

MARTHA STEWART

THE FLORAL ISSUE

# weddings

MIDDLE EAST

## Still ROMANCE

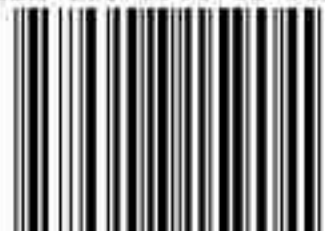
197 'I DO' DETAILS

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ISBN 978-9948-15-904-9



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Bibi founded the company with the aim of bringing a little bit of individuality, warmth and creativity to the lives of her friends and family. Bibi says, "November has grown into a complete lifestyle experience, inspiring your life on a social level through weddings and celebrations and in your everyday life."

My biggest challenge has been dealing with too many decision-makers for the same event. At one point I had two aunts, a sister, the mother of the bride as well as the bride and groom, all with conflicting ideas. I always suggest that my clients bring just one other person to all the meetings so they can be the point of contact if the client is busy.

**What is the recommended time frame to plan a wedding?**

It depends on the scale of the event but I would suggest a minimum of three months. This gives us enough time to replace certain vendors who might become unavailable and to ensure that the work is not rushed and the end result is perfect.

**Which is your favourite part of wedding planning?**

My favourite part has to be brainstorming with the clients and the ensuing research, particularly when we are getting ready to present our initial ideas to the client. The choices are endless and everything is gorgeous; we just do not know where or when to stop! The mood boards become beautiful collections of fabrics, floral design cut-outs, ribbons, silk flowers, patterns, wallpapers and prints. It is often hard narrowing down to a few choices for the presentation but we eventually do so after going through the specific wants, likes and dislikes, budget restrictions and personal style of the bride.

**TOP TIP** "Do not follow trends; make the event your own. Compile a collection of things that you love, as well as dislike, to let your planner really understand your style and deliver the wedding you deserve and have always dreamt of."

**BIBI HAYAT**  
Wedding Planner

**KUWAIT CITY, KUWAIT**

**KNOWN FOR** Focusing on experience and innovation, not formula and routine.

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**What are the questions brides should ask a potential wedding planner?**

It is important that the bride and her planner work well together and build a good rapport. Getting to know each other is essential in order to have a successful relationship throughout the planning process. This is why we stress the importance of clients coming in for the first consultation to get to know each other and ask whatever questions come to mind. This will ensure a good working relationship. Additional questions to ask

a prospective wedding planner include: Do my ideas fit in with the location chosen? Does my budget cover all of my requirements? How can the planner help me achieve my objectives?

**What are the options for brides who don't wish to hire a full-time wedding planner?**

If the client has the time and is willing to do most of the work, then they can co-ordinate with multiple vendors. They will have to deal directly with a florist for the flowers, cake designer for the cake, graphic designer and printers for the wedding stationary etc. and also deal with lighting, sound, caterers, and all on-site staff. Having said that, the benefit of dealing with one planner is that the client will have a holistic approach to all the elements of the event, and it will work as one whole theme, instead of separate parts.

**What is the biggest planning challenge that you have faced?**

Many challenges come our way but many occur when clients do not give us enough time in between the signing of our contract and the actual event.

**People often associate wedding planners with big weddings. Which was the smallest event you have taken care of?**

We handled a lavish yet intimate dinner for about twenty guests to celebrate a couple tying the knot. The table was a custom-made Venetian dining table filled with spray rose, sweet pea and peony floral arrangements. We also used candles and full place settings inclusive of nameplates, little chocolates on the seats and an individual cake wrapped in a box for every guest to enjoy at home. Small events can be entirely customised with delicious meals and luxurious gifts for the guests. The bride can enjoy herself as the focus is on one group and one location so you have time to take pictures and speak to each and every one of your guests.

**Speaking of stress, how do you calm a nervous bride on the big day?**

I simply tell her not to worry and leave all the stressing to us as it is our job. The bride should just relax, look gorgeous and dance the night away.