

# 24 dresses

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I've just returned from a holiday in Italy. A week in Tuscany which was planned around the wedding of two of my closest friends.

The event itself was like something out of the movies, romantic, picturesque and all round dreamy. It may not have made it onto 'This Morning' as Princess Eugenie's did, but it wouldn't have been a surprise if OK magazine had been there, circling the villa in a chopper and snapping pics of the guests in all their finery. The balcony shot of the happy couple (above) should help give you some idea of the sort of day it was, but as someone who works in advertising I think the best way for me to sum it up is to say ... 'If Carlsberg did weddings'!

On my return to work, tales of my week in Italy led to a team discussion about wedding's.

Particularly how much we loved them (who doesn't?) and how many we had attended. Turns out – I've been to *a-lot* of weddings! In fact, when I started to count, I realised I'd already totalled 24! I mean come on! As much as I love a wedding – even to me that seemed a ridiculous amount.

Many a bride and groom have stressed over the finances of a wedding. But, as Carrie Bradshaw pointed out in 'Sex and the City', weddings aren't cheap for the guests either. Think of all that money we spend on outfits, hair, make up, shoes, fascinators, gifts, travel (and that's not even mentioning the must-have hen or stag do). Yet with every new invite comes the number one question – What to wear?

This got me thinking about the film '27 Dresses'. For those who haven't seen it, the film stars Katherine Heigl who has been to 27 weddings – as a bridesmaid. 27 weddings wearing 27 terrible dresses. Now, while I have only had the pleasure of being bridesmaid once (and the dress was gorgeous thankfully) it does mean I have had to find 23 different outfits.

Let's pause for a minute and consider the implications of attending so many special occasions, particularly those which include the same circle of friends. Whilst it is of course possible to recycle an outfit, the norm dictates that a new wedding equals a fabulous new look. And in today's world of social media, cries of '*She's worn that outfit before*' would ring through the ether if anyone dared to break with this convention. If Kate Middleton can't even wear the same attire twice without being labelled 'thrifty', then what hope is there for the rest of us? The same outfit twice?! Heaven forbid!

But surely a dress is bought to be worn? And a nice dress deserves to be worn often? So whilst there is an unspoken pressure to impress our friends / followers / fans / stalkers and look on point for our social media accounts, perhaps it's time that we take a stand and say, no more! No more shall my best floral maxi be banished to the back of the wardrobe! Never again shall I pass over my Ted Baker A-Line. To be socially conscious, at the very least I feel I should consider taking a leaf out of my friend Jen's book and sell some of these online? Or better still organise a swapshop in the office? Who's up for it?

*Photo courtesy of Eilidh Charles*

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