

Northern Vermont & New Hampshire

Weddings



*The 2015 Bridal Guide from
The Caledonian-Record, The Orleans County Record
& The White Mountain Record*



THE GAUDETTEs

Sarah, 28, and Pete, 28, of Franconia, N.H.

Wedding date: Jan. 25, 2014

Budget: \$36,000 for 190 people

Venue: The wedding and reception were at the Mountain View Grand Hotel in Whitefield, N.H.



Sarah & Peter

Our Couples

THE BIGELOWs

Crystal, 30, and Dan, 32, of Lyndonville, Vt.

Wedding date: Sept. 13, 2014

Budget: \$8,000 for 320 people

Venue: The wedding was at North Congregational Church in St. Johnsbury, and the reception was at Fenton Chester Arena in Lyndonville



Crystal & Daniel

THE ANANs

Laurie, 27, and Jimmy, 22, of Littleton, N.H.

Wedding date: June 14, 2014

Budget: \$5,000 for 75 people

Venue: The wedding was at Faith Bible Church in Littleton, N.H., and the reception was at the Littleton Opera House in Littleton, N.H.



Laurie & Jimmy

THE BOUTINs

Gillian, 28, and Daniel, 34, of Lyndonville, Vt.

Wedding date: Aug. 3, 2013

Budget: \$12,000 for 130 people

Venue: The wedding was at Lake Willoughby in Westmore, Vt.



Gillian & Daniel

We got dozens of entries in our bridal guide contest. We've selected a few couples to give you a behind-the-scenes peek into their weddings.

THE CARPENTERs

Lindsay, 30, and Brandon, 32, of Lyndonville, Vt.

Wedding date: June 28, 2014

Budget: \$17,000 for 150 people

Venue: The wedding and reception were at Pavilion in the Pines in Lyndonville, Vt.



Lindsay & Brandon

THE RISTEENs

Bridgid, 28, and Christopher, 30, of Lyndonville, Vt.

Wedding date: Aug. 16, 2014

Budget: \$45,000 for 160 people

Venue: The wedding and reception were at Windy Ridge Apple Orchard in North Haverhill, N.H.



Bridgid & Chris

THE PULVER-GAILLARD / BATALIONS

Heather, 30, and Philip, 31, of Burlington, Vt.

Wedding date: Aug. 31, 2014

Budget: \$26,000 for 128 people

Venue: The wedding and reception were held at Highland Lodge in Greensboro, Vt.

The name: Heather grew up with a hyphenated last name and often went by the nickname "HPG." Now she can't decide whether to keep her nickname or switch to a name that will be easier in the business world.



Heather & Phillip

THE HOWARDs

Meagan, 31, and Spencer, 25, of Hardwick

Wedding date: Oct. 4, 2014

Budget: \$22,000 for 240 people

Venue: The wedding and reception were at the Barn at Boyden Farm in Cambridge, Vt.



Meagan & Spencer



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ON THE COVER

Crystal and Daniel Bigelow, the winners of this year's Bridal Cover Contest, knew each other as high school students but didn't begin dating until they met again as adults.

Read more about our cover-winning couple on page 8.

Winning cover photo by Jordan Royer



PHOTO CREDITS

Our sincere thanks to the couples and their photographers for allowing us to use their photos in this publication.

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Anan -- Liane Librizzi | Boutin -- Randi Lee Photography |
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| Bigelow -- Jordan Royer | Carpenter -- Jacob Grant Photography |
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Meagan & Spencer

We met playing co-ed softball against each other. I had pretty recently gotten out of a serious relationship and I met Spencer and he was very persistent on wanting to go out on a date with me. I said no on probably five different occasions. I had a conversation with my mom who said, 'It doesn't matter how recent something was. You deserve to continue on with your life and he obviously wants to take you out. If you reciprocate those feelings at all, you should go regardless of what anybody else thinks. And I thought, if my mom approves, I guess it's okay!

We met on Match.com. Neither of us had been on Match for very long.

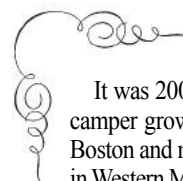
Whenever we talked, it felt like we were talking to our best friend. We knew everything about each other.

We were supposed to go out one time and he had gone skiing that day. He said, I'm really tired. What about tomorrow night? Little did I know that he was just really nervous!

We finally went on a date and we just knew this was it. That was five years ago.



Sarah & Peter



It was 2004 and I was a counselor at a camp where I'd been a camper growing up. One of my good friends went to college in Boston and met Phil. He had been a counselor in a different camp in Western Mass and she brought him to our camp so we were both counselors.

Fourth of July is when we first kissed. We were having a bonfire and we'd go out to get firewood to keep the fire going. I wanted to kiss him so I organized with my girlfriends that Phil and I would be paired up as the last two people to go get wood.



Heather & Phillip



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I knew I would love you...

Laurie is 27 and Jimmy is 22. This is the story of an unusual age match-up... and why it works for them, as told by Laurie.



I never thought I'd end up with a younger guy!

Jimmy's dad is the pastor of our church. Jimmy was away at college in California and I had returned to Littleton. His parents were like a second set of parents and mentors to me. There's a mini apartment in their basement and they opened their home to me so I could save for an apartment of my own. I was there for just over a year.

Jimmy came back from college that spring in May. When he came back I noticed how he had matured into a handsome guy. But I thought, no I'm being crazy!

We developed a close friendship when I lived there. We would watch TV after dinner and chat about life. I remember Jimmy's dad said that eventually the space in between us on the couch got more narrow until we were touching.

It definitely took time because I seriously was battling inside if this was okay. And I didn't know how he felt about me.

He is a little more reserved and quiet. I thought he probably thought I was a crazy girl

who was too loud, too outspoken. I had to trust that if it was meant to be, it was going to take place. I prayed a lot.

He definitely was nervous, too. He was thinking, 'She wouldn't think of me that way.' He looked to his parents for their direction to know if it was okay with the age difference. He was asking God too.

We were basically experiencing the same things simultaneously but were afraid to say anything.

In April 2013 he finally asked me out. We were sitting on his parents couch watching a show. I was getting ready to move out a couple weeks later. He turned to me and said, 'I'm going to ask you something I've been wanting to speak to you about.'

I started sweating and freaking out. He said, 'I didn't want to make it awkward with you living in the same house, but I've really grown to really like you.' He asked me if I would be his girlfriend. He was so nervous.

My sister jokes and calls me a cougar. I know some people his age and they definitely are not in a place to be married. It really depends on the person and their mindset.

It definitely took some getting used to for everyone. The age difference really was a concern for my parents. I un-

derstand that. They wanted to make sure that I was making the right decision. But at the same time I was never so sure of something in my whole life.

I had a prior relationship and I thought we were going to get married. Now I think, WOW. I thought I knew then what I wanted.

In hindsight sometimes it's amazing what you learn in life.

Meagan and Spencer are a few years older than Laurie and Jimmy, but they have the same age differential: Meagan is 31 and Spencer is 25.

"That's now the way it traditionally is," said Meagan. "But the only person that it really bothered was me in the beginning. And I got over it really quickly. No else seems to have even blinked an eye. ... I knew almost immediately that he was who I was supposed to be with."



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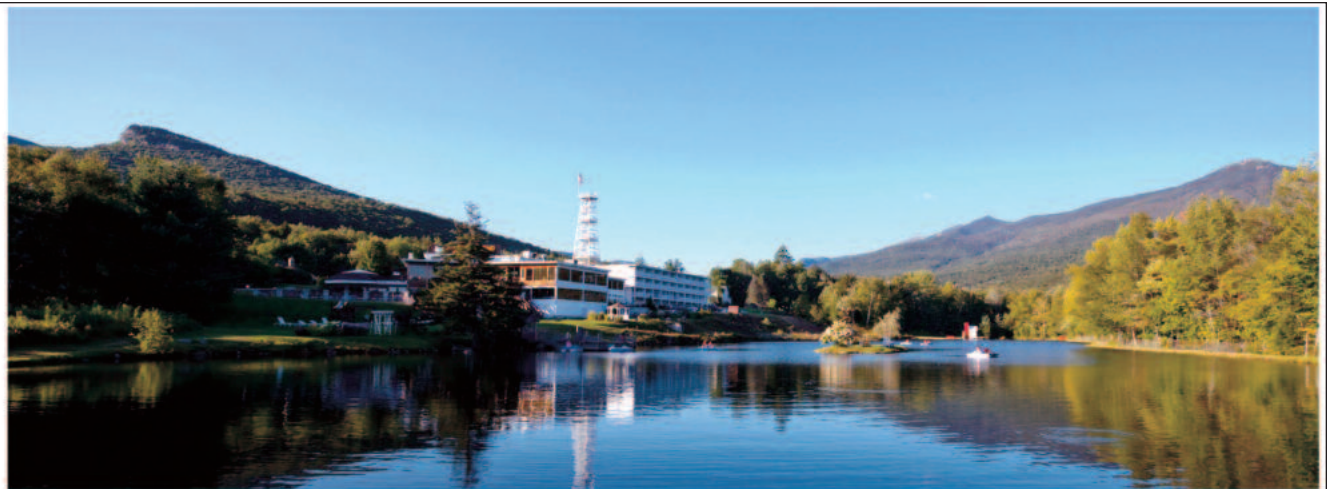
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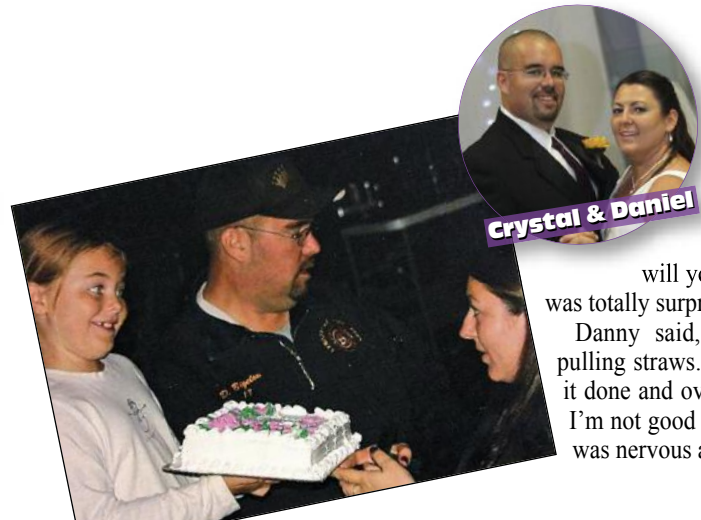
A ring is the traditional symbol of commitment. Here are some of the unique ways that our couples popped the question.

We had a house and two kids together. When I was pregnant with our second child my cousin got me a maternity shirt that said, "Now do you think he'll marry me?"

We'd been to a ton of family weddings and I was sick of going to everybody else's wedding. I kind of gave him the silent treatment. I'm a very vocal person so he asked, what was wrong? I said, 'I'm sick of it.' And he said, 'Well, let's pick a date.'

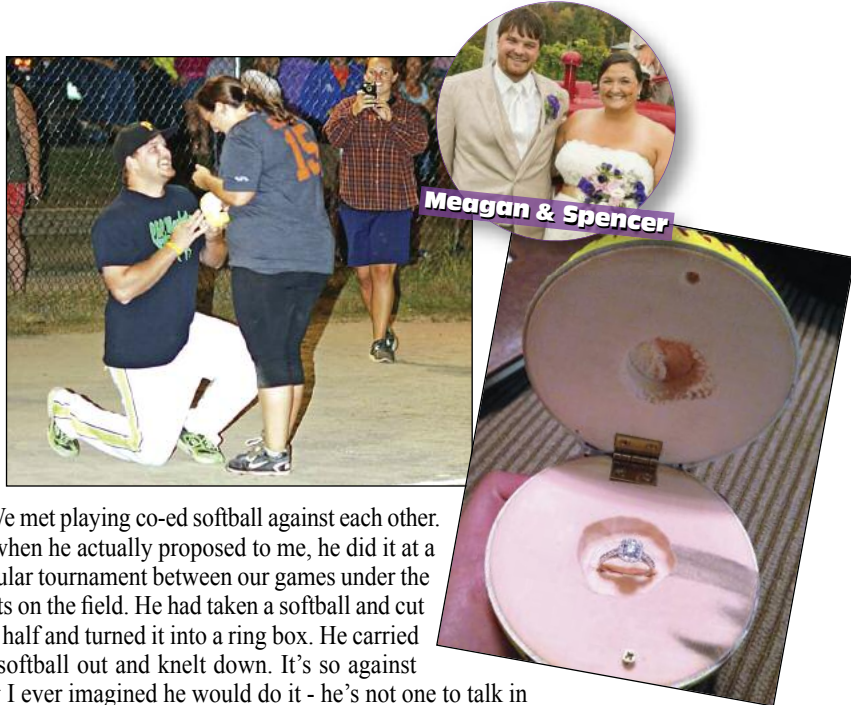


Gillian & Daniel



Crystal & Daniel

Danny is an official at Thunder Road and he asked me to marry him at the track with a cake that said "Crystal will you marry me?" I was totally surprised. Danny said, "I was really pulling straws. I wanted to get it done and over with because I'm not good with surprises. I was nervous as heck!"



Meagan & Spencer

We met playing co-ed softball against each other. So when he actually proposed to me, he did it at a popular tournament between our games under the lights on the field. He had taken a softball and cut it in half and turned it into a ring box. He carried the softball out and knelt down. It's so against how I ever imagined he would do it - he's not one to talk in front of big groups of people. There were about 500 people there!

He had talked to my whole family ahead of time and coordinated a bunch of our friends. There were a lot of people there who cared about us and knew what was going to happen. I was the only one who didn't know!



Heather & Phillip

Around the eight-year mark I started to feel like, okay I'm ready. I was tired of getting asked when we were going to get married. But even after all that time there was no pressure from my parents. And Phil's parents got divorced so they also were okay with us taking our time.

We had put an offer in on a house. We were closing on the house on Dec. 21, 2012. Phil had purchased the ring in June, so he had it for quite some time but was having trouble figuring out when to do it. He figured he had to do something pretty special since we had been dating for eight years. When we got the house it was the right time.

The day of the closing, Phil had taken the day off of work and was planning on getting Christmas lights to cover the back of the

house and porch. He'd enlisted a friend to help. But the closing took hours longer than it was supposed to!

Phil left under the guise that he had to go Christmas shopping because his mother was arriving the next day. He got to the house and realized that I had the key. They had to break in the window. They get everything situated and out on the back porch and it started pouring rain. He ended up electrocuting himself. You just can't make that up!

My parents were at a party and we called to tell them. My dad said, "Are you sure, Phil? It seems kind of quick!"



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I give you my heart...

Crystal and Daniel Bigelow were the winners of our 2015 Bridal Guide Cover Contest. Here is more about the lucky couple!



Crystal & Daniel



Crystal shows off the gift certificate she won at the St. Johnsbury Bridal Show.

What did you do to prepare for your wedding?

I went to the Bridal Show in St. Johnsbury. It was good, but it was a little crazy. It's like throwing a little tiny fish into a shark tank because they're all trying to get you! The one in St. Johnsbury is free and every vendor has a door prize. I won a gift certificate from Abbott's rental, which was helpful.

There were vendors for food, desserts, lodging and more. And there was also a fashion show. For a new bride who doesn't have any idea of what she's doing yet, it would be very helpful because it gives you an insight into things you wouldn't know about otherwise.



How did you find your dress?

I got my dress in May of the year before. Before I was even engaged! I picked it out with my future-mother-in-law before Dan even asked the question.

I'm a very broad shouldered woman and my mother-in-law said we were looking for a lady in a picture that had broad shoulders. I ordered online and it came in the mail and it fit perfect! I didn't have it hemmed or anything.

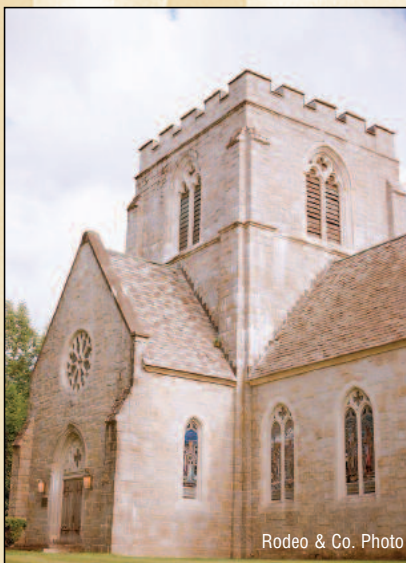
How did you know Daniel was the one?

He talked to his mom about me. His mom said he'd never talked to her about another woman. For the last couple years before

I met Danny, I was definitely in the mood to find someone that was serious. I hadn't been in a lot of serious relationships and I was ready to settle down and find that person.



Cyan
Magenta
Yellow
Black



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What was the most memorable moment of your wedding day?

Danny: Seeing my grandmother at the wedding. We weren't really sure she was going to make it. That's what got me emotional, seeing her walk through the doors. And then seeing my wife walk through those doors.

Crystal: Seeing Danny sob.

Danny: I had a tear or two but I didn't cry!

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Why did you choose to do your photos at the fire house?
 Danny: It's something I've always wanted to do because I've been on the fire department for the last 15 years. We wanted to have everything outside, but it was raining so we had to do everything inside. It was good. I liked it.
 Crystal: On the back of his fire jacket Danny has a thing that says Bigelow. He made one for me that says C. Bigelow. We pinned that to my dress and we have pictures of both of us wearing them.



How did you meet?

Crystal: We went to high school together but we didn't date then. As adults we had a mutual friend and we hung out at their house and ended up talking. I messaged him through Facebook and invited him to a party. We Facebooked for a day or two and he said, this would be so much easier if you just gave me your number. That moment I was like, holy cow. We just started talking about everything. I thought, this is it! This is my life.

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To have and to hold...

When Heather Pulver-Gaillard got the email that she was a finalist in our Bridal Guide cover contest, she let us know about a big coincidence. She said that she graduated from Lyndon Institute in 2002 with THREE of the other finalists!

We talked with all four - Heather, Meagan, Lindsay and Crystal - about their memories from high school and the coincidence that 12 years later all four of them got married.



Crystal

Did you attend any of the other weddings from the foursome?
 Meagan Howard was at my wedding, and I went to hers.
When you were in high school, what did you think about weddings?
 As a kid I had a dream of what it would be. I tend to dream that things are perfect because I'm a stresser. I get emotional when things don't go as planned.

Did everything go as planned at your wedding?

I worried about the wrong things! I should have worried about my husband crying at the altar! I wasn't prepared for that. The things that I was worried about the most, I don't even really know how they turned out.

Are you surprised that you all happened to get married around the same time?

The funny part is that the four of us were never really in serious long-term relationships. We were all single ladies and it seemed to happen for us all around the same time.



Above: Heather told us that another high school classmate was also in her wedding party. "Rachel LaCasse (left) also went to LI and graduated in 2002. She's getting married in September!"

How close were you with the girls in high school?

We were all friendly. Meagan came to my 16th birthday party. Crystal and I both managed the basketball team. Lindsay and I have since become quite close friends.

When you were in high school, what did you think about marriage?

I was very interested in my grandmother's wedding pictures and my aunt and uncle's pictures. My parents never got married and I knew I wanted to get married. They're still together and have certainly celebrated, but they never officially got married.

Why did you return to the NEK from Burlington to get married?

Once I moved away from Vermont and realized how special and unique it is - the venue and location - I wanted to celebrate it. I think I incorporated a lot more Vermont rustic items than I would have imagined wanting to in high school.



Heather



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Do you keep in touch with the other girls?

I went to Crystal's wedding - she and I were the closest. Lindsay played field hockey with me. We did a lot of student activities together - we were in volunteer club and student council. Heather and Crystal were both managers on the basketball team that I played on. We were in similar circles so we spent a lot of time together.

Now we all keep in touch on Facebook. I still work at Lyndon Institute.

When you were in high school, what did you imagine your wedding would be like?

I imagined more about who he would be than what the wedding would actually be. But I definitely imagined rustic and country themed and everything being local and in Vermont for sure. All of those things that

have always been important to me.

I imagined that he would be as handsome as he is!

What has life been like since you got married?

We were building a house at the same time we were planning a wedding. We've been homeless for the first few months of our marriage.

Are you surprised that you all happened to get married around the same time?

They're all fabulous women, so it doesn't surprise me at all that someone would take them off the market.



Meagan

How close were you with the girls in high school?

We were all really involved in the same things. I played field hockey with Meagan and Crystal. We had a great class and we were all really friendly.

When you were in high school, what did you imagine your wedding would be like?

It was more like, who is that going to be? You're in high school and I think all of us had plans to leave or go on to college. You're just thinking when you go to college you're going to meet all these other people and you'll meet this one guy. You make all this stuff up in your head. In some cases it comes out exactly as you saw it. Thankfully for me, I can't imagine a better person to be my husband.

What was planning your wedding like?

I am not a decision maker; it's not my strong point. Two other LI alums work in the wedding field. I really didn't know. I knew that I wanted to get married in Vermont and have an outdoor wedding but that was the extent of what I had thought about.



Lindsay

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From this day forward...

A wedding can take many months of planning for a single day of joy. Here's how some of our couples attacked the project.

We did everything together. It was good because we were paying for our wedding, so we definitely had to be realistic budget-wise. Our biggest thing from the beginning was that we did not want to go into any debt planning our wedding. And we didn't!



Laurie & Jimmy



Lindsay & Brandon

Brandon and I did the entire thing. I would not recommend it. It was fine up until the week of the wedding.

We went up to the Pavilion on Friday morning and decorated. But you have all these other things in the back of your mind going on and it's hard to stay focused

and make decisions. That was exhausting. And then we had to clean up ourselves. Thankfully so many of our friends came the next day to help. But it's kind of sad to tear down your own wedding.

If money was not an issue, I'd have somebody plan my wedding with input from us. It would be good to have someone delegate and make decisions about where flowers go and lights go.

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Gillian & Daniel

We're obviously a family on a budget. I gave myself a year and a half to get everything that I wanted done. The biggest thing to start with was finding where to have the wedding. We had talked a lot about doing it here on the family land, but the cost of a tent and a port-a-potty were unfathomably pricey so we decided not to.

We basically had our first real connection in Westmore. It seemed to be fitting to get married on Lake Willoughby facing the Gap on the beach.

For the reception, we found through friends that there was this great garage with big doors and they do weddings and anniversary parties. The price fit, the building was immaculate for being a garage. They allowed camping and because we had a lot of people coming and we'd be drinking, it was a great option for them to be able to stay right there.

It made it really special because everyone is starting to just have a good time, people have finally loosened up and the DJ is shutting down and everyone's getting ready to go home, but they're not ready yet.



Liz Shelton has been on both sides of the wedding experience in the past year: she owns An Affair To Remember Party Store in Woodsville, N.H., and works with couples as a wedding coordinator. This year her daughter Bridgid Risteen was a bride and it was time for Shelton to step back and be the mother of the bride while someone else was the coordinator.

“Even when I was at the reception, I saw things and I wanted to go do them,” Shelton said. “But there was someone else there saying, this is my job and that’s why you hired me. It was important to put my money where my mouth is.”

Advice for brides

Usually when I sit down with a bride and groom and other family members, I try to encourage them to select a theme or establish what their vision is. We do that first.

And then my job is to help them get from A to Z, whether I’m doing the work physically for them or they’re doing the work.

Most of the time the bride is a Pinterest person and has a lot of visions. One of the bits of advice that I give them is to make a list of the things they really love on



Bridgid & Chris



Liz Shelton stepped aside as wedding planner when her daughter Bridgid got married this year.



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I give you all of myself...

An alternative to doing all of the planning yourself is to work with a wedding coordinator. You might be surprised to learn that working with a planner might not even put a financial crimp in your plans.

I give them ideas of things that I’ve seen and they show me what they’ve seen and we talk about how to carry that out and what the timeline should be, where they should get their supplies from, how to do it. At the end, I carry out their wishes. I put together everything they wanted.

We can streamline things so you can enjoy your day and you aren’t running all around and your mom isn’t running all around. You’re still a part of it and helping to get things done, but you want to really enjoy the process of being a bride on the day. Go get your nails and your hair done, be with your bridal party and your family.

There’s a point where you need to step away and hand it over to someone else. My job is to do everything that you visualize and get everything in place for you.

In the long run I really feel that having an outside person, a coordinator, come in and help you costs you no extra money, because we know how to save money.

Pinterest and choose the three most important things so they don’t overwhelm themselves.

You can go in so many different directions and you get so much advice from all the people helping you that you can drown in all sorts of crafty projects.

A lot of the brides want to have control and they feel that if they have a wedding coordinator they don’t have control. It’s the exact opposite – we empower them to have the wedding they want and help them get there.

At first we talked about what our priorities were. Were our priorities having the right venue, the food, having all the guests we wanted? What is it we wanted? We both said that we wanted to make sure that everybody we want to invite can come to the wedding. We knew it was going to be a very high number.

Along the way we made decisions and I narrowed it down for him because he was busy building our house. I did all the research and narrowed it down to three options. Then he still had input in the process.

Pete’s cousin Gina was previously a wedding planner and coordinator. She was great at feeding me resources. She wasn’t pushing anything, but she knew where to look for everything.



Sarah & Peter



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For richer or poorer...



Sarah & Peter

Anticipated budget - \$30,000
Final cost - \$36,000

Where did you scale back in order to stay within your budget?

We were going to do late-night snacks. When we saw our budget we thought, is that really necessary? We cut back on those extra things. We didn't do an entire champagne toast for everybody there. We just did it for ourselves and had everybody have a drink or water. Little things that added up but weren't essential to making our day the way we wanted to be.



Anticipated budget - \$15,000
Final cost - \$17,000

Where did you allow yourself to be extravagant?

The food. I love food, and we've had experiences where there wasn't enough food or good food. We wanted people to feel full and happy.

And for our bar we brought in beer and wine and that was open bar. We wanted our guests to just have what they wanted to drink. Brandon and I bought all the water and sodas on our own throughout the year.



Lindsay & Brandon



Anticipated budget - \$5,000
Final cost - \$5,000

We were like, it's one day. And it will be the best day of our lives, why go into debt over it? We were able to pay for everything.

Did having a budget make planning easier or harder?

The budget totally saved me! I almost bought a dress that was over budget. But then I went a second time and found one I liked better under budget.

It can be done. It probably made planning a bit more difficult and stressful because of trying to stay so true to our budget. But we were pretty adamant about staying within our budget. We were also paying for our honeymoon to Mexico. We really wanted to make sure that after the wedding and honeymoon we didn't want to come back to huge credit card bills and being broke.



Laurie & Jimmy

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Anticipated budget - None
 Final cost - \$40,000 to \$45,000

We didn't have a budget. I was given a certain amount and then just whatever I needed, I got. I don't think we skimped on anything

Where did you allow yourself to be extravagant?

Definitely the flowers, that was important. The food was quite expensive. And the table settings.

Turn the page for more...



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Gillian & Daniel

*Anticipated budget - None
Final cost - \$12,000*

I didn't put a number on it, I just knew what I wanted to do. And I knew that if I did enough research I could find or make what I was looking for without having to pay out very much.

Were there places that you were especially frugal?

I decided there was really no point in spending \$500 in bouquets and boutonnieres. My bouquet was \$25 – it was very small. I bought all my girls paper umbrellas to hold instead of flowers. And my husband's uncle DJed for us. That was a huge cut in cost.

My wedding cake was through my babysitter. I paid her \$100 for it. It seems like it could have been a very redneck horror story, but it was absolutely incredible!



Meagan & Spencer

*Anticipated budget - \$15,000
Final cost - \$22,000*

What compromises did you make to keep your budget within reason?

There were things I wish I could have done like a photo booth, but I chose not to do that stuff. Instead we made our own "Polaroid frame" and let people take pictures with it.



Crystal & Daniel

*Anticipated budget - None
Final cost - \$8,000*

The good part was that we were able to pay as we went for everything. Every week we'd get something new, so it wasn't a big chunk of change all at once. We didn't have a budget but we knew we weren't going over the top. Our parents bought our food, which was our biggest expense.

Were there places that you were especially frugal?

We got awesome deals everywhere we went. We know a lot of people so we knew the right people to talk to.

*Anticipated budget - \$20,000
Final cost - \$26,000*

Where did you allow yourself to be extravagant?

The photographer. Those are such important pictures and what people who haven't spent money are really disappointed most by.

The dress was also pretty important. And food and beer. But we only did wine and beer, no liquor. That really helped.



Heather & Phillip

For the brunch, Phil's Mom brought up all these bagels from New York and my parents made scrambled eggs and bacon. It was really low key. And the Highland Lodge, they're semi-retired, so they don't have the restaurant open any longer. You can bring in all your own food. It was very DIY and everyone came together and helped out. It was amazing – it takes a village to throw a wedding!



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Wedding Budget Checklist

	Budgeted	Vendor Estimate	Actual		Budgeted	Vendor Estimate	Actual
Apparel				Photography/Videography			
Bridal Gown	_____	_____	_____	Formals	_____	_____	_____
Veil/headpiece	_____	_____	_____	Candids	_____	_____	_____
Alterations	_____	_____	_____	Extra prints	_____	_____	_____
Bride's shoes	_____	_____	_____	Photo albums	_____	_____	_____
Bride's hosiery	_____	_____	_____	Videography	_____	_____	_____
Bride's garter	_____	_____	_____	Other	_____	_____	_____
Jewelry	_____	_____	_____	Total Photography:	_____	_____	_____
Groom's suit	_____	_____	_____	Music			
Groom's shoes	_____	_____	_____	Ceremony music	_____	_____	_____
Engagement rings	_____	_____	_____	Cocktail-hour music	_____	_____	_____
Wedding rings	_____	_____	_____	Reception music	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____	Sound system rental	_____	_____	_____
Total Apparel:	_____	_____	_____	Dance floor rental	_____	_____	_____
Flowers/Decorations				Other	_____	_____	_____
Bridal bouquet	_____	_____	_____	Total Music:	_____	_____	_____
Bridesmaid bouquets	_____	_____	_____	Favors & Gifts			
Boutonnieres	_____	_____	_____	Hotel gift bags	_____	_____	_____
Corsages	_____	_____	_____	Attendant gifts	_____	_____	_____
Ceremony flowers	_____	_____	_____	Bride/groom gifts	_____	_____	_____
Flower girl buds	_____	_____	_____	Gifts for parents	_____	_____	_____
Ring pillow	_____	_____	_____	Gifts for readers, etc.	_____	_____	_____
Pew decorations	_____	_____	_____	Other	_____	_____	_____
Table decorations	_____	_____	_____	Total Gifts:	_____	_____	_____
Reception decorations	_____	_____	_____	Stationery			
Lighting	_____	_____	_____	Save the date cards	_____	_____	_____
Candles	_____	_____	_____	Invitations/RSVPs	_____	_____	_____
Balloons	_____	_____	_____	Programs	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____	Seating place cards	_____	_____	_____
Total Flowers:	_____	_____	_____	Menu cards	_____	_____	_____
Reception				Thank you notes	_____	_____	_____
Venue rental	_____	_____	_____	Postage	_____	_____	_____
Table/chair rental	_____	_____	_____	Guest book	_____	_____	_____
Food	_____	_____	_____	Reception napkins	_____	_____	_____
Drinks	_____	_____	_____	Calligraphy	_____	_____	_____
Linens	_____	_____	_____	Other	_____	_____	_____
Cake	_____	_____	_____	Total Stationery:	_____	_____	_____
Favors	_____	_____	_____	Other Expenses			
Staff and gratuities	_____	_____	_____	Wedding coordinator	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____	Rehearsal dinner	_____	_____	_____
Total Reception:	_____	_____	_____	Engagement party	_____	_____	_____
Ceremony				Showers	_____	_____	_____
Site fee	_____	_____	_____	Salon appointments	_____	_____	_____
Officiant fee	_____	_____	_____	Stag/hen parties	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____	Brunch	_____	_____	_____
Total Ceremony:	_____	_____	_____	Hotel rooms	_____	_____	_____
Transportation				Other	_____	_____	_____
Limousine rental	_____	_____	_____	Total Other Expenses:	_____	_____	_____
Out-of-towners	_____	_____	_____	GRAND TOTAL:			
Parking	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Total Transportation:	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

For warmer or colder...

One bride took photos to a whole new level when she scheduled outdoor formal photos for their winter wedding.



Sarah & Peter

Obviously with a winter wedding, we're going to be outside to have winter pictures. I don't care what the weather is going to be! It was 20 degrees and windy that day. We'd go outside for 15 minutes, we'd go inside and get hot chocolate and hot cider and kept going back in and out. The girls wore thermals underneath their gowns. And I had thermals under my gown too. I gave them boots to do the walking.

We didn't take our flowers out because they were wet on the bottom and we were trying to hold them at the bottom and they were frozen.

The guys weren't as prepared but they were troopers. It was fun. The pictures we got are so hilarious and so worth it!

I wouldn't change it for anything.



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Meagan & Spencer

Cake, cupcakes and assorted sweets – Bentley's Bakery and Cafe, Danville, Vt.



Crystal & Daniel

DJ – Jeremy Lawrence (of the Packing House)
Flowers – Purchased flowers from A Daisy Daze and arranged them themselves

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"I couldn't make a decision for anything. She just took my whole vision right out of my head without me even saying it. She was fantastic."



Sarah & Peter

Flowers - EH Floral, Littleton, N.H.



Heather & Phillip

Tent - Under Cover Tents in Bradford
Cheese display - Jasper Hill, Greensboro

"They don't really advertise it, but if you speak with [Shaw's] florist, they do it a lot more often than you would think. ... [they] let us look through all these huge boxes filled with flowers. So my mom, the night before the wedding, she made all our bouquets, all the center pieces, everything."



Laurie & Jimmy

Flowers - The Antique Rose, Woodsville, N.H.
Desserts - Becky's Baked Goods, Bath, N.H.
Photography – Meg Hamilton of Rodeo & Co., Landaff, N.H.

Hair styling - Tempting Hair Designs, Woodsville, N.H.
DJ – Phil Rivera of WLTV, Littleton, N.H.
Gowns - Betty Dee Fashions, Berlin, N.H.
Flowers – Shaw's Supermarket, Littleton, N.H.



Lindsay & Brandon

Food – Market Café, St. Johnsbury
Bar - Phat Kats, Lyndonville
Photography – Jacob Grant, Bethlehem, N.H.
Gowns - Needleman's Bridal, Newport



Bridgid & Chris



Gillian & Daniel

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To love and to cherish...

Every year we see a different trend in the photos and stories. This year it was groomsmen (women who stand with the groom) and bridesmaids (men who stand with the bride).



Meagan & Spencer

Spencer and Morgan grew up together in Hardwick. Their families knew each other well and the kids spent the summers together because Spencer's mother was a teacher and had the summers off. She kept the kiddos entertained, playing sports, exploring and playing outside in the woods. Spencer and Morgan remained extremely close, helping each other build their new homes, playing co-ed softball, and more. When Spencer was asking friends to be a part of our special day, there was no question that Morgan would be his Best Woman, regardless of the traditional gender lines.

Brandon and I didn't have a traditional wedding party. Instead we had our brothers stand up with us and our sisters gave readings. The picture of him holding a bouquet is hilarious - it will certainly be used for ammo later in his life. Or maybe it is already ammo for all the annoying things he did when he was little!



Lindsay & Brandon



Every Gown Has a Story...



Photos by KingdomWeddingPhotography.com

Nelia longed to incorporate her late mother's wedding dress into her own. She came to Tara Lynn Bridal with some ideas and her mother's gown. Tara Lynn helped Nelia choose an affordable wedding dress style and thoughtfully trimmed Nelia's wedding dress with lace from the bodice of her mother's gown.

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Jen was one of my husband's roommates for about three years. She came bridesmaid dress shopping with us. I knew the boys would be wearing a charcoal grey suit so I felt like Jen should be in the same color. We picked out the bridesmaid dresses and found that the same dress could be in grey as well. I wanted Jen to feel girly even though she wasn't standing on the bride's side.



Heather & Phillip



Bridgid & Chris

Haley is a very good friend of Phil's and it meant a lot to have her be a part of the celebration. She and I are also friends, but it made more sense for her to be with him. My only request was that she did not wear the same dress as the bridesmaids because I didn't want her to look like she walked to the wrong side. Finding a dress to match the suits was quite difficult, but we found something she was comfortable in and looked good. Phil never called her a groomsmaid or groomsman, she was a groomsman just like all the others.

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Today and always...

Many couples decide to do a lot of their wedding preparations DIY (do-it-yourself). Some found that it saved them money, others...well, not so much.

My sister and I baked hundreds and hundreds of different types of cookies a week before the wedding and we froze them. We thawed them the day before, and after the rehearsal dinner she and I went to the Opera House and set up a big cookie buffet with different jars and displays with little chalkboards explaining, "Made with love by the bride and her sister."

All the decorating for the reception. Both of our families – everyone chipped in and helped and did the hors d'oeuvres for the reception.



Laurie & Jimmy



Bridgid & Chris

From the time we got engaged until about three weeks before the wedding, I started collecting plates in three different sizes for our tables. They could be depression glass, Limoges, anything that was different, but it had to have pink, blue, or green in it. We mixed and matched all the patterns. Each person's setting had three plates. If one plate was depression glass, we'd do a plate that had a floral over it and then depression glass as the bread plate. It took me a year and a half to gather 500 plates.



Meagan & Spencer

I crafted a lot of things and made a lot myself. We were engaged for a year and I needed that amount of time to get it all done.

We made signs out of wine corks that we glued all together. We made giant tic-tac-toe boards out of slices of wood and hand-painted them with Ss and Ms instead of Xs and Os.

It didn't save me a dime. I think I spent *more* money!

Cyan Magenta Yellow Black



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People spend a lot of money on guest favors and they're really nice but they're not necessarily useful. We made a CD and called it the "Soundtrack Of Our Life." We chose a lot of songs that fit our relationship. We burned CDs with our playlist and labels with a picture of us.

And then we did the candy bar – who doesn't like candy? You can take it home and eat it! We picked our favorite red and white candy and did jars of that. We had these melt-away mints and Dove Chocolate. It was perfect because Dove had come out with burgundy red and snowflake chocolate. And then there were white chocolate peppermint M&Ms, so they fit our colors!



Sarah & Peter



My great-great-grandfather went to West Point and our family has his sword. It's a family tradition to cut any important cakes with a sword.

My cousin's husband created the doorway from a picture on Pinterest. I got a lot of beginning ideas there. I liked the idea and then I took it from there.



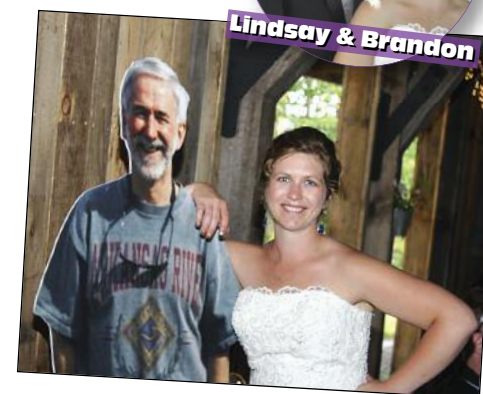
Heather & Phillip



My uncle was supposed to walk me down the aisle, but he'd had a stroke two years earlier. His health was fading (he died two days after the wedding). Because he couldn't be there, I made a joke that it would be funny if we got a cardboard figure of Sherm and had it up at the reception. My aunt ordered a six-foot-tall cut-out of Sherm. It even came out on the dance floor. It was fun and he was definitely there in spirit!



Lindsay & Brandon



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One of the biggest decisions a bride makes - other than her groom - is what she's going to wear on the big day.

You go in with a vision of what you want and then you end up with something completely different!

Pete texted me at exactly the same moment as I tried on THE dress saying, 'I love you.' And that sealed it.

I wanted red for the bridesmaids. I had dreamed of red for a winter wedding.



Sarah & Peter

I had 11 people with me when I went to pick out my dress. And my grandmother had flown up from Florida, so there was a pressure to get the dress that day. I tried on maybe eight dresses and there was one that fit really well. I liked it and it was really pretty. So I kind of settled.



Bridgid & Chris

It must have been a month after I placed the order for my dress, the bridal shop in North Conway posted this brand new dress online. I saw it and said, that's the one. I didn't even try it on, I just knew it was the one. I called the

dress shop and asked if I could cancel the dress.

I had to pay a cancellation fee, but it wasn't a problem. They ordered it in my size and I was absolutely thrilled with it.

There wasn't anything I wanted to change about it. It just felt me. It was vintage and simple and pretty. It had a little of everything - sparkle, tulle, a little bit of lace.

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Lindsay & Brandon

I went to Needleman's in Newport and brought my mom, aunt, mother-in-law and one of my best friends. I had it in my head that it was going to be bought that day because I didn't want to go again. I had no idea what I wanted and I'm not a girl who looks good in everything.

The dress I ended up with was the second one I tried on, but I tried on 30 more. I went back to the one from the beginning because it was different - not poofy, shorter with longer-in-the-back lace - perfect for an outside June wedding.

Of course you look around and everything is beautiful! There's tons of dresses and the lighting is nice and you see the pedestal. You go into that mode of wanting to try on everything. It was super exciting.

I came out in a dress and my sister was there and I got a little choked up. I said, I don't know if I'm crying because I want it or I can't believe it's happening. In the moment you're just overwhelmed with 'Wow, this is happening, it's so exciting.'

The dress was over my budget. I called Jimmy and he said, 'This is only your first time trying on dresses!' I was kind of pouty.

A few weeks later, my mom and my sister and I went up to Betty Dees Bridal (in Berlin, N.H.) I thought what do I have to lose?

We went up there and I was pleasantly surprised at the selection they had. I was impressed! The downstairs is all prom, bridesmaid and tuxes, and the upstairs is all bridal. The selection of what they had in my price range was far superior.

I tried the dress on and it was poofier on the bottom. I remember swishing it back and forth and it felt fun. I ended up getting my dress for \$459!

My mom and I purchased some material from Walmart - mesh netting - and made my veil. She glued and sewed it into a little comb or pick.



Laurie & Jimmy



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Wherever we may be...

Each couple had different considerations in picking venues. Here are some stories about what mattered to them.



Sarah & Peter

Sarah and Peter chose to have their winter wedding at the Mountain View Grand Resort in Whitefield, N.H. “We were looking around 250 before we even really finalized the guest list. So I had to find a venue that if everybody said yes, where could we have it? And then another thing was knowing,

if we’re getting married in the winter, we want it to snow. There’s no way I was going to get married in the winter and not have it snow. The inn fit that wintry theme.”

I wanted to get married in the Connecticut state park where we got engaged, but it’s years in advance to get on the list to be married there. I was getting frustrated because I wanted something that had a home feeling. My sister and I went on a car ride and we went up to Windy Ridge Or-

chards and I just kept saying, ‘Really?’

My dad said, ‘This makes me think of when you were a kid and it would be so sentimental.’ Chris and I decided together that it seemed like the right thing to do.

They’d never had a wedding there when we booked it!



Bridgid & Chris



Gillian & Daniel

Gillian and Daniel had their wedding on the beach at Lake Willoughby. “The wedding was in August and going to the north beach at Lake Willoughby at 4 p.m. could have been a very daunting task based on how many people were at the beach! That day it was showers on and off and 50 or 55 degrees. The beach was empty. There were probably three people there. We really scored on that.”

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Crystal & Daniel

Crystal and Dan knew they needed a big venue because they had over 300 people coming. But in keeping with their budget, they wanted to find a place that was also economical. They found the perfect option right around the corner.

After getting married at the North Congregational Church in St. Johnsbury, they headed to the Fenton Chester Ice Arena in Lyndonville for the reception. Danny played 16 years of youth hockey at the arena and has worked there on and off since.

“Danny grew up in the Fenton Chester Ice Arena, so that was the perfect place,” Crystal said.

They ended up only having to spend \$250 for the rental. “That’s usually people’s biggest expense,” Crystal said, adding that it was perfect for them. “We loved it.”

Timing worked for them as well - the wedding was a week and a half before ice went in at the arena. “They keep all the walls up, so it’s just a cement floor,” Crystal said.

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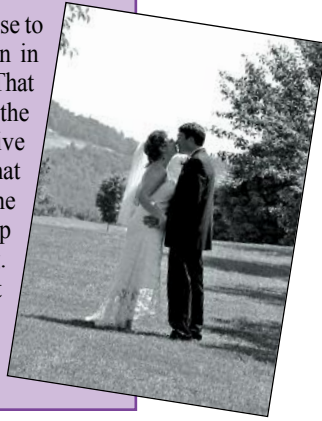


Jarod & Amanda Rogers



Lindsay & Brandon

Lindsay and Brandon chose to get married at the Pavilion in the Pines in Lyndonville. "That spot encompasses the beauty of where we live and I wanted to show that off to our friends. The view of Willoughby Gap and Burke was just breathtaking. We had a lot of friends who left the reception to just walk around and take it all in."



Heather & Phillip

Heather and Phillip met at a summer camp in Vermont and wanted their wedding venue to reflect that background. They chose The Highland Lodge in Greensboro.

"I could never imagine doing the manufactured catered hall," Heather said.

At \$500 per day, the rental fee was very reasonable. And the cost for their guests to stay on-site was also attractive: Heather explained that every room was \$125 per night, regardless of whether it slept two or six.

The Pulver-Gaillard family also has long-time ties with the Highland Lodge. "My dad worked in the ski shop for a number of years and my mom waitressed there," Heather said. "Two of my best friends waitressed there during high school, and I worked some shifts one Christmas vacation."

"It's close to my parents, but it's still really rural – no street lights, but still close to Greensboro and the store and the lake," Heather continued. "Because you could take over the whole place, we could really make it our own."

Laurie and Jimmy chose the Littleton Opera House in Littleton, N.H. Not only did they like the vintage style of the venue, they liked the \$300 rental fee as well. Then they realized that the vintage feel came with one minor drawback.

"It was a little tricky because they have the round tables and chairs. But we had to get linens and every single other thing you want. In a normal wedding

venue you don't have to think, 'What are we going to put the sugar packets in?' We had a big box of crystal platters and plates that my mom had. We made it pretty, but it was all our own stuff."



Laurie & Jimmy



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In the presence of our family and friends...

Having run the gauntlet themselves and come out successful, we asked our couples what advice they would give to others who are just starting the process of planning their wedding.

Find your priorities within each other before you even start. What do you both want on your wedding day? For Pete and I, it was to have everybody there. It didn't matter if it was top of the line food or the most expensive venue. That's what mattered to us and we kept reminding ourselves of that.

If you're fashion-oriented and want to focus on the dress, that's fantastic. Or the flowers, or the meal - whatever you want to look back and remember on your day.



Sarah & Peter

I would highly recommend that whatever vendors you choose are people that come with great references, but also understand your vision and what you want out of the day. I think that was one of the reasons that I didn't worry at all the day of. Make sure that the people you're working with care as much as they should.



Meagan & Spencer

It's amazing and fun and stressful at the same time. It goes by so fast. The ultimate goal is that it should be the most joyous day. Remember to not freak out at each other. Don't let the stress get the best of you. Remember it's all for the greater good. Ultimately, the day does fly by. Don't let the stress overtake the joy of the process.



Laurie & Jimmy

I definitely would say have a wedding planner, that definitely helps. That way you can spend time with your family.

We took pictures of all the tables, of how they were being set up, and that helped a lot. It was all organized - we couldn't set up until that morning and we had 22 tables to set up and they were all different. It was a good team of friends. We had a cleanup crew and we had a setup crew.



Bridgid & Chris



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Heather & Phillip

Something is going to go wrong. Accept it. Just know that you have to roll with some of it. You can't control the weather, you can't control who comes.

The woman who did the alterations on my dress, she said that when she got married her photographer had a heart attack the day before the wedding. They completely had to rely on everybody else's pictures. That put it in perspective. If there's something that's really, really important to you and you couldn't do without it, have a back up in your mind.

It's also really important to remember that it's YOUR wedding and even though you'll get pressure from family and friends to do certain things, you have to be happy with your decision.



Be creative and make it your own. It's amazing how many people will have an opinion about what you should do when you're planning your wedding. I'm not a cookie-cutter type of person. Just because it's in a book or in a magazine or on a website doesn't mean that's what you have to do. Make it your own so that it's special to you and has meaning for you.

Work together as much as you can so it's part of both of you and not just the bride. And also try not to do it all on your own.



Lindsay & Brandon



Crystal & Daniel

Try to make as many things as you can and make it simple. You don't need to spend a lot of money on little things. You don't have time on your wedding day to see how people interpret those things. Don't worry and stress over the little things.

You spend nine or 10 months planning on this and it's all over in a day. Step back at some point and see what's going on. It's cool to see that everyone is coming together for us getting married.



Gillian & Daniel

Listen to the advice people give you, but do what you want to do. It's going to be your wedding and hopefully you only get married once in your life. Make it the day you want it to be.

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One of my favorite parts was after the ceremony. The nerve-racking part was over and we were getting ready to take photographs. We were just standing out there with all of our wedding party and seeing how happy and excited everybody was. The day was finally here and it was genuine, pure happiness. It was really special.



Meagan & Spencer

I thee wed

Once the big day is done, we hope you will carry beautiful life-long memories with you. Here are the special moments our couples say stand out for them.

My mom had passed away. Everyone was telling me I'd have a rainbow at my wedding.

We sat down to eat dinner and Dan's best man pointed and said, 'Look! There's your rainbow!' I yelled for the photographer. We took off running outside so she could get a good picture. You could almost see the whole thing.

It definitely made me feel like my mom was watching. And I mean how often do you get to marry someone and get a rainbow in the same day? It just felt like if there was anything else that could happen that day to make it a perfect day for us, it happened.



Gillian & Daniel

It was really special to dance with my dad and amazingly enough we both got through it without crying.

I had [DJ] Phil Rivera put a track together with Frank Sinatra's "The Way You Look Tonight," and then it went into "Sweet Home Alabama." It's a joke between my dad and I. He loves that movie - he loves the humor in it. It was honoring the humor between us. I wanted to have fun with my dad and laugh in front of everyone. That's how we are together.



Laurie & Jimmy

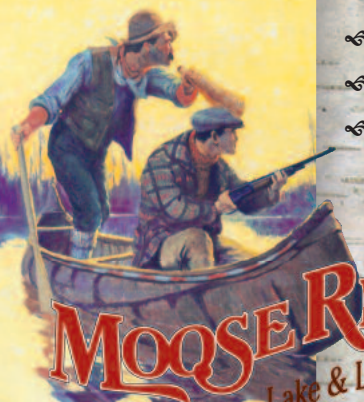


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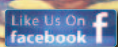
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Several of our couples said their favorite memories are of taking a few quiet moments for themselves during their big day.

After Pete and I got married, we left the ceremony on a horse and sleigh. Everybody went up to the reception. Before they introduced us, we went upstairs to the presidential suite and we just looked over everything. Before we even entered everything and saw everybody, it was just the two of us. *Okay we're married. Now let's go celebrate.* That was pretty cool.



Sarah & Peter



Heather & Phillip

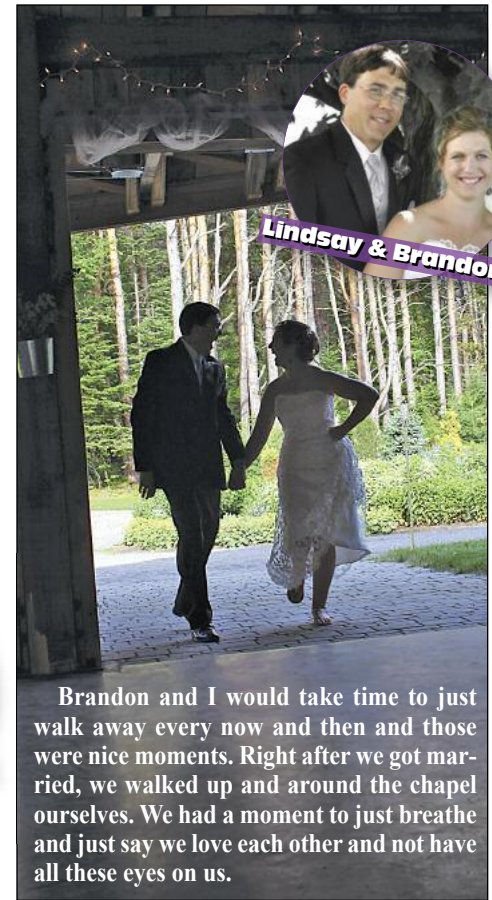
During the reception just step back and take a moment to look at what's going on. Look at what's going on *for you*. Look in the tent and see all the different worlds mixing.

"We had a room at my sister's house that we had decorated with special things from my childhood and my youth. Going in there with my mother and my sister was a really important moment for me.

We also did a warming of the rings. Our best man had the rings and they were passed across the bridesmaids and through the first row of moms and dads and then through the groomsmen. Each person held the rings and was meant to give us their warm thoughts before we got them.



Bridgid & Chris



Lindsay & Brandon

Brandon and I would take time to just walk away every now and then and those were nice moments. Right after we got married, we walked up and around the chapel ourselves. We had a moment to just breathe and just say we love each other and not have all these eyes on us.

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