



*Ailbhe & Tomás Dennehy*

# Irish flair

**A**ilbhe Hegarty (27) first met Tomás Dennehy (28) the night they finished their end of high school leaving exams. “We were college sweethearts in Cork, Ireland, and have been together for 10 years since.”

How did Tomás propose? “We were on holiday in South Africa/Botswana in January 2008. Towards the end of our trip we spent a night at the Lanzerac estate in Stellenbosch. After lunch at Tokara, we went for a swim as it was 35°C. We were reminiscing about our holiday and Tomás said that the only thing that would make the trip any better would be if I agreed to marry him. I was over the moon and said yes straight away!”

The couple live in Dublin, Ireland and chose South Africa as their wedding venue for three reasons: The first is that I was born in Bloemfontein and spent



*17 February 2009*  
**VENUE:** Vrede en Lust Vineyard, Franschhoek  
**DÉCOR STYLE:** Vintage, fairytale, glowing, timeless  
**GUESTS:** 55  
**HOME:** Dublin, Ireland



18 years in Africa between Botswana, Lesotho, Zambia and South Africa; the second is that we fell in love with the Winelands following our engagement there; and the third is that we couldn't think of a more beautiful spot to invite our friends and families to – to escape the cold, dark February weather in Ireland!”

Their wedding ended up as an Irish celebration like no other - the amount of detail that went into it was exceptional. Gold foiling on the stationery, and the intricate family tree alongside the seating plan showed how connected and close this group were. The guests played croquet during pre-drinks, and after a sumptuous five-course meal Nightshift got the party started with their smooth jazz hits and DJ Preston kept the dance floor open until the wee hours of the morning. (Ailbhe's best friend also sang a song acappella midway through the meal, which brought a tear to everyone's eyes.)

Instead of having favours, each table received an envelope containing a card advising them that a donation had been made on their behalf to [www.imibala.com](http://www.imibala.com) - in total 7 children were sponsored for one year's education (including schoolbooks and uniforms). Ailbhe and Tomás love South Africa and giving something back to the community was really important to them.

The bridal car “Lady Moonpenny” Bentley, was originally the British High Commissioner for Zambia's official state car (1954).

What is the best piece of advice they can give to other couples planning their wedding? “To make the day as personal as possible. We had one friend read out a poem by W.B. Yeats during the service to inject some of Tomás' Irish heritage into the day, whereas one of my oldest friends sang during dinner. We tried to put as much of our personality into the day as possible, choosing everything from the lighting and flowers down to the linen and glassware.”

They honeymooned at The Bay Hotel, Camps Bay, Cape Town for four nights; Coco Palm Bodhu Hithi, the Maldives, for 7 nights; and Mina al Saleem, Dubai, UAE for 3 nights. ♥



*Old, new, borrowed, blue*  
**SOMETHING OLD:** Bracelet from my grandparents for my 21st  
**SOMETHING NEW:** Jimmy Choo bridal shoes  
**SOMETHING BORROWED:** My grandmother's pearl earrings  
**SOMETHING BLUE:** Agent Provocateur lace garter



## Service providers

- WEDDING COORDINATOR ..... Kim Werner of Wedding Concepts
- PHOTOGRAPHER ..... Jean Pierre Uys
- DRESS DESIGNER ..... Ines di Santos
- FLOWERS ..... Okasie
- CAKE ..... Kanya Hunt
- MAKE-UP ..... Rose Bruins
- HAIR ..... Zelma Parenzee