

The River Room at The Savoy

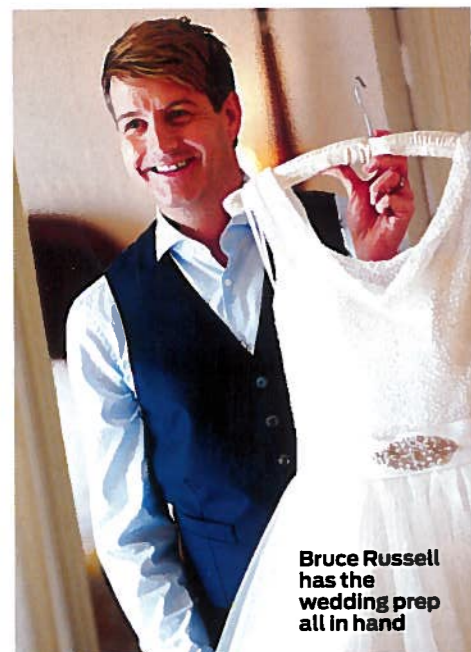


The Savoy's Ballroom

He's not flapping

If you're having butterflies at the thought of your big day, this man will keep you calm

BY VICTORIA PREVER



Bruce Russell has the wedding prep all in hand

TRANSPORTATION, CHILDREN and live animals present the biggest challenges for affable Canadian wedding planner Bruce Russell.

"One bride wanted white butterflies to be released," he recalls. "First we had to find a breed of white butterfly that would be reproducing at the right time of year.

"Having managed that part, we then had problems on the day getting them to leave their cages. You put nectar in the cage to entice them in and keep them awake so they will be ready to fly at the big moment.

"However, they were so content, that the 100 white butterflies were reluctant to come out. We had to try to shoo them out at the right moment — even the bride was helping us!"

At another wedding, it was discovered that kosher wines specially flown in from the family's private cellar in Brussels, were not mevushal, and so could not be served by the staff they had hired. At an hour's notice he had to source additional shomers to serve each table personally — for two hundred guests.

Very occasionally, though, a request may be outside of Russell's control.

"Most of the time, wedding couples are happy to 'let go' and allow me to look after everything but occasionally a bride wants to try to control everything.

"I was asked to ensure that all 24 children attending remained seated during the one-and-a-half hour ceremony and for the meal.

"Given that they would be scattered around the room and sitting with their parents, I didn't feel that I could do this — how can you stop a child moving around over such a long period? I had to ask the bride to mention this to them herself. Thankfully they were all well-behaved and not disruptive at all".

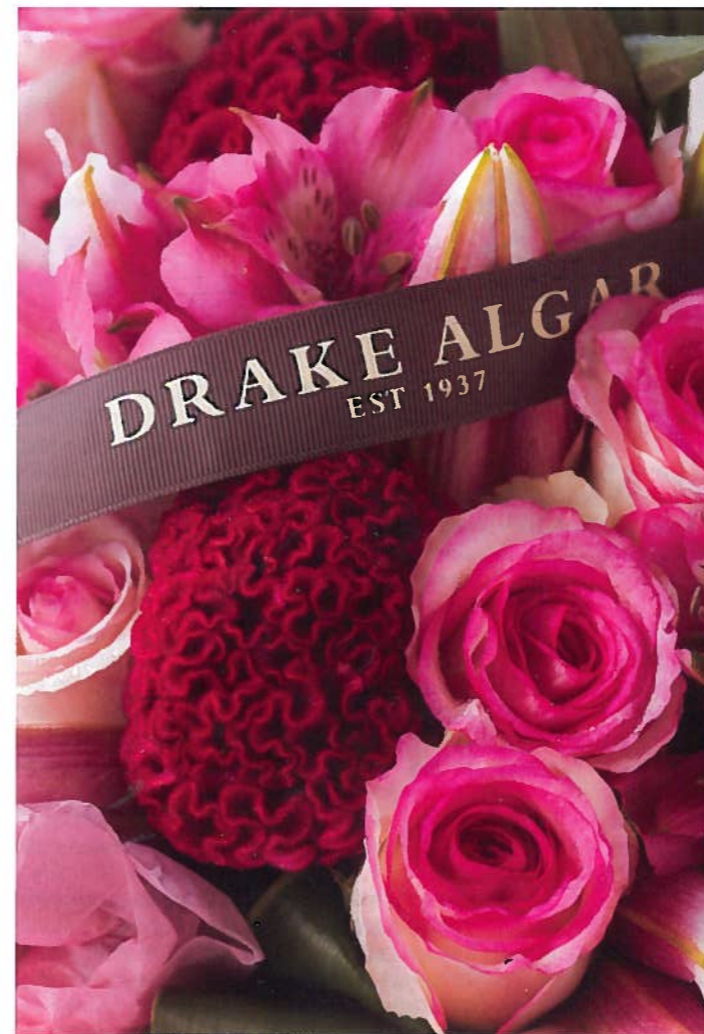
Sometimes the best ideas cannot be acted on immediately but have to be kept on ice until the right bride comes along, adds Bruce.

"I had met someone from the Royal Opera House who hires out opera singers. Then a bride came to me who loves opera, so we have agreed that the singers will perform something from her favourite opera at her wedding".

In Bruce's experience, a growing number of Jewish couples are starting to prefer something bespoke for their wedding.

"They might want very particular canapés or to replicate the menu that was served at their parents' wedding — and we work hard to make this happen."

Bruce Russell this year became the resident wedding planner at The Savoy, where he handles each event with his team, Samantha Poole and Shona Paré



DRAKE ALGAR
EST 1937

Beautiful and elegant floral designs created and tailored especially for your perfect day

T: 020 7722 4491 | E: shop@drakealgar.com

www.drakealgar.com

1b St John's Wood High St, London, NW8