

# Dream maker

In the current economic climate you may think a wedding planner is an unnecessary luxury, but the reality is that having a star planner like Leo Callow on your team, could actually be a way of getting your dream day for less...

**W**hen money is tight it's amazing how the important things in life quickly come into focus. The huge reception in the glitzy hotel with the helicopter drop-off; the unbelievably expensive designer dress; the mini caviar canapés that cost the earth...none of this really matters. What really count are the people, your closest friends and family – the world's most valued currency.

"In these times of recession and credit crunch, people are motivated by laughter and friendship that feel good factor – that's what a wedding should achieve, that sense of happiness, love and togetherness," explains celebrity planner Leo Callow.

"But it may surprise you just how much work it takes to get everyone singing off the same song sheet! That's where my services can be invaluable – I love the detail needed to lock all the key ingredients together, taking the stress out of planning the wedding for the couple involved and ensuring that both families are on course for a happy occasion. I'm the middle guy, the buffer if you like."

If you're drawn to the idea of a wedding planner but you're worried about how you can justify the price, Leo has the answer;

"My skill lies in organisation and negotiation; I'm the master at getting things done and negotiating the best price, without compromising on quality. People think hiring a wedding planner is an additional luxury but I see it as an essential that can actually save you money. You wouldn't ask your brother to operate on you unless he was a surgeon, so why would you not call in an expert to look after one of the most important milestone events in your entire life?"

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Or if you're worried that a planner will take over your big day leaving you feeling completely detached from the whole event, Leo has an answer for that too;

"I want couples to have a real sense of pride and achievement about their day. Hiring a

## STAR STRUCK

Some of the big names in entertainment Leo has brought to Ireland for private events...



wedding planner isn't about delegating your duties; it's about asking an expert to come on board and help make your dreams a reality. I don't take over, of course I can if you want me to, but generally I work alongside families to create their ultimate wedding day, for two very special people with minimum fuss, hassle and expense for everyone. After all, the wedding will be a reflection of their taste and their style; I'm simply helping to make it happen, so they have more time to enjoy each other".

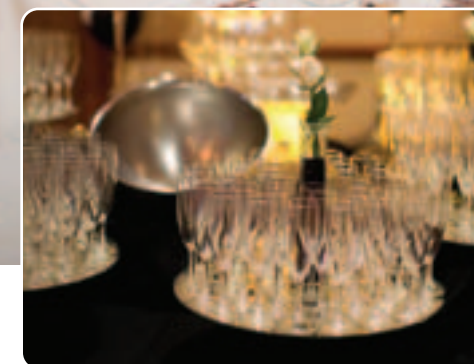
A man of many talents, Leo has worked on some of the biggest weddings, social events and parties that Ireland has seen and his job has seen him plan parties in Dubai, Cape Town, Berlin, Barbados and Mauritius but recently he's noted a change in peoples attitudes towards their wedding with the focus now being firmly on the celebration itself, rather than the pomp that surrounds it.

"The days of doing something huge 'just because you can' are over. I'm finding that clients want a less showy celebration of their marriage with the focus on their personality, their home life and close family unit.

"Couples want to forget their financial woes and work troubles and instead want to bask in the warmth and support of family and friends and that doesn't cost a penny!

"It's my job to deliver that relaxed and welcoming environment for the couple. My speciality is bringing together all the ingredients needed for a fabulous celebration, that emphasises the love and kindness that two people have all around them".

In Leo's opinion the bride and groom shouldn't need to spend any time fretting over legal details, supplier chains or family disputes, instead, they should be enjoying the 'bubble' of getting married.



"Today I'm creating the set for a high profile society wedding and its all go, setting up a marquee, dressing the room and co-ordinating with the caterers, entertainers, production company, photographers and florists. But where's the bride and groom? They're no where to be seen, she's in the spa and he's playing golf and that's exactly the way it should be," he laughs.

The great thing about a planner is that they offer a diverse range of service and skills, it's a bit like a pick and mix bar, you can choose the resources that you really need to make your wedding day truly special – by hiring the dream team to shape the look, the entertainment, the venue or simply bring the whole plan together.

"Whatever your budget or your dream, I can make it happen," says Leo. "I've worked with

couples who have virtually limitless budgets and I've helped others create their ultimate wedding day on a shoestring. Either way the end result will be the same – a wedding that they, their families and close friends will remember for the rest of their lives.

My years of experience as a wedding planner have taught me what's important – a wedding is all about two families joining together and passing on their heritage, love and traditions to the next generation. It's a milestone that brings with it a lot of emotion. My job isn't about clipboards and headphones, it's about the behind the scenes creation of a stage on which the jewels of family are exchanged and that's priceless.

You can contact Leo on 07775842488 wj

## YOU KNOW YOU NEED A PLANNER IF...

- You're stressed out trying to make your Pounds or Euros deliver your dream wedding
- Your swamped by 101 suggestions but don't know if you like any of them
- You're thinking of cancelling your hen weekend because you're worried about getting everything sorted
- You can't find that amazing singer for the church or world class entertainment for the reception
- You're looking for that dream castle with a lake, where you can get married and party with friends and family, all night long, but don't know where to find it