

What led you to choose Malta as your wedding destination?

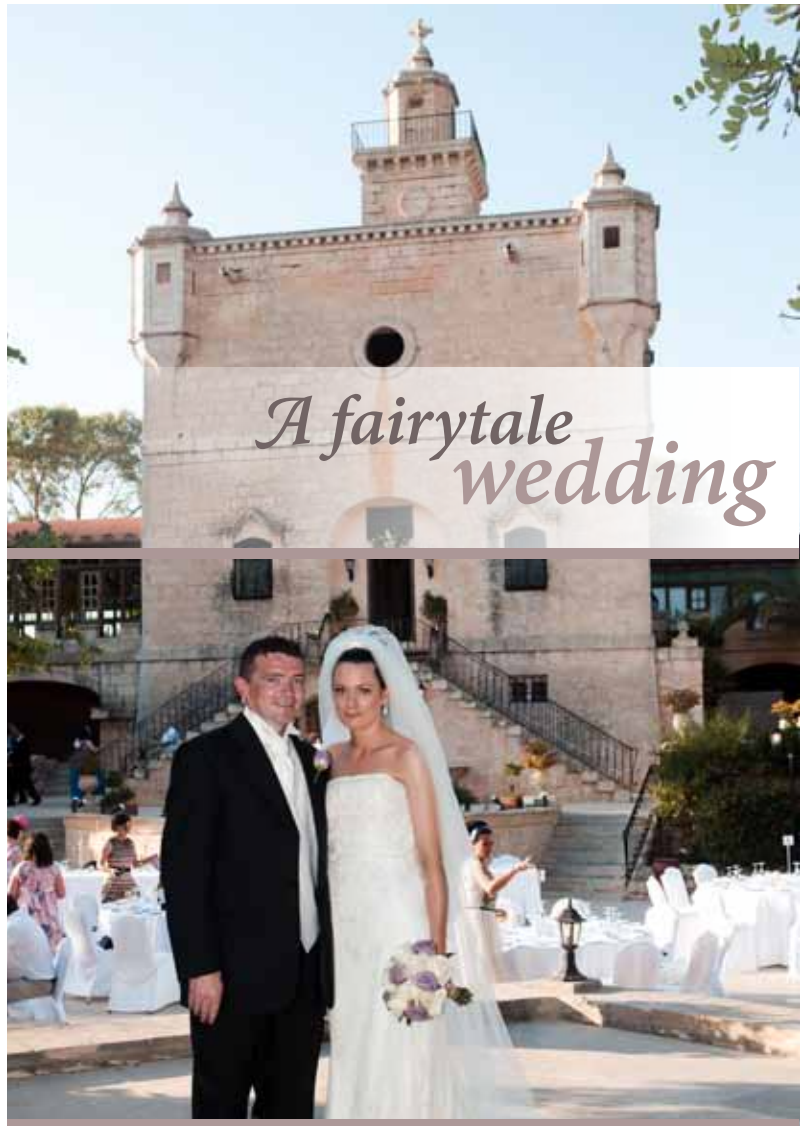
In 2009 John and I visited the island and it turned out to be one of our best holidays. We were blown away with the beautiful scenery and the friendliness of the people. When John proposed in December 2009 it was the obvious choice and after discussing it with our families, we realised that it would be a fantastic holiday for them too.

Were you considering our destinations besides Malta?

We also researched Italy but Malta won hands down. Our guests were forefront in our minds and the fact that they could fly direct from Dublin to Malta and then be in their hotel in 20 minutes was great. Hotel accommodation in Malta is excellent with something to suit every budget.

What were the preparations like particularly in view of the fact that you live overseas?

John and I both have busy jobs so it was very important that we had someone in Malta to help us plan our big day, and in particular to oversee the religious and legal paperwork. From the minute we made the initial contact with our Maltese wedding planner Sarah Young we knew we were in safe hands. We travelled to Malta last year to look at venues and knew immediately upon meeting Sarah that she would plan our special day in a professional manner,



Wedding planner **Sarah Young** has helped several couples, both local and foreign, to organise the wedding of their dreams. Here **Guide Me** asks **Ursula Gallagher** and **John Hession** - an Irish couple who tied the knot in Malta a few weeks ago – to share their experience.

WEDDING IN MALTA



using the best local suppliers. After we put our trust in Sarah, a year of emailing followed and she didn't let us down.

How many days before the big day did you arrive in Malta?

We arrived five days earlier as we wanted to enjoy some time with our guests before the wedding.

What were these days like?

The days leading up to the wedding were very exciting as we had our church wedding rehearsal and following that, Sarah took us to the venue to check the final set up, then we were free to mingle with our guests.

What was your wedding day like?

It was magical. It was more than we could have hoped for. We were very fortunate to get married in the Mdina Cathedral, followed by a reception in Castello Zamitello. Our wedding took place at 4pm so guests had the morning free to relax by the pool. I travelled to the Cathedral in a vintage car with my dad which was a very special part of the day. We were greeted by Fr Tony and my own priest who came from Ireland, Fr John Joe Duffy. The ceremony was beautiful and we all felt very lucky to be in the Cathedral. While our guests mingled at the reception John and I drank champagne and had our photographs taken in the historic city of Mdina. The backdrop of the Castello for our reception was simply stunning. We then partied the night away with our family and friends. DJ Malcolm ensured we had our first dance to an acoustic version

of 20 Good Reasons by Thirsty Merc. This song is very special to us as we listened to it in Australia where we first met in 2006. Sarah and her assistant Lisa ensured the day went along without any major hitches and our guests commented that the day was like a fairytale.

Was there a particular theme to your wedding?

We wanted to show our appreciation to our guests for travelling over so we collected as many of their photographs as we could and hung them up at the Castello. Both John and I are very close to our families so we had photographs of our parents on their wedding day displayed near the cake. My mum lent me the cake topper and lucky horseshoe that she used at her own wedding in 1975.

What in your opinion are the biggest advantages of getting married in Malta?

We were lucky enough to have many of our family and friends travel to Malta with us. Several of them planned it as their Summer holiday and as a result our guests were on a high. We got to spend more time with them than if we had got married at home. Also leaving Ireland in the rain and coming to sunny Malta which was 39° was a recipe for success!

Would you recommend a Malta wedding to your friends?

Without a doubt we can honestly say we have no regrets about coming to Malta to get married and would have no hesitation recommending it to our friends. It truly was the best day of our lives. ☺