

Baby You're A Firework

The happy couple at any wedding will be no strangers to feeling fireworks between them, and aptly this festivity has long been used to mark important milestones and celebrations. Here, **Kirrily Ireland** chats with Steve Lawrence, owner of Geelong Fireworks, to reveal how *Melbourne Wedding & Bride* readers can incorporate pyrotechnics into their celebrations so that guests can enjoy a taste of those thrilling emotions, too.

Whether you're after a little flare around the dance floor, or a full-blown show to wow your guests, fireworks can contribute a wealth of excitement to your special day. You don't have to go big, either; even a touch of sparkle can transform a generic wedding into a proper party – one that will go out with a bang.

Find That Spark

Before you lock in your pyrotechnic displays, Lawrence urges couples to “check with the venue first!” It's important to ensure that not only are the venue owners comfortable having any form of pyrotechnics around, but also if the venue itself is suitable for this kind of risk. “Some [venues] allow them, some simply will not, even with the new technology of spark machines,” Lawrence explains. “Outdoor displays require lots of space, so we cannot do an outdoor show in a carpark full of cars [for instance].”

Speaking of safety, it is crucial that you research the vendor and confirm that they have proper safety practices in place. “Geelong Fireworks ensure our Safe Work Method Statement and Risk Assessment is in place for every event. We know the venues and what can and cannot be undertaken ... ensure whoever you use can show the venue and you – if required – a copy [of the] insurance certificate in their name.”

Working with your venue can have more benefits than one. If your venue has had fireworks before, it is very likely they can recommend a reliable company for you to use. “Check with the venue if they have a preferred supplier,” Lawrence agrees. “Preferred suppliers are on the list for a reason... they know the venue layout and the venue knows they will not disappoint their clients!”

Light The Fuse

Of all the moments and places a wedding might showcase some fireworks, Lawrence notes the first dance as being something special, and their most common request. “The First Dance is the one we do the most ... It is the big moment of the night, when all eyes are on [the couple].”

To enhance this significant moment, as the newlyweds take to the dance floor to spin and twirl in the majesty of their love, Lawrence and his team use their “indoor pyrotechnics with low fog”. “Ensure whoever you are using does not use a DJ fog machine! A dry ice machine is a totally different machine. Speaking of different, we use liquid nitrogen – faster fog, always in stock and does not wet the dance floor – especially tiled floors.”

If you have a complete vision of how you want the pyrotechnics to unfold, speak with the vendor. It'll all come down to the timing, which a professional pyrotechnician will be able to manage. “If during the dance, [the couple] can simply tell us the time, for example at the forty-second mark and two-minute mark, or when [they] do a twirl or lift.” Communication is the key.

A Show Of Colour And Light

Modern technologies and pyrotechnics mean you can now incorporate fireworks as part of your indoor decorations, creating a bit of a show for your guests and igniting their interest from the moment the reception begins. “Indoor pyrotechnics, including our cascading waterfall effect, make a great entrance,” the expert explains. “At Geelong Fireworks, we combine this with fog jets, LED lighting of fog and, coming soon, genuine colour fog.”

Beyond your grand entrance and first dance, smaller fireworks can be utilised to highlight the other main elements, such as the cake. “We can also add fireworks around the cake, and even fog the tabletop of the cake and fire mini fog jets with colour lights at the back of the cake – like a mini concert!”

Other than fireworks, couples can include a range of special effects to boost the excitement of their day. Lawrence notes, “We offer colour fog, bubbles ... UV glow bubbles, snow effects, colour smoke for photographers, confetti cannons, confetti blasters, long sparklers, firework spinning wheels, foam effects.” – just to name a few!

A Starry Night

The thought of fireworks often conjures up images of spectacular arrangements showcased against the night sky. If the space allows, consider factoring in some of these outdoor fireworks, especially if you're lucky enough to be working with wide-open areas. “Display fireworks are where the ultimate wow factor occurs, using a range of small barrage effects, roman candles and aerial shows that get the big ‘ahhhs!’,” Lawrence says. “Many [couples] ask for [outdoor shows] for when they leave. However, we suggest around 10:00 or 10:30pm, after dessert.” You'll want to wait until it's nice and dark, especially if it's a summer wedding, but be wary of guests leaving earlier who might miss out on the show.

Outdoor fireworks aren't limited to night time either, although they may come in different forms to suit the lighter backdrop if your wedding and reception are held during the day. “We have a range of colour smoke cakes – these shoot colour powder into the sky with a crack[ling] explosion effect. We also add very specific aerial shells and other effects such as ground level colour smoke, and fireballs!” The colours will make an excellent pop against the blue skies.

Of course, the weather doesn't always promise blue skies. An outdoor display can run the risk of being compromised by poorer weather, however contingencies can be put in place to make sure everything runs smoothly. “If it rains, make sure your guests have undercover areas or umbrellas... our crew will be the ones in the firing zone protecting our product and firing systems. Maybe the Fireworks Gods like us, but we have never cancelled a show due to poor weather.”

Whether they're lighting up your dance floor or filling the sky above with sparks, fireworks are the perfect way to start married life, setting the tone for a thrilling and joyful lifetime spent together.