



Italian Garden Ceremony Only Wedding Booking Procedures, Information & FAQs

One of the most magnificent areas of the gardens at Hever Castle is The Italian Garden, designed to display William Waldorf Astor's collection of fine Italian sculpture. The Guthrie Pavilion, Palladian in style with vaulted ceilings and floor-to-ceiling arched windows, makes for a light and airy atmosphere from day into night without losing the romantic backdrop of the lake and gardens.

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 eight weeks 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 function.

PLEASE ENSURE ALL YOUR GUESTS ARE AWARE OF OUR GUTHRIE PAVILION

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 01732 861 721

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. If no communication is made by the client within this time the provisional booking will be removed from the diary.

Confirmation:

In order to confirm your provisional booking, we ask that the Hever Castle Booking Terms and Conditions are read, signed and returned along with a non-refundable confirmation deposit of £2,000.00.

Payments:

Any remaining balance is due in a final deposit invoice eight weeks / 2 months prior to your day.

Meetings:

Should you wish to re-visit the venue 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. You will have a final meeting with your wedding coordinator approximately eight weeks prior to your wedding date. This must take place Monday – Friday between the hours of 10:30am – 3:00pm.

Min Numbers:

If catering is required, we have a minimum catering requirement of 25 adult guests at £20.00 inc VAT per person for 2023 and £30.00 inc VAT per person for 2024.

Final Numbers:

Please note that final chargeable numbers must be provided 5 clear working days before the event, 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:

Once the event coordinator has received a copy of the signed Booking Terms and Conditions and confirmation deposit, a Ceremony Booking Form will be sent to you which you will need to complete and return back to Hever Castle. 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 a meeting where you will give Notice of Marriage and discuss the content of the ceremony. Please note payments are to be made directly by you, to the Registry Office.

Ceremony:

Ceremonies in the Italian Gardens commence at 10.00am with guests arriving to the lake side location from 9.30am. Drinks and photographs would follow from 10.30am to 12.00pm. Alternatively, afternoon ceremonies can be arranged with prior notice. The grounds open to the general public at 10.30am but the loggia and part of the Italian Gardens would have restricted access to members of the public until midday, so you would have privacy for your ceremony and drinks reception until this time. Wedding ceremonies on the Loggia are available Sunday – Thursday mornings only. The maximum capacity in this venue is 180 people. Bookings can be taken up to a year in advance for Sunday - Thursdays and 4 months in advance for a Saturday.

Room Hire:

The Italian Garden Ceremony Only includes the facilities fee for your Civil Ceremony to take place on the Loggia at Hever Castle, followed by a drinks reception on the Lower Loggia Terrace.

Music:

We are happy to provide a CD system or IPOD docking station in the ceremony room, free of charge, however we do ask that one of the wedding guests operates the IPOD 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 by the client must be given to the venue in advance e.g. number of musicians, instruments, and times they are booked to play. Please note the registrar will discuss what music can be played during the ceremony as no religious content is allowed.

Other Information

Stationary:

Hever Castle can provide 'Reserved' signs with Hever branding for your wedding ceremony should you need to reserve a few seats. Your Ushers or other members of the wedding party are traditionally responsible for ensuring people are seated correctly.

Set Up:

Hever Castle will provide chairs, a table for registrars and glassware for your ceremony and drinks reception.

Chair Covers:

Hever Castle do not provide chair covers however you are welcome to have an external supplier supply these for you if required. Please refer to our recommended suppliers list for contact information.

Catering:

A selection of Canapés can be tray served with Champagne or you can choose a light finger buffet with wine and soft drinks. We require a minimum spend of £20.00 inc VAT per person based on a minimum of 25 persons. Your event coordinator can provide you with current menus so you can make your choices.

Beverages:

Additional beverages ordered on the day from the Loggia can either be added to the Bride & Groom's main wedding account or there are facilities for a card bar for guests to settle their own drinks.

Accommodation within Anne Boleyn Wing

Bedrooms:

The newest addition to Hever Castle is the transformation of Anne Boleyn's Wing. This is a stand-alone section of the Astor Wing that boasts nine beautifully appointed bedrooms. Should you require these bedrooms, you will need to reserve Anne Boleyn Wing in its entirety. Should you require bedrooms, provided they are available to book, rooms can be booked via our B&B coordinators on a bed and breakfast basis.

Check-in:

Rooms are available for check-in from 3:00pm on arrival and check-out is at 10:30am on the day of departure. No early check-ins are available.

Breakfast:

A full English or continental breakfast is included within the accommodation rate. This will take place from 08.00-09.30 the following morning.

Wedding Co-ordination

Wedding Coordinator:

You will have a dedicated wedding coordinator throughout the planning stage. During the coordination process there may be the need for you to communicate with other members of the Hever Castle coordination team. Our team works closely together and information pertaining to your event is accessible to all coordinators. Given the time period of some booking journeys it is a realistic expectation that 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.

Function sheet:

In line with your confirmation pack from Hever Castle, you will be issued a 'Function Sheet' document. This should be returned to your coordinator 8 weeks before your wedding to allow our team to begin to finalise your wedding arrangements.

Suppliers

Recommended Suppliers: We offer a list of recommended suppliers as a helping hand to you. These are suppliers that have worked at the venue on many occasions and understand our operational requirements. They are best placed to guide you and work with you to develop your requests. However, you are free to source your own if you wish too for any service although we do stipulate usage of our in-house catering team, firework and marquee suppliers for these particular services.

Delivery & Collections:

It is essential that all suppliers liaise with the event coordinator prior to the event otherwise access on the day may be denied.

Photography

There may be certain restrictions in regard to photography at the front of the Castle with the couples requested timings dependent on subsequent events taking place on other areas of the estate. This will be discussed with you prior to your day and the house manager will make any necessary decisions on the day.

Drones:

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

CONDITIONS FOR UAV/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.

Parking:

No overnight parking is permitted in the main car park or the Lakeview Car Park. The events office must be advised of any coaches booked for both delivering and collecting guests prior to the event taking place. Unfortunately, double-decker buses or coaches are not allowed due to their size and the narrowness of the lane. Out of respect for local residents we do ask that guests depart quietly after the event.

Accessibility:

There is a limited number of accessible parking adjacent to the Guthrie Pavilion. Wheelchair access is via the Rose Garden and onto the top part of the Loggia where the drinks or ceremony is taking place. Unfortunately, there is no access to the lower terrace.

Confetti:

The use of confetti, rose petals and rice is not permitted anywhere on the Hever Castle estate. This includes confetti cannons. A clean-up fee of £1,000.00 will be added to the final account if used.

Catering:

All food and beverages throughout your celebrations must be provided by Hever Castle.