

ASK THE EXPERTS

Got a question about your big day? No matter what you need to know, our experts can help. Email asktheexperts@weddingbelle.ie.

Q I keep seeing adverts for designer trunk shows in wedding boutiques. Can you explain exactly what these are?

A bridal trunk show is an in-store event at which a designer visits the store with their new collection of dresses straight off the runway. Brides make one-hour appointments to try on the dresses and meet the designer, who will also bring some key pieces from previous collections that the store does not normally have. It is also a chance to ask the designer about the gowns and discuss colour options and any changes. A common misconception is that a trunk show is a sale or fashion show. It isn't, however the designer will often throw in an extra such as a hand-drawn sketch of the dress, changes to the design at no extra cost or a discount on accessories. The dresses are only in-store for the duration of the trunk show (two to three days) so you should be prepared to place your order there and then. The White Room hosts many trunk shows during the year - cutting edge British designer David Fielden, who designed *Holby City* star Tina Hobley's wedding dress, will have a show here from April 12th - 14th.

Marion Matthews, The White Room, Mullingar, www.thewhiteroom.ie or 044-9347661

Q I would be interested in making my own wedding invitations but am not particularly creative. Can anyone attempt it?

When we started a business printing invitations it was great, but when we opened our DIY shop on Camden Street, we started to put our printed shop, out-of-business. So 18 months ago we closed down our art paper shop and our printed shop to concentrate on selling materials for people to make their own wedding invitations, and we've never looked back - that's how popular making your own invites has become! Everyone has access to a computer and an ink jet or laser printer. You don't have to be too creative to make invitations. We help with the

designs, cutting and folding. Our web site has templates so that people can set up their invitations in Microsoft Word. Invitations can be as simple or complicated as you choose. Plus by making your own invitations you will save between half and two thirds of the cost.

Paul Barnes, Daintree, www.daintree.ie or (01) 475 7500



Q I would love to get married in my parents' garden but I'm worried about the logistics. What's involved? I don't want any hassle for them.

You have every right to be concerned about the logistics of the day. With marquee weddings there are so many factors to be taken into consideration and there is another major factor which couples completely overlook - the clean up. Again and again we hear horror stories of couples having their big day marred by messy, and costly, 'clean ups'. Ensure your marquee company is fully contracted for the entire day, from planning to clean up. At Weddings At Home our policy is to take the headache out of the day. We organise every aspect of marquee weddings from start to finish, leaving you free to enjoy yourself. We are rigorous in ensuring that our service is non-invasive, and never compromises the normal running of the family home. We assure every customer that their garden will be left in impeccable condition. **Emma Maguire, Weddings at Home, www.weddingsathome.ie**

