



Wedding Special

The Daily
Herald

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Taking the plunge

The current period is traditionally a favoured one to get married on the island. This annual supplement aims to provide particularly all those planning or involved in weddings with relevant information and tips that will hopefully help inspire them.

Enjoy the read!



Choosing your wedding venue is one of the most exciting – and important – decisions you'll make during the wedding planning process. The location sets the tone for your big day, influences the theme, dictates the guest list size, and takes up a large portion of your budget. Here's how to find the perfect spot for your "I do."

Start with your vision

Before you tour venues or request quotes, sit down with your partner and discuss the kind of wedding you want. Are you imagining a rustic barn, a glamorous ballroom, a beachfront ceremony, or an intimate garden gathering? Having a clear vision will help you narrow down your choices quickly.

Consider the following:

- Indoor vs. outdoor
- Formal vs. casual
- Seasonal preferences
- Destination vs. local

Estimate your guest count

Your venue must comfortably accommodate all your guests. Have a rough estimate of your guest list early so you can filter out venues that are too small – or unnecessarily large.

Bonus: Knowing your guest count also helps with budget planning and vendor coordination.

Choose a general location

Depending on if you are tying the knot close to home or planning a destination wedding, decide on a general area. Then consider how accessible the venue will be for you and your guests. Think about the following:

- Travel logistics (airports, hotels)
- Transportation options
- Guest accommodations

Do your research

Start browsing venue websites, reading reviews, and scrolling through real wedding photos to get a feel for each location. Make a list of your top picks and schedule site visits.

Questions to ask during visits:

- What's included in the rental fee?
- Are there restrictions (noise, alcohol, décor)?
- What's the backup plan for bad weather?
- Do you have preferred or required vendors?

Consider the amenities

Think beyond the aesthetics. A beautiful venue might lack essentials like restrooms, parking, or kitchen facilities. Make sure the space is both stunning and functional.

Look for the following:

- Bridal/groom suites
- Climate control (especially important for outdoor venues)
- ADA accessibility
- Lighting and sound systems

Understand the venue's style and flexibility

Some venues come fully decorated and furnished, while others are a blank slate. Choose one that match-

es your desired level of involvement and design, and remember to ask the following questions:

- Can we personalize the space?
- Are there décor or vendor limitations?
- Can we bring in our own food, drinks, or rentals?

Check availability:

Popular venues book up fast – sometimes more than a year in advance. Be flexible with your wedding date or have a few options in mind before you tour.

Read the fine print

Before signing a contract, read everything carefully. Make sure you understand the following:

- Cancellation policies
- Payment schedule
- Insurance requirements
- Timing (setup and breakdown hours)

Trust your gut

After all the research and site visits, go with the venue that feels right. It should not only meet your practical needs but also make you feel excited and at ease.

Picking the right wedding venue is a balancing act between budget, style, logistics, and personal preference. With thoughtful planning and clear communication, you'll find a space that sets the stage for the day of your dreams.



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Publisher
Paul De Windt

Coordinators
Darlene Hodge
Martha Jane Marsden

Contributors
Darlene Hodge
Martha Jane Marsden
Evadney 'Eve' Henriques

Layout
Pip van Gelder

Cover Photo
Lancelot and Nicole

Copy Editor
Sharon Van Ameman

Operations Manager
Steven De Windt

Advertising Coordinator
Moira Marcelle



Bringing the vision to life with edible art

Wedding Cakes by Zee Best

bit heart-stopping at times – especially through Mullet Bay!

Vintage cakes, also known as Lambeth cakes, are still enjoying their moment in the spotlight. Lambeth cakes were THE definition of cake design in Victorian times and remained popular up to the 1950s. The re-emergence of this style of cake came back in the form of the heart shaped cakes that you see all over Instagram and, of course, this trend spilled over into wedding cakes.

The modern vintage wedding cake is more restrained in piping to its predecessors, which featured layers upon layers of intricate detailed piping, but still features enough décor to create a very elegant and refined classic English effect.

Floral designs on cakes never go out of fashion and are as popular as ever. Handmade florals, made from wafer paper and sugar paste are really special in that they are customized to meet the exact colour palette and mood board.

I'm also seeing a new trend that I'm loving for its simplicity and yet ethereal and whimsical look. These are narrow slab cakes about four inches in height that extend the length of a long rectangular table. This is perfect for long tables at a garden wedding, for instance, where guests help themselves to cutting a piece from the cake right in front of their place setting.

They are generally decorated with a gardenscape design with flowers and petals strewn throughout and trails of whimsical buttercream swoops and ribbons that weave their way the length of the cake. While this is not for every theme, I do feel these are a beautiful way to incorporate a playful and whimsical effect at a garden wedding.

A recent stand-out project

I was so pleased to create a cake for a fellow Sint Maartener who has been living abroad for many years but planned on getting married in her native Sint Maarten. Over our phone

consultation months prior, we discussed her desire to incorporate the colours of a beautiful Caribbean sunset into her cake. Her colours were apricot, peach, fuchsia and a touch of yellow and I was so pleased that she gave me free rein to bring her inspiration to life in cake form.

I incorporated bright wafer paper bougainvilleas and yellow orchids to accentuate the watercolour hand-painted effect on the cake and when I stood back, I was really pleased with the elegant Caribbean vibe it gave.

This is now what I call the Sint Maarten Sunset Cake as it really does bring to life the colours and sunsets of our beautiful island. I was really touched to do this for someone who lived abroad and missed her Caribbean sunsets.



Wedding cakes are no doubt an unmissable centrepiece of the Big Day, and an opportunity to truly customise your aesthetic. Crafting these cakes is a work of passion, serious skill, art and engineering. We approached Chef Kara Sanchez Lapierre, pastry chef extraordinaire from Zee Best, to ask her about exciting trends, her artistic experience, and what it takes to bring it all together.

A stunning variety of artistic styles: What's exciting?

Wedding cake trends for 2025 are an exciting mix of big, small, vintage and new. Wedding cakes have come such a long way from that staid afterthought of a dessert that usually consisted of dry cake with a layer of tooth achingly sweet buttercream, to towering confections of edible art that bring the bridal couple's vision to life in cake form.

A wedding cake is the centrepiece and the iconic picture moment of the wedding and the look has to be just right. The expectation now is that wedding cakes must be supremely beautiful, showcasing artistic talent, but also crazy delicious, consisting of layers of perfectly executed dessert components including pastry creams, compotes, fruit coulis, mousses and much more.

To pull all of that together and literally put a bow on it is the challenge that Cake Designers live and breathe by. Cake designers are part pastry chef, artist and engineer!

Tall, narrow, elegant towers of multi-tiered cakes are back, so much so that dummy cakes of Styrofoam are covered to add more height and grandeur. I recently had a client request a five-inch cake for a party of 20; it was so tall that I needed a step-stool to work on the top tiers! Transporting it was a



Wedding Cakes

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A Personalized Approach

Your perfect wedding celebration

The Simpson Bay Resort (SBR) team believes every couple is unique, and their wedding should reflect that. That's why they don't offer traditional, one-size-fits-all wedding packages. Instead, they take a personalized approach to curate an event that captures the essence of your love story. Every detail is important – and from the venue layout to the smallest decorative touches, everything is tailored to match your individual vision for the perfect celebration.

Tailored wedding packages just for you
Planning a wedding can be overwhelming, but at Simpson Bay Resort, they make it simple and stress free. They begin by getting to know you, understanding your preferences, and learning about the atmosphere you envision for your big day. Therefore, whether you're looking for a romantic, intimate setting or a grand, lavish celebration, they will bring your ideas to life. To ensure a personalized quote, the SBR team takes into account the number of guests, your choice of venue space, and any special touches you wish to incorporate – anything from custom decor to unique enhancements. They always have a goal to provide a seamless, incredible experience for you and your loved ones.

Unparalleled location and beautiful venues
What truly sets this venue apart is its prime location in the centre of the Simpson Bay paradise. Surrounded by breath-taking

views of the ocean and the stunning natural beauty of the area, they offer a variety of exceptional event spaces, each with its own distinct atmosphere:

- ***The Royal Ballroom:*** This elegant indoor space features large windows that frame the ocean view, providing a stunning backdrop for receptions, dinners, and other special events. With a refined ambiance and sophisticated design, The Royal Ballroom sets the perfect tone for a stand out celebration.

- ***The Marina Upper Deck:*** For couples who love the outdoors, their open-air terrace offers panoramic views of the sea, making it an ideal venue for ceremonies or receptions under the stars. With the sound of gentle waves and the warmth of the evening breeze, the Marina Upper Deck is the ultimate spot for an unforgettable, romantic celebration.

- ***The Oceanfront Gazebo:*** Situated right by the water, this intimate, romantic setting is perfect for small ceremonies or private dinners. With the ocean as your backdrop, the Oceanfront Gazebo offers an exclusive, serene atmosphere for the most special moments of your day.

Exceptional culinary experiences

Food plays a crucial role in any event, and their in-house culinary team ensures that every meal served is as exceptional as the setting itself. From appetizers to main courses

and desserts, the SBR team will create bespoke menus that cater to your tastes, dietary preferences, and cultural traditions. Each dish is prepared with the finest ingredients, ensuring that every bite is a reflection of their high standards. You can rest assured that their dedicated team will provide seamless service throughout your event, so you can focus on celebrating with your guests, knowing that every detail is in expert hands.

Make your dream wedding a reality

If you're planning a lavish event or a quiet, intimate gathering, the SBR team understands that your wedding day is one of the most important moments of your life. That's why they offer a personalized, stress-free experience that allows you to relax and enjoy every step of the journey. From the venue to the catering and everything in between, the SBR team is here to bring your vision to life and create an unforgettable wedding celebration.

Start planning your dream wedding at Simpson Bay Resort – a place where love, beauty, and personalized service come together to make your day truly extraordinary.





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WEDDING DECORATIONS FOR EVERY SKILL LEVEL & BUDGET

DIY projects don't have to break the bank

It doesn't matter if you're a craft expert, a beginner, or trying to be budget-friendly, going the DIY wedding decorations route can be an enjoyable and satisfying activity. Do it yourself decorations allows you to have more oversight, spend more time with the loved ones you've enlisted to help and learn new skills. Another bonus is that you can walk around your wedding cherishing all the personal touches you added to make your day special. Whether you are coming into this with zero ideas or with an abundance of decor ideas in mind, here are a few ideas to get you started.

HANGING FLOWER ARRANGEMENTS FOR CEREMONY CHAIRS

This bohemian and DIY rustic wedding decor for ceremony chairs is simple and easy to make. Since this decoration involves fresh flowers, it is suggested that you wait to assemble these until a few days before the wedding. Personalize this idea with DIY wedding aisle chair decorations like your favourite flowers, waterproof fairy lights or monogrammed mason jars.

Plan and practice your floral arrangements months in advance. Get familiar with basic techniques, such as cutting stems, using floral foam and creating balanced arrangements by watching online tutorials. By practicing early, you

can also test how long it'll take to make each piece.

WEDDING WELCOME BAG WITH SNACKS

Welcome gifts become even more special when they're created and put together by the couple. Sure, you can buy everything nowadays and have it all cutely packaged. But when you're gathering and hand-making elements of your welcome gift, it means more because every element was chosen with care, made with intention and represents the couple, the place and the wedding. This doesn't mean everything has to be handmade, but when the key elements are made by you, it's special. And it's also not something they could get anywhere else.

FLOWER AND SAND CENTREPIECES

You will need the following supplies: artificial flowers, glass vases of any size, sand, and scissors.

Fill the vases up to $\frac{3}{4}$ way with sand. Snip the stems to suit the height of the sand in the vase then simply bury flower in the sand.

Fluff the flower a bit to make sure it looks voluminous and gorgeous. That's all it takes to make this centre-piece.

Adding candle light is simple – just bury votives or tea lights in the sand.



Since its inception on July 1, 2004, Sint Maarten Marry Me has proudly stood strong for 21 years, redefining destination weddings on the island by helping couples create unforgettable wedding experiences that truly reflect their unique love stories. The team specializes in everything from intimate beach ceremonies to lavish destination weddings, offering full-service planning that ensures every detail is thoughtfully and meticulously handled.

Back in 2004, when Sint Maarten Marry Me began its journey, destination weddings were typically built around generic packages. What made the team stand out from the start – and still continues today – is their dedication to creating fully personalized, meaningful wedding experiences that reflect each couple's unique love story. The Sint Maarten Marry Me team also takes

pride in working with a network of trusted, professional vendors who understand and uphold the same high standard of service.

Just recently, Sint Maarten Marry Me forged a partnership with Artemia Event Planners, which has the largest wedding and event inventory on the island; thus enabling Sint Maarten Marry Me to offer an extensive range of décor, modern furniture, and stylish options to their discerning couples.

Being in existence for two decades and counting, creating unforgettable weddings remains the ultimate goal of Sint Maarten Marry Me. The company has remained a trusted name in wedding planning through all of life's challenges, whether navigating hurricanes, economic shifts, or the global pandemic. Through it all, the Sint Maarten Marry Me team has stayed focused on what matters most – delivering exceptional service, building genuine relationships with clients, and celebrating love in all its forms.

Get to know St. Maarten Marry Me through the eyes of the Senior Wedding Planner.

I am Maressia Bailey-Mohamed, the senior wedding planner at Sint Maarten Marry Me. I've had the privilege of working in the wedding planning industry for over 20 years, and I'm deeply passionate about creating memorable, personalized experiences for every couple. As the senior wedding manager, I oversee the entire wedding planning process, from the initial consultation to the final celebration, ensuring that every detail aligns with the couple's vision.

Looking back on 21 years of business, what would you say the company most proud of?

We are most proud of the lasting relationships we've built with our clients and the trust they place in us to create such significant moments in their lives. Seeing returning clients for renewals and anniversaries is a touching reminder of the lasting impact we've made, and it's a testament to the dedication and passion that has driven our success for over two decades.

What's even more special is when couples return to the island for family vacations and reach out just to share a coffee or introduce





their children and in some cases, even their grandchildren. It shows that for many, we've become more than just planners – we've become a meaningful part of their love story. It is experiences like these that reinforce why I chose this path. They continue to inspire and fuel my love for wedding planning.

Can you give an example of any changes the company has made, and the benefits of those changes?

Over the years, Sint Maarten Marry Me realized that in order to offer even more complete services, we had to think outside the box. Our creative thinking led us to joining forces with Artemia Event Planners. This partnership has allowed us to become a one-stop shop for all wedding and event needs, from weddings and corporate events to a host of other destination services for our clients.

In addition to serving Sint Maarten, we also offer our services on the surrounding islands, such as Anguilla and St. Barths. This expansion has significantly enhanced our ability to offer a diverse range of services, allowing us to manage every aspect of an event, big or small, with the same personalized attention and exceptional service we're known for.

In general, have there been any big changes in the industry over the years?

The wedding and event planning industry has seen significant changes. One of the most notable shifts has been a move toward more personalized and unique experiences. Couples today are seeking events that truly reflect their personalities and love stories, rather than following traditions. Another change has been in the size and scale of events. While large, extravagant weddings were once the norm, today's weddings have a smaller guest list and a stronger emphasis on meaningful interactions, unique details, and elevated guest experiences.

Technology has also played a huge role in shaping industry. The rise of virtual planning tools, live streaming for remote guests, and social media for sharing real-time moments have all changed the way weddings and events are planned and executed.

These changes have made the industry more dynamic, creative, and flexible, allowing for an even wider range of possibilities for couples.

Are there any significant planned changes coming up for the company?

Yes, Sint Maarten Marry Me is always evolving to meet the needs of modern couples and to stay at the forefront of

Sint Maarten Marry Me

Creating unforgettable wedding experiences for over two decades

the destination wedding industry. One exciting development is the planned expansion of our on-island Artemia warehouse offerings. New décor collections and customizable design options give our clients even more creative freedom and inspiration when planning their special day. This allows us to provide an even more comprehensive and streamlined experience for couples who may need assistance beyond the wedding itself, such as activities, logistics, or multi-day event coordination.

As a seasoned professional, what is one tip that you would give to aspiring couples when it comes to working with a wedding planner and planning their dream wedding?

Even though there exist many tools online and otherwise that can help you plan your dream day virtually, my recommendation (especially when it comes to a destination wedding) is to invest in a local planner – a planner who has local knowledge, who is experienced and tried and true! A wedding represents one of the most important days in a couple's life, and it deserves to be handled by professionals who understand the full scope of work. Look at a company's track record, how long they've been in the business, client testimonials, and their ability to tailor events to each couple's unique story and then make an informed decision.

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The love story of newlyweds Lancelot and Nicole is one that started many years ago. The two, who have known each other since high school, decided to give love a shot nearly two decades ago, and have steadily built a beautiful life together in The Netherlands. The power couple has an active and full life – working, each while also running their own separate business and raising a family.

Solidifying a

~ Lance

ing two children, they solidified their lasting bond by saying “I do” on May 2.

Lancelot, better known as Lance, is the Head of the Fitness, Health and Well-being department within Cisco Systems Amsterdam, and also owns two fitness companies that provide group training, personal training, and coaching. Nicole works at the Nike European headquarters, and has her own interior design company.



Lancelot Thompson and Nicole Brown, who now both go by the last name Thompson-Brown, have a 16-year-old daughter, Kohi; a 10-year-old son, Knight; and a 12-year-old dog called Snuffy.

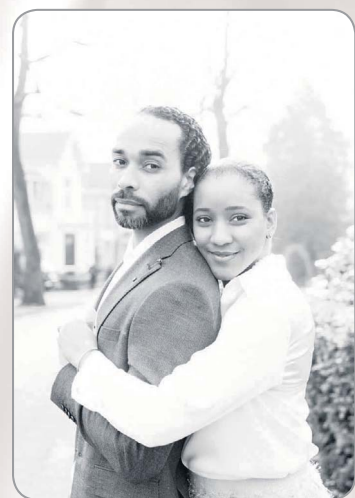
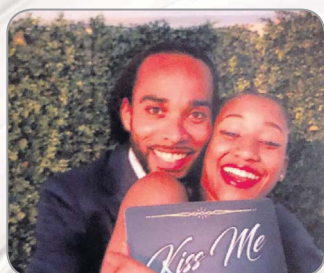
After years of growing and evolving together, navigating through the stages of their school years, early careers, ventures into starting their own businesses, becoming parents and nurtur-

The two met during their high school years in St. Maarten, and Lance can still remember the first time he saw Nicole at the old movie theatre, Movies 1 & 2, in Philipsburg. Years later, during their time in college in The Netherlands, they would cross paths a few times once again. Realising they kept coming back to each other, they knew it was time to give a relationship a try – thus began their journey, and there’s been no looking back since.

The proposal was unexpected, taking place during a family trip to Greece in the summer of 2023. Lance, who had been scheming for months, bought the engagement ring during another trip to Dubai, and hid it in Nicole’s bag. It had been with her for all this time, without her knowing.

During a sightseeing trip in Greece, Lance got the driver involved by having him set the scene and take a family photo. When everyone else walked off, he dropped down to one knee and waited until Nicole realised that he wasn’t following behind her.

Two years later, the nuptials took place in a private villa among the nearest and dearest, with a stunning view of



er Lasting Bond

Lancelot and Nicole ~

their sweet St. Martin land and the Caribbean Sea. Tying the knot on the island was important and special to them both. "Home is where we belong, so where better place to get married than surrounded by those that mean the most to us," they shared.

While opting to stay in The Netherlands after their studies, they've always kept a close connection to family and friends at home, visiting when they can and making sure the children enjoy their St. Maarten ties and experiences.

The timing of the wedding coincided with St. Maarten carnival, which only added to a joyous momentum and sense of celebration. The ceremony itself was memorable, perfect even, turning out exactly as they had envisioned – a day for them and by them, surrounded by those who are the closest to their hearts.

Knowing themselves and each other so well, it's not hard to imagine how the vision would come together seamlessly. Nicole, interior designer by trade, put together an entire briefing document shortly after Lancelot proposed, and the vision quickly materialised. "It was by mood, colour, signage, venue, cake, signature drinks... you name it. I took it on as my biggest design project."

Working and planning from afar, they coordinated with local vendors to make it all possible: Destination Wedding and Event Planners Janique and Tasana from Just Creative, DJ Spy, Photographer Lili Peterson, Videographer RJM, Saxophonist Big Note, Make-up Artist and Hair Stylist Rogelia

Euson & Kisha Brown, CB Catering, bar service company Drinktopulous, Baker Taste by Cassidy, Dutch Tours transportation, and IRE Real Estate.

On asking for advice for aspiring couples looking forward to their own wedding day, the couple had these tips to offer:

- Think about how you want to feel on your wedding day.
- Who do you need around you – really need around you, to create that feeling?
- What colours, textures and fun meaningful elements /items make

you happy?

- Look for examples for everything and be specific with your event planners and anyone helping you to pull off the day.
- Have a structured timeline for the day.
- Make sure you do and say all you want to.
- And, lastly, have no regrets – hopefully, you've only got one shot!





Captured moments by Alexandra Shaede

Photographer in St. Martin - St. Maarten
who can capture your perfect moments!



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Wedding flowers that make a lasting impression

A wedding day is one of the most important and cherished moments in the life of a couple, and flowers play a pivotal role in making the event truly unique. Flowers by Flores is ready to assist with your intimate ceremony and, of course, the grand celebration afterwards! It's all about choosing the right floral arrangements that suit your personality, favourite colours and flower types. Flowers by Flores will elevate the ambiance of your event by adding a personal touch to your special day.

Flowers are meant to last, not just in memory, but in their beauty. For the past few years, a growing trend has been the use of flowers in boxes and large, elegant bouquets wrapped in chic cellophane. These box arrangements are not only visually stunning; they also extend the life of the flowers. The shorter stems, which absorb water more effectively, ensure that your flowers stay vibrant throughout the day, and beyond. And for couples looking for something unique and modern, these arrangements also come with a practical advantage – the boxes can later be repurposed as storage.

One of the trends this season is lining the driveway that leads to the altar or gazebo with beautiful flowers set up according to the couple's taste. Along with roses, peonies and ranunculus continue to be the favourite of brides when their budget allows it. Centrepieces are more on the wild side with a more whimsical look.

For couples who enjoy classic elegance, glass vase arrangements are always a hit. Many brides and grooms love receiving vases because they can be re-used, making the wedding flowers a lasting symbol of their special day. The beauty of a glass vase is that it can be filled with fresh flowers long after the wedding, creating an ongoing reminder of love and joy.

When it comes to wedding flowers, roses are a classic choice, loved by brides, bridesmaids, and the most discerning guests. They symbolize romance and timeless beauty, making them the perfect flower for any wedding celebration. Other popular choices include lilies, tropical flowers, and orchids – each offering its own unique charm. It is highly recommended that you plan ahead and order your wedding flowers well in advance. This ensures you get the most stunning and freshest arrangements before they run out of stock.

Wedding specials and offerings

Flowers by Flores offers a variety of floral arrangements tailored to suit every wedding style, from elegant bouquets to stunning centerpieces, boutonnières, corsages, and arch decorations. Maybe you're looking for live orchids, or personalized gift baskets, or even chocolates and balloons, they can help you create the perfect atmosphere for your big day.

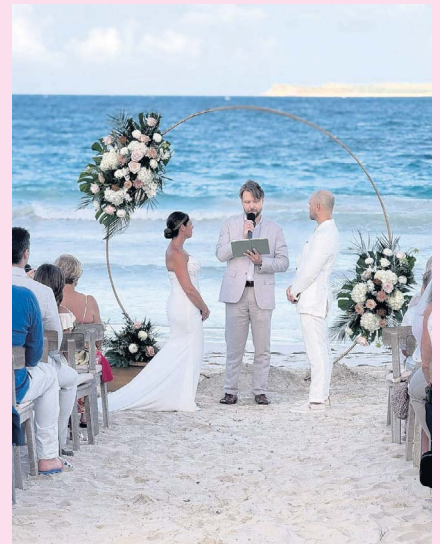
Wedding hours and availability

Flowers by Flores is open Monday through Friday from 9:00am to 5:00pm and Saturdays from 9:00am to 4:00pm. On wedding weekends, the shop is open all weekend long, including Sunday from 9:00am to 5:00pm, so that the team can assist you with last-minute details or additional arrangements before your big day.

How to book your wedding flowers

To reserve your wedding floral arrangements, simply reach out via phone at +1721 524 8106 / +1721 542 1935 / +1721 559 8782. You can also visit the shop at Cannegieter Street #129 in Philipsburg, next to Travel Planners.

Flower by Flores looks forward to helping make your wedding day as beautiful and memorable as the love you share!



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When the time comes to plan the Big Day, SXM Party Rentals N.V. is there to make sure it all comes to life, without a hitch. The full-service party rental

company offers essential event coordination services, entertainment, and catering, topped off with tasteful décor and design. From lighting and furniture to delicate glassware, the team has everything you need for a successful event, and is available all year round for all sorts of parties and gatherings, whether you keep it small and intimate or large and lavish.

EVERYTHING YOUR WEDDING NEEDS, WITH A PERSONAL TOUCH

SXM Party Rentals N.V.

SXM Party Rentals provides a wide range of services, for different types of gatherings – everything from weddings to corporate events, the team has seen it all and carefully takes the wishes and tastes of their clients into consideration. So keep this local, family-owned 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.

When asked what he's looking forward to over the coming months, Creative Director Dion Gumbs said he loves to "help create an experience that will meet the needs of our clients, or to supersede their expectations." He continued: "Building valuable relationships with clients and business partners while doing what we love to do is priceless. For me, this is growth, and I'm looking forward to that."

When we asked about some of the noticeable and exciting trends when it comes to weddings, the creative director said he is definitely seeing movement in the industry. Neutral tones are in and have been trending for a while, however at the same time, eye-catching vibrant floral arrangements or focal points are now very much in demand. Bold statement linens are also trending,

and there has been a rise in requests for personalised items or monograms.

"These little details bring personality to the forefront," he pointed out, "and help create a memorable experience." Having multiple daytime celebrations is also becoming more popular, such as having an active day of family fun after the wedding. Given the fact that friends and family typically travel down to enjoy weddings, we think that having organised, catered activities even after the wedding is a great call.

If you're interested in having the SXM Party Rentals team help you bring your wedding plans to life, reach out by calling +1 (721) 522-1972 or emailing dlggumbs@gmail.com. The team would love to hear from you.



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How to work with your wedding photographer and videographer



A tropical wedding is the epitome of romance, with the swaying of palm trees, the sound of ocean waves splashing, the amazing golden sunsets and colourful flowers that all come together to create the perfect backdrop for your "I do." Capturing the magic of this setting requires more than just a beautiful location – it also calls for seamless collaboration with your photographer and videographer. Here's how to make the most of your partnership with these essential vendors to ensure your memories are preserved as beautifully as they unfold.



Choose professionals experienced in tropical weddings

Not every photographer or videographer is equipped to handle the unique challenges and opportunities of a tropical location. The intense sunlight and heat can be unmanageable to those used to our temperatures. So hiring a local that shoots in the extreme heat year-round is the best option, as they know the specific conditions that affect lighting, equipment, and timing. Look for professionals who have experience shooting in similar settings and can show you a portfolio that includes tropical or outdoor weddings.

Involve them early in the planning process

Your photographer and videographer should be part of your planning conversations from the beginning. Share your vision, timeline and locations for each part of the day – from getting ready to the cer-



Wed at the picturesque Divi Little Bay Beach Resort

Come back for your anniversary!

Dreaming of a lovely beach wedding, or an elegant black-tie reception? Divi Little Bay Beach Resort offers you these options, and much more. The resort makes your destination wedding deal a little sweeter when you book 10 rooms, you'll benefit from lots of perks and you'll be invited back for a free stay on your anniversary – an offer that's hard to beat.

Perks include a couple's massage, free upgrade to a suite, fresh flowers, champagne, and free daily breakfast for the bridal suite stay.



Your wedding will reflect your unique style, especially given the range of settings available. Relax and enjoy the wedding, pre-wedding festivities, and even the honeymoon – all in one place.

Many couples choose to tie the knot on the stunning peninsula beach, at one of the three poolside locations, or on one of the open green areas with a breath-taking scenic view of Great Bay. We also have a large number of guests that do proposals and vow renewals.

Divi's Executive Chef Julio Haynes will create premium, tantalising dishes for your wedding reception or dinner at their Sea-breeze Restaurant, a poolside venue overlooking the ocean.

Family and friends staying at the resort can enjoy the pools, water sports on the beach, gym, shopping promenade, a wonderful spa, and various onsite dining options. The historic Fort Amsterdam monument is located on Divi's premises, and the resort is a stone's throw away from the heart of Philipsburg.

Divi Little Bay Beach Resort offers the ideal setting for your destination wedding, whether it's your first time visiting the Caribbean, or you're from a neighbouring island and looking for a hassle-free travel experience. With its ideal setting, facilities and catering options, Divi is also a popular wedding venue for St. Maarteners.

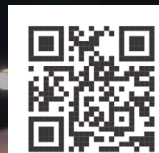
Don't hesitate to contact Divi Little Bay Beach Resort to take the first step in making your dream wedding a reality. Visit www.diviresorts.com and select "St. Maarten" for impressions, details, and contact information. Also ask about the honeymoon and group packages.



Celebrate Your Romance

at Divi Little Bay

Tucked between turquoise waters and lush hillsides, our beachfront resort is the perfect place to say "I do" or start your forever.



GET INSPIRED

Weddings,
Honeymoons,
Romance Packages,
& More!



emony and reception. This helps them plan for lighting, logistics, and capturing important moments without disruption.

Scout locations together (when possible)

If you're arriving at your destination a few days early, consider setting aside time to visit your ceremony and reception locations with your photographer and videographer. This gives them a chance to assess lighting conditions, find the best angles, and plan for gear setup. If an in-person visit isn't possible, video calls and sharing maps or venue photos can still be very helpful.

Create a detailed timeline with buffer time

Timing is everything in a tropical wedding, especially when you're racing against the sunset. Work with your photographer and videographer to build a realistic timeline that includes enough buffer for transitions, travel between venues, and spontaneous moments. Golden hour (the hour before sunset) is ideal for dreamy portraits – schedule your couple's shoot during this time if possible.

Discuss style and must-have shots

Photographers and videographers have different styles, from documentary to cinematic, traditional to artistic. Make sure you're on the same page about the overall aesthetic. Also, provide a list of must-have shots: special guests, cultural rituals, or specific décor elements. While profes-

sionals need creative freedom, clear communication ensures you don't miss any meaningful moments.

Trust their expertise, but speak up when needed

Your team has likely seen it all including unexpected rain showers, strong winds, or tight timelines. Trust their guidance when it comes to adjusting locations or schedules. At the same time, don't hesitate to voice your preferences or concerns. A good vendor wants you to feel heard and happy with the final product.

Plan for the environment

Tropical settings can be unpredictable, so think humidity, sand, and sudden rain showers. Ask your photographer and videographer how they plan to protect their gear, and consider backup plans for rain. Having umbrellas, shaded areas, and indoor options for key moments can save the day.

Keep your crew comfortable

Weddings in warm climates can be physically demanding. Provide water, snacks, and a comfortable space for your photo and video team to rest if the schedule allows. A happy

and energized crew is more likely to capture your big day with enthusiasm and creativity.

Factor in travel logistics

If you're bringing your own photographer or videographer to a destination, make sure you're clear on travel costs, accommodations, and meals. Clarify who is responsible for what in the contract, and provide all necessary travel details well in advance.



CONTINUED ON P. 14

Blooms that tell a love story

Flowers "R" Us and the art of wedding florals

In St. Maarten, it's always wedding season, so plan for your big day to be unforgettable with the perfect details that include fresh flowers and thoughtful touches from Flowers R Us.

Flowers "R" Us is your go-to destination for exquisite floral arrangements, luxurious gifts, and delightful treats! They have curated a beautiful selection to elevate your wedding celebration and make it as memorable as your love story and are always happy to assist you in preparing for your grand ceremony, your vow renewal, anniversaries or even your most intimate affairs such as wedding proposals.

Fresh flowers are always the perfect addition to any romantic event, so swing by today to discuss making your event come to life with breath-taking ambiance and colours.



Exclusive selection for your wedding needs

- **Floral arrangements:** From elegant bouquets to spectacular centrepieces, handcrafted with the freshest blooms, designed to complement your wedding theme and colour palette.
- **Bridal bouquets:** Choose from a variety of timeless designs, whether you prefer classic roses, or sophisticated lilies.
- **Luxury gift boxes:** Treat your wedding party with stunning gift boxes filled with premium flowers, chocolates, and more – perfect for bridesmaids and groomsmen.
- **Chocolates & champagne:** Add a touch of indulgence with our specially curated chocolates and select liquors or champagne, perfect for toasts or gifts.
- **Cakes & desserts with flowers:** Delight your guests with a combination of delicious, artfully crafted cakes, desserts, and beautiful floral accents for a sweet finish to your celebration.

Don't worry if you can't make it in person; they've got you covered with delivery service that is available across the island, ensuring that your wedding flowers and gifts arrive perfectly, no matter where your celebration is taking place.

Flowers "R" Us doesn't just decorate weddings. They create moments. They tell stories. They bloom with you. So let Flowers "R" Us help you create the wedding of your dreams!

Book your consultation today and start designing the wedding florals of your dreams. WhatsApp +1 (721) 588-6829 or +1 (721) 586-8753, and discover more on Instagram @flowersrusxm



How to work with your wedding photographer and videographer

CONTINUED FROM P. 13

Enjoy the moment because it shows on camera

Above all, remember that your joy and connection are what shine brightest in photos and video. Once the planning is done, trust your team and focus on soaking in the magic of your tropical celebration. Genuine emotion is what transforms great footage into unforgettable memories.

memories will be captured in all their sun-kissed glory. With a little planning and a lot of trust, your love story will be beautifully recorded, frame by frame, moment by moment on your very special day!

A tropical wedding offers a dreamlike atmosphere for tying the knot – and with thoughtful collaboration between you and your photographer/videographer, your



Flowers that tell your love story
At Flowers "R" Us, we design one-of-a-kind floral arrangements for unforgettable weddings.

Custom designs, guarantee freshness, and a touch of magic in every bloom.

Enjoy personalized assistance from start to finish.
Your vision, our passion.



Visit us: #79 Bush Road
(same plaza Carrefour Market)

Call us or

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Exceptional five-star weddings

The Morgan Resort

Offering an unparalleled experience that combines luxury, breath-taking scenery, and world-class service, The Morgan Resort is the premier destination for couples seeking a picture-perfect wedding venue. This incredible five-star resort is the ultimate choice for your perfect dream wedding.

In a dreamlike setting in paradise, on the pristine shores of The Friendly Island of St. Maarten, The Morgan Resort has panoramic views of crystal-clear turquoise waters, white sandy beaches nearby, and amazing sunsets. The resort serves as the ideal backdrop for any wedding ceremony, anniversary, vow renewal, or proposal.

Couples seeking a truly romantic atmosphere will find that the resort's open-air spaces and modern design seamlessly blend with the natural beauty of the island. They also offer amazing service, quality dining, and the opportunity to customize the setting to reflect the couple's unique style and vision.

Each couple will enjoy access to luxurious accommodations, including spacious suites with private balconies and sweeping views of the Caribbean Sea. You can relax by the resort's infinity pool and indulge in gourmet cuisine. The Morgan Resort team is there to ensure that every moment is filled with elegance and relaxation not just for the bride and groom, but also for all of their guests!

Spa services include tailored massages and beauty treatments to help you feel pampered and ready for your special day. With private, personalized attention from the resort's staff, couples can rest assured that every detail will be taken care of with precision and care.

At The Morgan Resort, couples are provided with a dedicated wedding coordinator who works closely with them throughout the planning process. From selecting the perfect venue to choosing floral arrangements and catering options, the resort's experienced team of professionals is committed to creating a seamless and stress-free experience.

Maybe you are dreaming of an elegant traditional wedding with a more relaxed and casual celebration. The Morgan Resort offers a range of customizable packages designed to meet every couple's vision and budget. The resort's all-inclusive wedding packages cover everything from ceremony and reception planning to post-wedding activities, so that the couple and their guests have an unforgettable experience.

Beyond the wedding ceremony, The Morgan Resort provides a wide array of activities for couples and their guests to enjoy. From water

sports like snorkelling and jet skiing to exploring the island's vibrant culture, there's something for everyone. Couples can enjoy private sunset cruises and day trips to nearby islands, or indulge in the resort's fine dining options for a culinary experience unlike any other.

St. Maarten is renowned for its unique blend of Dutch and French cultures, offering visitors a chance to explore charming towns, dine in exquisite restaurants, or shop for one-of-a-kind souvenirs. The resort's central location makes it easy for guests to explore the island's beauty, making it the perfect destination for both a wedding and a honeymoon.

Bridal testimonial from Elise regarding her wedding that was held at The Morgan on March 15.

"I grew up vacationing in St. Maarten and when Brady and I started dating, I started bringing him to the island. He quickly fell in love with the island and understood why it was so special to me. We chose St. Maarten for our wedding because we wanted to share such a special place with all of our family and friends on the most important day of our lives – our wedding day. The Morgan encapsulated the beauty of the island and provided a venue that was right on top of the water. The service was exceptional and our guests are still talking about how incredible the food was. From the cocktail hour being on the lawn to the reception being in the tent, the whole night we were surrounded by the clear Caribbean ocean. Maho Beach is not only near the airport, but has many close-by restaurants, bars, and stunning beaches that our guests could explore. The location provided ease and convenience, along with many upscale options and unique places to explore."

For couples looking to create lifelong memories, there's no better place than The Morgan Resort in St. Maarten. With its stunning location, impeccable service, and expert wedding planning team, it's the ideal destination for couples seeking a wedding that's as unique and beautiful as their love story. From the moment the couple says "I do" until they depart for their honeymoon, The Morgan Resort promises an unforgettable wedding experience in one of the most stunning locations in the Caribbean.

Quick Tip: Inquire about their offer of 10% off on event space and set up.

For more information about booking your wedding at The Morgan Resort, visit their website at www.themorganresort.com/events-weddings

Photos by Carlos Lippai





10% OFF VENUE RENTAL AND SET-UP

SAY "I DO" IN THE PERFECT SETTING!



THE GAZEBO



BANQUET TENT



GREAT LAWN



THE PIER



CATERING

IDEAL FOR CATERING EVENTS

- Engagement parties
- Cocktail hour
- Rehearsal dinner
- Wedding receptions
- After-party
- Farewell brunch

TENT CAPACITY: 200 GUESTS

TENT: 3,200 SQFT

LAWN SPACE: 6,400 SQFT

Host unforgettable weddings and events at The Great Lawn's Banquet Tent and Gazebo!

IN-HOUSE CATERING

SALT Restaurant at The Morgan Resort offers exceptional in-house catering for events big and small.

Led by Executive Chef Derio Boyce, our skilled culinary team creates personalized buffet menus tailored to your vision. Every dish is made with the freshest, locally sourced ingredients for vibrant unforgettable flavors.

Our stunning buffet presentations are guaranteed to impress and delight your guests.



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