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Our Big Day: Lucy & Tom

Lucy Underdown, 23, and Thomas Martin, 30, said 'I do' on the 4th September, 2009 at Boughton Monchelsea Place in Maidstone. The ceremony was followed by a reception at The Dering Arms, Pluckley. Images courtesy of Darryl Curcher Photography

How it all began

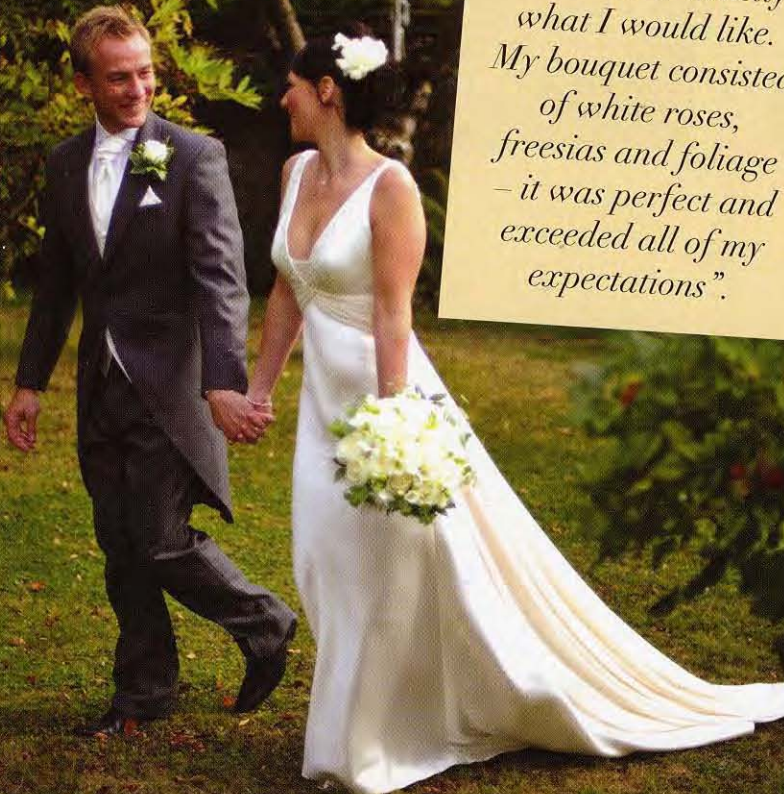
Despite Tom's mum being Lucy's pre-school childminder, it wasn't until the pair met again in 2004 that they started dating. "Our first date was at a pub called Who'da Thought It in Grafty Green," Lucy tells us. "I was very nervous and Tom was quite shy, but it went very well – in fact we met again just a few days later."

After four years together Tom popped the question on Valentine's Day during a romantic dinner for two. "Tom had cooked a surprise meal at home. He was so nervous about proposing that he presented me with my beautiful diamond ring before we'd even tucked into dessert," Lucy says.

It took a year to organise the big day, and although Lucy did most of the planning, Tom and other family members helped out too. "I thoroughly enjoyed the planning process," says Lucy. "My dress was definitely the easiest thing to pick, and deciding on the content of the ceremony was probably the most tricky."

Lucy tells more about the big event...

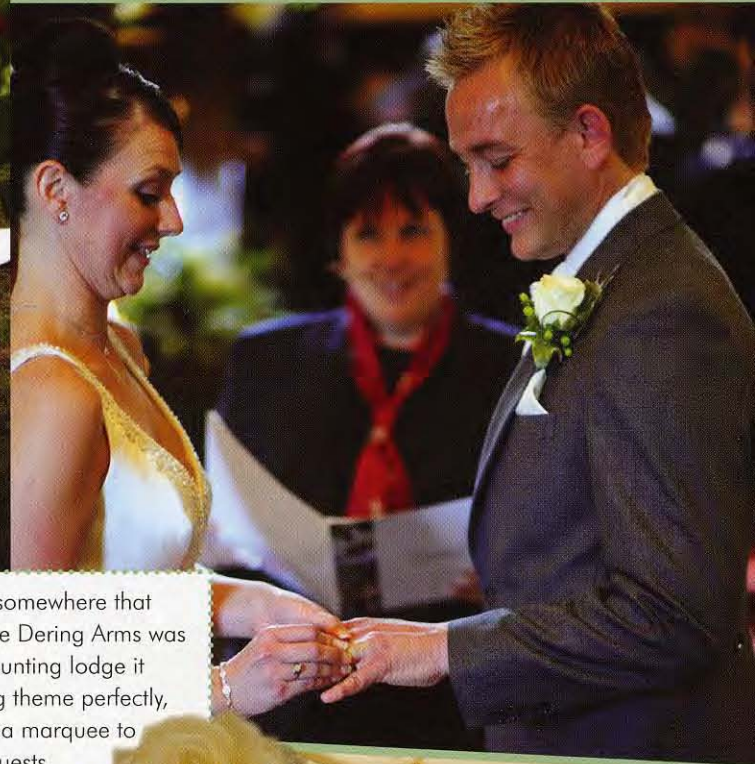
"The florist we used is my best friend's mum and has known me since I was four, so she knew exactly what I would like. My bouquet consisted of white roses, freesias and foliage – it was perfect and exceeded all of my expectations".



I had a clear image of the style of dress I wanted and used the internet to find it. I then tracked down and visited a stockist in London. When I arrived at the boutique I tried on seven different styles of dress just to be certain, and although the other gowns were lovely, the one I had initially chosen was definitely for me. It fitted my original vision perfectly and when I tried it on I knew it was perfect, as it felt special.



The best man was Tom's school friend, Lewis, and the usher was Pete – a football team mate. Tom and I picked the guys' outfits together. We decided on grey suits with ivory waistcoats and green cravats to match the bridesmaid's dress. Tom's waistcoat had a different pattern and he wore an ivory cravat.



We wanted our reception somewhere that was close to home and The Dering Arms was ideal. Plus, as it's an old hunting lodge it suited our country wedding theme perfectly, and we were able to have a marquee to accommodate all of our guests.

Boughton Monchelsea Place

Tom and Lucy



Boughton Monchelsea Place was our ceremony venue. It's a beautiful country house with lovely grounds and gardens.

We didn't want to marry in a church or hotel, and this was exactly what we were looking for.



I've been a client of my hairdresser, Kerry, since I was seven so I've already had trust that she would create a look I would like. After trying just two or three different styles we found the right one for me – it was simple and natural looking, despite being reinforced with what seemed like millions of pins and tons of hairspray.



To complete the look both Beth and I wore fresh flowers in our hair

My younger sister Beth was the only bridesmaid and, as with my own dress, I had a good idea about the colour and style I wanted her to wear. At first Beth was a little unsure about the gown, but after trying on other dresses, she decided this was her favourite.



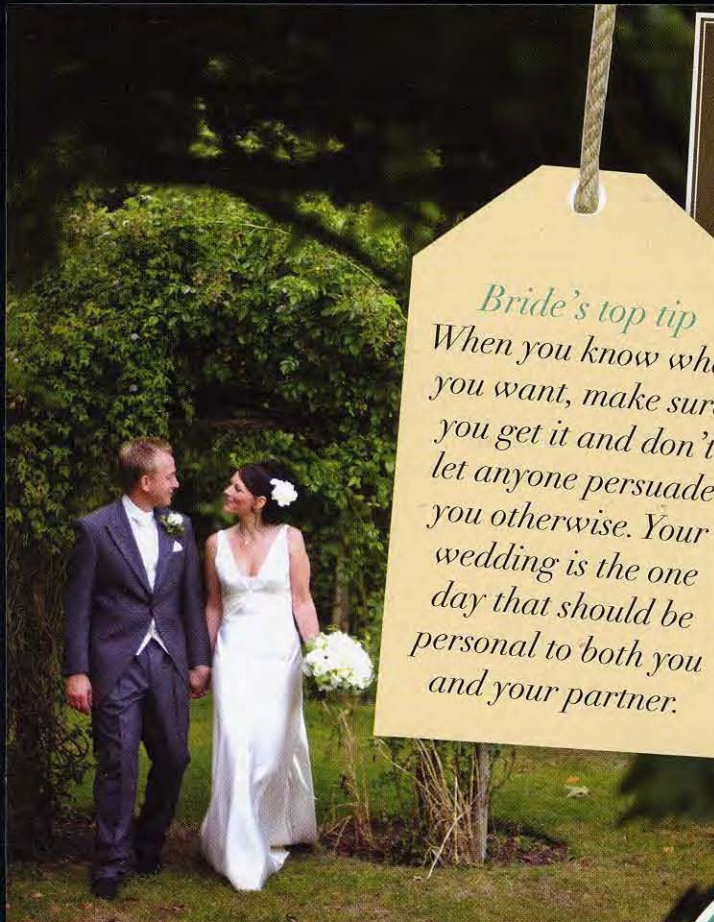
My mum's friend made our three-tier cake based on a design I found in a magazine. I loved the simple look and that it had different flavours for each layer.



Our table centrepieces were slim glass vases filled with arrangements of white roses, freesias and ivy. We placed individual tea lights and rose votives alternately around the base.

We had trailing foliage to decorate the venue along with white roses, bows and trees adorned with twinkling fairy lights.





Bride's top tip
When you know what you want, make sure you get it and don't let anyone persuade you otherwise. Your wedding is the one day that should be personal to both you and your partner.



Tom and I were particularly pleased with our intimate ceremony. We had a personal service with a reading from my uncle and singing from Beth, who was accompanied by my best friend on guitar. The song they performed was one that Tom and I had dedicated to each other, which made it even more special.

Our photographer, Darryl Curcher was recommended to us through a friend. When we met to look through his portfolio Tom and I instantly liked him and felt confident that his images would do our wedding justice. Sure enough, on the day Darryl was brilliant. His unobtrusive approach made all of our guests feel at ease and meant that he was able to capture lots of natural moments – we would definitely recommend him.

As our wedding gift, my uncle arranged for my dad and me to be driven in a Rolls-Royce Phantom to the ceremony, and for me and Tom to be taken to the reception in the same car.



Tom's mum had heard Estilo String Quartet previously. So, for our wedding present she arranged for them to play as guests arrived for the ceremony and again while everybody enjoyed the nibbles before we left for the reception.

Lucy and Tom's useful contacts

- Photography Darryl Curcher Photography www.darrylcurcher.com
- Ceremony venue Boughton Monchelsea Place www.boughtonmonchelseaplace.co.uk
- Reception venue The Dering Arms www.deringarms.com
- Bride's dress Ring O' Roses www.roroses.com
- Bride's shoes John Lewis www.johnlewis.com
- Bride's jewellery Swarovski www.swarovski.com
- Groom and groomsmen's suits Moss Bros Hire www.mossbros.com
- Bridesmaid's dress Oriental Pearl www.orientalpearl.org.uk
- Wedding rings BeaverBrooks The Jewellers www.beaverbrooks.co.uk
- Flowers Hazel Brickles Corporate Floristry www.corporatefloristry.com
- Entertainment Estilo String Quartet www.estilostringquartet.com

The Maldives was our selected honeymoon destination. We enjoyed the welcome massages at the spa, the gorgeous weather and fantastic food. It was absolute paradise and the perfect place to relax after the wedding.

