

A day in the life of...

She does it all so you can say 'I do'

BOEL ERIKSSON

CROWS NEST: She is a self-proclaimed "serial-bridesmaid" and lover of weddings who, after working as an accountant, realised her future was in planning other peoples' big days.

Despite starting Couture Wedding Planning at Crows Nest during the global financial crisis three years ago, Zimbabwe-born Fiona Deans-Dundas has turned it into a success, organising about 15 weddings a year.

Mrs Deans-Dundas, who got married two years ago, said recent research showed that 250 hours of planning goes into creating a wedding, which is equivalent to about six weeks of full-time work.

"I love creating something special for the couple and bringing their personalities out," she said.

"I like to find out what makes them tick and surprise them."

8am: The days starts with coffee and checking emails in her Crows Nest office.

9am: She meets with Abraham Jeffo from Untitled Film Works in North Sydney to discuss an upcoming wedding. She also picks up a copy of the same-day edit from last weekend's wedding.

11am: Mrs Deans-Dundas is off to Mosman to meet with Graham Munro of GM Photographics to discuss a wedding coming up in December and collect a CD of photos from a wedding back in August.

"Choosing a good photographer is so important," she said. "The pictures from the day is the thing that lasts."

1pm: After a quick bite to eat, she drives down to Sergeants Mess at Chowder Bay to chat to venue sales manager Natalie Henriques. They go through the



Fiona Deans-Dundas with Event Florist Maria Lush testing a centerpiece for an upcoming wedding.

Pictures: DAVE SWIFT

timeline for a wedding, from pinning down when guests are expected to arrive, to speeches and the fireworks finale.

"You just want everything to run smoothly," Mrs Deans-Dundas said.

2pm: Event florist Maria Lush drops in to discuss the flower arrangements for an upcoming wedding in December. For a recent wedding she was given free rein and organised small trees with purple tulips for each table. The most common request is white roses, and Ms Lush always

tries to create something unique and special for each wedding.

3pm: She meets with Sarah Janks in Neutral Bay to look at her new collection of bridal dresses.

Mrs Deans-Dundas said she always tried to join the bride at the first and final fitting of the dress. The spring-season is her busiest, with weddings most weekends from September to October. She is currently organising both her smallest and biggest weddings yet; one is for 12 people and the other is for 1200 people.

4pm: The last appointment of the day is at Halo Bridal in Crows Nest, a dress fitting. Mrs Deans-Dundas said many brides were reluctant to wearing a "big" dress and being the centre of attention.

"I usually make them try on at least one big dress, most girls love it," she said.

5pm: Back to the office for a cup of tea and more emails to end the day.



Discussing dresses with Tanya Thomson from Halo Bridal.



Talking wedding photographs with Graham Munro of GM Photographics.



With Natalie Henriques at Sergeants Mess at Chowder Bay.



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