



HEVER CASTLE WEDDINGS

CASTLE WEDDINGS Booking Procedures, Information & FAQ's

The private and exclusive use area of the Castle, where we are able to accommodate wedding ceremonies, drinks receptions and wedding breakfasts, has a standard of decoration and comfort that is equivalent to an opulent Tudor manor house.

During the winter months when we are closed to the general public (please speak to a wedding coordinator to check closed dates) and from 6:30pm throughout the year, weddings can be held in the Castle with the ceremony taking place in the magnificent and atmospheric Castle Inner Hall and the wedding breakfast in the Castle Great Hall, where Henry VIII once dined.

All year round the venue offers unsurpassable photo opportunities both inside and out.

As an exclusive use venue, we only hold one function at a time within the Castle. Hever Castle is very different to a hotel, with a team of professional and discreet staff offering outstanding service to each and every one of our clients. In addition, working closely with our event coordinators is important to establish arrival and departure times, pre-selected menus, wines/Champagnes etc.

**PLEASE ENSURE ALL YOUR GUESTS AND SUPPLIERS ARE AWARE OF OUR GUTHRIE PAVILION
TELEPHONE NUMBER: 01732 861 721**

**Should they encounter any problems with arrival or access on the day of your wedding
the Event Manager can be reached on the above telephone number.**

What is the booking procedure?

Provisional:

A provisional booking can be held for a maximum of ten working days before confirmation or release of the date is required. If we receive no communication within this time, then the provisional booking will be removed from our diary.

Confirmation:

In order to confirm your provisional booking we ask that you read through the Hever Castle Booking Terms and Conditions, sign and return the document back to us. After which, a non-refundable deposit of £1,500.00 is due and will secure and confirm your wedding with us.

Payments:

Deposit invoices will be issued prior to the event as follows:

- *Six months Interim Deposit £5,000.00*
- *Two months Pre-Payment Deposit (based on the quote value at the time)*
- *4 Weeks Final Deposit (any additional items added following final meeting)*

The above invoices are all required to be settled prior to your wedding day.

Meetings:

Should you wish to re-visit the Astor Wing with any of your suppliers, this should be conducted during the week and is by appointment only. Naturally, this can only take place when we do not have another event in house. If you require a visit on a weekend, this will still be by appointment only. Amongst other meetings and the menu tasting, you will have a final meeting with your wedding co-ordinator approximately four-six weeks prior to your wedding date. *This must take place Monday – Friday between the hours of 10:30am – 4:00pm.*

Minimum Numbers:

We have a minimum requirement of 25 adult guests on our Castle and Astor Wing Wedding Packages.

Final Numbers:

Please note that final chargeable numbers must be provided 5 clear working days before the event and this will be the minimum number of guests that will be charged for on the day.

Cancellation:

Any cancellations received after confirmation will be processed as detailed in the Booking Terms and Conditions.

Civil Ceremony information

Kent County Council has granted Hever Castle a licence permitting the regular solemnisation of civil marriages and civil partnerships.

Booking:

Once the event co-ordinator has received a copy of the signed Booking Terms and Conditions and confirmation deposit, a Ceremony Booking Form will be sent to the client to confirm details of their request for a civil ceremony at Hever Castle. Once completed and returned by the client, Hever Castle will reserve the Registrars for the date, time and location with Tunbridge Wells Registry Office. Having received the request from Hever Castle, the Registry Office will contact you directly to take a deposit and arrange a meeting where you will give Notice of Marriage and discuss the content of the ceremony. Please note payments are to be made directly, by you, to the Registry Office.

Ceremony:

Civil Ceremonies are licensed to take place on any day of the week throughout the year except on the 25th & 26th December between 10.00am and 8.00pm.

Room Hire:

All Wedding Packages include the facilities fee for your Civil Ceremony to take place on site at Hever Castle.

Please note the maximum capacity of our licensed ceremony locations:-

Tudor Suite Sitting Room - 48 guests seated + 12 standing (minimum number of 25 adults)

Castle Inner Hall - 48 guests seated + 12 standing (minimum number of 25 adults)

Music:

All ceremony music must be provided on a CD or iPod / iPhone. We can provide a CD system or iPod docking station free of charge; however we do ask that one of the wedding guests operates the iPod during the ceremony.

If you would like any live music such as a Harpist or String Quartet, please refer to our recommended suppliers list for musicians that have previously performed at Hever Castle. Full details of any musicians booked by the client must be given to the venue in advance e.g. number of musicians, instruments and times they are booked to play. Please note, the Registrar will discuss what music can be played during the ceremony as no religious content is allowed.

If you are providing music on a CD, it must be provided to us at least two weeks prior to your wedding so we may ensure its compatibility.

Rehearsal:

The Kent Registration Service who conduct wedding ceremonies at Hever Castle do not offer rehearsals. Should you feel the need for a rehearsal of the ceremony element of your wedding at Hever Castle, without a registrar, this can be arranged, bookable a month in advance of the date of your wedding, subject to venue and staff availability. A facility fee of £500.00 is charged at the time of booking, which covers staffing cost, set up costs and venue costs for a two hour window which will be determined by the availability of staff on the date you wish to conduct a rehearsal. Hever Castle do not encourage or feel it should be necessary for you to conduct a ceremony rehearsal given the detail that our coordinators are able to relay to you with regards to how a ceremony will be conducted, however we understand that some couples might wish to book one none the less and will endeavour to make this possible for you should you feel the need.

Wedding Breakfast Information

Room Hire:

All Wedding Packages include the facilities fee for your drinks reception and wedding breakfast. The package covers a seven hour period from guest's arrival. After which time, a charge of £150.00 per hour is introduced for extended use of the Astor Wing or Castle (until 12 midnight). This does not apply for residential weddings or if you are having a Moat Restaurant evening reception.

Castle Dining Room – 40 guests (minimum number of 25 adults)

Accessibility:

The Castle Dining Room is accessible, and is on the ground floor level.

Table plan:

The Castle Dining Room can be set with either one or two long banquet tables; alternatively depending on numbers a 'U' shape table may be possible. Please speak to the event coordinator who will advise the best layout for your numbers. A copy of your table plan can be printed onto an A3 sheet of white paper and displayed on our table plan stand free of charge if you would like us to print and display this for you. A copy of the seating plan and list of decorations that you will be supplying must be given to the events office at least four weeks prior to the event.

Stationary:

Hever Castle can provide printed place cards and printed menus with Hever branding for your wedding breakfast. Speak to a coordinator for associated costs.

Set Up:

Hever Castle will provide tables, chairs, linen, glasses, crockery and cutlery for your wedding breakfast. We are happy to set up items on your tables such as favours, place cards and menus however any decorative items will need to be set up by an external supplier.

Menus:

Menu selections are to be made from the Seasonal Menu for your wedding date. These will be available at the beginning of the season for the year in which your wedding takes place. (March for Spring/Summer Weddings and September for Autumn/Winter Weddings). We ask that the same menu is selected for your entire party with the addition of a vegetarian option. Our catering team are happy to cater for any guests with special dietary needs. Confirmation of menus should be submitted to your co-ordinator in the form of your function sheet no later than four weeks prior to your wedding date. Additional courses are available to add to your inclusive wedding breakfast, such as a sorbet or a cheese course at an additional charge.

Please note that all of our red meat on our menus is cooked to 'Medium'. It is not possible to offer a choice of cooking to your guests.

Children:

We are able to cater for children of all ages and two package prices are available. Please speak to your coordinator if you require a children's package.

Highchairs are available and should be requested on your function sheet and listed on your table plan. Should you have babies attending the event, parents are permitted to bring 'jar' food and will not be charged for their attendance. They do however count as a guest for your table plan and must be included within the total guest/maximum numbers.

Speeches:

Speeches must be planned for either before starters are served or after dessert has been served. Due to the detrimental effect having speeches between courses has on food quality and service we do not permit speeches in-between courses. Our recommendation is to have speeches after dessert.

Tasting:

Prior to your wedding day the couple will be invited alongside other couples to a complimentary group wedding menu tasting. (Usually held in March for Spring/Summer weddings and September for Autumn/Winter Weddings). Please note, the menu tasting is only available for two people and we cannot permit the addition of friends or other family members. There will also be the opportunity to sample the house wines and other upgrades from our wine list. Following the tasting any requirement to taste any further specific dishes/wines from the menu on an alternative day, will be charged at full rate with additional service costs.

Please note that this is not offered complimentary to 'Special Offer' package weddings. Please speak to your coordinator for further information and for confirmation on an associated charge for us to organise a menu tasting for you if you are on a special offer package and wish to have a menu tasting.

Wines & Champagnes:

House wines and Prosecco are included within your wedding package. A selection of fine wines and Champagnes are available for you to upgrade to if you wish from our extensive wine list. (Please note this is updated each April in line with the financial budget and any relevant taxes on alcohol). If there is a beverage of your preference which is not listed on our wine list please liaise with your event coordinator who will try and source this for you.

Beverages:

All additional beverages ordered on the wedding day within the Castle or Astor Wing will be added to the main wedding account. There are no facilities for a cash/card bar for guests to settle their own drinks within these venues. The Moat Restaurant which hosts evening receptions can accept cash/card payments from guests.

Alcohol License:

Hever Castle is licensed to serve alcohol until 12 midnight to non-residential guests. Residential guests can continue to drink alcohol if the couple chooses to offer a late bar within the Astor Wing following 12 midnight and the departure of non-residential guests and this can stay in place until 2am.

Evening Reception Information

Dancing:

Dancing is not permitted in the Castle due to the nature of the building. Dancing is permitted in the Moat Restaurant.

Moat Restaurant:

This venue is available for music, dancing, buffet and bar for up to 120 guests. You can begin your evening reception from 7.30pm and suppliers have access from 6.00pm to set up. The bar will stay open until 11.30pm. Out of respect for the local residents we ask that discos and bands stop playing at 11.45pm and that guests have departed by midnight. An additional facility fee will be applied for the hire of the Moat Restaurant. Please refer to your wedding tariff for the associated cost.

A minimum catering charge of £1000 plus VAT will apply when the Moat Restaurant is hired. This amount includes pre-booked food and bar revenue (cash / card / account) generated on the evening. This amount will be incorporated into the final deposit invoice should the items you select in the planning stages not equate to £1000.00 plus VAT or more.

Candles are not permitted in the Moat Restaurant.

Set Up:

It is with regret that our team is unable to transfer your table arrangements used during your wedding breakfast over to the Moat Restaurant for your evening reception, however you may wish to allocate members of your wedding party to help with this. All additional decorations need to be organised by your florist or a nominated external supplier. The catering team may be able to assist with smaller items of set up but an additional staffing charge may be applied.

Late Departure:

Non-residential guests are required to have departed by midnight. Hever Castle Ltd reserves the right to make an additional charge for departure later than this time of £150.00 per hour. This charge will be added to the final invoice.

Accommodation within the Astor Wing + Anne Boleyn's Wing

Bedrooms:

Within the private residential area of the Astor Wing we have 19 en-suite bedrooms. We also have a small number of z-beds/sofa beds/travel cots if required. Prices for these are in addition to the room cost to cover set up, linen and breakfast for the additional guests; prices are available on request. It is not permissible for guests to bring their own additional z-beds/camp beds for children to sleep on. If bedrooms are required, a minimum of 10 bedrooms must be booked the charge for which will be added to your wedding account.

The Anne Boleyn's Wing is a stand-alone section of the Astor Wing that boasts nine beautifully appointed bedrooms. Should you require these bedrooms in addition to the accommodation within the Astor Wing, we ask that you book all nine bedrooms within this wing. To take both accommodation wings, you would be subject to a minimum of 24 bedrooms on your main account.

As we are an exclusive use venue and not a hotel, your guests cannot book bedrooms directly with us. All bedroom bookings must be directed via the couple and paid for on the main wedding account.

Room Rates:

Please refer to your booking terms and conditions for information on accommodation rates. A full English and continental breakfast is included within the accommodation rate. This will take place between 08.00-09.30 the following morning.

Why are the Bed and Breakfast bedroom rates more cost effective than wedding accommodation rates?

As The Astor Wing is our private and exclusive use venue; our accommodation is let in line with a private event. This allows us to provide your guests with the feeling of exclusivity with such facilities as; Exclusive Use, a turn down service and bedroom paperwork in each bedroom too.

It was decided in March 2012 that we would allow our accommodation to be offered on a bed and breakfast basis on dates that we didn't have any private events in house. Due to this, being able to book a bed and breakfast bedroom is only available within an eight week lead in time. Bed and breakfast accommodation is available on dates that we provide rather than the guest having a free choice; because of these restrictive factors we have reduced the accommodation rates for bed and breakfast to encourage guests to book the bedrooms on dates that our business is quiet.

Check-in:

Rooms are available for check-in from 3.00pm on arrival and check-out at 10.30am on the day of departure. It is permitted that the Bridal party may arrive from midday to check in to a maximum of three bedrooms.

Changing Rooms:

If changing rooms are required these will be charged at £175.00 per room. Arrival and departure times must be agreed with the venue prior to your event taking place.

Late bar:

If you choose to have a self-service late bar by the Music Room this is available at the end of the evening with access also granted to the Billiards Room. This is set up as a private bar for resident use only and due to our residential license, this is left out until 2.00am. An estimated charge for beverage consumption from this bar will be added to your final deposit invoice and actual consumption from this bar will be listed on your final account.

Wedding Co-ordination

Event Coordinator:

You will have a dedicated event coordinator throughout the planning stage, however during the coordination process there may be the need for you to communicate with other members of the Hever Castle coordination team. Our team work closely together and information pertaining to your event is accessible to all coordinators. Given the time period of some booking journeys it is a realistic expectation that a new coordinator may be introduced during your booking journey. At such times a detailed handover is carried out and an opportunity to meet with the new coordinator will be arranged. When the day arrives, your wedding will be managed by one of our Event Managers who will be fully briefed on your requirements.

Wedding Function Sheet:

In line with your confirmation pack from Hever Castle, you will be issued with a copy of a function sheet which, at that stage of the arrangements, will very much be in a template format. This document is what Hever Castle will use to conduct your wedding and during the planning process, this document will work as a central place to collate all of the information pertaining to your wedding. We will ask that you return a copy of this function sheet, with your annotated information on it, to your coordinator 6-8 weeks before your wedding which will then allow our team to begin to finalise your wedding arrangements and host your final details meeting.

Suppliers

Recommended Suppliers:

We offer a list of recommended suppliers as a helping hand to you. These are suppliers that have worked at the venue on many occasions and understand our operational requirements. They are best placed to guide and work with you to develop your requests. However you are free to source your own for any service although we do stipulate usage of our in-house catering team, firework and marquee suppliers for these particular services.

Delivery & Collections:

As the Astor Wing is not open 24 hours a day, it is essential that all suppliers making deliveries or wishing to set up, liaise with the Event coordinators to arrange a convenient day and time.

Suppliers Meals:

Please speak directly with your suppliers to see if they require catering during their time at Hever Castle. Often, musicians and photographers will ask for a hot meal or sandwich which we can provide, as long as they are pre-ordered in advance. Please speak to your coordinator for the associated charges if you are unsure.

Photography:

It is permissible for you to take photographs within the Italian Garden area however this should be discussed with your coordinator. If there is an Italian Garden Wedding taking place on the same day as your wedding, they will have priority of that area. This will be discussed with you prior to your day.

FAQ's are provided as an advisory document and subject to develop in line with business requirements. Should you have any questions please contact your Events Co-ordinator.

Flowers:

Pamela Brise is employed by Hever Castle on a freelance basis and looks after all the floral arrangements in Astor Wing and Castle. We have four permanent flower arrangements in the corridors of the Astor Wing all arranged using green/cream/white flowers and foliage. If you would like to discuss any further arrangements with Pamela, her telephone number is 01732 823 890.

Additional Items

Catering:

All food and beverages throughout your celebrations must be provided Leith's, Hever Castle's appointed and sole caterer on the Hever Castle Estate. Your wedding cake however would need to be provided by an external supplier.

Corkage:

The general rule of thumb is corkage is not permitted. However, we do understand that there may be occasions when a particular beverage is desired that is not on our list. In these instances, Leith's will endeavour to source it for you. If they are able to source it, a per bottle price will be quoted to you along with the number of bottles you need to purchase from Leith's in order for them to be able to supply it. If Leith's are unable to source it, the following corkage fees will be applied: £15.00 + VAT per 75cl bottle of still wine and £20.00 + VAT per 75 cl bottle of Champagne/Prosecco/Cava or sparkling wine. Any bottles over 75cl will be priced according to size. This same rule applies to spirits, if you require a spirit not on our bar list, we will source it and confirm a price per single measure and the number of bottles you need to purchase from Leith's in order for it to be supplied, you will then need to pay for the number of bottles we need to order. Should we be unable to source a requested spirit, we will quote a per measure corkage rate and you will be charged per full bottle based on that rate for all bottles opened. In all instances, if we have sourced an item for you, any bottles charged for and not consumed can be taken away with you.

Parking:

There is a private car parking area available for guests to use free of charge during your stay. Directional signage will be strategically placed to direct guests on the day. Overnight parking is strictly not permitted for non-residential guests

Confetti:

The use of confetti, rose petals and rice is not permitted anywhere within the Astor Wing, Castle and Grounds. This includes the use of a confetti cannon. A clean up fee of £1,000.00 will be added to the final account if used.

Fireworks:

Due to insurance limitations we are unable to allow any fireworks around the Castle & Astor Wing complex.

Sparklers and sparkulars are only permitted outside of the venue and should be mentioned to your Event Coordinator during planning meetings.

Cakes:

A traditional or sweet wedding cake can be provided which we can display. We request that your cake is delivered assembled. Should it need assembling on site we request that you provide someone to do so. We have two beautiful silver etched cake stands and accompanying silver cake knife which we are happy to lend out. The round one is 39cm (15.5 inch) in width and the square 40cm (16 inch). Please note that Hever Castle will not take on the responsibility of moving cakes from one location to another on the day of your wedding.

Cheese:

If you wish to substitute a traditional wedding cake for a cheese tower there will be an associated per person charge of £7.50 plus vat per person. This charge covers the cost to us for staff to cut up and present the cheese on platters or plates and the provision of crackers and pickles. This charge also applies should you wish to provide a cheese tower in addition to a traditional wedding cake to be served later on in the evening. If you are having an evening reception with us with a minimum spend of £6.50 plus vat per person, this charge of £7.50 plus vat is reduced to £3.50 plus vat per person.

Private Guided Tours:

Castle tours last approximately 1 hour with guests being able to view the wonderful and interesting Hever Castle artifacts with the guide telling not only of the fascinating history of the Castle but amusing tales and interesting facts taking you right through to the present day. Tours can be conducted at outside of public opening hours and the cost of tours should be confirmed with your coordinator.

Candles:

Real candle sticks are permitted in candelabras and can be lit for your wedding breakfast. Tea light style candles are permitted however they must be in a candle votive tall enough to cover the naked flame. For your evening reception, LED candles must be used.

Drones:

The use of UAV's (unmanned aerial vehicles) or drones are not permitted on or over Hever Castle without prior approval. If approved, this would only be permitted at times when the Estate is closed to and clear of member of the public to ensure their safety and security.

CONDITIONS FOR DRONE FLYING

Current CAA legislation states that drones are not permitted to be flown within 50 meters of any vessel, vehicle or structure which is not under the control of the person in charge of the aircraft. The aircraft should not be flown within 50 meters of any person except during take-off or landing or within 30 meters of any person except for the person in charge of the aircraft.

All operators must hold the following:

- a current and valid CAA 'Permission for Aerial Work' (PFAW);
- evidence of valid insurance cover;
- a risk assessment for the proposed flight
- a method statement outlining what equipment will be used and a flight plan outlining where flying is proposed.

Failure to provide all of these documents at least one week in advance of the event date, the drone will not be allowed. Prior arrangement must be communicated with your Wedding Coordinator who will request details of the Drone Company you will be using and let you know if it would be possible for a drone to be used.