

Rudi & Kerry





Under the Tuscan Sun

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Chiara Sernesi of WEDDINGSINTUSCANY.INFO

Tuscany depicts the most spectacular display of Mother Nature and it was against this setting that Cape Town couple Kerry and Rudi decided to celebrate their wedding.

Why did you decide to get married in Tuscany?

Having spent a delightful holiday in a beautiful villa in 2005, both Rudi and I dreamt of sharing the magnificence with our family and friends.

Describe the scene for us in Tuscany?

Tuscany is a canvas of brick red, pink, yellow, blue, mauve, and varying shades of green. The landscape is scattered with Cypress trees and olive groves, interspersed with the brilliance of sunflowers and divided up by narrow, winding streets climbing into the distance. Charming villas stand out on hilltops and are positioned sporadically between wheat or vines lending to the brilliant views.

How did you plan your wedding abroad?

We discovered Chiara Sernesi, owner of Weddings in Tuscany, over the internet and it was only after six months of intense emailing that we finally met. We had already paid a deposit for the venue and made our way over in the freezing February, entrusting Chiara to produce all the specifics we had been imagining. We were not disappointed. Over a board of cheese and meat, and a glass of wine, we discussed the busy days ahead. We discussed flowers, photographs, menus, favours and legal documents. Over the next five months before the wedding we continued to communicate over email.

Did you dramatically shorten your guest list?

We wanted an intimate affair and were extremely lucky to have as many as 48 guests make their way to our wedding. They travelled from Hong Kong and England, but mostly South Africa. They stayed with us at our farmhouse venue in Tuscany for a full week - and some as long as three weeks. Chiara organised day trips and evenings out for everyone.

Under South African law were you able to marry in Tuscany?

Yes, and there are a few ways of going about it. We opted for a private civil marriage in the nearby town hall. This was performed by the town mayor in a touching ceremony that was conducted in Italian and translated for our purposes. Once we said our vows and signed the papers we were given a beautiful wooden box filled with olive oil, figs, biscotti

and wine from the region, as well as books written by accomplished locals. The day was rounded off with a formal luncheon at a seafood restaurant and a blissful walk along the shoreline.

Tell us about your 'symbolic' ceremony?

The official wedding day - as we refer to it! The proceedings kicked off around 6pm, with a ceremony set on the side hill among the olive groves and surrounded by tall Cypress trees. My mum was the first to take the aisle, followed by our daughter Kayla and my bridesmaid. Accompanied by the sting quartet, a tenor delivered the most breathtaking rendition of Elvis Costello's "She", as my father escorted me atop the scattered rose petals towards my dashing best man. A small white table was positioned at the forefront, with rustic pails carrying a variety of fresh seasonal Tuscan olives. A short and appropriate ceremony ensued including the exchanging of rings and delivery of poems by both my brother and me.

Tell us about the festivities afterwards?

At the large farmhouse terrace we enjoyed a dinner with a diversity of flavours, which was accompanied by wine from the cellar beneath us. Small tea light candles created a delicate, romantic atmosphere, while unobtrusive paper flowers acted as simple, elegant centrepieces. Personalised bottles of the farms very own Olive Oil were given as favours. Kayla took to the stage and, at only three and a half years of age, sang a precious version of 'You are My Sunshine' to her fans while twirling in her dress - a touching version of mum's.

How did you conclude the evening?

We returned to the pool area where a traditional Mille Miglia was cut and music, drinks and a few cigars saw us through the end of a successful evening. Thanks to Weddings in Tuscany it was an experience we will treasure forever. As Chiara says, the pictures are stunning but do not quite do justice to Tuscany's actual marvel!

Any advice for brides planning a wedding abroad?

Your relationship with your planner is crucial, especially when the distance between you is so extreme. Chiara is truly great and endeavoured to source and deliver what was required; we couldn't have planned it from afar without her efficiency. We are still in touch, and became friends. Chiara posed to wedding coordinator and client.

