



ALIA AL SHUBAILY

For this Saudi-based couple, Dubai's Westin Hotel was the picture perfect setting for their dream-like wedding

Photography by *MARIUS VAN RENSBURG*

Their story reads like a Hollywood script. The couple were childhood friends, went their separate ways, only to be reunited through a mutual friend 20 years later. They fell in love and the rest is history. So when 30-year-old banker Tameem Al Shubaily, proposed to Saudi/French Alia, 29, during a movie after a year-long whirlwind romance, the bride called on wedding planner Clare, from The Perfect Moment, to help her create a day the couple and their 200 guests would never forget.

With only six months to plan, and based in Saudi Arabia, the couple relied heavily on Clare to do the groundwork for their winter nuptials. "She handled every detail of the wedding" the newlywed says. The couple chose Dubai for its perfect blend of Eastern and Western culture and because it was the place they first vacationed together, making the location even more special.

The exquisite outdoor amphitheatre at The Westin Dubai Mina Seyahi beach resort proved the ideal backdrop to bring their "enchanted garden" theme to life. Alia and Clare collaborated to ensure no details were overlooked. From the "white, classic, natural" and purple accented colour palette to the white illuminated birdcage table centrepieces, flower embellished wood and hundreds of candles, an intimate and romantic atmosphere was perfectly created. Tulips, white roses and ivy were incorporated to really ensure an "enchanted, magical effect" she says.

The couple knew they wanted party favours that would honour their special wedding date: 12.12.12 and opted for custom-made purple

velvet boxes beautifully filled with "camel milk and date-flavoured toffees," with their names and wedding date embossed on the lid, which they placed on each guest's table. "It was a lovely way of adding colour to the table," she says. Photobooth pictures taken were also instant souvenirs of the memorable evening.

When it came to the dress, the bride lucked out, having found it while wedding dress shopping with a cousin who had gotten married six months prior. "I knew it was the one when I saw it," she says smiling. Alia wore a beautiful Pronovias dress by Elie Saab and accessorised with Valentino heels, emerald and diamond earrings and a matching ring from a boutique in Saudi, while Tameem was perfectly tailored in a Hugo Boss suit.

The couple took to the candle lit dance floor, for their first dance to Michael Bubl 's rendition of Nina Simone's classic *Feeling Good*. Later, a DJ played an eclectic mix of "current feel good music", while a saxophone player and Flamenco dancers were also on hand to spice things up.

Guests were treated to an international buffet and a beautiful three-tiered white cake with custom-made floral embellishments based on the colour scheme of the wedding flowers. Although, Alia says, "it was important that guests were dancing for most of the evening and not sitting down to eat; the dinner process was informal."

Aside from exchanging vows, Alia says the most magical part of the whole wedding was "my father giving me away to Tameem," and while she wouldn't change a thing about her fairy tale wedding, with a knowing smile, Alia advises future brides "to hire a wedding planner!" ▶



The favours were camel milk and date toffees in a custom-made gift box inscribed with the date



Pre-wedding preparation complete



The amphitheatre at The Westin was set against a twinkling Dubai skyline

Happiness is... introducing the newlyweds, Alia and Tameem

WORDS: TARA SOBTTI



Suited and booted: cute guest alert



Being given away by her father was one of Alia's most treasured memories from the day



Alia's Pronovias by Elie Saab dress was the stuff of fairy tales



Moustaches and merriment in the photo booth



Prop-ready and pretty, Alia gets ready for her pictures by Photobooth ME



Alia's emerald and diamond ring gave a little hint of colour to proceedings

BRIDE'S BLACK BOOK
DRESS: Pronovias by Elie Saab, [Pronovias.com](#)
SHOES: Valentino, [Valentino.com](#)
RINGS: Cartier, [Cartier.com](#)
GROOM'S SUIT: Hugo Boss, [Hugoboss.com](#)
VENUE: The Westin, [Westinminaseyahi.com](#)
FLORIST: Wud Flowers, [Wudflowers.com](#)
MUSIC: DJ Gail, +971 50 100 3074, and Adam Long (saxophonist), [Soleagency.com](#)
PHOTOGRAPHER: Marius Van Rensburg, [Mvrweddings.co.za](#)
WEDDING PLANNER: Clare Ebbs at The Perfect Moment Wedding Planners, [Theperfectmoment.com](#)



Flamenco dancers added a little fire to the festivities



Dinner was kept informal, with a focus on dancing rather than sitting down, with sweet treats for desert



Designed by The Westin, the cake's floral design was created to match the wedding flowers



The bridal bloom: a combination of tulips and white roses for a simple, classic feel



Peep-toe, bow-tied Valentino heels



The table settings were simple, classic and elegant, featuring birdcages with candles inside to add light



Just married, the couple steal a private moment in the lush gardens of The Westin