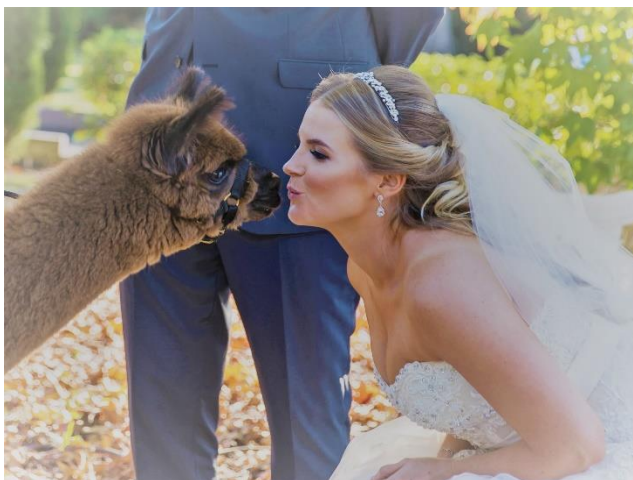


## How to get the best alpaca interaction photos.

**A photo session with alpacas can be a lot of fun.** It can be an opportunity to capture many moments of genuine emotion. Moments of excitement, trepidation, joy, reverence, compassion, care, surprise, connectedness, disbelief, awe and love.

In general alpacas are timid, curious, easily startled and prefer not to be touched. The trick to capturing the magic shots is to set the subjects up and then to let the handlers introduce the alpacas to the shot and then let them facilitate the desired interaction. The best and most genuine interaction occurs when the respective parties first meet and when we let the alpacas make the moves (driven by their natural curiosity), so to capture it, BE READY!



Some of the best shots come from candid, casual, non-forced moments of interaction, so again we encourage you to be ready.

The following points can help make the most out of the session

1. Before planning your shots ask the handler for some site-specific tips.

The handler will know

- ✓ the current mood of each alpaca
  - ✓ if there is any aspect of the area that the alpacas are anxious about
  - ✓ which alpaca is best for particular modes of interaction
  - ✓ what resources may be needed – e.g. food treats, extra-long leads etc
  - ✓ whether subject managed leads would be appropriate given the setting risk assessment
  - ✓ whether the desired shot would be better with the alpacas kushed or standing
  - ✓ how best to achieve your desired interaction in a safe, calm and efficient manner
2. Clearly describe to the handler/s the shot/s you would like to capture.
  3. Ideally it is preferable to get shots where the alpacas' ears are upright and forward as this reflects confidence and curiosity. Ears pinned backwards can (but not always) be a reflection of a more 'uncomfortable' state of mind.
  4. The must-have shot – an 'alpaca kiss' is relatively easy to capture if you are ready. In general, it will happen early upon first meeting. The 'kiss' is alpaca initiated when the subject hums and has their head low and projected somewhat forward toward the alpaca. The 'kiss' is momentary and is simply a very soft and brief meeting of respective noses.
  5. Regardless of where you are and what shot or perspective you are trying to get, you and your colleagues need to move very slowly. Alpacas have excellent vision, even if you make a sudden move 1km away they'll see it!
  6. Please don't hesitate if you need to ask the handlers to move a bit further out of shot or to lower their hand etc. They'll go as far as they dare without 'breaking' the scene. The handlers are the alpacas 'safety/comfort blanket' and the alpacas will always want the handler to be near-by.
  7. Whether a subject can be given independent control of an alpacas' lead will be at the total discretion of the senior handler and dependent on the nature of the subject, setting and function.
  8. Alpacas do not like to be held in a hug or forced by the lead. It may be possible though for subjects to touch and stroke the alpaca depending on the alpaca's temperament at the time.
  9. Quite often handlers will 'break' the alpaca from a scene and then circle back to the scene in order to 'reset' and initiate a 'new' interaction moment – if they do, be ready, the magic moment will be brief and typically happen within the first few second of the re-introduction.
  10. Don't park your head or \$20K camera near the back end of an alpaca – they can kick out hard and fast with their hind quarters. Also, for this reason avoid touching the back half of an alpaca.
  11. Keep in mind that non-interactive shots can make for a gorgeous shot e.g. grazing in the background, kushed near-by or being led by the subjects.





12. Note that most of our alpacas will kush (sit down) on demand. This can make for a very relaxed and intimate scene. It can be a good way to settle the alpacas if they are a little unsettled or distracted.



13. Alpacas love being with other alpacas. If there are two or more alpacas at a function have them work together. You'll have little joy if you try to have them separated by more than 10m.
14. Be patient and trusting. We'll know the likelihood of pulling off a particular shot. If we think there is little chance, or the opportunity has passed, we'll let you know.
15. The handlers can issue food treats when needed to facilitate interaction. This strategy is usually reserved for the latter half of a session. Alpacas can find bouquets and boutonnieres quite attractive (to nibble) – this can be used to promote interaction.

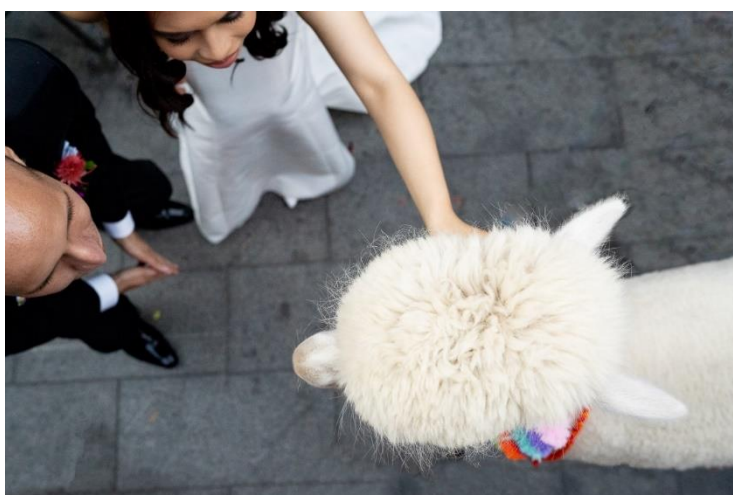




16. Taking the image from down at alpaca level can afford a perspective that permits the emotion of each of the participants to be captured.



17. Alpacas get a little unsettled around dust. So, if possible, photo sessions before the 'pumas come out to hunt' is best.
18. We encourage you to be creative. Let us know if you would like to capture images from behind, from afar, from above or one reflected in the alpaca's eye.



19. Don't forget the dress and the button on the suit! It makes a big difference. Perhaps allocate it as someone's job to manage and lay the dress during the photo shoot session.





20. Sit down and pucker up! The use of an allocated garden or love seat is an efficient and fun way to facilitate photo opportunities for your guests.

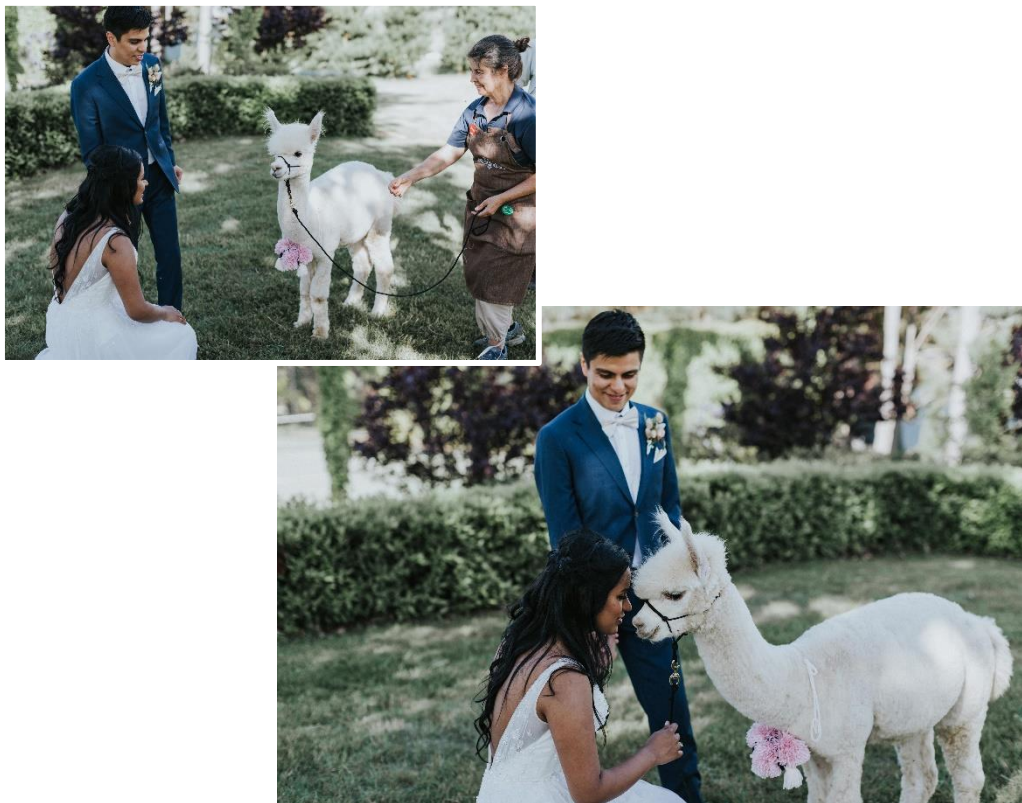




21. Yes – a shoot inside is fine, as long as the host venue is fine with it. Don't buy them cocktails though, regardless of what they may whisper in your ear.

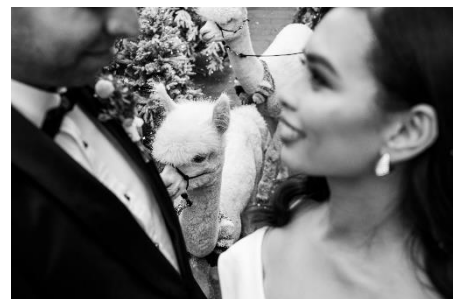
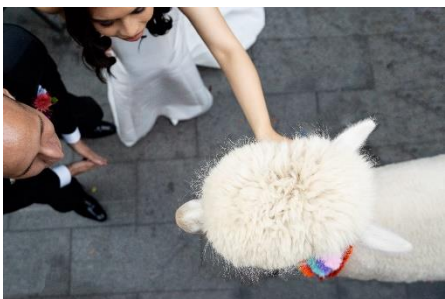


22. Be flexible. Roll with it ..and oh, did we mention - BE READY, the 'kiss' happens upon first meeting.





"Don't shoot what it looks like.  
Shoot what it feels like."  
- David Alan Harvey



Please give us a call if you have any questions?