

## Arriving In Style

Planning your special day is a very personal process, each and every item bought and service booked must be right for you both. The transport you choose is no exception.

Whatever you're selected vehicle it should say something about you, and should make you feel a million dollars as you arrive at the venue to exchange your vows. It's your special day after all a once in a lifetime experience so why not go for something different, unique, something that will turn heads and something that will make your day even more memorable.

Sit down and discuss what you want out of your wedding day transport and the service that you would like from the wedding transport hire company. If there is something specific that you want to achieve talk it over with the hire company to find out if it is possible. Discuss it with friends and family too, you might be surprised with the ideas that come out! Why not make a list of all the types of vehicle you like and give them a scoring system based on your specific criteria.

So what is available? Practically anything goes now, London buses, Vintage Buses, Fire Engines, Lifeboats, Veteran cars (pre 1903), Vintage cars (between 1903 and 1933), Classic cars (post 1933 and at least 15 years old), Limousines, Horse drawn carriages, high performance cars – the list is endless. The important thing is to feel that "this is the one"; don't just pick a vehicle because it's traditional or because "that's what everyone has". Try to picture the vehicle on the day especially if you plan for it to be an integral part of the wedding photographs some vehicles are more photogenic than others.

**Tip:** Before making your enquiry especially on the phone write down on a piece of paper some vital information such as the date of your wedding, time, pick up point, wedding ceremony venue, reception venue, number of people requiring cars.

There are so many beautiful cars available for weddings – perhaps you're having a themed wedding, or you've got a particular colour in mind, or maybe you simply like a particular era for example the 20's or the 60's? Also have a think about what time of year you're planning your special day, this could help you decide whether you go for a convertible, sports car, saloon or horse-drawn carriage.

**Tip:** If you're not quite sure about cars go to the library and find some car books, or if you have an idea then there are some great car magazines and websites to browse.

Choose an individual or company who really care about their vehicles and the service they provide. You can usually gauge the commitment and "care factor" by the initial response to your enquiry, enthusiasm goes a long way! Ask questions about the vehicles, the most important ones being – are they reliable and are they well looked after, it's all well and good hiring the best looking car but will it get you to the church on time so to speak? If a car is well maintained and serviced regularly regardless of its age it should not let you down. Ask if you can view the vehicle, most companies will welcome your visit and it will reassure you about the state of your proposed Bridal car and it's proportions it would be a shame to leave it to the last minute and then start worrying about whether your dress will fit in the car! It's so important to get the right feel for a vehicle, just the same as you would when you book your venue checking for atmosphere and a certain ambience. Ask if you can be taken for a drive, this is a great way to get the measure of how it will perform on the big day.

It will give also you the opportunity to meet the people who are helping you on your special day. Also ask to see any testimonials, you know cards of thanks, letters of recommendation, a recommendation is always a good place to start.

**Tip:** When you make your enquiry have the route that you'll want the driver to take you on mapped out and it's also a good idea to know how many people you will want cars/carriages for, this will help the company calculate an accurate quotation and they'll also be able to let you know if they have enough vehicles to accommodate your party.

It is important to go into as much detail as you can about your requirements for example, how long you anticipate the ceremony to last, whether you will want to have photographs taken, do you require the driver to escort you from the wedding reception to another destination – these are all important points that could (a) save you money and (b) save you and the driver from embarrassment on the day, and let's face it no one needs any extra stress on their wedding day!

**Tip:** Be organised, keep a file either hard copy or on your PC of all the companies you've contacted or visited and the quotes that they've given. If you've visited websites that have particularly caught your eye keep them in your web browser favourites list or make up a specific folder and call it something like "Our Wedding Car".

Make sure that you are 100% satisfied with what you are going to get for your money. Some sample questions to ask for example are is there a chauffeur included in the price, will the car have ribbons, will champagne be provided, and are flowers included. Also find out about any terms and conditions that apply to your booking, you know "dos and don'ts", this is especially important when it comes to an unforeseen cancellation finding out now could save you an awful lot of unnecessary embarrassment.

Most companies will require a deposit when you book find out what the deposit is and also when the balance is due, make sure that you get a receipt or confirmation for your booking preferably in writing, this will put your mind at ease that the booking is now "set in stone".

**Tip:** Before paying anything be sure of what you are going to pay, you don't want any hidden extras giving you sudden surprises especially when you've carefully budgeted your big day.

So in essence perhaps a few key words might help in the decision process:

- Design
- Functionality
- Cost
- Personality
- Camera-friendly
- Reputation
- Reliability
- Compatibility

Whatever your chosen method of "arriving in style", enjoy the experience, embrace the moment and have fun with it!