



problem at home and was quick to show us how to resolve it (you don't put the flower inside the buttonhole). That is how I spent my last few minutes as a single man – fixing a flower to my best friend's lapel while Ed, my brother, freaked out in the background because he'd forgotten the pen with which we were supposed to sign the marriage documents.

But in the end it all went well. More or less. The replacement pen for signing the documents didn't work so a replacement for the replacement needed to be found. My fiancée forgot her own name during the vows (I'm not making this up).

The ceremony was over before we knew it.

Fat chance. I started hearing other words and phrases being mentioned in frantic phone calls my fiancée was making to various people. Phrases like 'colour scheme', 'entertainment', 'headdress' and most baffling of all: 'cake toppers' (huh??)

You see, what I hadn't realised is that organising a wedding is not about the big things. Those are just the obvious ones you need to get out of the way immediately. What that leaves is hundreds of little, niggling details that manifest themselves in the shape of lists and lists and more lists. Or in our case, since we were organising it from abroad: emails. Inboxes overflowing every day with emails, long ones, short ones, epic ones, complicated ones, angry ones, apologising ones, confused ones (my favourite is the email exchange about how we wanted a dozen goldfish bowls but no goldfish. Can you imagine the confusion?), one word emails ('Candles!!!'), emails with no attachments, emails with attachments only and an apology for the first attachment-less email, lost emails ('But where will you put the goldfish?'), exasperated emails ('What goldfish?') and any other emails you can imagine.

Eventually it all boils down to this: Plan, and when you think you've covered all contingencies, plan again. You also rely on so many people. We're lucky to have fantastic families and friends who were willing to do our bidding and sort out forms and other stuff we simply couldn't do from London.

Then finally the wedding day arrives. But it's windy and the beachside venue you had chosen is battered by waves (28 June!) so you have a meeting to change venue to a less seawater-drenched spot. What did I say about planning and planning? There's always something you didn't foresee.

Before you know it, it's off to the church. But there's one more problem to overcome. The buttonholes. There we were, my two best men, my brother and I, all with our buttonholes in our hands wondering what on earth we were going to do with them. Luckily Rudi, my soon-to-be-brother-in-law had already encountered this



Chris' family. *Left to right: Justine (sister), Robert Dingli (dad), Erika, Chris, Lucienne Dingli (mum), Edward (brother)*



Erika's family. *Left to right: Ovidio Vella (dad), Erika, Chris, Angele Vella (mum), Rudi Vella (brother)*

PHOTOS BY