



2026

*Wedding Special*



## Memorable occasion

It's that time of year again when many couples are getting married or thinking about it. This supplement with relevant information and tips is meant to assist all involved. Important it is to enjoy a special moment in the lives of two persons who have found each other and are tying the proverbial knot. May it serve as an inspiration and remind them of how every wedding is indeed a memorable occasion.

*Paul De Windt*  
Publisher

Wedding Special 2026 is a Special Publication of

**The Daily Herald**

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# NURTURE YOUR MARRIAGE

BY SHARON VAN ARNEMAN

*A husband and wife are going through a rocky phase and are giving each other the silent treatment. At the height of hostilities, the husband realises that he needs his wife to wake him at 5:00 a.m. so he could catch an early morning business flight the next day. Not wanting to be the first to break the silence, he writes on a piece of paper: "Please wake me at 5:00 a.m." The next morning, he wakes up to discover that it is 9:00 a.m. and he has missed his flight. Furious, he is about to confront his wife when he notices a piece of paper on his pillow. The paper reads: "It is 5:00 a.m. Wake up."*

Who doesn't love a good marriage joke?! Probably the only thing we enjoy more is a good love story, because deep down, I believe people really want marriage to succeed. No matter how many marriages go awry, there's just something about watching a couple fall in love and get married that'll make us root for them.

We admire happily married couples; and we feel secretly encouraged by those whose marriages seem to stand the test of time. That may be why when we hear that the couple we've been admiring æ— albeit from a distance — is getting a divorce, we feel strangely sad, as if our own marriage were being threatened.

This thing called marriage is as unique as it is mysterious — and wise couples take time to nurture their marriage. No matter how long you've been married, you can decide today to be intentional about bringing the spark back into your marriage.

Here are some tips to get you started. I promise that if you take them to heart and practice them, you'll reap the rich rewards of a happy and fulfilling marriage.

Honour the institution of marriage and stay true to your vows even when you're hurting.

- ♥ Scratch that "D" word (divorce) altogether from your conversations with each other.
- ♥ Have fun together; really enjoy each other's company.
- ♥ Respect each other and never stop using those magic words like "Please"; "Thank you" and "I'm sorry" to each other.
- ♥ Learn to forgive quickly.
- ♥ Celebrate your wedding anniversary in a special way; don't let it pass off like any other day.
- ♥ Serve each other.
- ♥ Kiss often.
- ♥ Be generous with your hugs.
- ♥ Don't take each other for granted.
- ♥ Make time to pray for and with each other.
- ♥ Never let a day end without saying "I love you" at least once to your spouse.
- ♥ Laugh together.
- ♥ Make a habit of going to bed at the same time each night.
- ♥ Prioritize physical intimacy — and when life gets too busy, plan ahead for these special times together.
- ♥ Be each other's best friend.
- ♥ Please each other in those little things that mean so much.
- ♥ Trust one another.
- ♥ Protect each other.
- ♥ Stick together and stand up for each other.
- ♥ Know that your spouse is not your enemy but your teammate.
- ♥ Respect each other's individuality.
- ♥ Celebrate your differences and make them work for you.
- ♥ Learn how to agree to disagree, knowing that you are

two different people who will not always agree on everything.

- ♥ Love your spouse in ways that make them feel loved.
- ♥ Make a point to do activities together that you both enjoy.
- ♥ Have a weekly date night and honour it as such; don't treat it like a free night.
- ♥ Never stop holding hands.
- ♥ Carve out some alone time for just the two of you to talk and connect each day.
- ♥ Share chores.
- ♥ Send your spouse love notes and little gifts "just because."
- ♥ Make memories together.
- ♥ Put your spouse first and let nothing and no one come between the two of you.
- ♥ Learn to communicate; be open and honest with each other.
- ♥ Really listen to each other.
- ♥ Resolve conflict quickly.
- ♥ Value your union.
- ♥ Support each other.
- ♥ Do not go to bed angry.
- ♥ Be generous with your compliments to each other.
- ♥ Never pass up an opportunity to celebrate your good times.
- ♥ Root for each other.
- ♥ Serve God together.
- ♥ Speak well of each other to others.
- ♥ Do not major on the minors.
- ♥ Keep Christ at the centre of your marriage.

*Cheers to a happy and fulfilling marriage! And, if you're considering whether or not to pop the question; I'd say go for it!*



## Celebrate your special day at Emilio's

*With its historic charm, elegant setting and flexible event spaces, Emilio's has become one of the island's most sought-after wedding venues. From intimate gatherings of 20 guests to grand celebrations of up to 250, Emilio's offers couples a beautiful and memorable backdrop for their special day.*

Owners Drew and Marianella Wathey are dedicated to creating seamless, worry-free weddings tailored to each couple's vision. "We work

closely with all wedding planners, and they are all very professional and caring," says Marianella. "Together with our dedicated staff, they ensure every detail is beautifully executed, from planning and décor to the final celebration."

Couples can choose from a variety of ceremony locations and picturesque spots throughout the property for unforgettable wedding photography. Reception options are equally versatile. Smaller celebrations can be hosted inside the venue's charm-

ing 18th-century sugar cane boiling house, offering an intimate and romantic atmosphere. Larger events can take place on the spacious patio under elegant umbrellas, complete with ample room for a dance floor, DJ, or live band.

Emilio's also offers a selection of customizable dinner packages, allowing couples to create a menu that reflects their tastes and style. Once a menu is selected, couples are invited to enjoy a complimentary tasting experience to final-

ize their choices.

Another standout feature of Emilio's is its convenience. With parking accommodations for up to 60 vehicles and year-round availability, guests can celebrate comfortably and stress-free.

*"Your wedding day is one of the most important moments in a couple's life," say Drew and Marianella. "We do everything possible to make sure we exceed expectations and create a truly unforgettable experience."*

# THE CIVIL WEDDING CHECKLIST

*You've long imagined the cake, the dress and the venue. But dealing with the legal documentation is one of the first things you should do once you decide to get married to that special someone. This way, you can move forward confidently without risking the derailment of your wedding plans.*

The process starts with filing the "intention to marry" with government's Civil Registry Department, which is done weeks before the civil ceremony takes place. When you file your intention to marry, all documents must be submitted, and all fees paid before the Department starts to process your request. While technically this can be done a minimum of two weeks in advance of the wedding, it should be done as soon as possible, especially since it may take time to collect all

the needed paperwork.

**Requirements**

- ♥ Passport copies of the bride, groom, and all witnesses.
- ♥ Birth certificates for bride and groom (if not registered on St. Maarten).
- ♥ Declaration of marital status (no older than three months).
- ♥ Two- to- four witnesses.
- ♥ For widow(er)s, a death certificate for the deceased spouse.
- ♥ For divorcees, a divorce certificate.
- ♥ For non-Dutch nationals, an interview at the Immigration Department.

Cost is between US \$178 and \$409.58, depending on factors such as location and day – weekdays are less expensive than weekends.

Depending on your country

of origin, the certificates/declaration must be authenticated: Either through an Apostille stamp – which can be obtained from the Secretary of State, Civil registry, or High Court (this includes the United States) – or by your country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and then the Dutch Consulate.

**Considerations**

Visitors having their destination wedding in St. Maarten should handle all paperwork and payment well in advance. Make contact by email for more information, and send original documentation via FedEx or DHL. This is especially important for those with a tight vacation schedule.

All required documents must be submitted in English or Dutch.

The marriage license is issued in Dutch. A certi-

fied translator can be hired on-island to translate it into English or another language.

If you do not wish to deal with all the paperwork and contacting the Department on your own, a wedding planner can help you get through this whole process. Either you or a wedding planner must handle all other arrangements such as décor or transportation.

The civil wedding can be held in the government's designated Marriage Hall, or at another venue of your choosing on the Dutch side of the island. While guests may socialise for a short time, no food or drink is allowed in the Marriage Hall. Festivities take place elsewhere.

Alternatively, St. Maarteners getting married abroad can obtain an Apostille stamp for their paperwork from the St.



Maarten Civil Registry. St. Maarteners getting married abroad should register their marriage at the Department, as soon as possible after returning.

Requirements are listed at [www.sintmaartengov.org](http://www.sintmaartengov.org).

Select "Government" from the top-left menu, then go to the top-left menu again and select "Ministry of General Affairs." Select "Civil Registry" and then "Back Office Services" and last, select "Register a Marriage".

To make an appointment online for the various services, go to <http://appointments.sintmaartengov.org/services>. To contact the Civil Registry Department, call +1 721 542-0652, email [burgerzakensxm@sintmaartengov.org](mailto:burgerzakensxm@sintmaartengov.org), or visit the Government Administration Building at Soualiga Road #1, Philipsburg.

## EVERYTHING YOUR WEDDING NEEDS, with a personal touch

SXM Party Rentals N.V.

# SXM Party Rentals

Over 40 years in business.

Dedicated to serving you professionally and creatively. We have everything you need to make your wedding and special events memorable.

*SXM Party Rentals N.V. is here to make sure your plans for the Big Day all come to life, seamlessly and to your unique taste. The full-service party rental company offers essential event coordination services, entertainment and catering, topped off with tasteful décor and design.*

**C**reative Director Dion Gumbs loves to craft an experience that will meet the needs of clients, and supersede expectations: "Building valuable relationships with clients and business partners while doing what we love to do is priceless." From lighting and furniture to delicate glassware, the team has everything you need for a blissful wedding, whether it's an intimate gathering with your nearest and dearest, or an extravagant affair.

SXM Party Rentals provides a wide range of services for different types of gatherings, all year round – everything from weddings to corporate events. The team has garnered a wealth of experience over the years and carefully takes the wishes and tastes of their clients into consideration.

Keep this local company in mind, not just for the wedding, but for anniversary celebrations and vow renewals as well! It's all about adding a personal touch to the events – something that makes special events unique and part of an unforgettable day. The team understands that lit-




**Specialties:** rentals, coordination service, decor, entertainment, catering, tents & tent drapery, pole covers for tents, flatware, chinaware, glassware, buffet ware, tables & chairs, table linen, decoration, lighting, red carpet and more...

Contact Dion: (+1-721) 522-1972

E: [dlggumbs@gmail.com](mailto:dlggumbs@gmail.com)






# TWO DECADES OF MEMORABLE EVENTS:

*Artemia Event Planners continues to elevate celebrations*

*For twenty years, Artemia Event Planners has helped transform special events and wedding dreams into unforgettable Caribbean celebrations. From elegant, branded events to lavish destination weddings, the company, which is known for its creativity, professionalism and highly personalized approach, has become one of St. Maarten's most recognized names in event planning.*

Founded at a time when St. Maarten's tourism and hospitality industry was rapidly evolving, Artemia Event Planners was created to meet the growing demand for a local full-service event planning company catering to both the incentive travel market and the island's corporate sector. As new international resort brands arrived on the island, so did opportunities to redefine luxury events and destination weddings in the Caribbean.

Today, as the company celebrates its 20th anniversary, Artemia continues to set the standard for exceptional wedding experiences across St. Maarten.

"Our clients are our greatest inspiration," the

team shares. "Every client expects unique décor, unforgettable experiences, and personalized service when they hire Artemia. That expectation pushes us to constantly evolve and create events that are even more beautiful than the last."

What truly distinguishes Artemia from other wedding planners in the Caribbean is its dedicated team's unwavering attention to detail. Through its sister company, St. Maarten Marry-Me, the company specializes in destination weddings and believes that every wedding – regardless of size or budget – deserves full attention, constant communication and flawless execution.

St. Maarten itself remains one of the Caribbean's most desirable wedding destinations – thanks to its unique dual-nation culture, warm hospitality and intimate atmosphere. Couples are drawn to the island's blend of Dutch and French charm, picturesque beaches, and proximity to neighbouring luxury honeymoon destinations such as Anguilla and St. Barth.

Outdoor weddings continue to dominate wedding trends on the island, with beachfront ceremonies and romantic gazebo settings remaining timeless favourites for couples travelling from abroad. Artemia Event Planners works with some of St. Maarten's most scenic venues, including Fort Amsterdam, JW Marriott St. Maarten, Sonesta Maho Beach Resort Casino & Spa gazebo settings, Baie Rouge, and Emilio's to name a few.

Planning a destination wedding remotely has also become easier than ever in today's digital world. Artemia works closely with international couples through email, WhatsApp, Zoom, and Teams meetings to ensure seamless communication throughout the planning process.

T h e



company offers full-service personalized weddings and event planning, covering everything from conceptual design and décor to catering, entertainment, transportation and guest experiences. Rather than offering rigid packages, Artemia customizes nearly every event and wedding based on each client's vision, guest count and budget.

Clients especially appreciate the company's signature touches and modern décor items. There is always something new at Artemia; including customized wedding favours and locally inspired souvenirs that give guests a meaningful connection to the island.

As Artemia celebrates this important 20-year milestone, the company is also preparing to launch special anniversary promotions and incentives for clients booking upcoming celebrations – be it a product launch, grand opening, anniversary or Christmas staff party.

Their final message to couples dreaming of a St. Maarten wedding is heartfelt and practical: "Ask as many questions as possible until you feel completely comfortable with your wedding planner. Choosing the right wedding and event planner is one of the most important steps for your special day."

With twenty years of experience, creativity, and passion behind every celebration, Artemia Event Planners continues to prove why St. Maarten remains one of the Caribbean's most enchanting wedding destinations.

*For more information and inspiration, readers can visit Artemia Event Planners on Facebook or Instagram. Couples interested in beginning their wedding journey can visit Artemia Event Planners at Fouress Suite 4A, Ennmaplein in Philipsburg, or schedule a consultation directly with the team via email at [planner@sintmaartenmarry-me.com](mailto:planner@sintmaartenmarry-me.com) or [sales@artemia-sxm.com](mailto:sales@artemia-sxm.com)*



20 years of memorable events

# Artemia



*Our services includes:*  
*Anniversaries & Birthdays Celebrations*  
*Branding & Product Launch*  
*Christmas Decor*  
*Christmas Staff Party*  
*Farewell Party and much more...*

[sales@artemia-sxm.com](mailto:sales@artemia-sxm.com)

(721) 542 - 5245

(721) 542 - 7140

# RAINBOW CAFÉ

*elevates destination weddings in Saint Martin*

*Nestled along the iconic shoreline of Grand Case, Rainbow Café has become one of Saint Martin's most sought-after destinations for weddings and private celebrations. Combining beachfront elegance, Mediterranean-inspired cuisine, lively entertainment, and personalized hospitality, the venue offers couples an immersive celebration experience designed to create unforgettable memories by the sea.*

From intimate sunset ceremonies to full-scale venue privatizations, Rainbow Café has positioned itself as more than just a restaurant – it is a curated destination where gastronomy, music, celebration and luxury hospitality come together effortlessly.

Couples interested in organizing their wedding or private event can contact the Rainbow Café events team directly via email at [events@rainbowcafesxm.com](mailto:events@rainbowcafesxm.com). Consultations are handled by Noame or Caroline, who assist couples throughout the planning process.

The venue offers both in-person consultations for couples visiting the island and virtual meetings for those planning remotely from abroad. Appointments may be arranged directly through the events team, allowing future brides and grooms to begin envisioning every detail of their celebration before arriving in Saint Martin.

Unlike traditional venues that rely on standardized packages, Rainbow Café customizes each wedding individually, according to the couple's preferences, style, guest count, and desired atmosphere. Before the first consultation, couples are encouraged to prepare several key details, including their estimated number of guests, preferred date, and general budget range.

The property itself offers remarkable flexibility for celebrations. Ceremonies, cocktail receptions, dinners and private parties may take place across several areas of the venue, including the rooftop terrace, the main dining space, or directly on the beach among the café's signature cabanas and beach beds.

Capacity varies depending on the chosen setting, with the rooftop accommodating up to 70 guests, the main restaurant area hosting approximately 150 people, and beachfront celebrations welcoming as many as 200 guests. Full exclusivity of the venue is also available for couples seeking a completely private experience.

According to the Rainbow Café team, one of the greatest advantages for destination wedding couples is the simplicity of the planning process. Their experienced team offers seamless remote coordination, trusted local vendor recommendations, and turnkey event solutions that minimize stress while maximizing the guest experience.

"Grand Case already offers such an idyllic natural setting that very little decoration is needed," the team explained. "The atmosphere, the sea view, and the energy of the location naturally create something magical." The venue also collaborates with local wedding planners, florists, decorators, photographers, entertainers, and musicians to help couples fully personalize their celebration. Entertainment options may include live musicians, DJs, dancers, fire shows, customized lighting, and curated sunset experiences.

Food and beverage experiences remain central to the Rainbow

Café identity. Menus are fully tailored to each event and may include curated sharing menus, signature sushi selections, crudo specialties, premium grilled dishes, and chef-selected desserts inspired by Caribbean energy and Mediterranean refinement.

The beverage program complements the festive ambiance through champagne service, signature cocktails, curated wine pairings, premium bottle service, and personalized beverage packages. Couples also have the opportunity to schedule pre-wedding menu tastings after confirming an initial menu selection with the culinary team.

When asked about current wedding trends, the Rainbow Café team highlighted the growing popularity of intimate and elegant beach weddings, often centred on soft beige colour palettes, tropical flowers, candlelit tables, and relaxed luxury.

Their ideal wedding atmosphere? "Elegant, festive, and effortlessly chic by the water."

Among the team's favourite wedding moments remains a particularly emotional memory: "A first dance at sunset, with their feet in the sand." As for the soundtrack of love at Rainbow Café, Ed Sheeran's "Perfect" continues to be the most requested first dance song, while "Can't Help Falling in Love" remains a timeless favourite for the bride and groom's grand entrance.

The venue recommends May and June as ideal months to marry in Saint Martin, thanks to the quieter off-season atmosphere and increased flexibility for reservations and accommodations. Weekday weddings are also encouraged for greater availability.

For couples searching for inspiration, availability updates, and private event information, Rainbow Café invites visitors to explore their dedicated events platform. Contact them at [events@rainbowcafesxm.com](mailto:events@rainbowcafesxm.com). Follow the venue on Instagram @rainbowcafesxm or call +590 690 88 84 44.

*In one word, the Rainbow Café team describes weddings at the venue as "Idyllic."*





RAINBOW CAFÉ  
Saint Martin

# Your perfect day, our exclusive stages

Fully Private

Your celebration, your rules,  
the entire space is yours.

Curated Experience

Custom menus, decor &  
entertainment tailored to your vision.

Up to & 150 Guest

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Private spaces crafted so every wedding becomes  
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[events@rainbowcafesxm.com](mailto:events@rainbowcafesxm.com) - [www.rainbowcafesxm.com](http://www.rainbowcafesxm.com) - 176 Boulevard de Grand Case



# Surrounde As Their World.

~ Lincoln

The exceptional nearest and dearest from St. Maarten, The Netherlands, and Minnesota, gathered together in the picturesque mountains of Colorado to celebrate the love of Lincoln Hochmuth and Ryan Schonenberg. The bride and groom reminisce with us, as their wonderful delayed honeymoon comes to a close, on their relationship and wedding journey.

Little did they know that their serendipitous encounter was a beautiful foreshadowing of what the future had in store for them. Their intimate wedding, which included just 29 invited guests, centred on enjoying a sense of love and togetherness with family and friends – and above all, each other.

#### How it all started

Although Lincoln and Ryan went to the same high school in St. Paul, Minnesota, they never got to know each other back then, or even talked. Lincoln was in the 12th grade, and Ryan, who had just moved to the United States from St. Maarten, was in the 9th.

Fast forward nine years: Their two best friends are getting married, and Ryan and Lincoln are asked to be bridesmaid and groomsman respectively. “They made us walk down the aisle together and we have been together ever since,” they recall with a smile.

Lincoln asked Ryan out just two days after the wedding, and the rest is history.

Ryan brought Lincoln to St. Maarten for vacation in

2025 – his first trip to the island. He proposed during the sunrise on the beautiful Orient Bay beach. Ryan was surprised, although she had hoped it would happen during that trip. It was just the two of them, and they both loved it that way. They enjoyed the day together, heading to Top Carrot for a nice breakfast, and then celebrating with friends and family that evening.

#### The Big Day

Lincoln and Ryan knew that they wanted a small, intimate wedding, shared only with their nearest and dearest. Location was key as they wanted to find something that guests from Minnesota, St. Maarten, and The Netherlands could travel to. They also wanted somewhere that they could easily return to, as opposed to a wedding venue that they would not typically get to visit again. Ryan’s father lives in Golden, Colorado, and this fit the bill perfectly for their destination wedding.

The décor was kept simple, the flowers white, and the stunning beauty of the Colorado mountains set the scene. The couple coordinated things themselves, without hiring a wedding planner, for the family-centric micro wedding.

We asked what aspects of the wedding they were not flexible about, as they set about planning the big day. Food and capturing the memories were the most important aspects. They wanted guests to have a meal they’d remember, and it was also important to have both a photographer and content creator, each docu-



# Wedded By Love As Families Came Together

## & Ryan ~

menting the nuptials in their own way. Having both meant capturing more authentic memories of the special day.

As for the cake, the couple's close friend from Minnesota made it for them. She had them come over and taste three different flavours. Raspberries are their favourite fruit, and they ended up with a white chocolate and raspberry cake. "The fact that our close friend made it was so special to us," said Ryan. "We also got to serve it on a cake plate gifted to us by a close friend of ours."

With the couple having family fly in from abroad to celebrate their nuptials, it felt very special that their two worlds came together for a week. Several family members met for the first time during this special trip. It felt like one big family get-together, with everyone getting to know each other during dinners and hikes.

We asked about the most memorable moments of the big day. For Lincoln, it was seeing Ryan walk down the aisle. For Ryan, one special moment stood out when she and Lincoln were taking pictures right after the wedding. It was that moment when she looked up towards her father's house and saw all of their loved ones in one place, spending time together after the ceremony: "It was a moment where we felt so loved by the people we were surrounded by."

### Married Life

We asked how the two have been enjoying married life. They have been making the most of their time together travelling, working and making new memories as husband and wife – not to mention, it has been nice to relax and live in the moment, after a busy period of wedding planning.

They recently returned from a honeymoon, visiting The Netherlands and Barcelona and Girona in Spain. It was a lovely week of eating amazing food, seeing beautiful sights and exploring new places. We asked if they would like to offer any advice to couples planning their own wedding day. They believe in keeping the focus on what is actually important, rather than getting lost in the details.

"Decisions seem so big and stressful when planning," Ryan said, "but on the actual day...and what Lincoln always tried to remind me of during the planning process, was that nothing besides marrying each other actually mattered." She advises that "when getting stressed about the flower selection or what shoes to wear, remember that these smaller things really don't matter in the grand scheme of things."

We couldn't agree more. Dozens of decisions will be made in the months leading up to your Wedding Day, but all that truly matters is each other.





At Simpson Bay Resort, Marina & Spa, every wedding is designed to be as memorable and unique as the couple celebrating it. The dedicated team of wedding specialists works closely with each couple to transform their vision into an unforgettable experience, providing attentive guidance from the first consultation through the final celebration.

Couples can choose from indoor and outdoor venues, each offering stunning panoramic views over Simpson Bay and the Caribbean Sea.

Complemented by exquisite catering, personalised menus, and custom wedding packages tailored to each couple's style and guest experience, Simpson Bay Resort combines renowned hospitality and exceptional scenery to create the perfect destination for both intimate celebrations and grand weddings, whether for local couples or those welcoming guests from around the world.

#### SETTING THE SCENE: A VARIETY OF STUNNING BACKDROPS

**Ballroom:** The Ballroom offers an elegant indoor setting for weddings, featuring a spacious layout and large panoramic windows with beautiful views overlooking Simpson Bay. The venue can be fully customised to each couple's vision and is ideal for both intimate receptions and grand celebrations, with options including buffet-style dining or curated set menus, entertainment, a dance floor, personalised décor, and flexible event layouts to create a truly memorable experience.

**Marina Upper Deck:** Ideal for both intimate gatherings and stylish destination weddings, this open-air venue showcases one of the resort's most picturesque settings for weddings with panoramic ocean views, creating a naturally romantic atmosphere for ceremonies, receptions, and unforgettable celebrations. Guests can enjoy an elevated experience complemented by customised event layouts, buffet-

# Simpson Bay Resort:

## *Not just a venue but a complete destination experience*

feet-style dining or curated set menus, entertainment options, an open bar setup, and a dance floor to celebrate under the open sky.

**Beach:** A true Caribbean wedding experience, our beachfront setting offers an unforgettable backdrop where soft white sand meets the turquoise waters of Simpson Bay. Surrounded by ocean views and the natural beauty of the island, this open-air venue creates an intimate and romantic atmosphere for exchanging vows and celebrating life's most meaningful moments.

**Sky Lounge:** The Sky Lounge offers a breathtaking top-floor setting for weddings and special events. With panoramic ocean views, elegant open-air surroundings, and a sophisticated waterfront atmosphere, the venue creates the perfect backdrop for unforgettable ceremonies, receptions and private celebrations in St. Maarten.

**Mini Gazebo (chill-out pool):** The Mini Gazebo beachfront venue offers an intimate and romantic setting for weddings, vow renewals, and private celebrations overlooking the beautiful waters of Simpson Bay. Framed by stunning sunset views and a serene oceanfront atmosphere, this elegant space creates the perfect backdrop for unforgettable moments shared with family and close friends.

**A GREAT RESORT FOR ANY KIND OF VISITOR**  
Hosting loved ones from

abroad: One of the greatest advantages of hosting a wedding at Simpson Bay Resort is the convenience and comfort offered to family and friends traveling from overseas. Special group room rates may be available, allowing everyone to enjoy the celebration while staying together in one destination. Guests interested in group rates are encouraged to contact the Reservations Department directly to receive current pricing, availability, and applicable terms and conditions.

The resort team works to accommodate guests as

Endless opportunities for first-time visitors: Situated in one of the island's most desirable areas, the resort offers easy access to beaches, local attractions, shopping, entertainment, and vibrant nightlife. Guests can enjoy multiple dining experiences both within the resort and nearby, creating endless opportunities to explore the destination.

Within the property itself, visitors experience a relaxed Caribbean atmosphere complemented by several pools, swim-up bars, comfortable transportation options throughout the resort complex, and atten-

uniquely theirs while benefiting from the expertise and resources available at the resort.

#### PRACTICAL ASPECTS

To ensure the widest availability of dates, venues, and customisation options, couples are encouraged to begin planning as early as possible – ideally around 12 months in advance, particularly for larger celebrations or weddings requiring more detailed coordination.

However, there is no fixed booking deadline, as reservations are handled on a first-come, first-served basis. As long as the pre-



comfortably as possible by arranging nearby rooms for families and groups who wish to stay close together. Additional personalised arrangements can also be considered, including cribs for families with young children and accessible accommodations or lower-floor room preferences for guests with mobility needs.

tive, friendly service.

#### PERSONALISE THE DETAILS WITH CUSTOM WEDDING PACKAGES

Custom wedding packages are designed to offer flexibility while ensuring a smooth and enjoyable planning experience. Couples work alongside the experienced Events and Wedding team, who guide them through available packages and help personalise every detail according to their vision.

From venue selection and catering menus to décor concepts, entertainment, guest experience, and event flow, each package can be tailored to suit individual tastes and celebration styles. Personalisation may include menu preferences such as vegetarian or vegan options, customised décor, entertainment selections, and guest count considerations.

Couples should expect professional support, transparent communication, and thoughtful coordination throughout the planning process. The goal is to create a celebration that feels

ferred venue and event date remain available, the team will be delighted to help organise and personalise the celebration. The planning timeline may vary depending on the complexity of the event and the number of guests attending.

Simpson Bay Resort can accommodate celebrations ranging from intimate gatherings to larger wedding experiences, with venue capacities generally suited for events of approximately 200 to 250 guests.

A wedding at Simpson Bay Resort is more than a single-day celebration – it becomes a complete destination experience. From welcome gatherings and rehearsal dinners to post-wedding brunches and unforgettable moments shared with loved ones, couples have the opportunity to turn their special day into a multi-day celebration in paradise.

*Our goal is to create meaningful experiences that allow couples and their guests to relax, connect, celebrate, and leave with memories that last a lifetime.*





# WELCOME BAGS FOR GUESTS

*You appreciate guests who take the time, money, and effort of travelling to make it to your wedding. Perhaps you haven't seen many of them in far too long. Welcome bags are the perfect way to make your guests feel welcome. They can also show off your personality, the destination, provide practical guidance so that guests enjoy the trip, and give them a preview of what's to come.*

The Daily Herald's "OUT 'N' About" is available at many hotels, so that guests can check out events slated for that specific week, get a feel for different nightlife spots, and have all details handy of some of the best restaurants on the island (both French and Dutch sides).

If you're feeling generous, include a gift certificate to a spa or local attraction of your choosing.

Welcome bags can fit any budget, and are just one of the ways you can add unique, personal touches to the special occasion.

Include contact details of the hotel, as well as a Taxi service or car rental agency (preferably in the form of business/contact cards). Emergency contact numbers are available on page 2 of every edition of this newspaper.

Make sure a specific person is in charge of getting the welcome bag to your guests. If they're staying in a hotel, you can make arrangements with staff. If the hotel has its own souvenir store, they may be able to put a bag together for you. Keep in mind that some hotels won't accept packages ahead of time, so shipping in advance may not be an option. Also, avoid personalising the bags to specific guests, as it makes both product selection and logistics much more complicated.

If you're afraid some guests may be hindered by a language barrier, why not include a small booklet with common English phrases, or print a small pamphlet out yourself?

### A mix of charming and practical items:

- Sunscreen and after-sun lotion.
- Mosquito spray.
- Aspirin or ibuprofen, and vitamin C (also known as a hangover kit).
- Mini toiletries.
- Small bottle of water.
- Small bottle of champagne and/or local rum.
- Small souvenirs from the destination: piece of art, rum cake, spice mix or jam.
- Bottle stoppers.
- Your favourite sweet treat, or treats that your guests may not have tried before, such as local tamarind balls, Dutch stroopwafel or French cookies (all from the grocery store, as freshly baked goods will make it more complicated to plan).
- Mini hand sanitizer.

The bag should include printouts of all planned events, along with all relevant, practical information such as dress code, time, location, and transportation details. A separate printout should be made for the Wedding Day itinerary specifically. Include contact information where necessary. Last, include a thank you note.

You'll also want guests to be able to enjoy the destination on their own, so include a map of the area with points of interest; or if you're familiar with the place, you can suggest your favourite bars, restaurants, beaches and other attractions nearby.

*Even store-bought items can be made into something special with customised stickers.*



A NEW SEASON OF

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# Make your dream wedding come to life with Flowers "R" Us

Your wedding day is one of life's most cherished moments, and every detail should reflect the beauty of your love story. For more than 13 years, Flowers "R" Us has been helping couples create unforgettable celebrations through elegant floral arrangements and stunning event décor designed with care, creativity and passion.

Known for its personalized approach, Flowers "R" Us specializes in transforming wedding visions into breath-taking realities. Whether you are planning an intimate beach ceremony, a romantic garden reception, or a grand celebration, the experienced Flowers "R" Us team will work closely with

each couple to design floral pieces that perfectly match your theme, personality and style.

From exquisite bridal bouquets and bridesmaids' flowers to ceremony arches, centerpieces and complete wedding styling, every arrangement is crafted with attention to detail and artistic flair. Their goal is to create an atmosphere that feels magical, memorable and uniquely yours.

Flowers "R" Us takes pride in offering fully customized designs tailored to your wishes, ensuring that no two weddings are ever the same. They understand that every couple has a unique vision, and they are dedi-

cated to bringing that vision to life with fresh flowers, elegant décor and exceptional service.

For added convenience, delivery services are also available, making the planning process even smoother and stress-free for busy couples preparing for their special day.

Visit Flowers "R" Us at the same plaza as Carrefour Market. For more information or to schedule a consultation, contact +1 (721) 586-8829 or 586-8753.

*Flowers "R" Us - Turning your wedding dreams into beautiful memories.*



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*We assist you from the first inquiry until the completion of your dream.*



# Celebrate Love and Commitment

## WEDDING FLOWERS THAT LEAVE A LASTING IMPRESSION

*A wedding day is one of the most meaningful and memorable moments in the life of a couple, and flowers play an essential role in shaping its beauty and atmosphere. Flowers by Flores is here to help bring your vision to life, whether it's an intimate ceremony or a grand celebration.*

Every arrangement is thoughtfully designed to reflect your personality, favourite colours and preferred flower styles, adding a personal and elegant touch to your special day. A growing trend this season is decorating the pathway to the altar or gazebo with floral arrangements tailored to the couple's style.

Roses remain a timeless favourite, while peonies and ranunculus are especially loved when budget allows. Centrepieces are also evolving toward a more natural, whimsical and "garden-inspired" aesthetic. For those who prefer classic elegance, glass

vase arrangements remain a popular choice, offering both sophistication and versatility, as the vases can be reused long after the wedding. Filled with fresh flowers again and again, they become a lasting reminder of love, joy and celebration.

Roses continue to be the ultimate wedding flower, cherished for their romantic symbolism and timeless appeal. Other popular choices include lilies, orchids, and tropical blooms, each adding its own unique character and charm. To ensure the best selection and freshness, it is always recommended to book your wedding flowers well in advance.

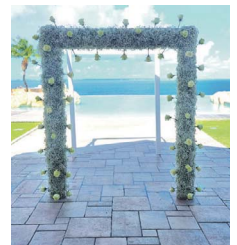
**Wedding specials and offerings**  
Flowers by Flores provides a wide range of floral services tailored to every wedding style. From bridal bouquets and centrepieces, to boutonnieres, corsages, and arch decorations, every detail is carefully crafted. They also offer plants, cus-

tom gift baskets, chocolates and balloons to help complete your wedding atmosphere.

**Wedding hours and availability**  
The shop is open Monday through Friday from 9:00am to 5:00pm, and Saturdays from 9:00am to 3:00pm. On wedding weekends, it remains open on Sunday from 9:00am to 4:00pm to assist with last-minute arrangements and ensure everything is perfect for your big day.

**How to book your wedding flowers**  
To reserve your wedding floral arrangements, contact Flowers by Flores at +1 (721) 524-8106, 559-8782, or 542-1935, or visit the shop in Philipsburg at Cannegieter Street #129, next to Travel Planners.

*Flowers by Flores looks forward to help make your wedding day as beautiful, meaningful and unforgettable as your love story.*



# LOVE LIT UP

Brighten your Special Occasion with Skyfall Pyrotechnics

Every wedding deserves a magical moment – the kind that leaves guests speechless and creates memories that last forever. That's exactly what Skyfall Pyrotechnics delivers through spectacular customized firework experiences designed to turn celebrations into unforgettable events.

entrance, a sparkling cake-cutting moment, or a dramatic finale under the stars, the Skyfall team creates personalized experiences that perfectly match the atmosphere and style of the wedding.

What truly sets Skyfall Pyrotechnics apart is its commitment to personalization. The team works closely with clients to understand their theme, budget, and expectations, ensuring

that every detail – from colours and timing to choreography and musical synchronization – reflects the couple's unique love story. Safety also remains at the heart of every production. Their experienced pyrotechnicians follow strict industry regulations and professional safety protocols while working alongside venues and local authorities to guarantee a secure and seamless event.

Beyond weddings, Skyfall Pyrotechnics also brings excitement to concerts, festivals, carnival events, birthdays, sporting events, pool parties, gender reveals, inaugurations, funerals, baby showers, New Year's Eve celebrations, and video productions. With innovation, professionalism, and a passion for creating magical moments, Skyfall Pyrotechnics continues to light up celebrations with unforgettable energy and beauty.

The company offers a wide range of services including special effects, cold spark machines, daytime fireworks, and professional firework displays for indoor or outdoor celebrations. Whether couples dream of a glamorous grand



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**We also have Centerpieces, Canopies, Corsages, Boutonnieres and more.**

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For more info, contact Burnett Fabrice at 0690 39 51 01. Follow them on socials at Instagram: @skyfallfireworks; Facebook: skyfallfireworks; & YouTube: @skyfallfireworks.

# Edible art at its finest: EXPERTLY CRAFTED WEDDING CAKES BY ZEE BEST



*There have been lots of changes lately at Zee Best – your go-to bakeshop that whips up beautiful cakes to suit any occasion, skilfully and artistically. The wedding cakes are a tier above the rest, and uniquely tailored to the newlyweds' wishes after thoughtful consultation. Zee Best's Kara Sanchez Lapierre, who has been a chef for over 20 years, fell in love with cake decorating in 2011, and still finds joy and challenge in the creative workspace. Here, she shares some of her journey, trends, advice and exciting updates with us.*

It's been a year of change and growth for the company. "I have an amazing team with new additions including my baker who handles cake production, as well as my new pastry chef and assistant pastry chef who keep the day-to-day production going and make sure beautiful cakes are being produced – with attention to details, design, and colour."

The newly revamped website – [www.zeebestrestaurant.com](http://www.zeebestrestaurant.com) – now allows for clients to order a cake directly, with a user-friendly platform. In the cake section, you'll find three categories: Classic Birthday and Celebration Cakes, Embellished, and Wedding and Specialty. Note that Wedding and Specialty cakes normally require a phone or in-person consultation and cake tasting. "Our wedding consultations are also a time for the couple to taste a flight of cupcake flavours and this is always a fun part of the whole wedding planning process," says Kara.

Timing is also of the highest importance. While the team will always do their best to accommodate wedding cake orders, giving the process ample time makes a big difference, allowing for less stress and more options. For example, a large cake with handmade flow-

ers will require at least three months' notice.

Before we move on to more about wedding cakes, let's look at the other two sections. Classic Birthday and Celebration Cakes: the menu shows the flavours, each featuring a unique design. For example, the Chocolate Salted Caramel Cake features caramel drip and is topped with a ring of salted caramel popcorn. As for the Embellished line of cakes, this category offers up a little more "wow" factor. Choose a pre-set design, then choose a flavour. There is also an option to upload a picture for inspiration.

After so many years, Kara still feels excitement for her work. "There are always new trends, new techniques to learn, and a new way to think about growing your business while making sure the integrity and care for every cake is still there. You have to think of check points along the way and a vision needs to be conveyed to those working alongside me. From a business perspective, it's always a new adventure requiring a new way of think-

ing, planning and organizing. My favourite moments that quiet the noise, are when I am hyper focused on making a flower petal look as realistic as possible. Those moments with some music in the background almost become a meditation for me."

Kara had never planned to focus heavily on cakes, and had not trained specifically as a pastry chef when first opening the bakeshop. But after many requests and becoming enamoured with the artistic possibilities, she tried her hand – and after trial, error and some tears, she really started to find her way in the



world of cakes.

For one birthday in Montreal, her husband treated her to a private one-on-one class with a renowned cake decorator that truly helped her to solidify skills. "I remember telling her I only wanted to do basic cakes and that I didn't really want the stress of getting into multi-tiered wedding cakes. She said 'come back to me in a year and we'll see if you feel the same way.' She obviously had more foresight than me. Now we do incredible four- to five-foot tall multi-tiered works of edible art."

We asked about exciting wedding cake trends. The vintage trend, which has been taking the wedding cake industry by storm, seems to be nowhere near ending. They "evoke a bygone era and opulence and craftsmanship." They are large, multi-tiered and have plenty of heavy piping, buttercream swags, and mini rosettes. "Flowers, fresh fruit and berries adorn the cakes, and they are found as multi-tiered towers or even as exaggeratedly large, round, single tiers that the new couple can finish decorating by spreading a generous layer of fresh berries and final dusting of powdered sugar. In this way, cakes are THE centrepiece and create an unforgettable moment in that special day."

"Garden whimsical cakes are still trending as

well, with a sort of beautiful whimsical chaos that just evokes pleasure. These can take on many forms, from round, to multi-tiered to long rectangles that extend the length of the table. These too are often piled high with fresh fruits, berries, figs and candied orange slices."

Whatever your preference, Zee Best has both the passion and skill to make it happen. Contact the team well in advance to make the most of it!



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# Wedding CAKES

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"ZEE BEST CAKES - FOR ALL THOSE SPECIAL MOMENTS"

[zeebestrestaurant.com/order-cake](http://zeebestrestaurant.com/order-cake)

# WEDDING OFFICIANT JAMES "JIMBO" MORRIS

To switch things up a bit for this Wedding Special, we decided to interview Jimbo – a well-known restaurateur on both sides of our island. Among his many other talents is that of being a wedding celebrant. Here's our interview with him.

**1: Jimbo, you've lived many lives – actor, playwright, art dealer, restaurateur, sailor, biker and now wedding officiant. How did you begin this journey of officiating weddings?**

Well, I was born into a Baptist preacher's family and left that many moons ago. As a hippie, I moved to D.C., worked in the House of Representatives, then moved to NY to pursue acting, then playwriting. When I came to St. Maarten on vacation, I fell in love with the people of St. Maarten and the weather, of course. I thought I'd be writing plays, but ended up opening Jimbololo in Grand Case on St. Maarten Day 1990, which got destroyed on September 5, 1995. Anyway, after a sail across the Atlantic to England, and a Harley ride around the USA, I opened Jimbo's in Simpson Bay. In the past few years, I've had the privilege of officiating three weddings – the last was the great honour of marrying good friends, Stefan Veraguez and Kyra Passos.



**2: What made St. Maarten feel like home?**

It is just what St. Maarten does – truly The Friendly Island. I fell in love with this place in one visit in November 1988 – not the place, but the people – I was hooked. I came back in January 1989 to see if there would be work for me, and I moved here and have called St. Maarten home since March 30, 1989.

**3: Your restaurants became legendary on the island. What was your philosophy as a restaurateur?**

Having never owned or run a restaurant before, it was a stroke of luck that I've been so successful. It was a learning experience from day one. I made mistakes and I'm sure I'll make more in the future, but I guess my philosophy would be the same as my life – honesty and integrity.

**4: You've transitioned from nightlife and parties into a more spiritual path. What inspired that change?**

Well, that is getting pretty personal, but I am happy to share a note. After Hurricane Luis and my adventures that included lots of drinking, I was miserable and sought help. I had no idea that my misery was being stoked by alcohol. The help I got changed my life. There is a 12-step program here called Alcoholics Anonymous, with meetings at the Red Cross. They are published in this paper with my phone number. If anyone needs help, call me please. I still attend meetings and am there to help the newcomer after 28 years of sobriety.

**5: How did you become involved in officiating weddings?**

It just happened naturally. People knew I was a PK (preacher's kid) and came and asked me. I don't have a license as yet, but I think I may apply, because I really like performing the weddings. The first one I did years and years ago for a Jewish wedding at Privilege. The vows were written by the bride and groom and were very personal. I had to recite them over in front of friends and try to not cry during the delivery – I still did choke up at one point. Funny, huh? And then because of that first one, the next two were friends. The couples are legally married before the ceremony.

**6: Why do you wear white when officiating ceremonies?**

Well, for this last wedding between Stefan and Kyra, I wore clothes that I bought in India during one of my spiritual quests and yoga – Kyra's grandfather, the recently deceased Tom, the pioneer that started the boutique on Pinel, was a good friend of mine – the "skirt" and beads were a natural choice and they loved it. Funny, not one person asked why I was wearing that outfit.

**7: What makes a wedding ceremony truly memorable?**

I believe weddings in and of themselves are all memorable.



The commitment between two people to share the rest of their life together needs no description. The photos of family and friends sharing that special moment make it memorable for everyone. Of course, the vows themselves are important, and I was honoured to be given carte blanche to write the ceremony and included a poem from Kalhil Gibran.

**8: Looking back, what would you tell your younger self riding motorcycles across America?**

I guess this is kind of a spiritual question, so I'll give it an appropriate answer: Nothing! Sounds weird, right? Since I know that The Universe is in charge and has led me to this moment, I wouldn't change a thing. Oh yes, I have some regrets, but those have just given me insight to what I need to work on and change for a better today and tomorrow.

**9: After all these years, what matters most to you now?**

Man, I don't know why you're asking all these deep questions, but I'll answer to the best of my ability. Like Miss America, peace on earth, right? Seriously: To live a life that can be an example to others and to reach out to those who may need what I have to offer and be less judgmental. For myself, internal peace of mind and a good night's sleep and the ability to walk the trail to the Natural Pool with my dog, Luna, every day – just the basics.

**10: Did this particular couple say why they chose you to officiate their biggest day?**

Well, it's funny. Stefan bought my house – so that's how we met really – and then after some months, he and Kyra moved in. I was in the States. I asked if I could rent the downstairs apartment from them and it just worked out so well. As I recall, in one of our get-to-know-each-other conversations, I must have told them I'd officiated weddings. The night before I had to go to the States, they came downstairs and asked me to marry them. I was just floored and so very honoured.

**11: So how would one contact you if they are interested in having you officiate at their wedding?**

Yes, I'd love to officiate at more weddings – it's such an honour. But at the moment, couples need to see to the details of their legal ceremony on their own, meaning they must register at their own area of official residency. Anyone interested in contacting me can reach me by sending an email to martha@thedailyherald.sx

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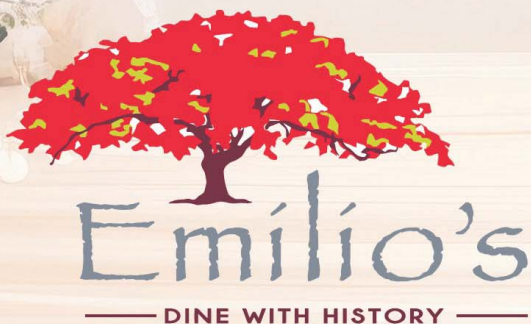
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