



real life
**dream
day**

THE GROOM'S SUDDEN ILLNESS SHORTLY BEFORE THEIR BIG DAY MADE THE VOWS EVEN MORE POIGNANT ON SIAN AND NICK'S EXCEPTIONALLY SPECIAL DAY

Words: Lydia Whiffield **Photographs:** Photo Evolution, www.photoevolution.com, 0844 2494655

It started as friendship for Sian Jones and Nick Brook from Llantwit Major, who married in a highly emotional June ceremony. Two months before their big day, Nick, Sian's partner of six years, was diagnosed with cancer. "The day was extra special because they didn't know how well he was going to be for the wedding, which was a horrifying thought," says Sian, a manager with Marks and Spencer. "But luckily he is absolutely fine now and the chemotherapy didn't affect him as much as they thought it would, thank goodness. My family and bridesmaid and best friend Katie were my rock and kept reassuring me that he was going to be fine and he was. Every moment was amazing and it really was the best day of our lives."

WINNING VENUE

It was the grounds at the Vale Resort that appealed to Sian and Nick, an RAF navigator. "I went to a wedding fair there and fell in love with the place and really hoped for nice weather," says Sian. "The wedding team there were really nice, the function rooms were fab and outside was just beautiful. We were also very lucky with the weather."

GORGEOUS GOWNS

Cheltenham-based Sian found her dream Rosetta Nicolini gown in Bristol's Berketex and took a chance with gowns for her bridesmaids Katie and Nick's half sister Emma. "I bought them without my bridesmaids knowing," she says. "I was



looking for dusky pink online on New Year's Day and came across the last two on the Debenhams site. Thank goodness they loved them." Sian's ivory flats were from Debenhams too and she says: "Because I'm 5ft 11ins, it was difficult finding a dress long enough and nice flat shoes. I never wear heels."

MODERN PROPOSAL

"Nick worked away in Lincoln for four years and was coming home for the week," recalls Sian. "He proposed on msn by saying, 'Let's do it next week then.' I thought he was joking, though it took longer than that of course to plan it. There was quite a bit of Bridezilla in me as I knew exactly which flowers I wanted from Jo at www.pasturesgreenflorist.co.uk." Sian's bridesmaids had beautiful wristbands instead of bouquets making it easier for them to hit the dance floor when Madassa Soul Band performed. The butterflies in the flowers were from www.confetti.com and other non-traditional touches included their masterpiece cake. "I knew I didn't ever want a traditional cake," says Sian. "Nick doesn't like marzipan and neither of us like fruit cake. I had imagined my cakes before anything else and there was a choice of chocolate or madeira inside with white chocolate outside from Cakes For Celebrations in Cowbridge (01446 771710.) Fabulous Welshcake favours (www.fabulouswelshcakes.co.uk) were a really nice touch, because we didn't want too much on the tables. They acted as place names too. I expected to be a stresshead on the day, but I wasn't. I enjoyed every minute." ■

GET THE LOOK

Invites and table plan www.byjo.co.uk (029 2081 3329), vintage car was from Champagne Cars, www.champagneweddingcars.co.uk and hair was by The Hair Studio in Llantwit Major (01446 795580).

Sian says: "I called Nick from my London hen weekend after seeing a Swarovski necklace so he bought it for me!"

Harpist Ruth Hicks (www.welshharpist.com) played Canon in D Major for Sian's entrance, Katie Melua's Closest Thing To Crazy during the register and Bring Me Sunshine to close the ceremony. Madassa Soul Band (07967 726704) entertained throughout the night.

Suits were by Dyfed Menswear, (029 2061 9040). Sian says: "John and Gail at Photo Evolution were fantastic."

