

On top of THE WORLD

Sarah and Steve embraced the grandeur of Highclere Castle with flamboyant purples and reds



The couple Sarah & Steve

Sarah Hewitt, 31, stay-at-home mum, and Stephen Ashley, 33, engineering supervisor

9 June 2012

Ceremony and reception at Highclere Castle, Berkshire

WORDS BY STEPHANIE STAFFORD

For a Brit husband and a Canuck wife – the inscription on Sarah and Steve’s ring bag sweetly summed up the essence of their day, which celebrated their two cultures coming together. For the ceremony, Sarah popped a sixpence in her shoe, but had her maids walk down the aisle with the groomsmen, Canadian-style. “We gave the men cufflinks with a Union Jack on one side and a Canadian flag on the other, and because we had guests travelling from all over, we made welcome bags filled with Marmite, tea, biscuits, tourist pamphlets and maps of London – people loved them!” explains Sarah. “I wanted our friends and family to recognise Steve and me in all the details of our day.”

The couple chose Victorian estate turned *Downton Abbey* film set Highclere Castle as their venue. “We exchanged vows in the saloon and hosted our wedding breakfast in the library,” says Sarah. “It really had the wow

factor we wanted.” Deep purple and red touches added a bold sense of fun to the super-glam setting. The maids wore aubergine frocks from Enzoani, a traditional British red post box served as a card box, and bright purple and red flip-flops were piled into a bucket for guests with tired feet. “For decoration, we had lots of flowers – ruby dendrobium orchids, black dahlia, calla lilies, chocolate cosmos and red spray roses amongst others – and we placed candles everywhere to up the romance.”

Instead of throwing the bouquet, Sarah followed Canadian custom and arranged a marriage celebration dance. “We invited all the married couples onto the dancefloor,” she explains. “One by one, they were asked to leave if they had been married less than a year, five years, 15 years and so on. The couple left at the end was Steve’s aunt and uncle who have been married for 41 years, so I gave them my bouquet to share the celebration.” >



HEAD-TURNING STYLE

Sarah styled her Enzoani dress with blue shoes from Badgley Mischka and glitzy jewellery. "I wore a beautiful cathedral-length veil with a lace trim for the ceremony and then replaced it with a beaded headband for dinner and dancing," she says. The flowergirls wore matching tulle frocks from Olivia Kate Couture with pearl bracelets.

TOTALLY BESPOKE

"Our friend, Luke Trickett, designed all of our stationery, from Save the Dates and invites to menus and orders of service," says Sarah.

"Everything was personalised with our monogram and the British lion and Canadian maple leaf. We loved the sign he made which read: *As two families are becoming one, we ask that you pick a seat, not a side.*"



JET-SET DETAILS

Sarah and Steve named the tables after places they'd visited. "We framed a portion of the world map for each one, pinned with a compass to show the location and explained why it was important to us," says Sarah. For another personal touch, Steve's sister gave a reading from their favourite book, *The Alchemist*. ♥



The dream team

Photography Pippa Mackenzie (pippamackenzie.com)

Bride's dress Enzoani (enzoani.com)

Venue Highclere Castle (highclerecastle.co.uk)

Planner Kelly Chandler from The Bespoke Wedding Company (thebespokeweddingco.com)

Groom's outfit Marks & Spencer (marksandspencer.com)

Bridesmaids' dresses Enzoani (enzoani.com)

Flowers Hybrid Flowers (hybridflowers.co.uk)

Cake Marks & Spencer (marksandspencer.com)

Stationery Luke Trickett (luketrickett.com)

Rings Jewels by Maxime's (maximes.ca)

