

Hens, Friends and Long Weekends – Wed Magazine

<http://www.wedmagazine.co.uk/hen-parties-cornwall-bride-to-be-blog.html>



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In the third instalment of our bride-to-be blogger series, Becca gets her gal pals together for a gaggle of hen party fun...

"I can't remember when I last had all my favourite folk of the female flavour together, not least for two days, if I ever have. So I was excited when I learnt this was the plan for my 'hen do'. But, perhaps because the popular media has so successfully marked this marital rite of passage as a catastrophe filled cacophony of lairy scantily clad girls, I was a bit worried. The thing is, I'm fairly sure that none of the below has ever been requisite for me to have a good night out:

- Plastic representations of male anatomy
- Flashing headgear
- Miss World style sashes (pink, always pink)
- L-plates on my back

To be honest, the whole language of this oeuvre of party makes me a little uncomfortable. Stags. Hens. In the game of anthropomorphic symbolism, women yet again get the duff role.

In the US it's worse. Bachelorette. I have a pet hatred of all marked terms, but the suffix 'ette' in its diminutive cutesiness is amongst the worst. More, this terminology seems to suggest we should model our (the women's) night out around the men's so, stereotypically I admit, we should also:

- Couple ourselves to lampposts
- Pack a spare set of clothes
- Bring a passport
- Drink
- Drink
- Drink

Amusingly given my semantic wrangling, on the weekend I had with my best female friends, the hens were more literal than metaphorical. Our two-night stay at the earthy yet sophisticated Lowen house in Bosinver, Mevagissey marked the two-month countdown to the wedding.

This house is zero carbon and energy self-sufficient, straw walled and fantastically beautiful. The décor successfully merges the raw, organic beauty of exposed timbers and wood finishes with a more contemporary aesthetic that exudes zing and verve – high-gloss orange kitchen cabinets crown the zesty citrus brights found throughout. If commissioned art or eco credentials don't make you catch your breath, sitting atop a Cornish valley the views from the double height windows and the mezzanine balcony probably would: <http://www.bosinver.co.uk/stay/lowen>.

Arriving on a Friday night with my Mum, I was greeted by my friends not only with a cold glass of my fave wine, but also – slightly scarily! – with their decorative efforts: oodles of pictures of a lifetime of my questionable fashion choices. A joyous moment to reflect that a picture lasts forever and to make a point to speak to my wedding photographer ASAP.

After a corking Keralan curry cooked by my talented Mum and some strong but expertly made Mojito cocktails, we made the sensible decision to leave the outdoor hot tub adventure till the morn and took to our beds.

Waking to a sea of baked goods and wall-to-wall blue skies, we took breakfast outside on the terrace. I can't remember the last time I did this in the UK...possibly at a festival, probably in the rain, never on a terrace. (If I'm honest I rarely 'take' breakfast at all: scoff, scran, munch is usually more on the mark - but Lowen demands a superior class of verb).

Cue a day of delights: a zip line, a slide, cake, jewellery making in the blazing sunshine with Sarah Drew (<http://sarahdrew.com>) bubbles in the tub and more cake.

Possibly the best surprise was the arrival of the talented duo being Kernow Forno (<http://www.kernowforno.co.uk>)...a portable gourmet wood-fired pizza company. They hand delivered an array of gorgeous pizzas to fuel our evening...even making 'pudding pizzas': bananas and chocolate and apple crumble. I'd whole-heartedly recommend these guys for the main event at weddings – really lovely food, really lovely people.

And that's it really. No reports of debauchery. No plastic paraphernalia. And, barring one errant bra strap (what happens on the hen do; stays on the hen do) we all kept our modesty in tact.

But, for me, it was perfect: more friend than henned.

Now it's time to think about details of the big day and allow myself to get excited rather than awed by the wedding. I've picked up my headpiece from the ever lovely Holly Young and my last dress fitting is in exactly four weeks.

With the help of Kellie from Vintage Addiction (search Facebook for the delectable Vintage Addiction page), I've sorted the table décor.

For those of you out there wrangling with dates, guest lists, venues and finance – bear with it, because this stage is the most fun. With all the big decisions made and bills pretty much paid, now you get to think about the details: finishing touches that speak of you as a couple, of your adventure together.

But my advice is don't obsess: you can't worry about whether people will notice or even care about

these decisions.

Everything you do is for you.

So...

If no one finds the secrets my Dad will hide in the garden. Fine. We know they are there.

If no one gets the symbolism of acorns and thimbles. Fine. We do.

If no one ventures over to the pond so misses the strange creature lurking there. That's fine too – it was fun thinking it up that rainy night in December.

If no one believes that “all the world is made of faith and trust and pixie dust” that's cool, because we have plenty to go around.

The warm glow of my 'Frhend do' reminded me of one major point about the wedding and my final words for this blog series: it's not about where, what and how...but about who.

I can't remember the last time I had all my favourite folk of both flavours together, not least for two days, if I ever have.

But, in more than one way, after 3rd August I will be able to say I do.

Check out Becca's website here www.rebeccaritson.com



Rosie and her new mates



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