



## “Our clever friends and family stretched our budget!”

When Amy and Lee Marsden tied the knot last January, they knew they didn't want to start married life saddled with debt. “We were adamant that our budget of £10,000 was an obscene amount of money to spend on just one day – but as we wanted to cater for 200 guests – we had to think up creative ways to stay within budget,” says Amy.

Pooling £6,000 of their cash on the stunning venue and catering, Amy's biggest save was her gorgeous gown, which our bargain-hunting bride picked up online for just £100! “Instead of paying to get it

professionally cleaned, my mum washed it in the bath and steamed it with a wallpaper steamer – it came up beautifully!” says Amy. “The shawl I wore was the one my Gran made for my dedication when I was just a baby, my mum made my jewellery and I wore a pair of wellies down the aisle, which I swapped for a pair of £6 Primark shoes to dance in”.

Utilising the skills of clever friends and family also helped the couple stretch every penny. “We were so lucky that everyone was willing to help,” says Amy. “A friend made our amazing cake, my stepmother did the flowers, my auntie made the stationery and my parents are in a band, so that was our entertainment sorted!” Amy also recommends hitting the Christmas sales. “We snapped up lots of things – from centrepieces and ribbons to our bridesmaid dresses and suit jackets – when prices were slashed,” says Amy. “A little creativity and forward planning will save you a bundle.” And we are all for a bit of that!



## “We won our wedding!”

For lucky couple Abi and Brian Searles, balancing the wedding books was never a problem – thanks to them winning their entire day! “I had recently discovered The Daffodil Hotel & Spa when I was in the Lake District with a friend and loved the look of it, so when I saw the competition online to win a wedding there, I decided to go for it. Maybe it was fate!” says this lucky bride. “I didn't think for a minute that I would win, so when I got a call from the hotel's wedding planner, I couldn't believe it! I don't think it properly sank in until we went together to visit the hotel and excitedly started planning our special day.” Amazingly, the couple's prize included full use of the hotel, a wedding planner and master of ceremonies, a stylish red carpet drinks welcome and wedding breakfast for 80 guests. “Not only that, our lucky streak continued when a local wedding photographer, Bowness Wedding Photography, found out about

the competition and offered us a full day's complimentary wedding photography too,” says Abi. “Everything about the day was perfect – even the weather, and not having to worry about the cost of everything allowed us to put money aside for our honeymoon to Thailand. “A lot of our friends didn't have a honeymoon until a long time after their wedding because of



the cost of everything, so thank goodness I entered the competition.” Abi explains. “We'd probably still be saving!”

