

Astor Wing and Castle Wedding FAQs

The Astor Wing offers a standard of decoration and comfort that is outstanding and retains the warm, relaxed feel of a family home or peaceful country manor with a team of professional and discreet staff.

The Tudor Suite, located within The Astor Wing, is a series of three inter-connecting rooms all of which have impressive wood paneling, leaded windows with views of the Castle, Moat, and Gardens. These rooms are licensed for civil wedding ceremonies and can also accommodate the wedding breakfast.

During the winter months when we are closed to the general public and from 6:30pm throughout the year, weddings can be held in the Castle itself with the ceremony taking place in the magnificent and atmospheric Castle Inner Hall and the wedding breakfast in the Castle Dining Room.

All year round the venues offer unsurpassable photo opportunities.

We ask clients to note the importance of working closely with your Event Coordinator to establish arrival and departure times, pre-selected menus, wines/Champagnes, timings etc. and we ask that all the above details are confirmed at least two months prior to the function.

We take pride in offering outstanding service to each and every one of our clients from the first contact through to departure at the end of your wedding.

PLEASE ENSURE ALL YOUR GUESTS AND SUPPLIERS ARE AWARE OF OUR OUT OF HOURS
TELEPHONE NUMBER: 01732 861 703

Should they encounter any problems with arrival or access on the day of your wedding, the Event Manager can be reached on the above telephone number.

What is the booking procedure?

Provisional:

A provisional booking can be held for a maximum of ten working days before confirmation or release of the date is required. If we receive no communication within this time, then the provisional booking will be removed from our diary.

Confirmation:

In order to confirm your booking, we ask that you read through the Hever Castle Booking Terms and Conditions, sign and return the document back to us. After which, a non-refundable deposit of £2,000.00 is due and will secure and confirm your wedding with us.

Payments:

Deposit invoices will be issued prior to the event as follows:

Second deposit invoice due 9 months prior - £5,000

Third deposit invoice due 6 months prior - £5,000

Fourth deposit invoice due 2 months prior to the wedding date – remainder of quote balance

The above invoices are all required to be settled prior to your wedding day.

Meetings:

Should you wish to re-visit the Astor Wing with any of your suppliers, this should be conducted during the week and is by appointment only. Naturally, this can only take place when we do not have another event in house. If you require a visit on a weekend, this will still be by appointment only.

Minimum Numbers:

We have a minimum requirement of 25 adult guests on our Castle and Astor Wing Wedding Packages.

Final Numbers:

Please note that final chargeable numbers must be provided 5 clear working days before the Wedding, and this will be the minimum number of guests that will be charged for on the day.

Cancellation:

Any cancellations received after confirmation will be processed as detailed in the Booking Terms and Conditions.

Civil Ceremony information

Kent County Council has granted Hever Castle a license permitting the regular solemnisation of civil marriages and civil partnerships.

Booking:

Upon receipt of your deposit payment, a Ceremony Booking Form will be sent to you to complete and return to us. Once returned, Hever Castle will reserve the Registrars for the date, time, and location with Tunbridge Wells Registry Office. Having received the request from Hever Castle, the Registry Office will contact you directly to take a deposit and arrange for you to give notice of marriage. Please note payments are to be made directly by you to the Registry Office.

Ceremony:

Civil Ceremonies are licensed to take place on any day of the week throughout the year, between 10am and 8pm, excluding the 25th and 26th December.

Room Capacities:

Tudor Suite Sitting Room: 48 guests seated + 12 standing.

Castle Inner Hall: 48 guests seated + 12 standing.

Music:

All ceremony music must be provided on a phone or CD. If you are unsure of the connection required, please speak to your coordinator. We do ask that one of the wedding guests operates the music during the ceremony.

If you would like any live music such as a Harpist or String Quartet, please refer to our recommended suppliers list for musicians that have previously performed at Hever Castle. Full details of any musicians booked must be given to us in advance.

Please note, the Registrar will discuss what music can be played during the ceremony as no religious content is allowed.

Rehearsal:

The Kent Registration Service who conducts wedding ceremonies at Hever Castle, do not offer rehearsals. Should you feel the need for a rehearsal at Hever Castle, without a registrar, this can be arranged, bookable a month in advance of the date of your wedding, subject to venue and staff availability. A fee of £500.00 is charged at the time of booking, which covers staffing cost, set up costs and venue costs for a two-hour window, which will be determined by the availability on the date you wish to conduct a rehearsal. Hever Castle do not encourage or feel it should be necessary for you to conduct a ceremony rehearsal.

Wedding Breakfast Information

Room Hire:

The venue hire charge covers a seven-hour period from arrival. After which time, a charge of £150.00 per hour is introduced for extended use of the Astor Wing or Castle (until 12 midnight).

The does not apply for residential weddings or if you are having a Moat Restaurant evening reception.

Capacities:

Tudor Suite Dining Room: 60 guests

Castle Dining Room: 40 guests

Accessibility:

The Tudor Suite Dining Room within The Astor Wing is a non-accessible room as there are two steps down into this room. The Castle Dining Room is accessible as it is on ground floor level.

Table plan:

We can offer different table layouts within the above rooms. Please speak to your coordinator who will advise on the best layout for your numbers. Please let us know if you would like us to display a table plan for you.

Stationary:

Hever Castle can provide printed place cards and printed menus with Hever branding for your wedding breakfast. Speak to a coordinator for associated costs.

Set Up:

Hever Castle will provide tables, chairs, linen, glasses, crockery, and cutlery for your wedding breakfast. We are happy to set up items on your tables such as favours, place cards and menus, however any decorative items will need to be set up by an external supplier.

Chair Covers:

If you require a 'round table' set up for 55 – 60 guests in the Tudor Suite Dining Room, Hever Castle will provide complimentary chair covers for the banqueting chairs required for such set ups. If you require a 'round table' set up for less than 55 guests, beautiful, upholstered chairs can be provided which do not require chair covers.

Menus:

A three course Formal Dining Menu is available as part of your wedding breakfast. We ask for a set menu to be selected for the entire party, along with a vegetarian/vegan option. If you wish to upgrade, other menus and dishes are available at a supplementary cost. We are happy to cater for any guests with special dietary requirements.

Confirmed menus will be available in March for Spring/Summer weddings and October for Autumn/Winter weddings. Confirmation of your chosen menu is required no later than four weeks prior to your wedding day.

Please note that all red meat on our menus is cooked 'Medium'.

Drinks Packages:

We have a set drinks package available to compliment your wedding breakfast, with the opportunity to upgrade or add additional drinks. Please speak to the Food and Beverage Coordinator if your party requires a non-alcoholic package.

A selection of fine wines and Champagnes are available for you to enhance the package if you wish. The wine list is updated annually and is shared with couples at the beginning of the season in April. All additional beverages ordered on the wedding day within the Castle or Astor Wing will be added to the main wedding account. There are no facilities for a cash/card bar for guests to settle their own drinks within these venues. The Moat Restaurant, which hosts the evening reception, can accept cash/card payments from guests.

Children:

We have two children's packages available, suitable for all children up to the age of 18.

Highchairs are available and should be requested in advance and noted on your table plan. Should you have babies attending the event, parents are permitted to bring baby food and you will not be charged for their attendance. They do, however, count as a guest for your table plan and must be included within the total guest numbers.

Tasting:

Prior to your wedding day, you will be invited to a complimentary group wedding menu tasting.

Tastings are held in March for Spring/Summer weddings and October for Autumn/Winter weddings.

Please note, the menu tasting is only available for two people and other wedding couples will be in attendance. There will also be the opportunity to sample the house wines and other upgrades from our wine list.

Speeches:

Speeches must be planned with your wedding coordinator. We advise against having speeches split between courses, due to the impact on food quality and service. Our recommendation is to have speeches either before your starter, or during dessert.

Alcohol License:

Hever Castle is licensed to serve alcohol until 12 midnight to non-residential guests.

For residential guests, there is an opportunity to offer a self-service residents bar after midnight until 2am outside of the Music Room. All charges are added onto the wedding account.

Evening Reception Information

Dancing:

Dancing is not permitted in either the Castle or the Astor Wing due to the nature of the building. Evening events where dancing is required can be held in the Moat Restaurant.

Moat Restaurant:

This venue is available for music, dancing, a buffet and bar for up to 120 guests.

Evening receptions begin at 7.30pm. The bar will stay open until 11.30pm. Out of respect for local residents we ask that DJ's and bands stop playing at 11.45pm and that guests have departed by midnight.

An additional room hire charge will be applied for the Moat Restaurant. Please refer to your wedding tariff for the associated cost.

A minimum catering charge of £1,200 inc. VAT will apply and will be added to the main wedding account when the Moat Restaurant is hired. This amount can cover pre-booked food and/or a bar account.

Set Up:

Suppliers have access from 6.00pm to set up and will need to make contact with your coordinator in advance to discuss set up and removal.

Late Departure:

All guests must depart the Moat Restaurant by midnight. Hever Castle reserves the right to make an additional charge for a late departure of £150.00 per hour. This charge will be added to the final invoice.

Evening Bar Facilities:

If you would like to have a bar facility after dining in the Tudor Suite Dining Room, we can offer this from the Tudor Suite Sitting Room until midnight. This can either be on an account basis, where the cost will be estimated in the planning stages and charged for as part of your pre-event pro-forma deposit schedule with the actual amount then being detailed on the final invoice that follows after the event; or on a card sales basis where-by your guests can pay for drinks they order as they go on a card. We do not have cash facilities at Hever Castle. The bar will be staffed and will close at midnight.

You can choose to have an account bar up to a certain amount and then switch to a card sales bar if preferred.

Our Food and Beverage Sales Coordinator will liaise with you in the planning stages to make the necessary arrangements and you can select which drinks you would like to be available and / or set a maximum bar spend / tab. This facility is only available until midnight and can only be offered when timing allows us to change the set up in the Tudor Suite Sitting Room from one set up to another.

For exclusive-use residential events, we are unable to set up a bar in the Tudor Suite Sitting Room until midnight and then move it to the Music Room. Please decide in the planning stages which location is preferable. Should you opt for the Music Room, all non-residential guests need to have departed before this is available.

If a maximum spend is set, we will stop serving drinks when it is reached unless you (or a designated guest) sign a request to extend your tab on the evening.

We can supply a till receipt for a card sales bar, we are unable to supply a till receipt for an account bar.

If your event is an exclusive-use hire, should you wish to offer a resident's bar from outside the Music Room after your event, this can only be offered on an account basis (not card sales) and the cost will be estimated in the planning stages and a charge added to your pre-event deposit pro-forma invoice. This bar will not be staffed and will be removed at 2am. Please note that if a residential bar in the Music Room is requested, all non-residential guests need to have departed before this is opened.

We are unable to offer a resident's bar outside the Billiards Room.

With regards to drinks in the Castle, due to the nature of the building all drinks in the Castle must be pre-ordered and will be tray served, we are unable to offer a bar facility.

If you are dining in the Castle, you can have access to the Castle Dining Room until midnight after which a resident's bar can be set up outside the Music Room (if your event is an exclusive hire). If you wish to vacate the Castle Dining Room before midnight, a bar facility can be set up in the Tudor Suite Sitting Room until midnight. Either case, the above detailed conditions apply.

Accommodation within the Astor Wing & Anne Boleyn Wing

Bedrooms:

There are 18 en-suite bedrooms available within the Astor Wing. If bedrooms are required, a minimum of 12 bedrooms must be booked for exclusive use of the wing. The charge for this will be added onto the main account unless you would like your guests to pay for bedrooms themselves. Please speak to your coordinator if you do not require twelve bedrooms.

The Anne Boleyn Wing is a stand-alone section of the Astor Wing with nine beautifully appointed bedrooms. If you require these bedrooms in addition to the Astor Wing bedrooms, we ask that you or your guests book all nine bedrooms within this wing.

Eight weeks before the wedding, if twelve bedrooms in the Astor Wing (or the entire 9 bedrooms in the Anne Boleyn Wing) have not been booked by guests then the difference will be added onto the main wedding account.

Some bedrooms can accommodate a sofa bed, Z bed or travel cot if required. Prices for additional children's beds cover the cost of set up, linen and breakfast for the additional guest. It is not permissible for guests to bring their own additional beds for children to sleep on.

A full English and continental breakfast are included. Breakfast is served between 08.00-09.30 the following morning.

Check-in:

Rooms are available for check-in from 3.00pm on arrival and check-out at 10.30am on the day of departure. It is permitted that the Bridal party may arrive from midday to check in to a maximum of three bedrooms.

Changing Rooms:

If changing rooms are required these will be charged at £175.00 per room. Arrival and departure times must be agreed in advance.

Wedding Coordination

Event Coordinator:

You will have a dedicated Event Coordinator throughout the planning stage, however during the coordination process there may be the need for you to communicate with other members of the Hever Castle team. Our team works closely together and information pertaining to your wedding is accessible to all coordinators. A new coordinator may be introduced during your booking journey, at such times a detailed handover is carried out and an opportunity to meet with the new coordinator will be arranged. When the day arrives, your wedding will be managed by one of our Event Managers who will be fully briefed on your requirements.

Wedding Event Sheet:

When you confirm your wedding with us, you will be issued with a copy the Event Sheet. This document is used to conduct your wedding and during the planning process, this document will work as a central place to collate all the information pertaining to your wedding. We will ask that you return a copy of this sheet, with your annotated information on it, 6-8 weeks before your wedding which will then allow our team to begin to finalise your wedding arrangements.

Suppliers

Recommended Suppliers:

We have a list of recommended suppliers that have worked at the venue on many occasions. They are best placed to guide and work with you to develop your requests. You are free to source your own for any service although we do stipulate usage of our in-house catering team, firework, and marquee suppliers for these particular services.

Catering:

All catering must be provided by Restaurant Associates, Hever Castle's appointed and sole caterer on the Hever Castle Estate. Your wedding cake needs to be provided by an external supplier.

Delivery & Collections:

As the Astor Wing is not open 24 hours a day, it is essential that all suppliers making deliveries or wishing to set up liaise with the events office to arrange a convenient date and time.

Suppliers Meals:

Please speak directly with your suppliers to see if they require catering during their time at Hever Castle. If they require a hot meal or sandwich these should be pre-ordered in advance. Please contact the Food and Beverage Coordinator to arrange this.

Photography:

It is permissible for you to take photographs within the Italian Garden area however this should be discussed with your coordinator. If there is an Italian Garden Wedding taking place on the same day as your wedding, they will have priority of that area.

Additional Items

Corkage:

We do not permit corkage; however, we do understand that there may be occasions when a particular beverage is preferred which is not on our list. Restaurant Associates will endeavour to source this beverage for you and will quote a price per bottle for the amount required.

Please speak to the Food and Beverage Coordinator should you wish to discuss this further.

Parking:

There is a car parking area available for guests to use free of charge during your stay. Overnight parking is strictly not permitted for non-residential guests.

Confetti:

The use of confetti, rose petals and rice is not permitted anywhere within the Astor Wing, Castle and Grounds. This includes the use of a confetti cannon. A clean-up fee of £1,000.00 will be added to the final account if used.

Fireworks:

Due to insurance limitations, we are unable to allow any fireworks around the Castle or Astor Wing. Sparklers and sparkulars are only permitted outside of the venue and should be mentioned discussed with your coordinator.

Cakes:

We request that your wedding cake is delivered assembled or that your cake maker sets this up for you as Hever Castle takes no responsibility for setting up or moving cakes.

We have two silver etched cake stands and accompanying silver cake knife which you're welcome to borrow on the day. The round stand is 39cm (15.5 inch) in width and the square stand is 40cm (16 inch).

Private Guided Tours:

Castle tours can be included as part of your wedding, during times when the Castle is closed to the public. Tours last for one hour and are hosted by a Castle guide. Please speak to your coordinator to discuss this further.

Candles:

Real candle sticks are permitted in candelabras and can be lit for your wedding breakfast. Tea light style candles are permitted however they must be in a candle votive tall enough to cover the naked flame.

Real candles are not permitted within the Moat Restaurant.

Drones:

The use of UAV's (unmanned aerial vehicles) or drones are not permitted on or over Hever Castle without prior approval. If approved, this would only be permitted at times when the Estate is closed to and clear of member of the public to ensure their safety and security.

CONDITIONS FOR DRONE FLYING

Current CAA legislation states that drones are not permitted to be flown within 50 meters of any vessel, vehicle or structure which is not under the control of the person in charge of the aircraft. The aircraft should not be flown within 50 meters of any person except during take-off or landing or within 30 meters of any person except for the person in charge of the aircraft.

All operators must hold the following:

A current and valid CAA 'Permission for Aerial Work' (PFAW)

Evidence of valid insurance cover

A risk assessment for the proposed flight

A method statement outlining what equipment will be used and a flight plan outlining where flying is proposed.

Failure to provide all of these documents at least one week in advance of the event date, the drone will not be allowed. Prior arrangement must be communicated with your Wedding Coordinator who will request details of the Drone Company you will be using and let you know if it would be possible for a drone to be **used**.