EVERGLADES
HOTEL

Your Wedding

Couple's Names: Emma Hilman and Gareth McAllister
Wedding Date: 9th July 2021
Ceremony @ @ Kilcronaghan Parish Church, Tobermore
Reception @ The Everglades Hotel, Londonderry
Photography: Sheena Thompson
Videography: Blank Canvas

The Couple

How you met & when:
We met in October 2017. Gareth made the first move and contacted me to see if I would like to go out. Gareth knew on the third date that I was the one. I, however, took a lot more convincing.

The Proposal
Gareth proposed on a beach in Marbella in 2020. The original plan was an elephant sanctuary in Thailand, however, COVID very quickly put a stop to this.

The Day

Venue:

We choose the Everglades Hotel because it provided the elegant 'grand ballroom' effect we were looking for. This was topped off by their excellent service, modern rooms for our guests and friendly atmosphere. I (Emma) previously had afternoon tea in the Everglades and loved it and when looking for a venue, my sister Rachel suggested considering it. Knowing the excellent service and fabulous décor and food, it was a great idea. This was confirmed when we met with Jason for the first time. Jason was able to confidently reassure us that we would get the wedding day we longed for. Jason was very friendly and listened carefully to everything we wanted. We decided there and then that the Everglades was the venue for us. Jason then made it his mission to provide us with everything in our price range, it was a package we could not refuse. On the day, all of the staff were amazing and so helpful. They made us feel so special and anything we asked for was no trouble to them. Everyone was so friendly and professional.

Theme:
We did not have a theme for our wedding but we knew sunflowers were going to be a big part of the day. From there we made decisions based on this such as colours and venues.

Wedding Planner/Stylist:
We did not have a wedding planner or stylist..

Wedding Dress:
I went to four boutiques in total and tried on 6 – 10 dresses in each store. I found it very difficult to find a dress that I loved but the store staff were all very helpful, listened to what exactly you wanted and often gave tips about different styles that suit your shape. I eventually found my dress in Dream Weddings in Coleraine. As I didn't suit lace and couldn't decide between a form fitting dress or an A line dress, Sue at the boutique helped me find the perfect dress that gave me the illusion of both.

The Bridesmaids:
Ultimate Dresses, Dungiven

Groomswear:
Freddie Hatchet, Cookstown.

When we went looking for suits, we had the idea of a navy tux in mind. There was something extra about a tux that we loved and knew navy would be a fantastic colour with the sunflowers and bridesmaid dresses. We tried a few different suits, but nothing compared to the tux. It was the classy, timeless look we were going for.

Decor

Wedding Flowers:
My favourite flowers are sunflowers. As a teacher, I always knew my wedding would be summer time and sunflowers had the bright, beautiful summery vibe we wanted. The floral display outside our ceremony was stunning and provided perfect photo opportunities. They were later moved to the front of the top table at our reception. Our bouquets were bright and effective and the buttonholes stood out against the dark background of the suits.

Room Decor & Table Plan:
We loved the Everglades' Grand Ballroom as it felt elegant and modern. The design of the high roof felt very grand and the large windows / trees at the top of the room provided a stunning backdrop for the top table. Everything was very bright and light which we absolutely loved. We did not feel like we had to add to it as it was already beautifully decorated by the staff. We had our own table plan, made by ourselves, that matched the colour of our bridesmaids and added sunflowers throughout the room to make it feel like our own.

Stationary:
Our stationary (invitations and order of service) was very kindly designed by our bridesmaid, Jessica Mckee. This is something that was very important to us as it felt personalised and designed with love. I also created all of the name place cards with artificial sunflowers

What food you choice & why:
Starter: Duck salad
Main: Turkey and Ham
Desert: Chocolate Torte and Cheesecake
Everything about our menu was fantastic and tasted amazing. The duck salad was particularly popular with everyone.

Wedding Cake:
Our wedding cake was made by Rachel Kyle (Rachel's Bakery). We choose three flavours; lemon drizzle, chocolate fudge and red velvet. Rachel was also able to provide a gluten free lemon drizzle cake as a number of our guests were gluten free. Rachel is amazing at her job and all of her cakes taste amazing.

Photos/videos

Why you chose your photographer:
We really wanted someone young and modern as our photographer and contacted many people but when we found Sheena, we knew she would be perfect for our wedding. Sheena captures the most beautiful, candid moments and offered us a package that we could not refuse with two photographers. We were also able to meet with Sheena for an engagement shoot and as she made us feel so comfortable and relaxed we knew we had choose the right person for the job. Sheena works hard to find out exactly what you want and takes an interest in you as a couple. Nothing is too much trouble, we requested an extra stop to visit grandparents and Sheena was very accommodating with this. Sheena also helped us find the venue for our photographs as our original location was closed due to COVID. The communication between us resulted in amazing photographs that we will be forever thankful for.

What made you choose your videographer?
We found Blank Canvas online along with many others, however Matt instantly clicked with us and we loved all of his work. He was the right choice for us as he made everyone feel so comfortable and worked so hard to capture all of the special moments that we will be able to remember forever.

Matt is a gentleman and we were so impressed with his work as it was so modern and different to what we had already seen.