



# PHOTOGRAPHERS & WEDDINGS



KEVIN CASHA

THE CRUCIAL QUESTION IS WHO DOES ONE ENTRUST WITH TAKING HIS WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHS? WITH OVER THIRTY FIVE YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHY, BESIDES OTHER AREAS OF COMMERCIAL WORK, PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHER KEVIN CASHA IS MORE THAN QUALIFIED TO EXPRESS HIS VIEWS ON THIS SUBJECT.

In practice, I believe that a competent wedding photographer should be capable of guaranteeing the bride and groom an excellent service and excellent results whilst at the same time taking up as little of their time as possible.

I wish to stress the importance of discussing beforehand all the details and facets of the couple's wedding and subsequently fixing a shooting and time schedule according to the couple's needs.

Getting an experienced professional photographer specializing in wedding photography usually ensures reliability, quality and that the event runs smoothly.

In reality, a couple should keep in mind that a good "general practice" photographer might not be the most suitable person to shoot a wedding. In health matters, although we may go to a GP whenever we have minor ailments we eventually consult a specialist when matters become more serious. The same parallel can be easily drawn when employing a photographer for a wedding. One should definitely source out someone who has experience and a proven track record of photographing weddings. A good portraitist or photojournalist might not be the right choice. Would you go to a dermatologist if you had, say, a muscular problem? Of course not! The same goes for a photographer. There are very few really good "all rounders" (although one might suppose otherwise from the various adverts and hype in the media).

So a couple should book a photographer who is experienced in the genre of photography they require. Doing otherwise is inviting disaster.

It is obvious that a wedding is a very special occasion and the more planning that goes into the preparations, the better.

Each wedding has its own story and each couple their needs, and a good photographer should be

able to make their day a memorable one - naturally, for the right reasons!

The couple should not be taken in by aggressive and repetitive advertising. How "professional" and great a photographer declares himself to be is no yardstick as to how good he really is. The couple should listen to referrals from their friends and the general public who might have already employed a particular photographer and were pleased with his work, attitude and service.

It is important that initially, before the couple finalizes their booking, they discuss at length what type of images they want and how they visualize the involvement of their wedding. A good, experienced professional photographer can make a wedding fun, just as much as an inexperienced and ill prepared photographer can turn it into a nightmare.

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Budgets, prices, editing and whether images are going to come in an album or just on DVD should be made clear prior to the booking. What is being paid, and for what it is being paid, should be made clear to all parties.

One must also be prepared to allocate some time in which to take the posed set-up photographs and group shots. The photographer cannot guarantee quality if most times he is shooting in a candid, haphazard manner. A degree of control is needed in most photographs. Still, if everyone is organized and co-operative, this should not take an experienced photographer more than three quarters of an hour.



Group photographs, which are usually quite troublesome, should be kept to a minimum and only feature the couple's immediate family. The day for shooting all the guests at a reception has long been superseded, especially with video service being virtually an ever-present part of today's weddings. Group images should be done as early as possible before the reception starts. This ensures the cooperation and the good state of all the featured guests.

Punctuality is another important factor and the bride should ensure that her hairdresser and make-up artist stick to their time schedules. Unfortunately, the practice seems widespread where some supposedly "professionals" just don't care when they finish their work and into whose time they are encroaching upon.

A sure way of starting on the wrong foot is when the bride fails to be ready by the agreed time. A photographer, no matter how experienced, cannot do the same standard of work in half the time he would usually allocate.

One should also make sure that the dressmaker has already delivered everything on time. It is not unknown that a dress arrives on the wedding day sometimes with disastrous results!

Lively children can be difficult to photograph. I don't believe they should form part of the bridal retinue. These will invariably start playing up and cause nervousness all round. However, if the kids are relatively well behaved, then it is not a problem.

For exceptional wedding photographs, one should also consider carefully the venue and time of the wedding. A morning wedding can usually give more rewarding results than an evening one and a well-thought out wedding hall can further help the photographer to create memorable images. The fact is that it is not so easy to create certain images at night for the complications and time factor are bound to increase.

Today's trend towards simple, more comfortable dresses, textiles and natural looking hairstyles, help



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to make the bride more relaxed on her big day, thus contributing to better, more natural photographs. Everyone knows that a grumpy, uncomfortable, irritated bride is not the ideal person to try to photograph looking radiant!

One thing which bothers me is when clients employ the services of an experienced photographer and then proceed to ignore his advice, restrict him and do not co-operate or stick to what has been agreed. It is a fact that to take good quality photographs at a

wedding is no easy task and time and concentration needed. If the couple do not even want to concede this, it is best not to employ a good photographer in the first place.

Remember, a photographer has one sharp "guillotine" hovering above his head - he cannot afford to go wrong on such an important day. There are no second chances. The same applies to the bride and groom's choice of photographer. The choice should be well thought out and studied. ☺

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