

## THE PERFECT PAIR

PR manager Katherine Robbins, 27, will walk down the aisle in August at her father's château in France. Her friend Louise Jennings, 26, will be her bridesmaid, and two-year-old Matilda Makin, a friend's daughter, will be her flower girl.

**Katherine says** 'Louise will be completely involved in picking her dress. I'd never force her to wear something she's uncomfortable in – there's nothing worse than a miserable bridesmaid. We're going for a holiday-glamour feel as it's an evening wedding held outside, but I wanted a flower girl to add the cute factor!'

**Shopping editor Astrid says** 'Just because Katherine is petite, at 5ft 4in, doesn't mean she can't pick a statement gown. The low kick of a fishtail-shaped skirt gives the illusion of height. With a bold dress, it's a good idea to put bridesmaids in something strong to match.'

**The verdict** 'I feel very *Sex and the City* in this dress,' says Katherine. 'It's not something I would ever have looked at, but I love how summery it is with the flower.' Louise adds, 'I like that my dress is long and floaty. One of the best things about it is that I can wear flat shoes.' →

**Katherine** Duchesse-silk dress with silk flower, from £3,600, The Couture Gallery. Silk flower (in hair), £6, VV Rouleaux. Freshwater-pearl bracelets, £80 each, Maggie Vintage. **Matilda** Silk-dupion dress, £120, Young England. Satin headband, £13, Adorable Little Things. Ribbon (worn as sash), £1.20 per metre, VV Rouleaux. Silk pumps, £20, Monsoon. **Louise** Satin dress, £120, Bhs



# HERE COME THE *girls*

Brides, bridesmaids and flower girls get a new look, with help from Astrid Joss





## THE MAID OF HONOUR

Emma Williams, 26, a beauty buyer, will say 'I do' at a beach wedding in Mexico in June. Her fiancé's sister, Rebecca Marlow, 23, will be her maid of honour

**Emma says** 'I'm having a small wedding so I don't want to have loads of bridesmaids – they would almost outnumber the guests. It's going to be a relaxed beach celebration but I still want to look special, though comfort is key in the Mexican heat.'

**Astrid says** 'This fitted lace dress makes the most of Emma's curves and will travel much better than a big dress. With only one bridesmaid, she is free to pick any style of gown to go with her wedding look – the Grecian style of Rebecca's dress suits the holiday feel.'

**The verdict** 'I love my dress,' say Emma. 'I thought I'd have to go floaty and boho since I'm having a beach wedding, but this suits my figure so much more – I feel quite sexy!' Rebecca adds, 'I love my hair – the ribbons and beads add a beach-chic boho vibe to quite a formal dress.'

Emma Lace and tulle beaded dress, from £1,000, Eternity Bride. Crystal and pearl headband, £320, Maggie Vintage. Crystal bracelet, £22, Jon Richard at Debenhams. Silk-satin shoes, £110, Rainbow Couture at Rainbow Club. Bouquet of anemones, Avalanche roses and ivy, £40, Lucy The Florist at The Luxe. Rebecca Bobbinet and lamé dress, £350, Vera Wang at The Wedding Shop. Pearl and ribbon headband, £22, Accessorize. Bouquet of lilacs, hyacinths and roses, £85, Wild at Heart



Hephi Silk dress, £3,799, Temperley London. Crystal headband, £180, Polly Edwards. Crystal and pearl earrings, £75; rhinestone cuff, £125, Stewart Parvin. Bouquet of Pink Bouvardia and Sweet Avalanche roses, £80, Inwater. **Bridesmaids, from left, Phoebe** Satin dress, £95, Monsoon. Gold bracelet, £140, Raris. Feather headpiece, £9.95, VV Rouleaux. Satin courts, £30, Linzi Shoes. **Victoria** Taffeta dress, from £185, Ellis Bridals. Silk rose (in hair), £65, VV Rouleaux. Gold cuff, £18, Freedom at Topshop. Satin courts, £70, Faith. **Imogen** Satin dress, £33, Goddiva. Pompom hairband, £75, Vivien Sheriff. Bead cuff, £18, Freedom at Topshop. **Francesca** Taffeta dress, £175, Amanda Wyatt. Feather and net headpiece, from £189, VV Rouleaux. Gold necklace, £75, Raris. **Lisa** Satin dress, £80, Debenhams. Feather headpiece, £266, Rachel Trevor-Morgan. Gold earrings, £50, Raris. Gold-plated cuff, £17.95, Rosie Fox. Satin courts, £1,445, Christian Louboutin. Bridesmaids' bouquets of Blue Curiosa, Esperance, Coolwater and Sweet Avalanche roses, £60, Inwater

## THE GIRLY GROUP

Hephi Pemberton, 24, a headhunter, will marry at Balliol College, Oxford, in May. Her two sisters, Phoebe, 20, and Imogen, 18, and friends Francesca Carpenter, Victoria Waters and Lisa Morgen, all 24, will be her bridesmaids

**Hephi says** 'My husband-to-be is in the army and is having lots of army officer ushers, so I can have all my sisters and friends on my side. We're all quite young so I want a modern look, rather than something too traditional – although with so many girls, it's hard to keep everyone happy!'

**Astrid says** 'A pink theme doesn't have to mean pastels or tweeness – hot pink and fuchsia are fashionable and fun. With a large group, it's more modern to pick the colour and let each girl choose a different style of dress. That way you also avoid any "she looks better than me" complaints.'

**The verdict** 'Wow! We look so stylish,' says Hephi. 'My dress is amazing; I never want to take it off. The bright pink is a fun contrast to my white dress.' Victoria adds, 'I'm obsessed with fascinators so my headpiece is my favourite bit. It's all so glam, I love it.' →







Sarah Silk-chiffon dress with crystal detail, £1,900, Jenny Packham. Feather and pearl headpiece, £85, Sheena Hölländ. Wedding party, from left, Tina Silk dress, £135, Coast. Feather and pearl hairclip, £125, Caroline Morris. Black chiffon and bead necklace, £40, Preshhus. Satin peep-toes, £120, Karen Millen. Sarah Taffeta dress, £99, Littlewoods. Feather headpiece, £130, Jane Taylor. Bead cuff, £18, Jon Richard at Debenhams. Reon Silk shirt and shorts, £195, Young England. Leather loafers, £65, Papillon. Jada Georgette and net dress, £107, I Love Gorgeous. Silk bow headband, from £195, Caroline Morris. Faith Beaded tulle dress, £65, Monsoon. Ribbon (in hair), 75p per metre, VV Rouleaux. Leather pumps, £26, Bloch at I Love Gorgeous. Aisling Lace dress, £175, Alfred Angelo. Velvet headband, £275, Caroline Morris. Golden cuff, £25, Rosie Fox. Georgina Satin dress with sequin straps, £235, Vera Wang. Flower and net headpiece, £68, Vivien Sheriff. Leather courts, £320, Gina. Bridesmaids' and flower girl's bouquets of black dahlias, Japanese anemones, Pepito, Sweet Avalanche, Peach Avalanche, Quicksand and Blue Curiosa roses, little silver spray roses and sweet wax flowers, from £30, Scarlet & Violet

## THE WEDDING PARTY

Sarah Ralph, 28, a psychologist, is marrying at The Elvetham hotel in Hampshire in July 2011. She chose Tina Louis, 25, Sarah Hickson, 28, Aisling Connaughton, 25, and Georgina Beccan, 31, and Georgina's children, Jada, 11, Reon, three, and Faith, 11 months, as attendants

Sarah says 'I'm having 300 guests, so it's a chance to have lots of bridesmaids. I think different dress styles will work better than trying to make everyone look the same.'

Astrid says 'Metallics are a great option for a large wedding party. From pewter to pale gold, there will be a shade to suit everyone. With different dress styles, it's best to stick to one length to keep it consistent and help pull the group together.'

The verdict 'My bridesmaids are different heights and shapes, so I planned to put them in various styles of dresses but in the same colour,' says Sarah. 'I never thought different shades would work so well together, but it looks modern and cool.'

METALLIC POLIIFE: £165, GRAHAM AND GREEN. HAIR: MATTHEW. DONNA AND BONNIE AT MATTHEW ALEXANDER BESSIVE HAIR & MAKE UP AT MATTHEW ALEXANDER (CO.UK) USING KIEHL'S AND JAMES MCMAHON AT NAKED ARTISTS USING DANIEL SANDLER COSMETICS. ASSISTED BY HEATHER WHITE. LOCATION: JILLOCATIONS.CO.UK