



HEVER CASTLE WEDDINGS

ITALIAN GARDEN WEDDINGS Booking Procedures, Information & FAQ's

One of the most magnificent areas of the gardens at Hever Castle is The Italian Garden, designed to display William Waldorf Astor's collection of fine Italian sculpture. The Guthrie Pavilion, Palladian in style with vaulted ceilings and floor-to-ceiling arched windows, makes for a light and airy atmosphere from day into night without losing the romantic backdrop of the lake and gardens.

We ask clients to note the importance of working closely with your Event Coordinator to establish arrival and departure times, pre-selected menus, wines/Champagnes, timings etc... and we ask that all the above details are confirmed at least four weeks prior to the function.

We take pride in offering outstanding service to each and every one of our clients from the first contact through to departure at the end of your function.

**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 £2,000.00 is due and will secure and confirm your wedding with us.

Payments:

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

- Second deposit invoice due 9 months prior - £5,000
- Third deposit invoice due 6 months prior - £5,000
- Fourth deposit invoice due 2 months prior / in line with final meeting – remainder of quote balance

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

Meetings:

Should you wish to re-visit the Loggia & Guthrie Pavilion 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, you are able to do so when we are open to the public. This will still be by appointment only, however a co-ordinator will not be available to escort you to the venue. Amongst other meetings and the menu tasting, you will have a final meeting with your wedding co-ordinator approximately eight weeks prior to your wedding date. *This must take place Monday – Friday between the hours of 10:30am – 3:00pm.*

Minimum Numbers:

Please refer to your wedding tariff which will note the minimum adult numbers required on your selected package.

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:

All ceremonies for an Italian Garden Wedding will take place at 4:30pm.
The maximum capacity of the Loggia for a ceremony is 180 guests.

Room Hire:

The Italian Garden Wedding Package includes the facilities fee for your Civil Ceremony to take place on the Loggia at Hever Castle.

Please note that boating, operated by an external company, takes places on the lake for day visitors on some days during day visitor opening times. This is usually at weekends and during school holidays.

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.

Music:

We are happy to provide a CD system in the Loggia, free of charge, however we do ask that one of the wedding guests operates the iPod/CD 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.

Wedding Breakfast Information

Room Hire:

The Italian Garden Wedding facility fee covers your ceremony or arrival drinks reception on the Loggia at 4:30pm and your Wedding Breakfast in the Guthrie Pavilion commencing from 6:30pm until 1am.

Please note the maximum capacity of our wedding breakfast is 180 guests (which includes Bride & Groom, children and babies that require a place at the table)

Table plan:

We are able to offer a long top table within the Guthrie Pavilion either opposite the bar or in front of the glass doors at the lake end of the room, for a maximum of 10 guests. All other guest will be dining on 5ft round tables that can accommodate a maximum of 10 guests to a table. Please speak to a co-ordinator who will advise the best layout for your anticipated numbers. 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.

Table easel:

We have a large wooden table plan stand which holds up to an A2 sized board or frame.

Stationary:

Hever Castle can provide menus with Hever branding for your wedding breakfast. Speak to a co-ordinator for prices.

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.

Chair Covers:

Hever Castle do not provide chair covers however you are welcome to have an external supplier supply these for you if required. Please refer to our recommend suppliers list.

Menus:

There are three package options to choose from for your wedding day. Confirmed menus 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).

If you choose a Formal Dining Menu or Standard Three Course Menu we ask that the same starter, main and pudding is selected for the 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 your chosen menu should be submitted to your co-ordinator in the form of your function sheet no later than four weeks prior to the wedding date.

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. 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 in advance with your wedding co-ordinator due to the detrimental effect having speeches between courses has on food quality and service. If you are having a three course meal 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 menu tastings are not included on the Standard Three Course menu.

Please speak to your co-ordinator should you wish to organise a menu tasting at an additional cost.

Drinks Packages:

There are several different drinks packages to choose from, to compliment your chosen menu. A selection of fine wines and Champagnes are available for you to upgrade to if you wish from our extensive wine list. (Please note that the Wine List 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 co-ordinator who will try and source this for you.

Cash/card payments can be taken at both the Loggia bar and the bar within the Guthrie Pavilion.

Alcohol License:

The Guthrie Pavilion is licensed to serve alcohol until 12.30am.

Evening Reception Information

Entertainment:

You are welcome to have a DJ or Band for your evening celebrations within the Guthrie Pavilion. We request that the last dance takes place at 12:45am, ready for guest's departure at 1:00am. We would advise evening bands to set up between 4:30pm – 6:30pm, prior to guests seating for the wedding breakfast. They will then be ready to begin playing at approximately 9:00pm/9:30pm following the wedding breakfast, speeches and cake cutting.

Departure & shuttle service:

If you have booked accommodation in the Anne Boleyn Wing, Hever Castle will provide a taxi shuttle service from the Guthrie Pavilion to the bedrooms at the end of the evening; as walking back through the grounds is not permitted.

This shuttle service will run from 12:30am until 1:00am. If any residents miss the last shuttle service, they will need to arrange and pay for their own transport back.

Guests are required to have departed by 1:00am. 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 Anne Boleyn Wing

Bedrooms:

The Anne Boleyn Wing is a stand-alone section of the Astor Wing that offers nine beautifully appointed bedrooms, available for Italian Garden Weddings. Subject to availability, should you require these bedrooms, you will need to reserve Anne Boleyn Wing in its entirety.

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 yourselves and paid for on the main wedding account.

Bedroom Rates:

Please refer to your booking terms and conditions for information on accommodation rates. All bedrooms will be settled on the main wedding account by the Bride & Groom. A full English or continental breakfast is included within the accommodation rate. This will take place at 08:00-09:30am the following morning. Residential guests also have complimentary access to the Castle and grounds the following day.

Check-in:

Rooms are available for check-in from 3:00pm on arrival and check-out is at 10:30am on the day of departure. No early check-ins are available.

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 co-ordinator 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. You are free to source your own if you wish too for any service although we do stipulate usage of our in-house catering team, firework and marquee suppliers for these services.

Delivery & Collections:

It is essential that all suppliers liaise with the event coordinator prior to the event otherwise access on the day may be denied. All suppliers will only be granted access to the Loggia from 2:30pm and the Guthrie Pavilion from 4:30pm. Vases, candelabras and chair covers can be stored that evening and picked up the following morning between 9:00am and 10:00am before we open to the Guthrie Pavilion to the public.

Photography:

There may be certain restrictions in regards to photography at the front of the Castle with the couples requested timings dependant on subsequent events taking place on other areas of the estate. This will be discussed with you prior to your day and the house manager will make any necessary decisions on the day.

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.

Additional Items

Arrival:

Arrival to the Italian Gardens will be clearly signposted on the day to the Lakeview Car Park and not via the main entrance to the Castle. Guests will not be granted access to the Italian Gardens until 4:00pm. If guests are attending a church ceremony at St Peter's Church in Hever, followed by the reception at the Loggia and Guthrie Pavilion, cars must be moved to the Lakeview Car Park following the service.

Parking:

No overnight parking is permitted in the main car park or the Lakeview Car Park. The events office must be advised of any coaches booked for both delivering and collecting guests prior to the event taking place. Unfortunately, double decker buses or coaches are not allowed due to their size and the narrowness of the lane. Out of respect for local residents we do ask that guests depart quietly after the event.

Accessibility:

There is a limited number of accessible parking adjacent to the Guthrie Pavilion. Wheelchair access is via the Rose Garden and onto the top part of the Loggia where the drinks or ceremony is taking place. Unfortunately, there is no access to the lower terrace.

Confetti:

The use of confetti, rose petals and rice is not permitted anywhere on the estate. 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:

Fireworks over the lake are permitted subject to use by our preferred supplier. All fireworks must be finished by 10:45pm as stipulated by our current legislation.

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 for clients to use. 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 are available for residential guests and last

approximately 1 hour. Guests are able to view the wonderful and interesting Hever Castle artefacts 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. A tour can be conducted at 10:30am following check out of the Anne Boleyn Wing (subject to availability) 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 as all naked flames will be extinguished after the wedding breakfast and before dancing commences.

Catering:

All catering 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. We do however understand that there may be occasions when a particular beverage is desired that is not on our list. In these instances, Leith's will endeavor to source this particular beverage for you and will quote a price per bottle for the amount required.

If Leith's are unable to source your preferred wine, 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.

Boating:

The boats on the Hever Castle Lake are operated by an external company and are available on selected days only, of which cannot be guaranteed. The last boating session begins at 4pm and lasts until 5pm, therefore finishing by the time the drinks reception on the Loggia begins.