the years—and who taught us about it through words.

As industry professionals, we can thank love for the work we do. And we can thank the perseverance of those who love, too. It is precisely love's superhero-like ability to break barriers and leap fences that leads to any client's wedding. These days, many barriers are being broken down in the same-sex marriage arena. Laws are changing throughout the world, making it possible for couples to overcome challenges and maintain hope.

In this issue of *Wedding Planner Magazine*, it's about the journey and the destination. Navigate the hills and valleys of destination wedding planning for today's same-sex couples in the final installment of our Same-Sex Marriage Series. Plus, for those interested in adding destination wedding planning to their service line, Ali Phillips, of Chicago's Engaging Events by Ali, offers her tips as well as those of other destination pros around the world so you can travel that road well informed and prepared.

You'll also learn what our readers think are the best-kept, secret locales for destination weddings around the globe in Industry Best Practices. And find out the ancient cultural traditions of Scotland and how they are making appearances in today's modern weddings. This issue is laden with so many tips that you won't want to put it down. As you read, consider sampling the signature cocktails suggested by one of the master mixologists with The Patina Restaurant Group (p. 25).

Finally, don't forget about the destination for Business of Brides this year! Join us at Sandals Whitehouse in Whitehouse, Jamaica, on Nov. 8 – 12, for what promises to be a memorable experience filled with networking, education, and fun-in-the-sun! Visit www.BusinessOfBrides.com or www.BridalAssn.com for more information.



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UPCOMING ISSUE: CATERING TRENDS - BLOGGING - OFFICE SPACES - MOBILE WEBSITES - AND MORE!

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Wedding Planner Magazine Welcomes New Advisory Board Members

The *Wedding Planner Magazine* Advisory Board consists of industry experts who volunteer their time to advise the editor, suggest content, and answer Ask the Expert questions in each issue. They also judge the annual

WEDStyle Awards. Members of the Advisory Board serve a two-year term with two positions renewable as emeritus board members. The 2014 - 2016 *Wedding Planner Magazine* Advisory Board members are:



TONIA ADLETA, PBC™
ARIBELLA EVENTS, HOCKESSIN, DEL.

Tonia Adleta, PBC™, is the owner and creative director of Aribella Events, a boutique wedding and event planning and custom floral design studio with roots in the Philadelphia area. As a creative, a mother, a dreamer, a traveler, an artist, a connector, a coffee junkie (seriously, the dog's name is Macchiato!) a speaker, and a writer, she believes in the power of connection and pursues beauty, striving to make a difference by creating moments to celebrate life itself.



MERYLL BROWN
MERYLL BROWN EVENTS,
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SANTA BARBARA, CALIF.

Meryll Brown is a Santa Barbara-based, award-winning Certified Wedding and Event Planner with a master's degree in international affairs from Columbia University. Before becoming an event producer, she was an international banker. Brown is fluent in both Portuguese and Spanish. She specializes in elegant corporate events, social events, and weddings.



FRANK J. ANDONOPLAS, MBC™—
WPM EMERITUS MEMBER

Frank, www.FrankEventDesign.com, Chicago
Frank J. Andonoplas, MBC™, has been an Association of Bridal Consultants (ABC) member for more than 20 years. His expertise has been featured on numerous local and national television segments and wedding magazines and blogs. He has been honored with numerous Chicago Excellence Awards, The Gala Award, The Penner Heart Award, and recently was named Event Planner of the Year by Event Solutions.



MARK KINGSDORF, MBC™—
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Disney Catered Events, <http://DisneyCateredGroupAndConventions.com>, Orlando, Fla.
Mark Kingsdorf, MBC™, is the Association of Bridal Consultants' Florida state manager and works as a catering coordinator for Disney Catered Events at Walt Disney World Resort in Florida. Mark is the founder of Philadelphia's The Queen of Hearts Wedding Consultants and has produced weddings and taught internationally.



ALAN BERG

www.AlanBerg.com, Kendall Park, N.J.
With more than 25 years in sales, marketing, and sales management, including working for 11 years for *The Knot*, **Alan Berg** has been called "North America's Leading Expert on the Business of Weddings & Events." In addition to public speaking and consulting with entrepreneurs and local businesses, Alan is a contributing education guru for WeddingWire. Berg is an author, in-demand professional speaker, and a member of the National Speakers Association.



CARMEN MESA, MBC™
CARMEN MESA WEDDINGS AND EVENTS,
INC., WWW.CARMENMESAEVENTS.COM,
COOPER CITY, FLA.

Carmen Mesa, MBC™, is the owner, principal wedding planner, and event designer of Carmen Mesa Weddings and Events. She has 20 years of experience in the wedding and event industry and is a proud and active member of the ABC, for which she serves as the South Florida senior co-director and Caribbean manager. In 2012, Mesa achieved Master Bridal Consultant™ status. She is the only Master in South Florida and one of only 76 in the world.



DONNIE BROWN
DONNIE BROWN WEDDINGS AND EVENTS,
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Celebrity Wedding Planner, **Donnie Brown**, of Donnie Brown Weddings and Events in Dallas is known for his 11 seasons on Style Network's *Whose Wedding is it Anyway?* He's a published author and has been written up in virtually every bridal and fashion magazine and produced more than 3,000 high-end weddings. Clients include LeAnn Rimes, Dixie Carter, Olympian Sanya Richards, and many more.



SHELBY TUCK-HORTON, MBC™
EXQUISITE EXPRESSIONS AND EVENTS,
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MITCHELLVILLE, MD.

Shelby Tuck-Horton, MBC™, is president and lead wedding planner and designer at Exquisite Expressions and Events, Inc., a full-service wedding and event planning company located in the Washington, D.C. metro area. She is also the ABC state manager for Maryland and Washington, D.C. She is a Miss Dorothy Award recipient and has received numerous awards for her leadership positions in the wedding industry. Shelby is an industry speaker and college instructor.

Industry Experts TACKLE YOUR TOUGHEST QUESTIONS

Q: “How do you develop fees on décor design and implementation?”

A: “We look at the size and budget of the project, the scope of work involved, and the amount of detail work, including research and fabrication. We estimate the number of hours we will need to commit and who will be involved—from junior to senior staff members. We also add in other ancillary costs. It has taken us time to understand the costs of our various inputs and, so, in our earlier years, we undercharged. Getting together with your bookkeeper to create a template to help you make these calculations will be a helpful exercise.”
- *Merryl Brown, MIA, CWEP, Merryl Brown Events, Santa Barbara, Calif.*

“The largest markup on wedding décor comes from the actual floral product. There is very little markup on rental items, such as draperies, linen, lighting, decorative accessories, props, etc. Most décor contracts are made up of 75 percent rental items and 25 percent floral-related items. Therefore, if you do the math, it is very easy to determine the selling price of a décor scheme. The actual flowers generally come through four different sellers prior to the consumer. There is the grower, the broker, the wholesaler, the retailer, and then the consumer. There is a markup at each stop along the way. This is why fresh flowers can seem quite pricy. Some designers go straight to the grower, which can cut out a lot of expense.”
- *Donnie Brown, Donnie Brown Weddings, Dallas*

“I develop my fees based on the complexity of the décor design and the hours estimated for implementation and install.”
- *Shelby Tuck-Horton, MBC™, Exquisite Expressions & Events, Inc., Mitchellville, Md.*

“My pricing depends on the extent of the set up/breakdown, the possibility of multiple locations, staffing and time to implement the design, and whether or not the equipment is my own or needs to be rented. With regards to floral design, I usually do a three-time markup. My set-up/breakdown fees are 20 percent of the total design budget, which is standard in my market. This goes toward paying staff for the event.”
- *Carmen Mesa, MBC™, Carmen Mesa Weddings and Events, Inc., Cooper City, Fla.*

Q: “How do you tell clients you are not their employee? You work with them as a team. You are hired to be their wedding coordinator or planner, not their babysitter or slave. What’s the pretty way of letting them know how far your services go?”

A: “I tell them I am not their employee nor am I hired by them. We are contracted to work with them on their event. Our level of participation is contingent with their package, with some more involved and others less. But, I am very clear with people that planners as well as every other professional in the industry must be treated fairly and with respect. You catch a lot more flies with honey!”
- *Donnie Brown, Donnie Brown Weddings, Dallas*

“It is important to set expectations and boundaries with couples from the initial meeting. We told them what our business hours are and that we will be as flexible with ‘after-hours’ meetings as our schedule allows, but that we are doing other couple’s weddings on weekends and generally not available then. We don’t do texts, because we can’t keep a paper trail. And I learned early on to ‘draft’ emails when I’m working late at night, and send them in the morning, during regular business hours.”
- *Mark Kingsdorf, MBC™, Disney Catered Events, Orlando, Fla.*

“If your website is professional and well-edited, if your demeanor is elegant and sophisticated, and if you always act professionally with clients and don’t cross over into friendship until after their event, this egregious behavior will be less likely to occur. A good preventative measure is to include verbiage in your contract outlining what your responsibilities are and what their responsibilities are. Have all new clients sign off of this section of your Services Agreement. If any requests fall outside these parameters, you can state that it is not included in your contract and not something that you are able to do, but that you can provide them with names of companies that do provide these services. Clarity from the outset will help you avoid these inappropriate requests.”
- *Merryl Brown, MIA, CWEP, Merryl Brown Events, Santa Barbara, Calif.*

“My clients receive an attachment to the contract that specifically states what my services will be, based on what they have hired me for and what they as a couple are responsible for. That is not to say that I won’t overextend a bit, and I almost always do. However, when a client comes to me asking for much more than we contracted for, I tell them, ‘I’d be happy to do that for you, and the fee for that will be...’”
- *Carmen Mesa, MBC™, Carmen Mesa Weddings and Events, Inc., Cooper City, Fla.*

“At the initial presentation—before they are a client—I explain in detail how I work with them as their planner. I clearly define our duties and

responsibilities. I even explain the things that we do not do as the planner. Clearly defining our role educates the client and eliminates any unspoken expectations.”

- *Shelby Tuck-Horton, MBC™, Exquisite Expressions & Events, Inc., Mitchellville, Md.*

“I’d recommend using your contract as your first line of defense here. Identify your scope and included tasks and then identify a price per hour (or other type of compensation) for anything above and beyond said scope. You might also want to consider creating an a la carte menu for items that the clients may choose to add on along the planning process that you weren’t originally contracted for.”

- *Tonia Adleta, PBC™, Aribella Events, Hockessin, Del.*

Q: “Is there a rule-of-thumb for contract agreements for clients (brides mostly) for how far you go before you are giving away your intellectual property too much?”

A: “It’s fine to discuss their ideas and give them some idea of what you can do for them, but if they want written details or samples made, that should be done with a deposit (your decision if it’s refundable or not).”
- *Alan Berg, www.AlanBerg.com, Kendall Park, N.J.*

“At an initial presentation, I listen to the vision of the couple and their wedding planning needs. After attentively listening, I tell them how I can be of service to them by outlining the benefits of working with me. I share my portfolio, which features past weddings I have designed and planned. This shows a great representation of my work, and I answer their questions but I do not give away information.”
- *Shelby Tuck-Horton, MBC™, Exquisite Expressions & Events, Inc., Mitchellville, Md.*

“I was and continue to be passionate about planning and designing weddings and, many years ago, got carried away giving too many ideas freely. After having these potential clients not hire me and basically having all my ideas to use or give to someone else, I stopped doing that. Now, in our initial ‘get acquainted’ complimentary session, I listen to their ideas, take tons of notes, tell them I can accomplish what they want, and only after the contract is signed and the deposit received, do I elaborate on designs and vendor recommendations.”
- *Carmen Mesa, MBC™, Carmen Mesa Weddings and Events, Inc., Cooper City, Fla.*

“I’ll give them a ‘taste’ during our initial meeting, a few basic tips they could actually find on any wedding website if they really looked, a few comments on quality professionals—but nothing more until they have signed!”
- *Mark Kingsdorf, MBC™, Disney Catered Events, Orlando, Fla.*

Ask Our Experts!

Is there a situation that’s been puzzling you? Do you want answers? Email your wedding industry questions to editor@wedding-plannermag.com. Be sure to put “Ask the Experts” in the subject line and include your full name, designation(s), business name and city and state. Questions are answered by our Advisory Board.

"Couples who hire wedding planners often know a lot about how they want their event to come together and have a reasonable idea of how to do it. They are usually professionals and don't have the time to get bogged down in the fine details. If they want to know how to plan a wedding, all they have to do is watch the shows, read the magazines, and pick up the planning books. I thought a lot about this when I wrote my book. I was perplexed with how much to give away and what to hold back. I realized that people appreciated knowing what I was up to in the planning process, in detail, while it was happening. It's a lot like Men's Wearhouse. [George Zimmer, the owner] always said that his best customer was educated about what they do. I completely agree. They get that from my book and many others. What they get from us, personally, is customized for them and not as general as what they learn from these other mediums."

- Donnie Brown, *Donnie Brown Weddings, Dallas*

"You should never give more than a general sense of what you will do, design-wise, until you have gone to contract. When you sell your services to a potential bride, you should be selling your competence, creativity, and passion for what you do, not the specific design details. If you show potential clients that you are highly competent and have integrity, you will be ahead of the game. If you can then back this up with a great website filled with images of past work and testimonials from happy clients, you will be giving them the peace of mind that they are looking for. All they want to know is if you can do the job well, on time, and within their budgetary parameters. Once your contract is signed, you will have ample opportunity to show them they made the best investment ever!"

- Merryl Brown, *MIA, CWEP, Merryl Brown Events, Santa Barbara, Calif.*

Q: "I have a full-coordination client who has disregarded my recommendations for vendors who will fit their budget and style. She decided to do research on her own and has chosen a less-qualified company. How can I keep other brides from following this path?"

A: "No matter what measure you put into place to have the couple select qualified and professional vendors, it is their final decision to choose who they want. For added protection, some planners have the couple sign a statement indicating that the vendor was hired against the advice of the client."

- Shelby Tuck-Horton, *MBC, Exquisite Expressions & Events, Inc., Mitchellville, Md.*

"Fire the customer if you don't agree with their choices and you feel the result will not be what they want. The most powerful word is often 'No'. They're hiring you for your expertise, and if they want to make all of the decisions without you, what do they need you for? Find another customer who appreciates what you bring to their wedding."

- Alan Berg, *www.AlanBerg.com, Kendall Park, NJ.*

"There is only so much you can do. You never want to disparage anyone. So, you have to walk a fine line. When you first interview with them, make it clear that you have vetted virtually all the possibilities and, if someone is not in your circle, it is probably because you have had a bad experience

with them or they are very new and haven't come across your desk yet. Make sure they understand from the get-go that you have worked hard to create a team. That said, you must use others if they want you to. If you stomp your foot, you will likely lose them. They are desperate for direction. Put yourself out there as the expert, and they will want to know what it is you think every time!"

- Donnie Brown, *Donnie Brown Weddings, Dallas*

"At the end of the day, it's still the client's choice and you'll have to work with whomever they have selected. You might consider having the client sign an addendum to your contract that clarifies this other entity has been hired against your recommendation and that you hold no responsibility or liability for performance or lack thereof. (Your contract should already have a clause like this!) As far as future clients, the best thing I've done is use experience and reference a 'war story' of something going awry when a client hired against my judgment. (Make it a mild horror story—you don't want to terrify someone if he/she has already booked this other person; and you still have the chance to build a bridge and navigate the wedding day smoothly for the client!)"

- Tonia Adleta, *PBC, Aribella Events, Hockessin, NJ.*

"Some clients will do this and others won't. I avoid this scenario by paying close attention during the interview process to see if there are any warning signs of this sort of behavior, which is typically quite obvious at the first meeting. That initial meeting is for both of you. You will know, if you trust your gut instincts, whether or not a client has the personality type that is always looking for a deal or who thinks that they are smarter than everyone else. If you still make the choice to work with a client you know from the outset will behave in this way, then you just have to accept that this is what you signed up for. Over time, you will learn that events with this type of client are rarely worth taking."

- Merryl Brown, *MIA, CWEP, Merryl Brown Events, Santa Barbara, Calif.*

Q: "How do I go about obtaining an internship with a successful planner/company?"

A: "By being honest, professional, and ethical! You are there to learn and gain experience. My interns and assistants have been ABC novice members, and they get paid. There is an Intern Agreement Form they must sign and abide by, which states expected behavior, dress code, communication, among other things. I am willing to share my contracts, planning forms, etc., if they ask. Someone having that doesn't take business away, as clients hire me—my experience and ability. I do, however, have them sign a confidentiality agreement to protect my clients."

- Carmen Mesa, *MBC, Carmen Mesa Weddings and Events, Inc., Cooper City, Fla.*

"It is really helpful to have some prior event experience before you reach out for an internship. School activities that require thinking on your feet, holding leadership roles, and experience working on non-profit events tell us you are serious and interested. At my company, we look for people who are smart, self-assured, and self-starters. Find a company that fits the scale, style, and type of events you are interested in being involved in. Event planners love to see anyone as passionate as they are about event planning!"

- Merryl Brown, *MIA, CWEP, Merryl Brown Events, Santa Barbara, Calif.*

"Planners are bombarded with intern requests. You should act and be eager. Send a written request, and follow it up with a phone call. If you don't get a good response, try again. Persistence pays off here."

- Donnie Brown, *Donnie Brown Weddings, Dallas*

"In the Association of Bridal Consultants MD/DC Chapter, members are required to attend our quarterly meetings, take at least one training seminar or workshop, and attend a mandatory training session. After meeting all requirements, they are assigned to a senior-level member for an unpaid intern position."

- Shelby Tuck-Horton, *MBC, Exquisite Expressions & Events, Inc., Mitchellville, Md.*

"Put together a presentation that will get their attention. They're not going to be impressed with a bland resume. Study up on them, and their core clientele, and show them that you understand what they're trying to offer their clients and how you can help them. You have to be a valuable asset to them, not just looking for experience."

- Alan Berg, *www.AlanBerg.com, Kendall Park, NJ.*

"The first piece of advice is to ask, but in a way that both your request and you as an individual stand out. (Internship requests come in weekly, sometimes daily in our office.) I'd also recommend considering another market if your service offering is too similar to your would-be trainee's. Be very clear about what it is that you hope to learn, as well as your intentions about post-internship. For example, if you are planning on opening your own shop down the road from your competitor/trainee, be up front about it. This helps everyone be on the same page and avoid possible tensions down the road."

- Tonia Adleta, *PBC, Aribella Events, Hockessin, NJ.*

Q: "Which software do other wedding planners use for room layouts and overall event management?"

A: "We use Planning Pod. We still do a lot of old-school things, like keep a hard manual of each event, but we also have a cloud-based filing system we can access from our iPad no matter where we are. We use Planning Pod as an organizer. I love that when we take care of a detail, we simply type it into the appropriate spot in the system, and it organizes it and reports it accordingly."

- Donnie Brown, *Donnie Brown Weddings, Dallas*

"I've worked with Murphy's Creativity and love it!"

- Mark Kingsdorf, *MBC, Disney Catered Events, Orlando, Fla.*

"I really haven't found one that I totally like. I use Powerpoint, Excel, and Word. For room layouts, I work with the venue coordinator since they have programs for their particular space and can do a room layout for me based on the event needs."

- Carmen Mesa, *MBC, Carmen Mesa Weddings and Events, Inc., Cooper City, Fla.*

What is your favorite, BEST-KEPT SECRET LOCALE for a destination wedding?



"The best-kept secret for a destination wedding is West Baden Springs Resort, in West Baden, Ind. In the spring, summer, and fall it is absolutely breathtaking. The resort is on the registry of Best Hotels of the World, and they pamper your brides. They also welcome wedding planners. It is a step back in time with plenty to do at the resort and a beautiful setting for the wedding and reception."

- GLORIA BOYDEN, MBC™, EVENTS BY DESIGN, CARMEL, IND.

"Our best-kept secret for a destination locale is the Riviera Maya for a luxurious *cenote* Mayan wedding ceremony. With more than 700 years of culture, the Mayans still amaze us with their spirituality. This is one ceremony you don't want to miss. It is highly recommended. Please try the original Mayan wedding ceremony with a shaman in the jungle vs. the commercial one they have at hotels."

- ILSE DIAMANT, DIAMANT EVENTS, MEXICO

"A sunset wedding in Key Colony Beach, Florida Keys. Imagine a small, quiet, private beach facing west over the Atlantic Ocean. The reception venue is in walking distance from the beach and offers award-winning cuisine for up to 150 guests."

- LYNN D'ASCANIO, D'ASIGNER EVENTS, MARATHON, FLA.

"Laguna Beach is the ideal destination wedding location because it has a little something for everyone—local art, fresh seafood, pristine beaches, a lively downtown, and California sunshine all wrapped in a laid-back, toes-in-the-sand culture! Surf & Sand embraces all things Laguna. Wedding guests take in stunning views of Catalina Island while breathing in fresh sea air during an outdoor ceremony. They then dine on fabulous American Coastal Cuisine in one of our beachy chic ballrooms. After the festivities, they are lulled to sleep by the crashing of the waves in one of our ocean-front guest rooms."

- LAUREN BERGMANN & KAT LAWRENCE, SURF & SAND RESORT, LAGUNA BEACH, CALIF.

"Montreal, especially the part of town known as Old Montreal (or Vieux Port, as the locals call it), is an absolutely fabulous and romantic destination for a wedding. Its cobblestone streets and French flare are very reminiscent of Paris, but distinctly Quebec in terms of culture and food. The best part is that it's very easy to travel to from the Northeast—it's a quick 50-minute flight from New York City."

- MARTINE BOURSICQUOT-LACONTE, THIS MODERN LOVE EVENTS, LLC, NEW HAVEN, CONN.

"My choice is The Bahamas. With 700 islands to choose from, how could we go wrong?"

- VININCIA STRACHAN, PBC™, THE BAHAMAS TOURIST OFFICE, TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA

"My favorite secret locale for destination weddings is the Villa at Sunstone Vineyards in Santa Ynez, Calif. The venue is absolutely magical, surrounded by vineyards, mountains, and glorious vistas. The villa itself looks as though it was plucked right out of the French countryside, with gorgeous stonework, charming ancient architectural elements at every turn, and a warmth and beauty that one simply does not see every day. It provides an enchanting backdrop of old European charm, in beautiful southern California."

- MERRYL BROWN, MIA, CWEP, MERRYL BROWN EVENTS, SANTA BARBARA, CALIF.

"Castle Farms of Charlevoix, a French Renaissance castle built in 1918, is one of Michigan's premiere wedding venues. Soaring stone towers, romantic courtyards, and lavish gardens create the ideal backdrop for ceremonies and receptions. Guests can make a weekend out of their visit by staying in the charming resort town of Charlevoix, nestled between Lake Michigan and Lake Charlevoix. Castle Farms is by far my favorite wedding destination location!"

- JOHANNA ALEXANDER, PBC™, TWENTY-ONE EVENTS, LLC, PLYMOUTH, MICH.

"One of my all-time favorite locations is the St. Regis Bahia Beach Resort in Puerto Rico. I filmed the first large wedding celebration at this beautiful oceanfront resort. It was an incredible, romantic, and luxurious setting in a Caribbean coconut plantation nestled between a lush, national forest and a really great beach... ABC members John and Sari Skalnik, MBC™, of Tropical Weddings Puerto Rico coordinated."

- JOHN GOOLSBY, MEI, MPV, CPV, GODFATHER FILMS, RIVERSIDE, CALIF.

"Ireland (above left) is a dream wedding location for all my clients. They want to experience the wild, rugged, untouched countryside that the West of Ireland offers. Top this off with a historic ruin, and you really can make their dreams come true! The Tower at Hags Head is remote, only accessible with the help of the farmer who owns the land, but this little known gem is worth the hike! It is absolutely one of my favorite secret locales in Ireland!"

- MICHELLE JOHNSTONE CLARK, WATERLIY WEDDINGS, ODENTON, MD.

"My hometown of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, is one of the best-kept secret United States' wedding destinations. Sparkling Lake Coeur d'Alene and the Bitterroot Mountain range provide a scenic backdrop to any type of wedding. We have wonderful, experienced vendors and unique locations to host any type of wedding whether it is ballroom elegance or country chic."

- ROBYN BRUNS, ABC™, RED LETTER EVENT PLANNING, COEUR D'ALENE, IDAHO

"Spencer House (above right) (www.SpencerHouse.co.uk) is called 'London's most magnificent 18th-century private palace.' Built in 1756 - 1766 for the first Earl Spencer, an ancestor of Diana, Princess of Wales, this home has a private terrace and garden with views of The Green Park. The house has recently undergone a 10-year renovation and is absolutely pristine. It has a stunning collection of 17th-century paintings and furniture and is a real treasure."

- LYNDA BARNES, MBC™, I DO WEDDING CONSULTING, PHILADELPHIA