





Deirdre Breen and Joe McVeigh

The Franschhoek Winelands was a gracious host
to Dee and Joe's classic white wedding

REAL WEDDING

Joe picked an auspicious day to propose to Dee, as it was two days before the couple were due to fly to South Africa on holiday. 'He came over to my family home for some festive Christmas Day drinks with our friends and neighbours. Just before we joined everyone for drinks he proposed at the Christmas tree. It was very romantic and so special to be able to celebrate it with everyone at such a lovely time of year,' reminisces Dee.

Although the couple fell in love with the Franschhoek Winelands on their trip, it was not immediately obvious that they would marry there, but Joe was on to something. 'While reflecting on our amazing holiday once we were back in Dublin, we were plotting a way to get back ... what better way than to get married out there with friends and family in the sunshine?' they say.

The couple wanted their guests to have a memorable day – decor, food and music played a key role. As the whole contingent had travelled from Ireland, an introduction to the gastronomy of Franschhoek was necessary. Guests were invited to dine with the couple at Reuben's the evening prior to the wedding.

The next day, Dee and Joe exchanged vows in a little thatched church at a traditional Catholic ceremony, followed by the reception at Vrede en Lust. 'The sun was setting during the speeches, the backdrop and vineyard terrace were just stunning,' says Dee. The speeches were particularly moving as they remembered Joe's dad, who passed away two months before the wedding.

The venue was a study in contemporary elegance with a fresh, summery feel communicated through the use of green in flower arrangements. Dee loves clean lines and elegant colours, which Wedding Concepts interpreted beautifully with a classic, predominantly white palette.

Guests arrived to the sound of the Dixie Swingers brass band. 'We just loved the Dixie Swingers when we saw them. The party started the minute we arrived at the vineyard!' laughs Dee, who confesses to spending most of the evening on the dance floor, pausing just long enough to enjoy the gravlax of salmon trout starters, rack of lamb for mains and Belgian chocolate fondant with fudge sauce and rum and raisin ice cream for dessert. 'All the food was divine and I was actually surprised that I remembered it all – it was *that good*,' she adds.

'All of it was so magical, we have so many wonderful memories,' they beam. 'We were surrounded by our closest friends and family, each of whom was extra special for having made the trip with us.' ♥



Clockwise from top left: Dee and Joe departed in style in a black Morgan Plus 8; the traditional Catholic ceremony was held at St George's in Franschhoek; rose petal confetti was presented in paper cones illustrated with the couple's monogram; guests relaxed with bubbly on the sun-drenched lawns of Vrede en Lust; an elegant three-course dinner was served at a candlelit banqueting table; Dee in her Alice Temperley dress and Christian Louboutin heels with her entourage; tall vases brimmed with loosely arranged flowers to form striking centrepieces; the Dixie Swingers played during pre-dinner drinks

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