

YOUR ULTIMATE GUIDE TO DESTINATION WEDDINGS AND HONEYMOONS

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WEDDING PLANNERS

WHIRLWIND WEDDINGS & EVENTS BARBADOS

Leighenne Rivero of Whirlwind Weddings & Events Barbados discusses planning destination weddings on the stunning Caribbean island

I've always been very organised. In fact, I started using a daily planner at 13 years old. This combined with my very sociable nature (I love entertaining!) got me into wedding planning. During high school, I always became involved in organising surprise birthday parties and end of year celebrations, so event planning was an attractive career for me. After sixth form, I obtained my first wedding planning certificate course at university. Then whilst completing my degree, I began planning weddings. Eight years have passed and I haven't stopped planning. I love it!

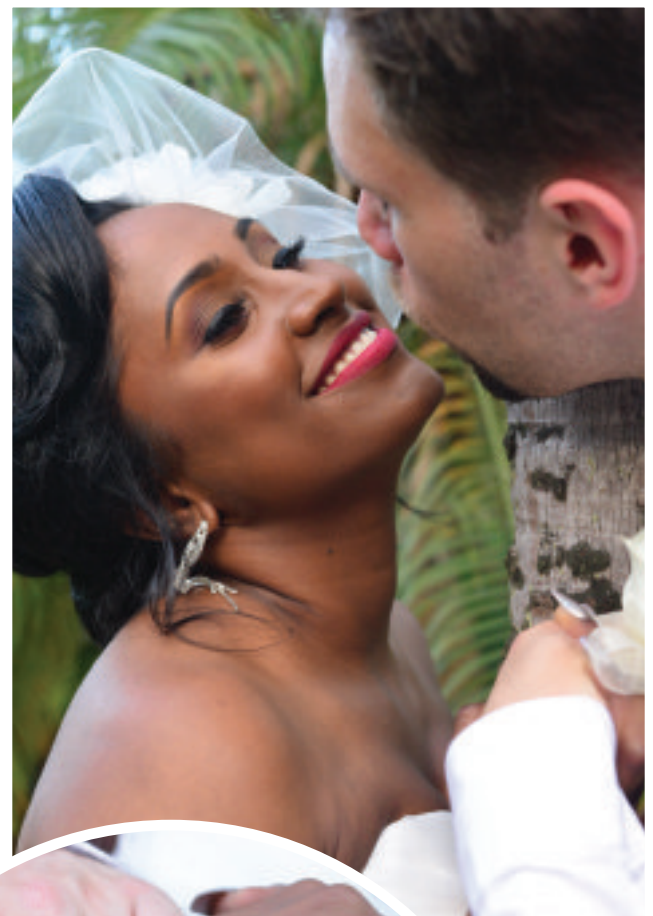
The 'wedding day' for me is actually a 'wedding week'. On the day, I always get started very early. Firstly, I ensure I have a good breakfast to keep me going. I make the first round of phone calls to my client, assistants, and vendors, then I spend the day co-ordinating the event to ensuring everything runs smoothly. My clients must receive everything that they want. It is their day; they must enjoy every moment. I really enjoy getting to know my clients and working with them to make their dream day a reality.

Barbados is a naturally beautiful destination for weddings. I'm from *Trinidad and Tobago* myself, and I moved here after coming on vacation and experiencing the Barbadian

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lifestyle. *Barbados* has amazing beaches that look like the pictures in the magazine. Of course, there also is the perfect weather. Destination brides love it here and there are great wedding professionals on island that can make the process simple; it's a great combination.

I'd say that *Whirlwind Weddings & Events* stands out from other planners because our first objective is to ensure that our clients get their dream day. We aren't restrictive when it comes to the services we provide. The entire concept of the business is two pronged; we cater to couples who are planning 'Whirlwind' or short notice weddings, and also to those who might have ample time, but are not hands on and want the process to be 'a breeze'. That's why we came up with the name 'Whirlwind' and tagline: 'for your event needs, in a breeze'! To make the planning easy for our clients, we are very flexible and sometimes perform tasks which others do not. This can include researching unconventional venues in person or creating a wedding website. We keep everything documented and remain



available for questions and regular Skype meetings and phone calls as needed.

I get unique requests from couples all the time! Such as special photo requests (with a coconut vendor or in a Bajan rum shop) or unconventional colour schemes such as bright red and royal blue. All of my weddings are favourites, and they are all memorable. However, I recently planned my best friend's beach ceremony, and that was very special. I was there for all the milestones of their relationship and it felt amazing to play such a meaningful role in their big day.

In the future I want the business to keep growing, and to continue to provide exceptional service to my clients. My long term goal is to expand across the *Caribbean* islands. In the short term, I want to attend the Preston Bailey Protégé workshop to learn more about transformative design. My best advice to couples looking to hire a planner would be to hire someone that understands the 'intangible' and appreciates the type of atmosphere you want to create on your big day. You must feel you can trust your chosen planner with this special task!



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