

2023 | 24

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WEDDING PROFILES | CURRENT TRENDS | LOCAL VENDORS



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Contents

2

Kiralee & Nicholas Rassias
A Riverland love story

4

Wedding Trends To Look Out For
Gift Guide
No Registry? No Problem

6

Brooke & Georgie Franks
Spring thunderstorm
helps create memories

9

Choosing Your Dream Team
Wedding Suppliers

18

Sophie & Nick Gillard
Easy decision for picturesque
park wedding

21

Honeymoon Planning
Do's And Don'ts

22

Kelsee & Adam Langford
The perfect Riverland wedding day

26

Sarah & Jed Millington
Growing up together &
growing old together

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Little Car Photography

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Produced by Taylor Group Media

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What dreams are made of.

Welcome to the third edition of Taylor Group Media's Riverland Style Weddings magazine. Produced right here in the Riverland, we love putting this magazine together and telling the stories of couples who chose to get married in this beautiful region.

Inside we tell the story of five spectacular Riverland weddings, including how the bride and groom met and details of their engagement, the highlights and challenges of planning a wedding, and how the big day turned out.

Couples – either local or visitors – planning a wedding in the Riverland have this guide at their fingertips to discover Riverland venues, businesses and services that help make these special occasions possible.

Within these stunning 32 pages you will find information on the many spectacular outdoor and indoor venues where your dream wedding could be held.

That is just the beginning, however, as we know planning is the key to making your dream wedding a reality.

Whether you're looking for the perfect location, a local dressmaker, expert make-up and beauty services, or the best catering options on offer, we've spared no detail in bringing you the comprehensive guide for all things Riverland weddings.

Within these pages, we also look at the up-and-coming trends to look out for if planning a 2024 wedding, and tips on how to pick your dream team of suppliers to make sure your day is as special as can be.

We cover some options for your honeymoon – because they are also important to remember amid the nuptial preparations – and detail the dos and don'ts of planning the holiday you take after saying 'I do'.

This edition also caters to wedding guests, with inspiration for gifts to buy the happy couple.

Whether you are thinking of tying the knot, recently engaged, or know of a special couple, this is the magazine for you.

The Riverland has the landscape, services and suppliers you need to make your wedding truly unforgettable.

Bride

Kiralee Rassias
(nee Lovegrove)

Groom

Nicholas Rassias

Date

24 September
2022

Ceremony

Saints
Constantine
and Helen Greek
Orthodox Church

Reception

Renmark
Function Centre

Celebrant

Fr. Dimitrios
Moraitis

Photography

Love & Other –
K Photography
by Karina

Videography

Love & Other

Dress

Demetrios Bridal

Suit

Calibre

Make-up

Laura Palumbo

Hair

Jarahs Hair, Berri

Flowers

Flowers by
Jodie Lee

Cake

Lyons Den Cakes

Catering

Salt and Pepper
Catering and
David Donohue

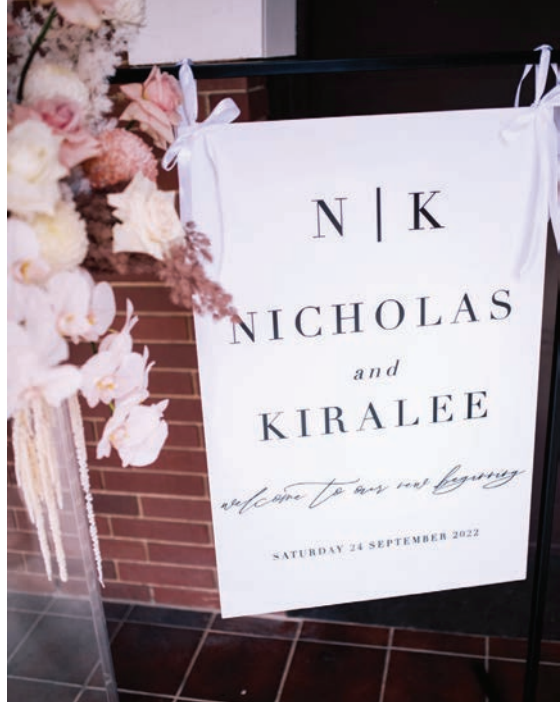
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Entertainment
Group

Hire

Equipment

Occasions Event
Management,
Evelyn Creative,
and Silhouette
& Co



A Riverland *love* story

Kiralee and Nick's love story is simple and sweet.

The two met at McDonalds Renmark through mutual friends, however Nick was too shy to say anything to his future wife, so Kiralee took matters into her own hands and messaged Nick on Facebook.

Twelve years later, the pair tied the knot at the Saints Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church, Renmark in September 2022.

The couple, who now live in Adelaide, got engaged in 2018 when Nick proposed on the way home from Renmark one weekend.

"When returning from Adelaide on a Sunday, I always fall asleep in the car, so he was hoping I might be asleep in the car but he had to stop in Truro so I woke up," Kiralee said.

"Nick drove to the Novotel in the Barossa Valley and said to me 'I'm just taking a detour' and halfway there I started picking up on things and thought, 'Well he wouldn't be making a detour through the Barossa Valley to get to Adelaide'.

"Eventually he said we were going to spend the night there and I just thought we were doing something romantic

because he's not really good at secrets like that, and then he proposed.

"It was a complete surprise, I thought I was going to know when he was going to propose or I was going to find the ring but he was really good with it."

The couple opted to marry in the Riverland, to allow Nick's grandmother to attend the wedding, and to celebrate in Nick's childhood church.

For the most part, wedding planning for Kiralee and Nick was smooth sailing, with the biggest challenge being the Covid-19 pandemic.

"We weren't in a rush to get married within the year, we wanted to be engaged for a little bit because we were also in the middle of building our house, so we just sort of waited and then last year we decided to start planning it and get married," she said.

A picture-perfect day was had, with Kiralee saying everything down to the weather was perfect.

Kiralee said she would definitely encourage anyone thinking of getting married in the Riverland to do so.

"I think it's so stress free," she said.

"In Adelaide there are a lot more people competing for a venue and suppliers, and all that stuff can get pretty stressful.

"We were originally planning an Adelaide wedding and then we decided to change it to Renmark and it was super free-flowing; it was actually really easy."



Gift guide

We have all been there at some point in our lives, and as we get older it doesn't seem to get any easier: deciding what to get the happy couple as a wedding gift.

While some brides and grooms choose to ask for no gifts at all, a contribution to their honeymoon, or a donation to a worthy cause in their name, most look forward to unwrapping the gifts chosen by the special people in their lives after the big day.

Shopping for a wedding gift is not always easy, especially if the good registry items have already been claimed and what is left is out of budget.

Luckily, the best wedding gift doesn't have to be expensive to be meaningful or useful.

Practical gifts for younger newlyweds might include homewares or gift cards for such items when a place of their own comes to fruition, but for the older, settled couples, what to do?

Look to gifts that help create memories, like a cookbook for at-home date nights, or a date ideas activity book – because no matter how old they are or how long the couple has been together, there can always be new and exciting date ideas.

You might be surprised at what local businesses have on offer for gifts. Pop in to the homewares store you walk or drive past all the time and see what catches your eye, or see if you can subtly ask the bride or groom where they like to shop.

There is a world of great websites and online shops for personalised and unique gifts for any couple, and you can help support small businesses from Australia and around the world at the same time.

If the couple has expressed wanting a big-ticket item, consider joining together with friends or family members to all contribute.

If you're ever in doubt or struggling to find something, there is no harm in asking the husband and wife-to-be what they would like, or what they might need.

After all, in the end, it's the thought that counts most.

NO REGISTRY?

no problem

simple gift ideas to suit any couple

- Candles or diffusers
- Adventure challenge book and camera set
- Flower vase
- Art piece of their wedding venue
- Photo frames
- Charcuterie/cheese board
- Personalised glassware
- Couples card games
- Memory books
- Experience vouchers

Wedding trends to look out for

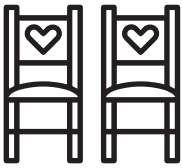
Trends are constantly changing and it's no different when it comes to weddings. Whether it be in your home town or somewhere new, a sit-down elegant dinner or buffet-style, a river backdrop or in the vines, in a church or at the town hall, every wedding is different.

A lot of the wedding trends for the next year are set to bring excitement, creativity and sustainability to your special day. The usual suspects are still around, and as popular as ever, but there are also some new ones to think about.



AUDIO GUESTBOOKS

A unique trend, audio guestbooks allow those sharing your special day with you to leave heart-felt messages and well wishes via voice recordings. The technology is becoming a popular inclusion at weddings as it adds an interactive and personal touch to the memories made during the celebrations. Guests get to have a bit of fun and leave messages to make you laugh, or cry, when you listen back.



SEATED WEDDING PARTY

Many enjoy picking who they want standing by their sides for the day they say 'I do', but some couples are choosing to seat their wedding parties. Having the party seated in the first row or two at the ceremony allows the couple to be alone at the front – after all, it is their day.



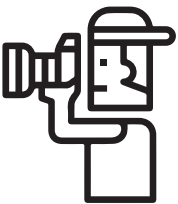
DÉCOR

Wedding arches are the perfect addition to outdoor ceremonies, with a variety of options to choose from including wooden, metal, floral, square, semi-circle or even hexagonal. For those with a creative flair and looking to put a hand-made touch on items on show at the wedding, small details can add a lot of personality to any wedding, in any location. Handwritten, acrylic signs are timeless and perfect for seating charts, entrance signs, bar signs, menus and more.



CHAMPAGNE TOWERS

They're back. Okay, maybe they never left, but champagne towers are starting to become popular again for 2023 and 2024 weddings. They have always been a symbol of celebration, and if done right, help capture an essence of luxury and elegance on your day.



CONTENT CREATION

In the age of social media, content creation is an emerging service for weddings especially with the rise of Instagram and Facebook reels and TikTok videos. A social media creator – or a friend with good camera and editing skills – is booked for the day to create content such as behind-the-scenes footage, short clips, and capturing candid moments to allow your wedding guests to be present at the time and put their phones away.



SUSTAINABLE TOUCHES

Being conscious of the environment and undertaking more sustainable practices is on the rise. As one couple does so in this edition of Riverland Style Weddings, biodegradable confetti is in, while other sustainable choices can be made in your menus and wedding favours.



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Spring thunderstorm helps *create* memories

Lightning strikes, thunder rumbles and a spring downpour did little to dampen the Franks' wedding day.

wedding décor, including the bar, wine and cocktail station, timber picture board, an arch photo background and signage, and lawn games such as Connect Four, cornhole, 'Yardzee' and Jenga.

"It was nice that everything was made with love and our guests loved it," Brooke said.

"We also hand-stamped our confetti out of gum leaves into love hearts – it was so time consuming but so beautiful."

As locals, a Riverland wedding was always going to happen.

"We wanted it to be by the river – why not showcase what we have to offer, especially for family members who don't live around here?" Brooke said.

"It was so nice to see the river while we were getting married."

Even the pair's dogs Maisy and Jäger were included on the day, with fresh flowers around their necks, courtesy of Renmark Flower House.

The thunderstorm on the Franks' wedding day added to the atmosphere and was taken advantage of for some spectacular photography.

"It rained all morning, and the girls and I had rehearsed how we would hold the umbrellas down the aisle, but to our surprise it was sunny and people actually got sunburned during the ceremony," Brooke said.

"On our way out to our photos you could see the lightning coming and we thought it was perfect timing. We went back, started our speeches and it just bucketed down with rain for hours, so everyone was stuck in the marquee but it was amazing."

Brooke Durdin and Geordie Franks met through local sport and realised they were destined to spend forever together after four years of close friendship.

Together for three years before Geordie popped the question, Brooke was whisked away on a surprise weekend getaway in December 2021.

"The whole weekend I had no idea where we were going and I hate surprises," Brooke said.

"He had planned down to the minute of how he wanted to propose – he wanted it to be at sunset with a specific song playing."

Engaged for just 11 months, the couple began organising the big day straight away and married in November 2022.

Brooke said due to the short timeframe, the only difficulties the pair faced included organising suppliers and photographers.

"I'm a planner girl anyway, so I really enjoyed the whole process to be honest," she said.

"Because we'd talked about it before, we kind of had an idea in our heads of what we wanted the wedding to be like, so we were always on Pinterest and making mood boards."

The couple handmade a lot of their

Bride

Brooke Franks
(nee Durdin)

Groom

Geordie Franks

Date

12 November 2022

Ceremony & Reception

Templeton on Murray

Celebrant

Hayley Ramsay

Photography

Little Car Photography

Dress

Adelaide Bridal Emporium,
alterations
by Jocelyn,
Two Needles

Suit

Tarocash

Make-up

Kylie Tschirpig,
Blush Barre

Hair

Sophie,
Socoh Salon

Flowers

Renmark Flower House

Cake

Made and decorated by
Brooke

Catering

Pete's Pizzas,
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Styling

Occasions Events



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Choosing your dream team of wedding suppliers

Planning a wedding can produce a mixture of emotions for you and your loved one.

While you likely have your date and wedding party all sorted, figuring out and booking the businesses you need are the next steps.

Securing a team of suppliers to ensure your wedding planning is easy and the day runs smoothly is essential, and thankfully here in the Riverland we have a lot of suitable businesses across the region happy to help you out.

The world is full of inspiration and ideas for wedding styles and décor, and lists of what couples should remember to book for the special day (Pinterest is a wonderful thing).

Some tips for picking your network of businesses:

Know your limits: Settle and agree on how much you are willing to invest in your special day. You (hopefully) only get one wedding day, but that doesn't mean you have to splurge big-time to make it a special occasion. There will be plenty of things you both want, but being budget-conscious and sticking to what is essential and crucial to the day is a wedding burden many couples have to face. Being open and honest about your budgets and managing expectations goes a long way when dealing with potential vendors.

What piques your interest?: With so many ideas at your fingertips, use your research time to define what things and ideas you love most – these will become important points when exploring options and discussing your day with suppliers. Make room on your list for the things you think you can't live without, and get booking before you regret waiting.

Get the low-down: Word of mouth is an invaluable asset when it comes to your wedding planning journey. Research can only go so far, so take on board the reviews and referrals from friends and

family members and find out what makes the recommended businesses special.

Make contact: Once you finally have a sure and steady idea of what you want your wedding day to look like, get on the phone. Suppliers in the wedding industry tend to book up quickly, sometimes years in advance if they're really popular, so start the discussions as soon as possible. Make sure to ask questions and even arrange a time to meet – this is a great way to make sure you fit with

the business and they can cater to your vision. A top supplier is someone who is a good balance of knowing what to do, can meet your brief and be flexible where possible.

Pick your team: Suppliers who meet your passion for the big day will help you build a shared excitement for the occasion. Having the right people in place to execute plan B if it's needed, and ensure the day runs seamlessly, will ease your mind.



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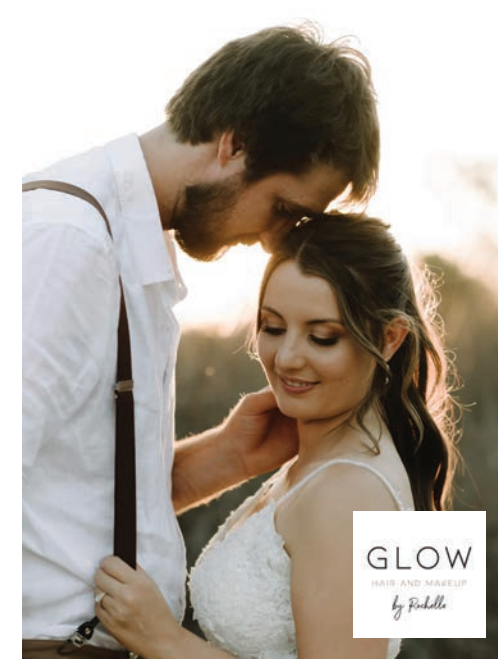
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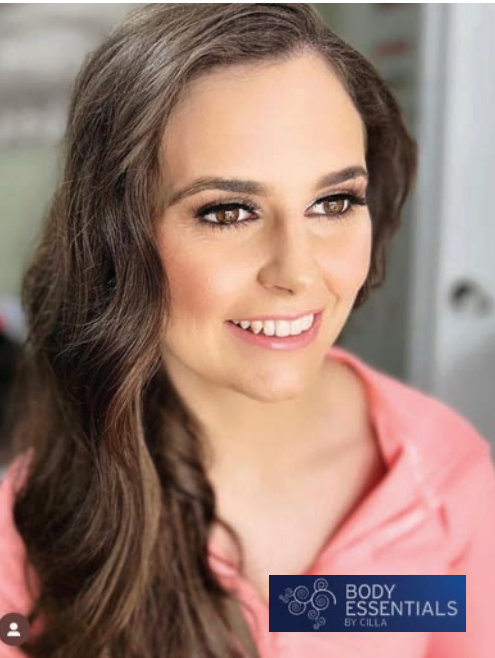
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Easy decision for *picturesque* park wedding

Bride

Sophie Gillard
(nee Grant)

Groom

Nick Gillard

Date

8 October 2022

Ceremony

Bert Dix Park,
Paringa

Reception

Templeton on
Murray

Celebrant

Emma Broomell

Photography

Benny Wylde

Videography

Mogg Visuals

Dress

The Bride Lab

Suit

Peter Shearer

Make-up

Make Me Up by
Amber Henwood

Hair

Honey Honey Salon

Flowers

Elem Blooms

Bar

Little Vintage Bar
and Van

Catering

Salt and Pepper
Catering

Entertainment

Georgette
Berry, Rocket
Entertainment

Styling

Occasions Hire

From meeting at an engagement party and loving one another from afar, to a surprise proposal and a scenic Riverland wedding, Sophie and Nick's story is anything but simple.

Sophie Grant was living and teaching in Port Lincoln when she met Nick Gillard, and the pair loved through a long-distance relationship for a year before moving in together in Adelaide.

Nick, who grew up in Renmark, proposed after three years in August 2020 – much to the surprise of Sophie.

"I had absolutely no clue," she said. "I literally thought nothing of it, but we were walking through the gardens of Partridge House in Glenelg and I noticed there were rose petals on the lawn. He'd gotten his sister to put petals in a love heart under a tree and he proposed there, so he very much went with that theme."

"I was in complete shock – I actually don't know if I said yes, now that I think of it. He had this beautiful spiel and I think I just said, 'Are you kidding me?'"

The surprise was kept together by Nick's sleuthing skills, working out Sophie's Pinterest password for ring

ideas, before taking the Pinterest board to his ring-maker friend.

When it finally came to preparing for the big day, after two years of engagement, Sophie said the guest list and keeping everyone happy were the main challenges.

"I don't think you're quite braced for the opinions of everyone – that can be a challenge, to keep everyone acknowledged," she said.

"I think we got it in the end."

"People ask what I would have changed, but I was so happy with how it looked and everything ran to schedule."

The choice to marry in the Riverland was an easy one to make for the Gillards.

"If you want to have a wedding outdoors, especially at the places we chose, there are so many different backgrounds for photos in the one spot," Sophie said.

"We had the beautiful cliffs with the river and Bert Dix has so much greenery which was stunning for our ceremony."

Local businesses were a breeze to deal with, especially when it came to Sophie's hair and make-up.

"I had to go for trial runs and their communication was unbelievable – they could fit me in for any time that we were coming up from Adelaide."

Special features on the day included his and her shots in place of a cake and personalised name tags made by Sophie's 2020-22 year 3 students.

"We wanted to create a day where all our guests felt special," Sophie said.

"Each guest also had a personalised letter written from myself and Nick when they found their seats at the reception."

"At the ceremony, we left seats for our grandparents who weren't able to physically be with us but were very much felt and remembered."





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HONEYMOON PLANNING DO'S & DON'TS

DO consider using a honeymoon gift registry. Weddings can be a financial drain, but if you have planned your honeymoon in advance you can ask wedding guests to buy things for you to do on the trip like spa treatments, tours, drink credits, or romantic dinners. Another option is a wishing well and informing guests their contributions will go towards the honeymoon.

DON'T plan the honeymoon by yourselves. Utilise the experts behind the desks at travel agencies and let them help you plan the best honeymoon possible. They can use their skills to find the best offers, provide information on the destination and offer activities for honeymoons of any length.

DO book special activities in advance. This can tie in to the aforementioned registry, especially if you have your hearts set on a hot air balloon ride, a horse ride along the beach or in the mountains, or just a simple spa day. Book ahead and avoid disappointment.

DON'T head off too soon after the wedding. The wedding is a big day, with a lot of planning and anticipation leading up to the actual occasion – take some time to wind down and collect yourselves before jetting off to your chosen destination. You could even leave it until later as something to look forward to (and a chance to recoup financially).

DO check the weather to try and avoid unseasonable conditions like a heat wave, a cold snap or a downpour of rain. While you can do your best to book at the right time of year for wherever you're headed, double check in the days before you leave to ensure you have packed the right clothes for the weather.

DON'T let the photos fool you on websites. Seek the help of travel agencies once again, or read reviews from people who have visited before. Promotional images can paint the ideal picture, but holiday-makers will always be honest about their experience.



Honeymoons

They might not be at the top of your to-do list, but your honeymoon is an important thing to remember amidst the craziness of planning your big day.

After months of planning and making sure everything is right for the moment you say 'I do' to each other, you would be looking forward to your romantic getaway – be it a weekend, a week or, if you're lucky, more.

That is why you should start planning your honeymoon around the same time you start planning the wedding – depending on your personal timelines. Planning eight to 12 months in advance is recommended, or more

if you plan to visit a tourist hotspot to make sure you're able to book the activities you want.

South Australia is home to some magnificent honeymoon options offering romantic activities, city escapes or luxury accommodation in the regions – including the Riverland, but we're biased here.

If you have been thinking about your dream honeymoon or holiday destination for years, it will be easy to decide where to go. But for those unsure, here are some options in South Australia, Australia and internationally to get you thinking.



SOUTH AUSTRALIA
1. Riverland
2. Kangaroo Island
3. Barossa Valley
4. Adelaide Hills
5. Flinders Ranges



AUSTRALIA
1. Whitsunday Islands, Queensland
2. Yulara, Northern Territory
3. Bruny Island, Tasmania
4. Exmouth, Western Australia
5. Blue Mountains, New South Wales



INTERNATIONAL
1. Santorini, Greece
2. Amalfi Coast, Italy
3. Queenstown, New Zealand
4. Canary Islands, Spain
5. Kyoto, Japan



The *perfect* Riverland wedding day

Bride
Kelsee Langford
(nee Kregar)

Groom
Adam Langford

Date
7 January 2023

Ceremony & Reception
Stanted House

Celebrant
Kerri Blaser

Photography
Kenzi St George
Photography

Videography
Cam Dixon

Dress
Adelaide Emporium

Suit
Peter Shearer

Make-up
Make Me Up by
Amber Henwood

Hair
Honey Honey Salon

Flowers
Dreamy Daiz

Cake
Creative Cakes by
Sally

Catering
Salt and Pepper
Catering

Entertainment
DJ Jeff

Hire Equipment
Imagine by Janelle,
and Little Vintage
Bar and Van

Kelsee and Adam Langford originally met through Facebook and mutual friends, but were brought together through the Berri Football Club where they both play.

Together for three-and-a-half years before Adam popped the question, Kelsee had a hunch he was going to propose on a trip to Adelaide.

"We went away to a little AirBnB in Adelaide, it was like a little glamping area which was nice," she said.

"We were just outside having a platter and he just popped the question.

"I kind of had my hunches because he wouldn't let me near his bag, he wouldn't let me put his clothes away, so I kind of had a feeling something

might happen."

Kelsee, who hails from the Riverland, said the main challenges while planning the wedding were remaining organised and making sure there was enough food and drink for everyone.

"The main highlight was picking our venue, I loved our place; it was all that we wanted," she said.

Their wedding took around eight months to plan, with Kelsee and Adam planning the whole wedding by themselves.

"Once we got engaged we planned it straight away, because we wanted to get it over and done with, and we didn't want to have our wedding and not have our grandparents there," she said.

"It was such a gorgeous day with an amazing garden, beautiful hosts, out-of-this-world food and our guests.

"Everything went exactly how we wanted it."

Part of the reason why Kelsee and Adam chose to get married in the Riverland was to showcase what the region has to offer.

"We are very country people and we just wanted to have it in a beautiful garden," she said.

"Our day was amazing, I wouldn't have changed a thing.

"It was just the perfect spot, I would definitely recommend a Riverland wedding to others thinking about it."

It was such a gorgeous day with an amazing garden, beautiful hosts, out-of-this-world food and our guests. Everything went exactly how we wanted it.

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Growing up together & growing old together

Sarah Ambaras used to tell her mother-in-law that she would marry her son one day, and in October last year she finally did.

Bride

Sarah Millington
(nee Ambaras)

Groom

Jed Millington

Date

28 October 2022

Ceremony & Reception

Bassham Wines,
Barmera

Celebrant

Deb Petch

Photography

Josh Stark

Dress

Rue de Seine

Suit

YD

Make-up

Make Me Up by
Amber Henwood

Hair

Jarah's Hair,
Berri

Flowers

Flowers by
Jodi Lee

Cake

Creative Cakes
by Sally

Catering

Pete's Pizza,
Mishes Kitchen

Entertainment

DJ Nages and
One Fusion

Styling

Aussie Hire
and Events,
My Little
Blossom Co

Sarah knew Jed Millington all her life and admits to having a crush on him before they took their friendship to the next level.

Jed proposed while on a trip to Hawaii two years into their relationship for Sarah's 21st birthday in 2018.

"We were on our last night there at a rotating restaurant overlooking the sea," Sarah said.

"He said we should go for a walk to look at the view and when we got back to our table he proposed. I kind of had an idea, because he was acting weird...

"Even though I had a feeling, when he actually proposed it was like, 'Oh I didn't expect that to happen'.

"I had always said I liked a pear-shaped diamond ring from Michael Hill and at the start of the year, before he proposed, we were walking down Rundle Mall and he said I should try the ring on.

"I didn't think anything of it, but I loved it when I tried it on and he must've ordered it then and there after I walked away."

Planning for the wedding began in

2019, but the arrival of a worldwide pandemic put a halt on its progression.

"We just waited, and when it finally started to feel like it was going away we started planning for October 2022 hoping it would be all clear by then with no restrictions and we got lucky that there were none," Sarah said.

Sarah and Jed had an enjoyable time planning the wedding, with Sarah's creativity free to come out to play. However, the biggest challenge they faced was forming a suitable guest list.

"It was hard trying to narrow it down so we weren't going over budget by having too many people there, but also making sure we had the people we felt like we needed there," Sarah said.

"We ended up having around 115 people, which was a pretty good number. It was a perfect day."

The couple would "definitely recommend the Riverland" for a destination wedding.

"We live in a beautiful part of the state," Sarah said.

"We went to Bassham Wines for lunch one day and I said to Jed it would be a really nice spot for our wedding. They were more than happy to have us.

"I got ready at my aunty and uncle's house just down the road in Barmera, and my cousin – whom I was very close with – had passed away at the start of the year so it was really special to be able to get ready with them.

"Having everyone we loved there to celebrate with us was so special."





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