

There's No Place like Home  
By Mary E. Hart

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No matter where life takes you, the place you grow up will always hold a special place in your heart. Sierra was born and raised in Bermuda, but went off to university in the UK, which is where she met fellow student, William, who would one day become her husband. After William proposed to Sierra during a holiday in Ethiopia, their thoughts turned to wedding planning, with Bermuda winning out as their wedding destination for several reasons—first and foremost, because most of Sierra's family still resides there.

"Bermuda's natural beauty, unique architecture, friendly environment, and knowledgeable, helpful, and resourceful wedding vendors were the other reasons to have our wedding in Bermuda instead of in another country," says Sierra.

Sierra's love for unique, natural, and rustic sites with historical significance led to the couple selecting The Unfinished Church in St. George's for their ceremony. With its open roof and grassy landscape, the venue was the perfect choice for the couple. An added bonus was Major the Reverend Canon W. David Raths of the Unfinished Church, who was fantastic as an officiant; he balanced valuable advice and support with wise humor throughout the ceremony.

Although Sierra and William planned the entire event without a wedding planner, relying instead on local family who helped with the planning, they recommend that brides and grooms who don't have connections in Bermuda hire a professional wedding planner to save time, hassle, and disappointment.

"Even with a wedding planner, overseas brides and grooms need to do their homework," says Sierra. "Read the reviews on the venues and vendors that you're considering, and look at wedding pictures taken in Bermuda to get ideas. It would be ideal if the bride and groom visited Bermuda a few months in advance to review their options in person, but planners should provide plenty of pictures if this isn't possible."

When it came to selecting her wedding gown, Sierra turned to the Occasions Bridal and Formal Shop in Sandys, Bermuda. She said "yes" to the third dress that she tried on, and she purchased it right off the rack as it fit her perfectly.

For their wedding reception, Sierra and William chose the Grotto Bay Beach Resort & Spa for its proximity to their ceremony location. The Grotto offers a beautiful venue, a great variety of delicious food and drinks, and a number of striking places for wedding photos on the property, including a dock with a sailboat, a beach, a pergola, a cave, and beautiful gardens.

Sierra's favorite memory from her wedding day was near the end of the reception when everyone was dancing together.

"Seeing everyone strutting their famous dance moves, laughing and having fun was a great sight to see," says Sierra. "To this day, I giggle when the image of my family dancing pops into my mind. I will forever hold onto those memories."

CEREMONY: The Unfinished Church in St. George's  
RECEPTION: Grotto Bay Beach Resort & Spa  
FLOWERS: DemCo  
CAKE: Glaze Bakery

MUSIC: Celebration Music; Royal Bermuda Regiment  
HAIR AND MAKEUP: Strands and MAC  
TRANSPORTATION: Graham Watts of Bermudafull Moments  
VIDEOGRAPHY: 360 Visuals  
WEDDING GOWN: Occasions Bridal and Formal Shop  
CHAIRS: Bermuda Rentals Ltd.