ANGELA WARD BROWN

THE WORLD'S BEST WEDDING PLANNING INSIDER GUIDE

To be fair I have only read this one, but my point stands.

SO YOU ARE GETTING MARRIED?

YAY! IT WILL BE THE MOST AMAZING DAY: FACT

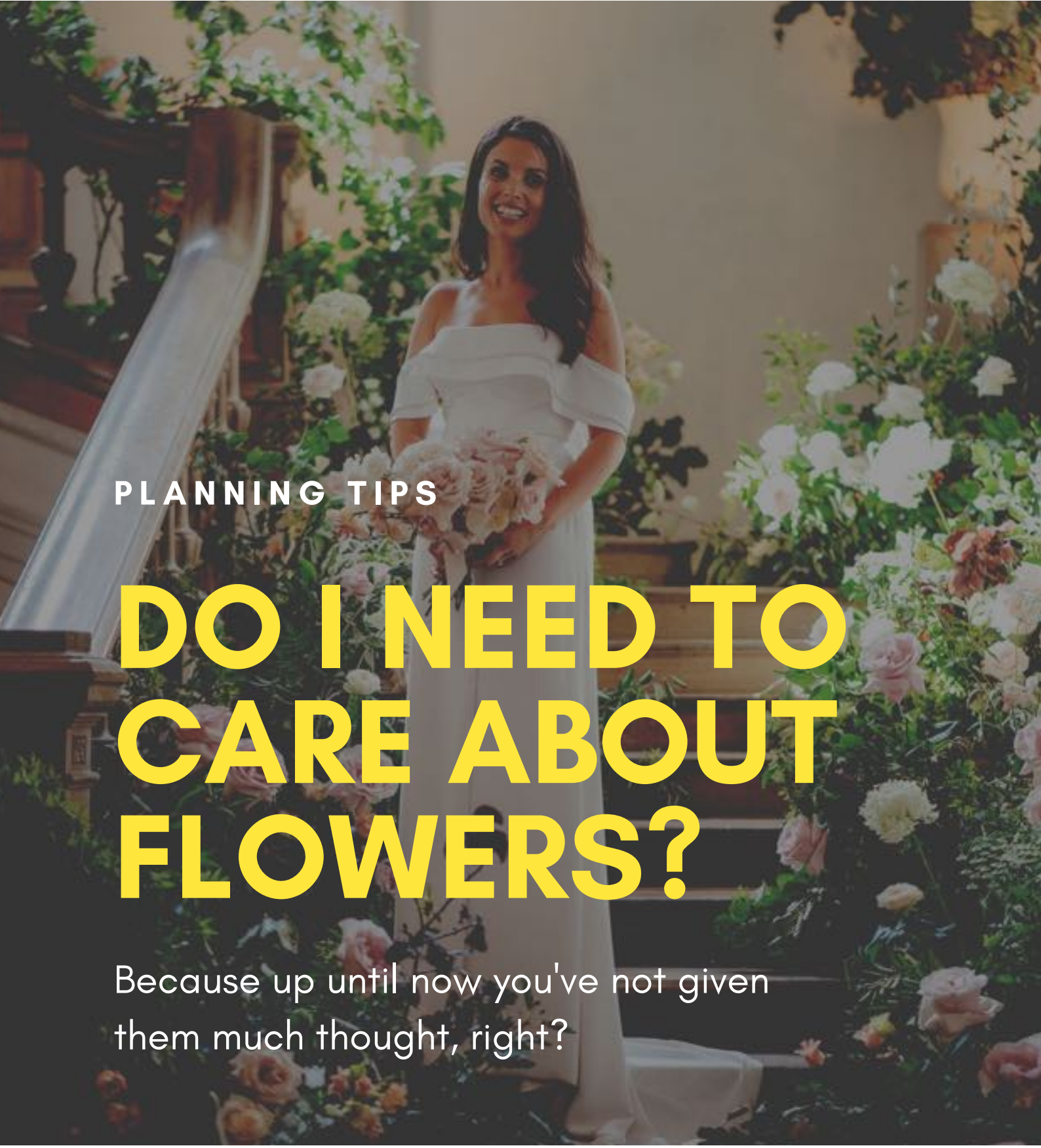
Here are some things you didn't know you needed to have an opinion on

- Favours
- The style in which flowers are grouped
- How long a day should be
- Napkins
- The usefulness of your friends
- Who can be trusted to arrange a stag/hen with nothing going on fire
- Tiny food you will eat before you eat much bigger food

I AM HERE TO HELP

Things to consider when choosing a venue

Is it big enough?
Does it have good natural light?
Does it have the facilities you need?
What's the wet weather plan?
Is there somewhere quieter for your Gran?
Is it going to require a lot of decorating?
Can you style it to reflect you?
Will the location prompt selfies or grumbling among your buddies?



PLANNING TIPS

DO I NEED TO CARE ABOUT FLOWERS?

Because up until now you've not given them much thought, right?

THE GOOD NEWS IS YOU STILL DON'T NEED TO

As with all your suppliers, my only and best advice is to pick someone whose work you like, then let them do their thing. Also, I have a list of amazing people if you need it.

WHAT ABOUT MY CATERER?

This is one of the most important wedding decisions you have to make

Naturally I advocate that your wedding menu is just a series of different cheeses, but apparently that has some kind of weird negative health benefit, so you get to ignore me, and have the most pleasurable experience of your life: a TASTING SESSION. In this magical time you will get to taste what your caterer will feed you, have 3 desserts in one meal with zero shame, and generally have to be rolled to the car afterwards.

Your venue may have a list of caterers they ask you work with - talk to them all & see who is offering a food style that suits you, are flexible to how your day will run, and whether they offer someone to run the day - all food providers are not equal!

WORDS OF WISDOM FOR FREAKED OUT PEOPLE

I completely reject this idea that a wedding day is all about the bride, it's not, and it's not all about the groom either (unless there are two grooms, then it totally is) - it's about you taking this incredible decision & then throwing a party to celebrate it. So, based on my experience here are some tips for brides & grooms as your wedding day looms up on the horizon like a giant T-Rex clutching wedding favours in his tiny, tiny hands. The speech. Let's start with the big one. This advice goes for Best Men and Fathers of the bride too - IGNORE EVERYTHING ON THE FIRST PAGE OF GOOGLE. It's where everyone finds their advice, so if you want your speech to feel individual, and thoughtful, step away from the computer. Basically, Grooms have the easy speech - they need to thank their families & friends, the bridal party, anyone who pulled out the stops to make the day go ahead, a toast to absent friends, and (and this is the really important bit) a few words about your bride/fellow groom. Do not plan this bit. I know, that sounds like mad advice - but nothing makes my heart sink more than a groom reading "and my wife looks gorgeous, doesn't she?" from a printed piece of paper that you know he wrote days ago. Sure, we all know your new spouse is going to look heart-stoppingly beautiful, because they look that way to you anyway. But take a minute to really look at them, lock that memory away, and react in the moment. One "My love, you look incredible", trumps 30 "and my wife looks gorgeous, doesn't she?"s. One sentence honestly saying what this day means to you will mean the world to them. Your job here is to be honest and in love, nothing more.

Oh, and never forget to thank the parents. Or you will be paying for that well into your silver anniversary.

What not to wear. God, nothing. Welcome to 2019 - morning suits not required. The last ten years have totally freed up what we expect grooms to wear. If you wish to top hat & tail it - knock your self out, but it is certainly not the norm anymore. Go hang out on Pinterest for some ideas. Or dress like one of the Doctor Whos - possibly more Matt Smith than Tom Baker. And certainly not Colin Baker assuming you want the wedding to go ahead. Hmm.

Women, the choice is baffling, overwhelming, and sometimes not as fun as you expect. In fact, it can be pretty dispiriting. So maybe don't organise a big high pressure day, but make it easy on yourself, however you do it.
There are so many amazing bridal boutiques to guide you, who will help you find something that fits your needs along with your body & budget. Maybe its a killer Alexander McQueen suit? Or a shift dress from ASOS in the sale. You do you, boo.

Stag/hen. I am assuming you have picked a Best Man/Best woman/ Maid of honour you can trust right? Then let him or her know your limits & boundaries, and make sure he knows you are serious. Then go & have the best time ever. My husband & I had no interest in splitting into gender groups for our stag & hen - as we would both have missed out on good buddies, so we just all went out together, and this is a really good option for most people. But if you do the traditional thing, don't feel like you have to fit the mould either. You want a River Cottage cooking weekend, do it. A yacht on a Greek island getting quietly steamed? Why not. Are you a bit of a feminist who would feel seriously uncomfortable about a stripper, good for you, it's tacky & sexist, let your buddies know this. Do you want to head to Comic Con dressed as The X-Men? Excellent. Can I come?

Dancing

Dancing. We have all seen those couples who do the amazing orchestrated first dance thing – a sexy tango, a hot shoe shuffle, not all of us are built for this and that's just fine. In fact (tell no one I said this) you don't even have to have a first dance. FACT. Or if you do it can be less Celine Dion & more pogo-ing around to The Pixies. ALL GOOD. But do be aware that your guests probably won't dance until you do, so get up on that floor regardless, even if it's with some buddies to do the Timewarp.

Finally, here is some sage advice – if you got married, the day officially went right. You have worked to supply your guests with a wonderful day packed with food & fun, it is not your responsibility to make sure they enjoy themselves. That will happen whether or not the cake falls over, the wedding car breaks down, or your buttonhole got crushed.

THE WEDDING INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX AND WHY YOU SHOULD CARE LESS ABOUT WHAT YOU LOOK LIKE, AND MORE ABOUT HAVING FUN

Click the image below & go straight to my blog post, and feel tons better about yourself.

We've made a terrible mistake and can we elope instead?

REMAIN CALM. It can feel a bit much at certain points of the planning process, and it's easy to lose sight of why you are doing this. It's a declaration and a celebration, and it's all about you. So an idea is to make a list of three things each that are your priorities (hopefully these overlap!) and use that list to guide your decision making.

Try not to get bogged down in the details. I should probably be ex-communicated from the wedding industry for saying so, but it's just a day. A brilliant day, a day you will always remember, and crucially a day you should get me to photograph OBVIOUSLY, but just a day. Enjoy it.

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