

# PERFECT days

From strawberry jam bubbling on the stove to doorstep sandwiches at silage time, we're lovin' summer in the country, writes **Maria Moynihan**

## MY COUNTRY LIFE

### Eunice Power

**S**ummer is wedding season for catering queen Eunice Power, but childhood memories of feeding the 'silage men' on the family farm in Co Waterford still linger.

"When I was 12, my mum was in hospital and myself and my sister had to feed the silage men. I'll never forget the mountains of potatoes we had to peel, and it took two of us to lift the brisket of beef in and out of the Aga. The minute lunch was over, we'd start on the ham sandwiches for tea, and on the final day, when the silage was done, out went the large bottles of stout. Even though my husband, Edmund, is a farmer, I avoid silage as much

as I can these days. July and August are very busy with weddings and events. Some days we will start at 7am and it could be 2am when we get home. But there is always a small thrill when we get our ingredients, and no menu is ever the same. Last August, for example, we made a beetroot wedding cake with a black-currant butter-cream icing, decorated with nasturtiums.

"The weddings we cater for all have one thing in common: the single-mindedness of our clients to get exactly what they want on the food front. While we're not wedding planners, if anything goes wrong on the day, everybody is looking at the caterers. And in Ireland, the idea of having ice creams on the lawn can quickly turn into icicles on the lawn. One time, we were doing a wedding in a farmyard and the couple thought, 'We'll have the drinks

outside,' but on the morning it was lashing. With the help of a florist – and lots of raffia and bales – we used the milking parlour instead. You always have to have a plan B.

"If I'm having people over for dinner in summer, I'll do a butterflied leg of lamb on the barbeque and salsa verde, maybe with some new spuds dug up from the garden. But if my hand was turned to cater for the silage men? It would have to be a stew with Dungarvan Black Rock Irish Stout and John David Power's ham, on big thick slices of Barron's batch bread." ❀

[www.eunicepower.com](http://www.eunicepower.com)



Picture: Shane O'Neill



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#### TRY

Give a tired piece of furniture a new lease of life with an **Annie Sloan** chalk paint workshop at Forget Me Not, Clonmel. Workshops also cover other up-cycling techniques, including découpage, texturing and gilding, and take place once a month, from 10am-4pm, at €80. For upcoming dates, call 052-6189-745.



#### TASTE

Dolloped on a fresh-baked scone, rolled into a roulade, or just spooned out of the jar, this award-winning lemon curd from Stamullen's **Big Red Kitchen** is made with real Irish butter, free-range eggs and fresh lemon, at €4.50. Visit [www.bigredkitchen.ie](http://www.bigredkitchen.ie)

