



Flowers—Gypsy West at The Vase Flora & Foliage thevase.net.nz, @thevasequeentown

Photography—Dawn Thomson dawnthomson.co.nz, @dawnthomsonphoto

Styling—Stacey Deane at Colour Me Happy Weddings colourmehappy.co.nz, @colourmehappyweddings



Wild & Free

New Zealand's enchanting answer to the fragrant lavender fields of Provence is the lupins that line the South Island's roadsides and flank its riverbanks each year in early summer. Gracefully bowing in the warm breeze, their periwinkle loveliness is captured here in Otago alongside the Rees River, which trickles from high in the mountains down to Queenstown's picturesque Lake Whakatipu. Nature has provided a backdrop perfect for a magical elopement or an intimate outdoor celebration, captured by stellar talents Dawn Thomson, Gypsy West and Stacey Deane of The Lovers Elopement Co, which specializes in curating and capturing elopements for artistic couples. The colour palette is kept simple, with creamy, dreamy neutral shades punctuated with metallics to complement the river's stone and sand. The bride bewitches in pale champagne and ivory, Juliette Hogan Bridal's sequined Simmons and Mattie column dresses echoing the lupins' statuesque form, and Natalie Chan's exquisite lace Anjelica gown, similarly unfussy yet polished. The gilded Zoe & Morgan adornments include Lovers earrings in the shape of two darling swallows. Layering textures adds interest and, right down to the scalloped frosting on the layer cake, it's a true feast for the senses, decadent and undeniably luxurious. The cocktails are laced with perfumed herbs, while grazing platters give guests the chance to come together to share flavours and stories. Smatterings of throw cushions allow sweet nothings to be whispered with limbs entwined, and come sunset, candles will light up the night with a romantic glow, causing the silverware to glint for an even greater sense of opulence. And how about those flowers? Ideally suited to the beguiling drama of the surrounding terrain, the explosive bouquet, floral installation and arrangements at once harmonise with the naturalistic setting and make a spectacle of themselves. They include foraged mānuka and lupins in richer hues than those seen growing wild here, the magenta and peach shades subtly enlivening the look. Tying together the fresh blooms is dried flora and foliage, including sculptural proteas and soft blue gum. The bouquet is bound with a selection of hand-dyed silk ribbons – the purple strands coloured with... lupins.

Words—Philippa Prentice

Location—Rees Valley, Glenorchy



Stationery—My Beloveds Studio @mybelovedsstudio

Jewellery—Zoe & Morgan zoeandmorgan.com, @zoeandmorgan

Art direction and production—The Lovers Elopement Co theloverselopementco.com, @theloverselopementco



Hair & makeup—Olivia Wild Beauty wildonmakeup.com, @oliviawild_beauty

Mattie & Simmons Gowns—Juliette Hogan Bridal juliettehogan.com, @juliettehogan



Platter—Lavish Grazing Co
lavishgrazingco.com, @lavishgrazingco

Linen—Whistling Reindeer
whistlingreindeer.co.nz,
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Shoes—Chaos & Harmony
chaosandharmonyshoes.com,
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Model—Rosemeri at Unique uniquemodels.co.nz,
@uniquemodelmanagement

