

# Made by hand



Want something completely unique for your wedding? Chat to some of Cambridgeshire's talented craftspeople – they can make the wedding of your dreams a reality

## The dress to impress

Know exactly the dress you want for your big day but just can't find it? You can have one handmade from just £1,000.

Designer and dressmaker Erica Bowler specialises in couture designs and every dress she creates is unique. 'Generally a bride comes with her ideas, and, using my knowledge of design and what suits, we work together to sketch out a design,' she says. Then I make a mock up of the dress, so the bride can see if she likes the fit and feel, and we can alter it as needed.

'The way I work means the bride sees the dress at each stage, through several fittings, and she is in control.

'I use couture techniques so there is quality and attention to detail in everything from the cut of the fabric to the intensive hand stitching, so brides know they are getting a quality handmade dress.'

Erica's talents can also be turned to the mother of the bride and the bridesmaid's dresses so every important lady can have exactly the outfit they want on the day.

● Erica B, 01223 464072, erica-b.co.uk

## Jewels in the crown

'If a bride-to-be comes to me with an idea then I will design and make it personally for them,' says Denise Charlesworth-Smith of Crystal Pig jewellery design. 'If a bride has a certain colour scheme or theme then we can work together to make sure she gets exactly what she wants.'

Inspiration for a design can come from various sources. 'A bride might end up wanting the

**'Inspiration can come from various sources'**

colour from one design, the beads from another and perhaps even the feathers from another but that's fine, I can then come up with a design that incorporates them all,' she says.

And the handmade service doesn't end there. 'Once the wedding day has come and gone I can tone down the wedding jewellery into everyday wear or even turn a necklace into a bracelet so it can still be worn,' Denise explains.

● Crystal Pig, 07885 843000, crystalpigaccessories.co.uk

## Individual design

Lisa Paice of Letterpress Design creates bespoke wedding stationery. 'We design and make everything from our workshop so we can experiment with different techniques to get the perfect design for each wedding,' she says. 'We recently had a bride who wanted laser cut invites and so we experimented with a new machine to create the effect she wanted.

'We draw lots of designs by hand before getting them made into plates ready for printing and so everything is possible.'

Once the design stage is complete Lisa then goes on to chat through various paper and colour options. 'We can use all kinds of different paper and weights and each one creates a different feel. For our letterpress invites we favour cotton paper as it gives a more luxurious feel and the impression of the ink adds a real quality,' she says.

● Letterpress Design, 08456 123205, letterpressdesign.co.uk

**'We can get the perfect design for each wedding'**

## Have your cake

'I've had requests for gingerbread, banana cake, carrot cake and red velvet in the past, so any flavour is possible,' says Liz Ungless from Sugar Design wedding cakes. 'Once I get a feel for the kind of thing that attracts the bride, then we work out exactly what themes they like.'

Liz is no stranger to different designs. 'I made one cake to look like an old fashioned map for a couple who had a travel theme, and a guitar shaped cake for a classical musician.'

Having a cake made to your own design means you can be very specific. 'I also make my own sugar craft flowers and so I can match colour schemes exactly and of course I can also cater for gluten and dairy free requests,' says Liz.

And handmade doesn't mean you have to blow the budget. 'I always advise brides and grooms on the best option price wise,' Liz says. 'Quite often if it's a large wedding I can provide a cutting cake, which the party never sees but means that there's enough to go round and works out cheaper.'

● Sugar Design, 01353 776085, sugardesign.co.uk