

people meet a local



The Wedding Planner

Meet Clare Robinson-Gale of Divinity Weddings, Byron Bay. Not only can she help you plan your wedding but she can also take away every ounce of stress and worry you may otherwise have had leading up to your big day. Now the only butterflies you'll have to worry about are those last minute ones before you step down the aisle.

1. How did you get into wedding planning?

I had given up work to have my first baby and when he was about nine months old I started researching the weddings market in this region. I identified a gap in the market and from there the opportunity just presented itself to me.

2. What do you like to do to relax?

Oh well I have a beautiful little family. My son, Louis is only three and my daughter, Scout, is only one, so I don't ever get to relax. But simple things, like lying in bed with my husband Jay and my babies on a Sunday morning and seeing the sun rise is fab!

3. Do you organise everything for a wedding?

Yes. I cover everything from the celebrant, photographer, staff, caterers, flowers etc etc. It is so varied and the requests are always different for each wedding, so it keeps me on my toes.

4. Do you carry a wedding survival belt like Jennifer Lopez in the movie "The Wedding Planner"?

Uh uh. No, sorry to disappoint. I just have my phone, my notes, rescue remedy and a camera - that is really all I need.

6. What's your favourite food?

Hmmm. Seafood, especially prawns and lobster. Yumm.

7. Byron Bay must see some very alternative weddings. What was one of the most different weddings you've planned?

Because I look after brides who are predominantly from interstate or overseas, I can honestly say that they are not that alternative at all. Sure we have brides who are barefoot and relaxed but more often than not, they are wearing Collette Dinnigan gowns and looking every bit the 'elegant bride'.

8. Do you often get fussy brides and mother's of the bride?

Yes. But I expect that. I had one client who kept referring to herself as Bride-zilla! But believe it or not, just about every client I have worked with has been a delight. I work hard to make the wedding meet every single one of their expectations and they know that, so we are all on the same team and they are so appreciative of everything I do.

9. Have you been involved in any celebrity weddings?

Oh yes of course. I don't just organise weddings, I also do birthday parties and product launches etc, so yes, I have worked

for some famous clients but I never tell tales - that wouldn't be professional. Sorry!

10. What's the biggest mistake people make when planning their own wedding?

Not asking for help from a professional! We hire people to mow our lawns, look after our children, do our nails, so why oh why, do women put themselves through the stress of organising what might well prove to be the most expensive party they will ever throw? When you think about it in those terms it seems crazy.

11. What are you reading at the moment?

The manual for my new washing machine! Fascinating stuff (not). We have just moved into our new house in Possum Creek, which we have been designing and building for the last two years so we have lots of nesting to do.

12. Any hints or tips for people planning a coastal wedding?

Just do it. Runaway weddings are such fun. The guests are so relaxed and the couple has such a blast. It is a wonderful way to start your married life.



anna & joseph - our coastal wedding

BRIDE - Anna Galanos (Flight Attendant)
GROOM - Joseph Cappadona (Hairdresser)

Location of your wedding and reception!
Watego's House, Watego's Beach - Byron Bay

Why did you choose the NSW north coast for your wedding?

We chose Byron Bay for our wedding for a few reasons, one being it was the destination of our first holiday together. Since then, we have been back many times, often visiting a few times a year. The other reason was that we just wanted to get out of Sydney and do something different and when we saw the view from Watego's House we were just blown away. Talk about wow factor! Some of the guests went for the weekend and others

stayed on longer making a little holiday out of it. For us it was a four day party. The wedding was on a Sunday but there were dinners before-hand and a big barbecue lunch the next day. Joseph even had his buck's night up there.

The most difficult aspect of organising the wedding?

To organise a wedding in a different place to where you live is a little scary because you don't know who is reputable. That is why I enlisted the help of a wedding co-ordinator - Clare Robinson-Gale of Divinity weddings. She was just fantastic and thought of everything and more. So it wasn't difficult for me at all.

Nominate a favourite moment on the day
Joseph's favourite moment of the day was

the look on my face as I came down the aisle with my father and saw that he was wearing snake printed pants. I had no idea what he was going to be wearing. All the guests burst out laughing at my reaction. There were so many great moments in the day but I guess for me my favourite moment was that one too.

Did you have a particular theme for your wedding and how did you carry this through?

The theme for our wedding was casual elegance, simple and stylish. After the ceremony, the guests were served beautiful canapes and french champagne. We then had a sit down seafood lunch. The food was just fabulous and very fresh. We had hired some of Byron Bay's most professional waiters that were really polished and dressed impeccably.



FAVOURITE MOMENT:

"Joseph's favourite moment of the day was the look on my face as I came down the aisle with my father and saw that he was wearing snake printed pants. I had no idea what he was going to be wearing."



PHOTOS Greg Mace

We had a variety of music. We started with a string trio both before the ceremony and after. A friend of ours played a guitar solo as I walked down the aisle and then after the ceremony he played Kissing You from Romeo and Juliet while his girlfriend sang the song. After lunch we kicked off the dancing with a DJ and bongo player. The lunch was held in the front yard overlooking the water and so was all the dancing. We also took the guests down to the beach for a big group photo.

Who did your photography? Did you get what you were looking for?

Our photographer was Greg Mace. He was fantastic. We wanted really natural, edgy, spontaneous photos and he managed to capture the day just beautifully.

Did everything go to plan? Did you have a back-up plan if the weather went bad?

Thanks to Clare everything went to plan and it was the most perfect day. We had a marquee

set up just in case it rained and it was right next to the house which was huge so we could have utilised that as well.

What advice would you give others planning a beach wedding on the north coast?

It is just such a romantic and magical way to get married.

HAIR: I did my own hair, **CEREMONY:** marriage celebrant - Zenith Virago, **MAKE-UP:** my makeup artist was Donna Korn, **CATERING:** Jeremy from The Larder, **FLOWERS:** I used 2 florists. Britte from Beautiflora and Floral Fusion in Ballina. My bouquet was white tulips, **CAKE:** We had a lemon poppyseed cake with white chocolate on the outside and the rest were individual cupcakes, all made by Charlotte Wild, **DRESS:** from Barbara Wilson in Double Bay, Sydney, **SHOES:** Jimmy Choo from Belinda, MLC Centre, Sydney, **GROOM:** Joseph's outfit was from Clifford Gordon, Oxford Street, Sydney.