



Dreaming of a White Wedding



Make planning your wedding and your honeymoon as easy as saying "I do"

It's just 24 hours to go to your Big Day and you're more stressed out than you've ever been before. The cake you ordered from the local bakery didn't turn out the way you wanted it to, the lady from the club who's doing the flowers brought pink roses instead of peach, the DJ your cousin recommended hasn't arrived to set up at the reception venue, and the dressmaker down the road is still putting the finishing touches to your dress, which should have been finished ages ago. This is the last thing you imagined when you started planning your wedding - and you're miserable.

Sadly, too many brides go through this kind of problem, and after two hours should be the most memorable event of their lives not only very stressful to organise, but also a huge disappointment.

"No bride deserves to be let down on her wedding day," says Alyson Watt, the Managing Director of the South African Bridal Industry Academy. "That's why we started SABIA two years ago - to provide a centralised database of accredited quality suppliers who are rated by bridal couples themselves."

After all, who better to recommend the best jewellers, venues, photographers, couriers, hairdressers, make-up artists and honeymoon spots than other brides who've just as discerning as you are?

Let's face it, your neighbour might do flower arranging in her spare time, but is she really the right choice for your once-in-a-lifetime event? And the dressmaker on the corner might make cute matric dance dresses, but can she give your wedding dress that professional touch?

"The problem is that the wedding services industry is very decentralised," says Alyson, "and there's often no way of guaranteeing the supplier you choose will deliver what you want - to budget and on time."

SABIA set out to address this problem, and after two short years, is South Africa's leading bridal hub for couples and suppliers alike.

"With weddings costing an average of R80 000, bridal couples want and deserve the very best"

its mission is simple: to ensure that every couple can have the wedding day and the honeymoon of their dreams, nothing less. And to make that even easier, the academy has also just re-launched its prestigious Brides' Choice Awards (previously the VOW Awards), which recognise the very best wedding service suppliers in the country, nominated and voted for exclusively by brides and their new husbands.

"That's what makes these awards different," says Alyson. "As the winners are not only nominated by brides, but also receive awards based on their votes, future brides can be assured that the Brides' Choice Awards are the best possible reflection of excellence in the wedding services industry."

At this year's elegant Brides' Choice Awards gala ceremony, held at The Vineyard Hotel & Spa, on 19 August 2010, L Designs, a Port Elizabeth-based clothing design studio run by fashion whiz Léandra Fourie received the highest overall rating, an incredible 99.87%. L Designs was again, the proud recipient of the National Prize for Couture Wedding Gowns, and Léandra was not only delighted to receive the top award, but says being a SABIA member has been a fantastic boost for her business.

"I had an unusual phone call a few days ago from a designer in the Pretoria area," she says. "She was phoning to ask me what being a member of SABIA had done for my business."

"L Designs has been a member for two years now, and I confessed to her that I was a bit sceptical about the potential benefits at first. But I was soon converted. From a supplier's point of view, it's the ultimate showcase. SABIA also interacts with members regularly, keeps up-to-date with industry information, and provides standardised quality management criteria which we can use to compare apples with apples."

"Being a member creates an image too. It demonstrates to new and potential clients that you're not just a backstreet business, but one that is accredited by SABIA - based on their stringent quality standards."

Andreas Hauke of Hauke Digital Production, the winner of the national award for videography both last year and again this year, also says there are many benefits to being a SABIA Brides' Choice Award winner.

"Not only has winning the award increased our local exposure, but we recently had a visit from a bride-to-be who lives in the UK," he says. "When we asked her how she had heard of us, she said she was contacting past Award winners to give her quotes for her upcoming wedding and, once she'd seen some of our work, she booked us immediately. We're delighted that, by being a SABIA award winner, we're reaching both local and international audiences."

From the bride-to-be's point of view, choosing a SABIA member and a Brides' Choice Award winner as a supplier offers both the guarantee of excellence and peace of mind.

The academy's web site also provides useful tools like a planning list, a run-down on wedding etiquette and traditions, useful tips and check lists, and even some of the best romantic poetry a bride could dream of.

"We got engaged on New Year's Eve," says Karen, who lives in the Johannesburg suburb of Parkview, "and we're getting married in October."

"People just don't realise how much goes into planning a wedding, but the SABIA site has

been an invaluable resource for us."

She and husband-to-be Rob were able to plan their boutique-style wedding from the comfort of Karen's lounge.

"They could browse a range of accredited suppliers and make their selection. As a client they could depend on them for the perfect wedding."

"Our mission is simple: to ensure that every couple can have the wedding day and the honeymoon of their dreams, nothing less."

"We found amazing suppliers in every category," says Karen, "and even depended on this year's Brides' Choice Award winner in the honeymoon destination for our honeymoon."

Using SABIA suppliers has been a breeze, and we're looking forward to an extraordinary wedding day, as well as the most romantic of honeymoons at Tranquility

Lodge on the Garden Route."

With their wedding only a matter of weeks away, Karen and Rob are happy and relaxed. They're enjoying every aspect of the planning process, and don't feel a hint of stress about any aspect of the event going off the rails.

"With weddings costing an average of R80,000, bridal couples want and deserve the very best," says Alyson Watt, "and at SABIA, it's our mission to see that they get it."

MAIN PAGE FAR LEFT: Celebrating the 2010 Brides' Choice Awards. **MIDDLE:** Stephanie and Rob at the Awards. **WEST:** Mark Engelbrecht. **PHOTOGRAPHY BY:** Mark Engelbrecht.

THIS PAGE FAR LEFT: Alyson Watt and Mark Engelbrecht shared national winner for Photography. **LEFT:** Léandra Fourie from L Designs with her outstanding awards. **PHOTOGRAPHY BY:** Cass Photography www.cassphotography.co.za



We are proud of the following SABIA member Brides Choice Awards Winners:

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| <p>PHYSICAL WINNERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st Night Honeymoon
The Vineyard Hotel & Spa - Bronze • Albums
Luscinda du Toit Photographic DPAI - Gold • Beady Therapist
Kwazi & Reauly - Gold • Bridal Shop
Gauteng
Pink Chiffy Bridal - Gold
Everything but the Groom - Silver
Alyson Watt - Gold
Bella of Hilton - Gold • Cake Design
Gauteng
The Cake Genie - Gold
Capotrice Boutique - Silver
Eastern Cape
Cakes of Bonaire - Gold
Western Cape
Kwazi House Pastries - Gold
Woods Cakes - Silver • Club Reception
21 Floral Links - Gold • Decorators
Gauteng
Rupika Designs - Gold • Designer / Couture Wedding Gown
Gauteng
Cherise Anderson Haute Couture - Gold
Unique Brides - Bronze • Dresses
Bella of Hilton - Silver
Eastern Cape
Sofie Lou - Gold
Western Cape
Cindy Born Couture - Bronze • Floral Design
Gauteng
Blooms on the Boulevard - Gold
Rupika Designs - Bronze
Alyson Watt - Gold
Kloof Floral - Bronze • Gift Registry
The Wedding Gift List - Gold • Hairistry
Exclusive Bridal Hair - Gold
Lynette v Zyl Bridal Hair & Make-up - Silver | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiring Company
Neri's Hire - Gold
Decora Pro - Silver • Honeymoon Consultant
Creative Honeymoon Solutions - Gold
Gauteng
Kwazi & Reauly - Gold • Honeymoon Destination - Local
Tranquility Lodge - Gold
Western Cape
Porcupine Pie Boutique Guest Lodge - Silver • Hotel Reception - Country
Charmelle Hotel - Gold • Hotel Reception - Urban
The Vineyard Hotel & Spa - Gold • Independent Wedding Planner
Gauteng
Silver Living Co-ordination & Decor Accessories - Gold
Poppy Designs - Bronze
Rose du Toit @ Nautans - Gold • In-House Wedding Planner
Gauteng
The Owl's Nest Wedding & Conference Centre - Silver
Kwazi & Reauly - Gold
Bella Vito - Silver
Eastern Cape
The Parlorian - Gold
The Vineyard Hotel & Spa - Gold
Western Cape
Sofie Lou - Gold • Make-up Artist
CJ Make-up - Silver • Marriage Celebrant
Ryan Hogarth, the Marriage Officer - Silver • Photographer
Gauteng
Luscinda du Toit Photographic DPAI - Bronze
Kerrie Coetzee Photoviz
Kevin Bender Photography - Gold
Exclusive Bridal Hair - Bronze
Eastern Cape
Cherise Theron Photography - Gold | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional DJ
Gauteng
Four Seasons Mobile Disco - Gold
Function Music Services - Silver
Kwazi & Reauly - Gold
Wedding DJs - Gold
DJ Simon D - Silver
Eastern Cape
DJ Productions - Gold • Reception Centre
Gauteng
Summer Place - Gold
Kwazi & Reauly - Gold
Bella Vito - Gold
Bonsheer Castle - Bronze
Eastern Cape
The Parlorian - Gold
Free State
Oreline Gastropub - Gold
Emvoya Estate - Silver • Salon Reception
Inverness Private Game Reserve - Gold
Bonsheer Winery & Lodge - Silver • Special Services
Designer Resale - Gold • Stationery
Gauteng
RubyGrey Creative - Gold
Wickham Van Cordale - Silver
Kwazi & Reauly - Gold • Wedding Photographer
Gauteng
Ingru Digital Productions - Gold
Luscinda du Toit Photographic DPAI - Silver
Western Cape
Nick Hayward - Gold
Sofie Lou - Silver
Special Services
Shelvia Meyer Videographer - Gold
Kerrie Coetzee Photoviz
Western Cape
DJ Productions - Silver
MM Productions - Bronze | <p>NATIONAL WINNERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luscinda du Toit Photographic DPAI
Beady Therapist
Middleton Hill & Beauty
Cakes Design
Bella of Hilton
Cakes Genie
Club Reception
Couture Wedding Gowns
Decorators
Designer / Couture Wedding Gown
Floral Design
Bonsheer Castle
Gift Registry
The Wedding Gift List
Ingru Digital Productions
Exclusive Bridal Hair
Neri's Hire
Hogarth
Marriage Consultant
Creative Honeymoon Solutions
Honeymoon Destination - Local
Charmelle Hotel
Hotel Reception - Country
Hotel Reception - Urban
Independent Wedding Planner
Kwazi & Reauly
Lynette v Zyl
Alyson Watt
Photographer
Creative Wedding Photography
Cherise Theron Photoviz
Professional DJ
Four Seasons
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Sofie Lou
Stationery
Inverness Private Game Reserve
Special Services
Designer Resale
Stationery
RubyGrey Creative
Shelvia Meyer Videographer
House Digital Productions |
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