

Off Peak Weddings

- YARRA VALLEY & DANDENONG RANGES -

getting hitched your way

ISSUE 2

AUTUMN

FABULOUS FOOD
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FIND YOUR SELF | MELBOURNE'S YARRA VALLEY AND DANDENONG RANGES

Destination

Yarra Valley, Dandenong Ranges & Nillumbik

Tramonto

Fall in love all over again in the Yarra Valley, Dandenong Ranges and Nillumbik. Melbourne's favourite weekend destinations welcome you every day of the week, and you'll be finding all sorts of excuses to extend your stay. An easy drive from the city quickly becomes a picturesque tour.

Via the Dandenong Ranges, the winding roads lead into lush forests and quaint villages. Via Nillumbik and the Yarra Valley, the symmetrical lines of vineyards stretch out on each side of the road, leading you to boutique and master cellar doors and character restaurants that have every reason to boast of their local fare. In autumn, it doesn't matter which turn you take, the beauty of nature is there to welcome you with hues of green and gold. It's vintage, and the grapes are being harvested as you drive by.

Taste the difference, celebrate the variety and share the love – that's how you become part of this utterly distinctive part of the world. Diversity is celebrated – the Yarra Valley, Dandenong Ranges and Nillumbik areas all have their own unique charms yet unite to offer you a big-hearted experience that is always inclusive. Against the backdrop of the Great Dividing Range, there is a sense of the landscape embracing you. Anything can happen and everything is welcome.

Express your love with an Off Peak Wedding – styled for choice, uniqueness and diversity.
More than a destination, this region is ready to be part of your story.



“Most wedding suppliers welcome an Off Peak Wedding with open arms – and they’ve got all the time to make sure your day is exactly how you want it.”



Soulful Ceremonies

Christine Pedley

SUPPLIER SPEAK

Soulful Celebrations in the Dandenong Ranges

Congratulations to the newly engaged! Planning your wedding can be one of the most exciting times of your life. You want to create the most amazing day; however, sometimes getting all the places and services you want lined up for the same day can be stressful. Planning an Off Peak Wedding may give you greater choice of dates and venues (some venues are booked out years in advance on weekends), and allow you to budget so you can still make a deposit for that house you’re dreaming of! Take the stress out of the planning – bring back the joy and excitement!

It’s time to think outside the square. Here are some ideas to consider:

1. Get married when it’s not so busy – how about from June to August?
2. Monday to Thursday weddings are fabulous – who said weddings had to be on the weekend?
3. Choose an amazing venue in the Dandenong Ranges – just perfect at this time of year. Always admired the grand mansions of the Dandenongs? Marybrooke Manor and Chateau Wyuna are terrific options.
4. Consider an outdoor wedding – how about in our amazing bush, followed by a celebratory meal in a local restaurant? The Cuckoo Restaurant offers plenty of options.
5. Get hitched sooner rather than later. Celebrants in the area are often available at short notice. You could consider a ‘Legals Only’ Wedding – reducing costs even more.



Looking for a simpler way to get married?

In a 'Legals Only' wedding all the ceremonial essentials are covered with the minimum of fuss. The couple must be present and there can be up to 8 guests (including 2 witnesses). Couples can add their personal vows, and all other details will be taken care of by the celebrant including:

- Signing of Notice of Intended Marriage one month before wedding
- Basic legal requirements under the Marriage Act (including the Monitum i.e. what the Celebrant must say – and the one sentence each party to the marriage must say)
- Signing of all legal documents
- Submission of all paperwork to Births, Deaths & Marriages

Gorgeous backdrops and panoramic views for photos

in the Dandenong Ranges



1. Pirianda Gardens – Olinda
2. Emerald Lake Park – Emerald
3. Mt Dandenong Arboretum – Mt Dandenong
4. Tesselaar – especially during Kabloom festival in April
5. SkyHigh – Mt Dandenong
6. Cloudehill Gardens (by arrangement) – Olinda
7. John Hills Reserve Lookout Trig Point – Kallista

Love Glows

In an Autumn Wedding

Autumn is a season made for weddings, and the Dandenong Ranges is made for autumn. Have you ever noticed how flattering autumn light is? Not just in the morning and late afternoon but all day. Your inner glow will be perfectly captured in spectacular outer glow photos and there is no limit to the locations you can choose to 'show your most gorgeous you.'

If you want environmentally friendly confetti then great handfuls of autumn leaves, in gold and amber, bring a touch of natural beauty to your day (or try this wedding hack - make your own bio-confetti with a holepunch and autumn leaves). Walking the aisle might be more like walking a carpet of gold, autumn leaves providing stunning contrasts of colour and texture. Or better still walk the aisle between the vineyards, or down perfectly symmetrical rows of a fruit laden orchard. Or perhaps you love the great outdoors and a misty bush track in the forest is your ideal aisle.

An outdoor wedding and autumn time go hand-in-hand. This is the season of choice. You have the best of both worlds. The temperature is milder, the days are clear and the evenings bring a touch of crispness, perfect for gathering indoors or outdoors. Long sleeves, short sleeves, it doesn't matter - you can choose the outfit you want - the one that sets your heart alight!

Adoring wedding lovers and ardent food lovers celebrate in double time in autumn. This is the time of the year when everything is abundant. Grazing tables groan deliciously with Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges produce - locally grown and magically transformed into gorgeous wedding breakfast dishes that showcase Melbourne's food bowl. It doesn't get better than this.

SEASON SNAPSHOT



You're a perfect match with your love, and the Dandenong Ranges is a perfect match for an autumn wedding. Love it all, right here.



Photo credits: LJM Photography



Three reasons why autumn weddings are for you

Food

It's feast time in autumn. Platters of fresh figs, crisp apples, stonefruit, berries, wild foods and more. The paddock to plate journey is 'right around the corner' and that means mouthwatering freshness, fabulous variety and food comas!

Wine

Harvest is a special time of year in the region. The air is ripe with celebration as the fruit comes in and you're part of the feels. Local wine, sparkles, brews and gin are must haves at your party - Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Prosecco and more, matched perfectly to your food and future!

Favour

Your photos will be awesome. Autumn light is both romantic and forgiving. Flattering light, golden smiles and the tonal beauty of autumn are all yours – make the most of them!

Cait & Steph

get hitched

Meet the couple

Stephanie Tennant is a Paediatric Speech Pathologist and Caitlin Wynne is a Designer. They live in Melbourne with their beloved miniature dachshund Billie. The couple met about 10 years ago, playing Handball at a little local Melbourne club. Caitlin was a veteran at the club and Steph was a new recruit, and they connected instantly. Caitlin knew Steph was perfect in every way from the first moment. After years of friendship, Steph finally plucked up the courage to confess her love to Caitlin sitting in a car on a Melbourne street.

Caitlin replied, "I know!" and the rest is history!

"I was drawn to Caitlin unlike anyone before and in my heart of hearts I knew she was someone special as being in her company felt right."

Steph

Who proposed?

Caitlin: Steph popped the question on a beautiful weekend away glamping in Point Leo, Victoria. The day started with a massage and spa followed by a beach picnic with oysters, cheese and champagne. After a lovely sunset beach walk Steph sat me down and gave me a present. I was kind of expecting the proposal by this stage so I was a little thrown by the present, but it was a book she had made listing all the things she loved about me and us. I cried my way through until the very last page which said, "Will you marry me?" She then surprised me with a beautiful engagement ring.



What made your wedding unique?

We had a full DIY wedding, and organised and styled everything – a lot to do but worth it because the wedding felt unique and authentic to us. Our ceremony, set among the soaring gum trees with the autumn sun glistening through the forest, created a truly magical experience. During happy hour, our guests enjoyed making flower crowns, drinking Aperol Spritz and listening to the beautiful sounds of Tobi music live, surrounded by the forest and keeping warm by the fires. Bliss!

Is there a story behind your dresses?

Caitlin: We decided to surprise each other with our dresses. I knew I wanted a two-piece, so I just Googled and found one in the first place I looked.

Steph: I wanted something Boho-ish, relaxed and oozing forest vibes. My mum, sister and sister-in-law and I took a trip to Geelong with only one day to find a dress and one bridal shop appointment and I didn't like anything. Then, in a café magazine, we found the lovely and intimate Pearls and Roses Bridal, who squeezed us in for an appointment and had a range of their own Boho designs.

How did you choose your ceremony and reception venue?

We loved the location of Kinglake Forest Adventures. We grew up around the bush and love nature and the outdoors and wanted a ceremony among the trees. At Kinglake Forest Adventures, we could take our guests on a journey to different locations for our ceremony, happy hour drinks and reception. And everyone could fully embrace the experience, stay the night and join us for brekky the next morning!

What was your wedding theme or vibe?

Caitlin: The main inspiration was the Australian bush location. This set the tone for the native flowers, the relaxed vibe with food trucks and the overall boho-ish style.





What makes a marriage?

Caitlin: Marriage is important for me in a way I never realised. It gives me a sense of belonging and security. Regardless of being married or not, Steph and I will always be there for each other. However, getting married has made me feel safe in a way I didn't think it would and doing it in front of family and friends made me feel so happy and lucky!

Steph: A marriage to me is a partnership built on love, trust and honesty. It's about accepting, appreciating and loving everything about each other. Doing the things we love together, sharing special moments and laughing often. Supporting each other no matter what happens in life. Making compromises, forgiving and admitting when we are in the wrong. Learning from each other, encouraging and challenging each other. Growing together through life. Being a family and sharing the pleasures of loving others, like our little dachshund Billie.

Feeling overwhelmed, I left it up to my trusty crew to select some dresses for me. My mum burst into tears with the second dress I tried on, and we unanimously agreed 'Wildflower' was perfect. It was a stunning dress and very comfortable to dance in...#1 criteria!

Tell us about any old traditions you love, and new traditions you embraced.

We embraced most of the typical traditions and made them our own. Both our parents walked us down the aisles, as we made our way to the altar from different directions - a surprise for everyone and hard work for our photographers!. That was a very special moment. We created our own version of a ribbon ceremony with the help of our amazing Celebrant Cassie. Our sibling in-laws gave us advice for the future as they placed a ribbon over our hands before we literally 'tied the knot'.

Our wedding dance was a dance routine with all our bridesmaids to *I Wanna Dance With Somebody* by Whitney Houston. That certainly got the party started!



What was the highlight of your day?

Caitlin: Dancing back up the 'aisle' together after we were officially married. It was such a happy and beautiful moment with all our friends surrounding us, happy and dancing, and throwing 'nature's confetti' all over us!

Steph: There were so many, but the ceremony was the ultimate highlight for me. The setting was breathtakingly beautiful. There was so much love in the air, thoughtful words and promises, and a dance up the forest aisle to Prince. It was a truly magical, happy and memorable experience.

Anything else you'd love to share?

Steph: Announcing our engagement to our family and friends after the YES vote was a very humbling experience for us. We were so thankful to have our love recognised. The outpour of joy, love and affection we experienced from our friends and family, with the backing of the Australian community, was beyond words. All the excitement and love in support of our partnership spurred us on to get married and celebrate with our loved ones. We feel so privileged now to have enjoyed such an amazing experience together. I love my wife. Being married is awesome!

If you insist on having your pooch as your ring bearer (like I did despite Caitlin's efforts to warn me of all the potential disasters) make sure the rings are secured properly so they don't end up in the dirt! Then it's totally worth it. :)

Number of Guests: 110 / **Wedding Date:** 28 April 2018

What is nature's confetti?

Rose petals, lavender, pot pourri or make your own with autumn leaves and a fancy holepunch.



Vendor Credits

Photographer/Videographer	Dan Brannan / Happy Video Productions
Florist/Headwear	Edward and I
Ceremony and Reception Venue	Kinglake Forest Adventures
Stationery	Caitlin Wynne
Catering/Cake	Happy Camper Pizza / Fig and Salt
Entertainment	Tobi Music & Jess McGuire
Wedding bands	Blackfinch, Northcote
Transport	None, everyone stayed the night
Bridal gown designer	The Bridal Atelier (Cait) & Pearls & Roses (Steph)
Bridesmaid dresses	SilkFred - ASOS
Hair & Make Up	Elliott Steele (Cait) & Jessica Woods (Steph)

Fabulous Food Truck Weddings

Do your wedding your way. If a sit down, choice-of-two style of wedding is not for you, then the Food Truck Wedding could be the perfect way to create the wedding of your dreams. This way of celebrating can be super casual and fun and if there is a special theme you are going for, then there's probably a food truck to match! Babaji's Kitchens are wedding specialists who serve delicious Indian Fare from an Indian Gypsy themed cart that adds colour and flavour to your day - and provides a great backdrop for some fun photos. From setting up street food carts serving unlimited pani puri (a national obsession in India!), cooking traditional Indian feasts, Indian style brekkys and late night street snack stalls - they've even served the 'morning after' curry brunch!

The Food Truck Wedding can be dialled up or down to suit your budget and number of guests so planning is easy - just add more trucks accordingly.

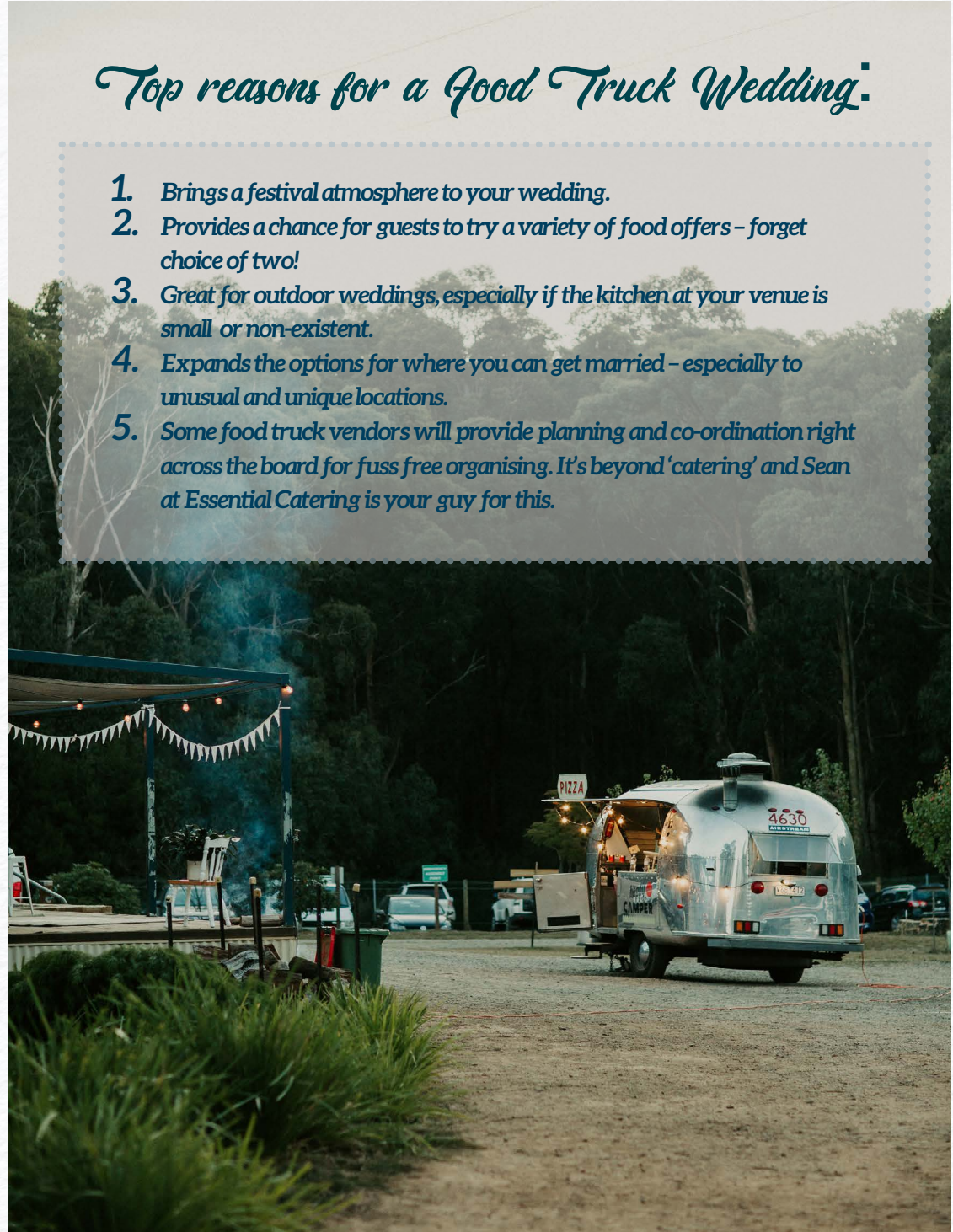
There's a food truck for every need! From tapas to tacos, from wine to cocktails, from ice cream, desserts and coffee, to pizzas, Indian and more. It's a great way to cater for different tastes and dietary requirements and your guests can graze as they please throughout your celebrations and in between precious time on the dance floor.

"The beauty of the food truck is it takes away all the difficult parts of catering like clean up. They do it all for you and you can be located almost anywhere! Food trucks are certainly the flavour of the month and this won't change because they are an affordable and easy drive in/drive out option for events."

Michelle French, Owner, Kinglake Forest Adventures

Top reasons for a Food Truck Wedding:

1. Brings a festival atmosphere to your wedding.
2. Provides a chance for guests to try a variety of food offers - forget choice of two!
3. Great for outdoor weddings, especially if the kitchen at your venue is small or non-existent.
4. Expands the options for where you can get married - especially to unusual and unique locations.
5. Some food truck vendors will provide planning and co-ordination right across the board for fuss free organising. It's beyond 'catering' and Sean at Essential Catering is your guy for this.





How to do a Food Truck Wedding

with Billy from Babaji's Kitchen

1. Plan for all kinds of weather (it is Melbourne after all!).

The one thing that can't be controlled is the weather, especially rain, so think about how you can look after your guests if it's wet. A couple of marquees, or having the food truck near the opening of a 'barn' or under cover area is a good solution.

2. Serve food quickly to hungry guests

A small queue is acceptable but no one wants a big queue. Check in with your food truck as to how many people they can serve in 15 minutes. Pre-prepared starters can help avoid a rush when the food truck announces dinner is up and offering choice to guests with a variety of food trucks will also help manage the queues.

3. Present your food your way

There are so many great rustic options these days that work well for food trucks. Make sure your truck uses environmentally friendly plates. We've even served off banana leaf before! It doesn't get more traditional or environmentally friendly than that. And the clean up is easy too!

"Festival weddings are perfect for those who love the festival atmosphere. Relaxed, casual and fun, they set the scene for one big party! Guests get to watch the cooking right in front of them, and mingle with each other as they enjoy the street food theatre. It's an 'experience' rather than just being served seated from white plates."

Inclusion & the Equality Projekt

Mark Fenech, owner and creator of Projekt 3488 – a bespoke iconic building in Warburton, Yarra Valley, that has become a stunning wedding and event destination – believes in equality with every fibre of his being.

“This place and the events and people that it has held have opened my mind. I didn’t set out to be a wedding venue but with each couple that came through – be they traditional, LGBTQIA, non-identifying – I came to see that providing a safe place for people to express their love, no matter who they were was actually what Projekt 3488 was truly meant to be about. It breaks my heart that people ring to enquire about the space and their first question is ‘are you gay-friendly?’ Through Projekt 3488 and Equality Projekt we’re saying loud and proud – YES! It’s ok to be you. This is my contribution and I want people to know they are loved, they are celebrated, and they can celebrate,” says Mark.

Projekt 3488 is in many ways an ‘installation of self’. It is also Mark’s home, with his industrial design edge, native sculptural garden and hand-picked treasures and collectables defining this as a unique space unlike any other.

Equality Projekt, a competition offering one LGBTQIA couple a wedding package worth more than \$70,000, is Mark’s way of showing pride in difference. More than 25 aligned suppliers offering the best in their category, have joined him in his Equality Projekt campaign, which had its genesis in the announcement of the plebiscite for marriage equality.



Photo credit: Mish Edstein

Projekt 3488
projekt3488.com.au

“Initially I was sceptical about the motives of the plebiscite, so it was a truly joyful day when same-sex marriage was made possible. I was in tears. I’d been thinking about marriage equality for 20 years – experiencing how it felt for me to not have the right to marriage, seeing how it made others feel who were being denied the right and knowing traditional couples who refused to get married until everyone had equal rights. When people of all identity started coming here and feeling safe, I started to know my first true sense of family.”



Couples can self-nominate via the online entry form (submitting a written piece, photo or video entry), or can be entered by family and friends. “Anyone, of any identity, can enter a LGBTQIA couple and we will celebrate together. Love is irresistible, and the winning couple will have a beautiful, memorable, inclusive celebration in a stunning venue with the crème of suppliers crafting their day beyond their wildest expectations.

We will ensure it’s the party of the year!”

“When people enter Projekt 3488 they often don’t know what to make of it, but as they feel into the building, they are transformed by it. Love is transforming too, and I want everyone to feel their place here and be who they are.”



Photo credit: Rick Liston



Photo credit: Rick Liston



Mark Fenech, Owner, Projekt 3488

Equality Projekt

Entries close: Tuesday 30 April 2019

Winner selected: Tuesday 14 May 2019

Wedding Ceremony: Saturday 7 December 2019

#equalityprojekt

projekt3488.com.au/equality-projekt

Get your glow on

Fabulous Faces For Your Big Day

On their wedding day, everyone wants to arrive at the altar with glowing, lustrous skin. Joanne, of Miss Josie's Beauty Parlour in Healesville, shares her expert tips to ensure your skin is at its best.

Whether you are male or female, great skincare is worth the investment in the lead up to your big day. Men with beards can also give their facial hair some extra love, with in-salon beard treatments recommended for soft, manageable and hydrated whiskers.

Joanne suggests starting early. Sit down with your skincare professional and plan what skincare and treatments you might need over the 8-10 weeks in the lead up to your big day, and don't forget your lifestyle can influence the health of your skin.

Joanne says great skin on the day is about relaxing the whole being. "Have a calming treatment, a massage or whatever works for you, before the big day, and be beautiful on the inside. You'll shine through and that's the key to feeling good all over!"

How to show your glow for the camera

"The best smile is a natural one, achieved through great comfort and rapport with your photographer who knows just what to say to get those natural smiles and real romance."

Rick Liston, Photographer

Miss Josie's Beauty Parlour

missjosies.com.au



Glowing Tips

1. The key to smooth, 'plump' skin that looks and feels amazing is professional skincare treatments. These can include deep layer treatments, micro dermabrasion and deeper exfoliations, which stimulate new cell growth and boost cell hydration.
2. The all-over body treatment - Don't forget shoulders, chest and backs - in fact any skin area on show on the day can benefit from a professional body exfoliation and body mask.
3. Your home skincare regime will really help. Attend to your skin as regularly as you brush your teeth. Home exfoliation and mask treatments keep the good cell renewal going every day.
4. Healthy skin starts from within! A healthy diet is essential and foods (or supplements) rich in the Omega family, silica and the antioxidising vitamins and minerals are often helpful - think oily fish, green leafy vegetables, fresh berries, nuts and seeds, and dark chocolate. Drinking plenty of water and reducing alcohol intake can help too.
5. Be kind to your skin. Choose skincare products that protect and suit your skin personality - these can even be prescribed by a professional. It's important to protect delicate pH levels and nourish cell renewal activity. Although any skincare regime is better than nothing, leaving your skin alone (that means no picking!) and letting a professional skin specialist resolve your spots and blemishes is ideal.

Linger Longer

The Pre-Wedding Moon

When planning a wedding, the honeymoon is typically planned as a post-wedding event. While the need for some special time together is a beautiful way to start married life, we'd like to suggest another option. How about easing into your wedding day with a pre-wedding moon?



Take the stress out of the lead up to your big day and book a few days or a week of rest and revival. Take the time to be with one another as you anticipate the immensity of married life together, devote yourself to some 'us' time and honour the next phase of your lives together. If your wedding venue has accommodation, they would be delighted to host you early and treat you like royalty, with all the lush, vibey love that you deserve. You'll have a chance to really feel into the place you're making your vows and own your ceremony. Give yourself the chance to be as prepared and ready as you possibly can with some essential Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges fresh air, fine food and deep rest! Perfect places include Araluen Boutique Accommodation, Wiggley Bottom Farm or try Valley Ranges Getaways for gorgeous homes and cottages. Arriving early and having a few days to chill is highly recommended anywhere in this beautiful region.

A pre-wedding moon is also a great idea if you have lots of guests attending from interstate or overseas. If your 'special' guests can arrive early too, a pre-wedding moon gives you a chance to catch up with people in a relaxed way and build towards the excitement of the big day together. Enjoy a smorgasbord at the Cuckoo Restaurant, lunch at Tramonto Kitchen and Bar, or tapas and cocktails at Herd Bar.

Take the time to tour the wineries, and combine with a delicious vineyard lunch at Immerse winery. If wandering a gallery and experiencing the blissful state of being immersed in art appeals, there are more than 20 galleries to explore in the region. For stress free getting about, consider a private tour with Yarra Valley A2B.

Or explore some walks such as the Wirrawilla walk in Toolangi, the Lilydale to Warburton Rail Trail (also a great option for cycling), or Sherbrooke Falls walk in the Dandenong Ranges, and show your family and friends why you've chosen such a special place to say, "I do".

Immerse Tramonto Kitchen Cuckoo Restaurant Yarra Valley A2B



There's no need for stress - your Dandenong Ranges, Nillumbik or Yarra Valley wedding is all about beauty and love - and if you've chosen from our wonderful range of services, you can be assured every detail is taken care of. Pour yourself a local Pinot Noir or Chardonnay, have a massage (Natskin Day Spa at Balgownie and Balance Mountain Day Spa are both great options), take another bath and chill to the view of hills and vineyards. You got this.

Wirrawilla Walk Sherbrooke Falls Walk

Weddings Go Digital

#engaged #OMGtheysaidyes #lovedup

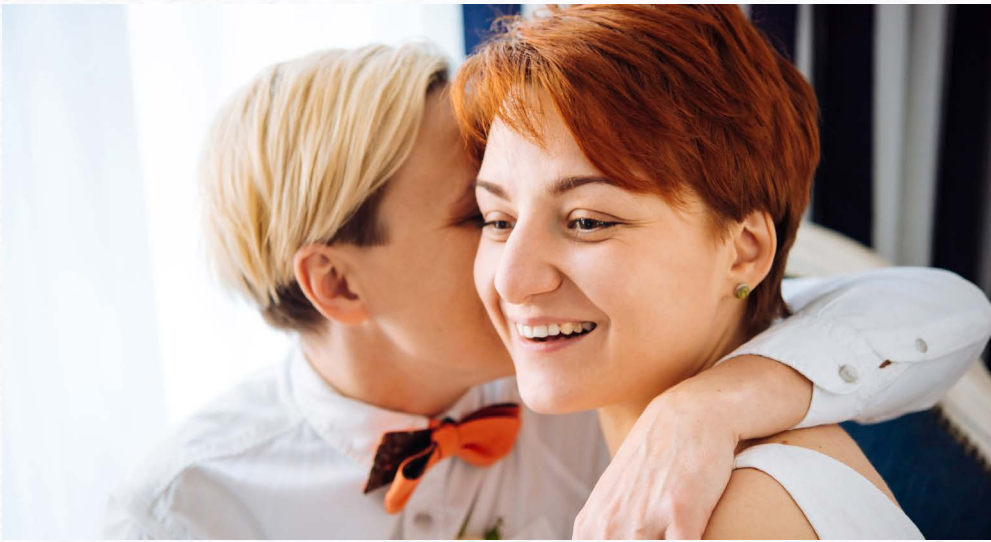
The happy news is easily announced on your socials and the congratulations flow. A quick pic of the 'over the moon' couple, the jaw-dropping ring, the celebratory cheers, the proposal location – all shared with loved ones, anywhere in the world, in the click of a button.

The digital world is bursting with ideas for contemporary couples to make a statement with their wedding. If printed wedding stationary feels a little 'past tense', then the digital invitation is a great way to give your wedding a uniquely 'you' feel.

Hire a videographer to make your bespoke digital wedding invite. (Or if you're feeling creative there's no reason why your phone camera, some simple editing software and some heartfelt storytelling isn't a great idea too.) It only needs to be a few minutes long and include all the relevant details. You could even include footage from your engagement party so guests can spot themselves!

And a video with footage of your wedding location, and surrounding attractions, is a great way for interstate and international family and friends to see where they are coming and plan for a longer stay – your wedding is a great excuse for a holiday!





The next level is the Wedding Website – a website dedicated to your big day where you can share photos, blog stories and videos, facilitate everything from RSVPs to food preferences and share post-wedding bliss after the big day, including your wedding video and photo albums and it's a great way to crowdsource images from your guests!

The digital world is so interwoven in our day-to-day lives and significant events are perfect opportunities to create 'forever' digital stories – your wedding invitation is the first episode!

Delivering your digital wedding invite is easy. Platforms such as Facebook provide easy and accessible (and low-cost) ways to send out your invite to loved ones, and if you set up a closed event, also provide you with a ready-made RSVP service, and options to share additional information and images closer to the big day. Other digital platforms, such as Instagram or WeChat, may also suit your needs so check out what's available and make it easy on yourself. Digital mail sent through services such as Mailchimp may be a great option too. Engage a graphic designer to create your look, your headers and other elements to reflect your wedding vibe.

I do or I don't?

*Would you Facebook
Live your wedding?*



Natural Altars

Make Your Space



From blank canvas rooms to stunning natural vistas, how you 'stage' the setting where you are holding your ceremony will express your individuality and style as a couple. Today 70% of ceremonies are held 'outside' a church setting, and how you choose to define the space could just as easily have you talking with a sculptor as a florist!

Sweeping floral arches and breathtaking arbours feature in many indoor and outdoor weddings but if you're looking for something different Youki from Sugar Bee Flowers suggests 'wedding stands' are a contemporary option. Two pillars hold the space for the couple with floral arrangements given an architectural treatment.



The perfect natural altar frames the couple while also showcasing the view. Floral chandeliers and simple suspended floral treatments are elegant options that create a halo effect for the happy couple. Clean textures are on trend and the ever-popular rose, particularly in blush pinks and muted colours, will soften the outlook and ensure the couple is the centre of attention.

If sculptural elements feel more like you, then installations made of metal, timber and other found materials are popular choices. Embellished with flowers or stunning in their simplicity, sculptural altars provide a modern touch that add a sense of drama.

Redefining the wedding space can also be as simple as moving from the traditional 'walk down a straight aisle with rows of seating' to something round and embracing. Surround yourself with the people that are celebrating you with a floral circle on the ground. The couple and celebrant stand inside and guests gather around in a symbolic gesture that speaks to many people of the sense of community and support the newlyweds can enjoy. Weddings may even embrace the custom of the smoking ceremony, with local gum leaves or dried herbs part of the welcome.

“Ultimately you should have what you want! That’s the trend I see most at the moment.”

Youki from Sugar Bee Flowers



Different shapes such as hexagons, triangles, squares and freeform organic shapes (local found timbers can be stunning) provide a dramatic backdrop that frames the ceremony. Creative and handy couples might even make their own bespoke installations as part of their wedding preparations. Some venues, including wineries, feature sculptural elements in their grounds and buildings (Levantine Hill, Oakridge Wines) that may provide a perfect pre-existing solution.

Hello Winter

Looking ahead



In winter in the Yarra Valley, your photo shoot can be an all-white event - a little dusting of snow is just short drive away! Twinkling fairy lights and lush fleecy lined coats add to the wonderland on your doorstep.

Winter is the perfect time for snuggling, for being close with family and taking the time to truly be (and the perfect time for a beach honeymoon overseas). Love is all you need to be warm.

What's not to love about winter weddings? In the Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges, winter brings the forest alive with soft mists and pale landscapes that allow you to really shine. Think of stately rooms in grand venues, with open fire places blazing and warming winter wines. Think soft rains, and even softer vistas. Think elegant table settings, candlelight and holding each other tight. Think outdoor braziers, with starry nights and long tables laden with foods to feast on - roasting meats, winter root vegetables, chestnuts and cheer.

Real Couple: Lydia Acuna and Kalan Logan | **Photography:** Rick Liston | **Styling:** The Valley Collective | **Flowers:** Anouk Flowers | **Make Up:** Reannah Stevens | **Dress:** Kara Jade | **Design Suit:** Briggins

Tattoo Your Love

When making a commitment to love 'forever', a tattoo holds a great deal of significance. Almost 15% of Australians have at least one tattoo and the idea of 'commitment tattoos' is gathering momentum among couples. With a nod to the tradition of bridal henna art, the tattoo takes on a new form – artful, botanical, sentimental – tattoos today can be stunning reminders of your day and the love you share. With many artists turning their hand to tattooing and visa versa, expect colour, beauty and photo-real work, that you can love forever. We're talking tasteful, living art that will be worn with pride!

Here are some ideas:

- Wear your wedding bouquet – Working from a close-up photo of your actual bouquet, tattoo artists can reproduce your flowers on the upper arm, shoulder or back. Ask your photographer to take a great up-close image when you brief them.
- Mix and Match – It's not a new thing for couples to have their ring fingers tattooed with a permanent ring, but there are plenty of other options for ways to honour your union. His and Hers, His and His, Hers and Hers – a tattoo artist can create a unique piece of matching original art for you both to have done, perhaps with a wedding date or symbols unique to your relationship. Better still, design your own!
- Two halves make a whole – on trend also is the 'shared tattoo' where couples have half a tattoo done on a part of their body that is mirrored on their partner. Pop the two halves together for the whole picture.
- Minimalist – Your tattoo doesn't have to be obvious. If low key is your bag and it's more about the gesture of permanency than the tattoo, a hidden or micro tattoo might be for you. A symbol, a set of initials, or simple heart hidden in between two fingers or in a place known only to you and your partner can be super meaningful too.



Your commitment tattoos can be done together in advance of the wedding (just allow a few weeks for healing and/or more complicated work), during your honeymoon (tattoo trip anyone?) or as a milestone celebration, perhaps a first anniversary!



In Love With Luxe

at Levantine Hill

When your morning starts with Veuve Clicquot, there's an anticipation that this day is going to be like no other. A wedding at Levantine Hill is an exquisite choice for discerning couples with a theme of refined elegance and 'the best of everything'.

Luxe defines every detail and leaves couples and their guests wanting for nothing.

A Levantine Hill wedding is a bespoke event where a team of bliss mavens anticipate every wish and go beyond to reach wedding heights that are truly unique...an expression of true excellence. Experience gastronomic rapture with several restaurants to choose from with degustation menus, all-day grazing, shared menus, sophisticated cocktails and award-winning wines at your service.

Breathtaking is the only way to describe the setting at Levantine Hill and spectacular photos are assured. The beauty of the day can be captured among immaculate gardens, against dramatic sculptures in the grounds and backdropped by 360-degree views of the Yarra Valley. The distinguished Homestead adds yet another unique setting and option for bridal parties to stay in utter luxury, art and beauty.

Make an impressive entry in a Vintage Rolls Royce through bucolic vineyards or for the avant-garde perhaps a helicopter. Share vows under the ancient oak tree or choose the majestic deck where guests can move seamlessly from the wedding service to a festive celebration.

Levantine Hill is the Yarra Valley's premium venue and a blank canvas where your exquisite wedding can be curated with distinction.

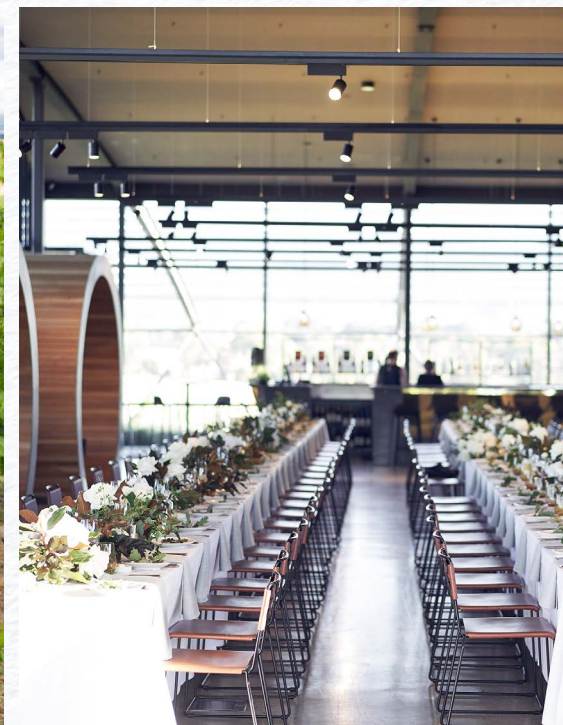


Photo credits: Alex Pavlou, Lost in Love

Celebrants



Robynne Mauger

Rainbow Authorised Civil Marriage Celebrant

A relaxed, creative, alternative celebrant who meets your values with heart and soul and who will work with you to bring just the right amount of colour and sentiment to your special day.

P: 0417 124 814
rainbowcelebrantyarravalley.com



Virginia Lawrence

Marriage, Family and Funeral Celebrant

Weddings are Virginia's specialty. Based in Kallista, she knows this area really well. She's super-organised, keeps calm under pressure, and will give you a lovely, heartfelt ceremony full of fun, happiness, joy and love. Contact her for a coffee and a chat - obligation free - and let's see if she's the one for you!

P: 0438 111 025
celebrantgin.com



Soulful Ceremonies

Marriage Celebrant

Christine Pedley of Soulful Ceremonies knows what an amazing wedding in the Hills feels like. She understands your wedding day is the most important day for you. A celebrant since 2010 (and resident of the Dandenong Ranges), Christine wants "Your Day" to be exactly "Your Way". With creativity and humour, she crafts a couples' love story into a soulful ceremony.

P: 0474 128 869
soulfulceremonies.com.au

Caterers



Babaji's Kitchen

Unique. Delicious. Charming. Perfect for a relaxed festival-themed wedding with street food theatre from the land of coconut palms and spice, tropical 'Kerala' in South India. Specialising in authentic village style banquets, 'live' dosa & chaat/pani puri (street snacks), chai and Indian desserts, served from a colourful 'gypsy mobile kitchen' or vintage Indian street cart.

P: 0405 765 388
babajiskitchen.com.au



Essential Caterer

Catering that's fresh, healthy and delicious, with flexible menu options that move from formal to fun - designed to suit your unique tastes. From a conference, to a wedding, to a casual meeting - we help you find the venue you've been longing for, and end-to-end management for stress-free event enjoyment.

P: 0417 527 037
essentialcaterer.com.au



Photographers



Rick Liston, Yarra Valley

Rick Liston is a Yarra Valley wedding photographer who loves joining adventurous wild hearts on their crazy journey from lovers to lifers. Rick doesn't just take photos, he's here to help you navigate the daunting task of planning your wedding with invaluable local advice. Rick is relaxed and grounded. You'll get comfortable with him as a friend and be totally at ease on your wedding day to naturally reveal your own true, beautiful selves. Nothing awkward, he promises!

P: 0475 604 713
rickliston.com

Transport



Yarra Valley A2B

Locally owned and operated Private Small Group Luxury Tours and Transfer company in the beautiful Yarra Valley. Let Yarra Valley A2B drive you in style A2B and back again.

P: 0455 041 051
yarravalleya2b.com.au



Stella Tours - Wedding Cars

A small boutique business offering a personalised wedding car service within the Dandenong Ranges & Yarra Valley regions. Imagine cruising with the top down in "Stella", a classic 1964 Chevy convertible – famed for her timeless lines and effortless class. Arrive in true 'Stella style' at your wedding in this iconic ride, and when it's time for the photos, Stella's there by your side. Drive off into the sunset together in true 'Stella style'.

P: 0476 785 356
stellatours.com.au

Accommodation / Venues



Kinglake Forest Adventures, *Kinglake*

Dreaming of a forest wedding? Let your wedding aisle be the magical forest floor. Simply hire the venue and create your own magic or let Kinglake Forest Adventures take some of the details off your hands. You can bring your own food van or they can cater a wedding feast for you. Their beautiful camp can host up to 120 guests for a sleepover. Let them cook up a morning after breakfast. Make it a wedding weekend, not just a day. And make it the most wonderful day of your life.

P: 03 5771 1287
kinglakeforestadventures.com.au/weddings



Elmswood Estate, *Wandin East*

Deriving their name from the mature Elms that line the private driveway, Elmswood Estate is situated in the renowned Yarra Valley wine country. The stunning all-glass Pavilion, complete with floor to ceiling windows, and extensive viewing deck allows you to take in the breathtaking 180 degree panoramic views overlooking 25 acres of vineyard - the perfect backdrop for your most memorable of days to say "I do".

P: 03 5964 3015
elmswoodestate.com.au



Accommodation / Venues



Wiggley Bottom Farm, *Badger Creek*

A small boutique pet friendly farm stay who can host small weddings in a very attractive unique venue. Pets are welcome.

P: 0411 608 400
wiggleybottomfarm.com.au
littleweddingsyarravalley.com.au



Immerse Winery, *Dixons Creek*

Nestled in the scenic Yarra Valley, Immerse is a breathtaking wedding venue, acclaimed restaurant, boutique winery and accommodation venue all rolled into one. Rolling hills of vines, picture perfect gardens, boutique accommodation, succulent food and two beautiful chapels plus spectacular outdoor ceremony locations.

P: 03 5965 2444
immerse.com.au



Araluen Boutique Accommodation, *Yarra Glen*

Yarra Valley's Premier Boutique Accommodation - Araluen offers a choice of accommodation for up to 18 guests and 3 acres of picturesque gardens to stage and host your intimate outdoors DIY wedding, all at one venue. Wedding groups also love the bonus Bridal Suite. Please enquire for more information on how they can assist in making your wedding day memorable.

P: 0411 242 212
araluenlodge.com.au



Ezard at Levantine Hill, *Coldstream*

Levantine Hill brings together the unique skills of hatted chef Teage Ezard and renowned winemaker Paul Bridgeman to begin your journey for a perfect life together. Meticulously crafted menus that balance sumptuous flavours to complement Levantine Hill wines, ensure you and your guests are guaranteed an unforgettable experience you will never forget.

P: 03 5962 1333
levantinehill.com.au



Projekt 3488, *Warburton*

Boutique & owner operated, Projekt 3488 are all about the details. They create an intimate, warm & inviting atmosphere - the perfect country getaway with a twist. They offer exclusive access to the entire venue & gardens for each event plus dedicated event planning & styling.

P: 0400 215 785
projekt3488.com.au



Herd Bar, *Healesville*

Boasting a late licence, Herd Bar caters and is welcoming to all, offering sensational service, ambience in an unpretentious relaxed space, a must-see destination whilst meandering the glorious Yarra Valley. A perfect location for a special event, right in the heart of Healesville.

P: 03 5962 7677
herdbar.com.au

Accommodation / Venues



Valley Ranges Getaways, *Dandenong Ranges*

Stay the night before your wedding at one of Valley Ranges Getaway's beautiful properties. Your maids-of-honour might stay, or your mum and sisters? You can dress for your wedding at the property with room for photographers, hair and makeup attendants and the gardens are beautiful spaces for your photographs. Following your wedding, return for your wedding night as bride and groom or your family or bridesmaids may stay with their partners, while you sneak away to another of their gorgeous properties to be alone.

P: 1300 488 448

vrgetaways.com.au/bridgetobe



Tramonto Kitchen and Bar, *Coldstream*

Tramonto Kitchen and Bar is a picturesque venue located on the top of a hill at a working vineyard in the stunning Yarra Valley. The award-winning restaurant and 'marquee in the vines' overlooks acres of vineyards giving it 'a taste of Provence feel' with its sun-filled, north-west views over rolling hills. The lawn, backdropped with vines, is the perfect location for an intimate wedding ceremony that can be enhanced with strolls and photos in the vineyard.

P: 0413 565 781

tramontokitchenandbar.com.au



Marybrooke Manor, *Sherbrooke*

Marybrooke Manor is nestled on the edge of the majestic Sherbrooke Forest in the Dandenong Ranges. Built in 1940 and recently renovated, it offers a picturesque outdoor garden lawn area and chapel for ceremonies, as well as an elegant reception room and cosy bar. With 8 acres of manicured gardens for photos, a flexible range of all-inclusive packages tailored to your needs and 20 four-star accommodation suites, Marybrooke can be the perfect one-stop destination for your ceremony and reception.

P: 03 9755 2755

marybrooke.com.au



Chateau Wyuna, *Montrose*

Chateau Wyuna is a rustic, award winning wedding venue built around a 1920s log cabin and featuring a 1909 heritage listed country Chapel set in over 6 acres of natural Australiana-style gardens. With several outdoor ceremony areas and reception rooms to choose from, all-inclusive packages, delicious comfort-style food, space for up to 150 guests and guest accommodation immediately next door, Chateau Wyuna can be exclusively yours for your wedding celebration.

P: 03 9736 2555

chateauwyuna.com.au

Accommodation / Venues



Oakridge Wines, *Coldstream*

Oakridge is a family-owned, Yarra Valley winery, restaurant and cellar door, originally established in 1978 alongside a ridge of oak trees. Located in the stunning Yarra Valley, and set among 10 hectares of vines and manicured lawns, Oakridge boasts sweeping views and one of Australia's finest food and wine offerings.

With an extensive range of award-winning wines, their sublime Hatted onsite restaurant and multiple ceremony locations, Oakridge could just be the wedding venue of your dreams.

P: 03 9738 9900
oakridgewines.com.au



Riverstone Estate, *Coldstream*

The Riverstone Estate offers exclusive use of the property for weddings. The Estate is set on 75 acres of vines with panoramic views of the Yarra Valley. Riverstone offers breathtaking sunsets in a relaxed setting; with stunning locally sourced menus creating the perfect Yarra Valley Wedding. Combine the opportunity to dance the night away under a starry sky with any of their wedding packages and let their dedicated staff create memories that will last a lifetime.

P . 03 5962 3947
therivertoneestate.com.au



Cuckoo Restaurant, *Olinda*

Australia's first ever Smorgasbord restaurant set in a Bavarian-style Chalet. The Vienna dining room is ideal for receptions with views of the gardens – great for drinks, appetisers and perfect for a garden wedding in the hills. The Cuckoo Restaurant caters to your guests with an extensive buffet, or two choices or alternate drops. Buffet guests get it all, from fresh daily made soup, seafood entrees, hot roast meats, speciality dishes, salad bar and fresh in-house baked cakes, Desserts, pancakes and ice cream. Weddings from 15 to 300 guests.

P: 03 9751 1003
cuckoorestaurant.com.au



Fergusson Winery, *Dixons Creek*

Entering the grounds at Fergusson is intoxicating. Proud, rustic and romantic and set in among the soft curls of precious vine trees, stands the award-winning Fergusson Winery and Restaurant.

This is a space for all kinds of weddings, from the classically beautiful, to the whimsical and creative, the rustic, vintage or farm style bash. The setting is lyrical, the food is sophisticated yet wholesome, and always made with love ... specially created to match a stunning wine list.

P: 03 5965 2237
fergussonwinery.com.au

Accommodation / Venues



Fondata 1872, *Kangaroo Ground*

Fondata 1872 is the contemporary revival of the iconic Weller's, originally established as a Cobb & Co circa 1872, it's a place where city style meets country hospitality. It is situated at the gateway to the beautiful Yarra Valley, approximately 45 minutes from Melbourne. The lovingly restored dining room comfortably seats 100 guests for any celebration. The stunning views create the perfect place to enjoy sumptuous food & wines, while relaxing with friends and family.

P: 03 9712 0742
fondata1872.com

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Olinda Tea House, *Olinda*

Nestled in the heart of the stunning Dandenong Ranges just 50km from the Melbourne CBD, the Olinda Tea House is a place like no other. With unrivalled ambiance, it is the perfect location to host your next special event. Whether it is your wedding, engagement, anniversary or birthday, this stunning secret in the mountain will leave your event much talked about. Relax in our modern environmentally sustainable building and enjoy the peace and tranquillity nature has to offer.

P: 03 9751 0556
olindateahouse.com.au





Coming up in the winter issue:

- 1. Eco and sustainable wedding tips
- 2. Cheese wheels for wedding cakes
- 3. Married on Monday

Off Peak Weddings

For more information:

email: hitched@offpeakweddings.com.au

Visit: offpeakweddings.com.au

 [offpeakweddings](https://www.facebook.com/offpeakweddings)

 [offpeakweddings](https://www.instagram.com/offpeakweddings)

- YARRA VALLEY & DANDENONG RANGES -