



Italian Garden Ceremony-Only Wedding

FAQs

One of the most magnificent areas of the gardens at Hever Castle is the Italian Garden, designed to display William Waldorf Astor's fine collection of Italian sculpture.

Spring and summer see the award-winning Italian Garden come to life as ceremonies take place under the beautiful arched columns of the Loggia overlooking the 38-acre lake. This magical lakeside location offers a covered terrace for a wedding ceremony and a lakeside terrace for post-ceremony drinks.

Ceremony-only bookings can be made three months in advance.

The maximum capacity is 150 guests.

Bookings can be taken up to a year in advance for Sunday to Thursday and 4 months in advance for Friday and Saturday.

Provisional Booking:

Book an appointment to meet with one of our experienced wedding coordinators. A provisional booking can be held for a maximum of ten working days. If we do not receive confirmation within this time, the provisional booking will be removed from the diary.

Confirmation of Booking:

Once you are ready to confirm your booking, a Booking Contract will be sent to you electronically to sign in agreement to the Terms and Conditions, along with a pro-forma request for payment of a £2,000.00 non-refundable booking fee. Once signed and once the non-refundable booking fee has been received your booking is then confirmed.

Further Payments:

Any remaining balance is due eight weeks prior to the date you have booked.

Meetings:

Should you wish to re-visit the venue with any of your suppliers, this can be scheduled for a mid-week date and by appointment only. This can only take place when we do not have another event on. You will have a final meeting with your wedding coordinator approximately eight weeks prior to your wedding date. This can be booked to take place Monday – Friday between the hours of 10:30am and 3pm

Final Numbers:

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

Cancellation:

Cancellations will be processed as detailed in the Booking Terms and Conditions.

Civil Ceremony information

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

Ceremony Booking:

Once a signed Booking Contract and the non-refundable booking fee has been received, a Ceremony Booking Form will be sent to you which you will need to complete and return 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. Civil Ceremonies are licensed to take place on any day of the week throughout the year except on the 25th & 26th December between 10.00am and 8pm.

Ceremony Timings:

Guests arrive at 9.30am, the ceremony takes place at 10am. Drinks and photographs follow at 10.30am and access is until midday. Although the gardens open to the public at 10.30am, the Loggia and part of the Italian Garden will have restricted access to members of the public until midday to give you privacy and a dedicated space. An afternoon ceremony-only wedding on the Loggia can be discussed with one of our wedding planners subject to availability.

Venue Hire:

An Italian Garden ceremony-only wedding is for a three-hour hire period of the Loggia. The maximum capacity is 150. One of our team of wedding planners will confirm the associated venue hire rate subject to which year you are interested in booking.

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.

Stationery:

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 and a table for registrars and a red carpet.

Chair Covers:

Hever Castle does 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.

Photography

Wedding photography must take place during your contracted hours which are detailed on your booking contract. Should you wish to organise for photography outside of these hours, this cannot be guaranteed subject to what else is happening on the Estate and for which our standard photo shoot charges will apply.

Catering:

Your event coordinator can share with you a menu offering a variety of food and beverage options to suit the time of day. Payment for any food and beverage items is required in advance of the wedding day. There are opportunities for corkage, and we are open to discussing the provision of food and beverages from third parties for which a fee will be charged.

Cakes:

As you have booked a ceremony-only wedding, should you wish to enjoy a wedding cake with your guests, a fee of £350 will be charged and we will supply plates and forks. Please note, we do not handle cakes and we are unable to store cakes in advance. Your cake supplier must bring the cake in and position it on the day of the wedding at a time agreed with us in advance. The Loggia will be open to the public outside of your contracted hours as detailed in your Booking Contract.

We have one square and one round silver etched cake stands and an accompanying silver cake knife which we are happy to lend out, subject to availability. The round stand is 39cm (15.5 inch) in width and the square 40cm (16 inch). Please note that Hever Castle does not place or move cakes from one location to another.

Accommodation:

Should you require bedrooms, subject to availability, they can be booked via your event coordinator. Check in is from 3pm and we regret that earlier access to get ready is not an option. Breakfast is included and is served from 8am – 9.30am. Check out is by 10.30am.

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 timescale 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.

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 to for any service, although we do stipulate usage of our in-house catering team, fireworks and marquee suppliers.

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 on photography at the front of the Castle on other events taking place. 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
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- a method statement outlining what equipment will be used and a flight plan outlining where flying is proposed.

If these documents are not provided at least one week before the event date, the drone will not be allowed.

Prior arrangements must be made with your wedding coordinator who will request details of the drone company you will be using and letting you know if it would be possible for a drone to be used.

Parking:

No overnight parking is permitted. 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.

Accessibility:

There is a limited number of accessible parking spaces 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.

Boating:

The boats on the lake are operated by an external company and are operated on selected days, hence, they cannot be guaranteed on your wedding day. The last boating session begins at 4pm and lasts until 5pm.