

A Day in the Life of... A Wedding Butler



DREAM TEAM
Sandy Lam (second from left) is part of The Langham Hong Kong's team of wedding butlers, who each serve as the main contact for a couple planning a wedding at the hotel

Sandy Lam, a wedding butler at The Langham Hong Kong, tells **Rachel Read** about her most memorable events and why every working day is different

AS AN EXPERIENCED WEDDING BUTLER at The Langham, my role is to make all the happy couples' dreams come true, and ensure flawless execution and excellent service on their special day. My working day usually starts at 8.30am with a morning briefing between the relevant hotel departments to communicate on all event updates, followed by a meeting with our catering services team to check through all the event details. We create personalised menu proposals and arrange tastings for our couples—one of the most commonly forgotten aspects is remembering the guests' dietary restrictions. If they decide to have Chinese cuisine for their banquet, it comes straight out the kitchens of our three-Michelin-starred restaurant, T'ang Court.

The rest of my day really depends on clients' and vendors' schedules; sometimes meetings are held early in the morning, late in the evening or even at weekends. For couples, it includes elements such as arranging site inspections, advising on wedding themes and logistical arrangements, creating a suggested sequence of service, reserving the bridal suite and guest rooms if required, and answering any other questions they might have.

In addition to coordinating with in-house colleagues such as our catering staff, sales and marketing department, and concierge and front-of-house team, my job involves working with third-party vendors too—for instance, photographers, decoration contractors, florists and entertainers, such as live bands and DJs. We only partner with exclusive bespoke brands that have intimate knowledge of our clients' needs and wants, and only select suppliers who offer quality, have a great reputation and can customise solutions for our couples.

One of my favourite details about The Langham that makes weddings here so memorable is our pillar-free ballroom,



which accommodates up to 500 guests. Its golden chandeliers and silk panels make it unique, while its newest feature is a large LED wall—an innovative enhancement for the big day. Couples who book a wedding with us have the entire ballroom to themselves, including the foyer and separate private rooms, and one of my main responsibilities is transforming the ballroom into whatever the couple desires.

We have received some unusual decoration requests over the years, including a wedding in the dark (lit only by candles) and a movie marathon playing romantic comedies continuously. One couple even requested a jungle theme with real monkeys as entertainment; we made a video with live monkeys for them to show during their wedding instead.

Of course, I'm there for the wedding too; my duties occur before the event itself, either the day before or in the morning for evening banquets. I'll greet the wedding couple, escort them to check in and go through a final rehearsal. I'll also coordinate with their MC on the banquet rundown, monitor the event set-up, communicate with third-party vendors on logistics such as storage, transportation and timing, prepare any equipment for the traditional Chinese tea ceremony (if they have one), finalise the seating plan, and confirm all food and beverage requirements with the banquet service team. I'm always nervous and excited with each wedding I plan, but after all that, I just try and enjoy the moment.

Problem-solving is probably the most challenging aspect of my job; nevertheless, it's always fulfilling to overcome hurdles. One time, there was a couple that was based overseas and when it came to the big day, only 30 minutes before the wedding itself, the bride suddenly realised that she'd forgotten to order her flower bouquet. I knew the bride loved the colour pink, so I quickly bought different shades of pink flowers from a florist nearby and created a wedding bouquet especially for her. We made it with just a few seconds to spare!

My day usually finishes around 8.30pm. I truly know that it's been a successful wedding when the couple refer us to their friends and family. Word of mouth is very powerful—one couple that got married here more than two years ago have continually supported us with more referrals, even holding their baby's 100-day celebration party here, too. They trust us completely and we've become really good friends.

I've been doing this for more than 13 years now, but I still love creating these special memories—witnessing a moment in time that my clients will cherish forever. 🍷



SETTING THE SCENE
The wedding butler is on hand to assist with anything from the menu to the best vendors for flowers