

Dancing With Her







MODERN *rebel*

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Dancing With Her acknowledges the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation. We acknowledge the people of the Bundjalung Nation whose Land on which our company is located and where we conduct our business. We pay our respects to Ancestors and Elders, past, present and emerging. Dancing With Her is committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to society.

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WE FIT YOU

HELLO

Welcome to Volume Three

We did it, again!

We are both so proud to get out another volume of Dancing With Her magazine. With this third time hitting 'print', there is a part of us that feels like we have been able to break through this invisible glass ceiling that is making a print magazine - it's beyond incredible and couldn't be without the support of others just like you. We are so thankful you've found us.

In the last few months, we've had the opportunity to speak on the global stage about what inclusivity, diversity and representation all mean to us, and how that translates into the wedding industry as it changes around the world. As we grow, we can't wait to explore more diversity, specifically gender, body and cultural diversities.

We have been so thrilled to see weddings start to evolve, and excited to see Dancing With Her do just the same. Weddings are finally starting to become a celebration with a focus on the individual couple, and we are seeing more and more couples ditch stereotypical traditions and replacing them with their own twist that feels right to them as a couple. We consistently feel empowered by couples who share their stories with us.

From the day we launched Dancing With Her we wanted to create a safe space for people who identify with the publication to have community. We wanted people to feel represented and find wedding inspiration that is relatable to them because it's something we, as two newly engaged women, couldn't find. And with that, we welcome you to Volume Three, our proudest issue yet.

We hope that you love it just as much as we loved curating it for you.

Love,
Arlia & Tara



betsy & iya’s story began in 2008 when designer Betsy Cross made the leap from theatre arts to pursue her passion for jewellery design.

Every piece of betsy & iya jewellery is designed by Betsy herself and then produced in her production studio by a team of talented makers.

From fashion jewellery to their Fine Collection, every piece is designed with a story and wearability in mind.

The Fine Collection is inspired by love and connection. The collection features contrasting black and white diamonds and hand-carved details. Each of the rings match and fit together in a multitude of really interesting ways.

They are the perfect jewels for anyone that wants something just a little bit different.

www.betsyandiya.com



Hailing from the south end of the Gold Coast, Australian based ceramic artist, Frosina, from Pinksoy, is a wife and mother of two. Her work infuses soft raw femininity and sexuality into ceramic tumblers that are perfect for your morning coffee or to pot your favourite succulent.

Every piece is a celebration of women’s most soft bits in all their different shapes and sizes. Embracing the beauty in the imperfections (just like in real life), you will find a variety of different textures.

Pinksoy draws inspiration from her own body and the bodies of women across the world.

These little handfuls of delicately raw artworks are designed to be used daily, to make you feel empowered and to bring you enjoyment with the knowledge that your piece is one of a kind just like you!

www.instagram.com/pinksoy



Put your best wedding shoes forward.

Introducing, Parallel Shoes, a brand new gender-fluid, menswear-inspired, shoe line.

Founder, Melissa Welsh, was sick of finding the perfect pair of shoes only to find they weren’t in a size small enough for her. Parallel Shoes are intentionally designed for those with smaller feet, ranging from a women’s size 5-9.

Each pair is priced at US\$80 and handmade using 100% vegan materials. They’re sleek and come in neutral colour palletes.

And, with each pair sold, one dollar is given directly to support Los Angeles area LGBTQ+ programs.

Want to **WIN** a pair of Parallel shoes? One lucky person somewhere around the globe will- let it be you. Enter here;

www.dancingwithher.com/win

THINGS WE LOVE



The wedding planning journey can be simultaneously exciting and stressful.

Pollyanna Events want to make sure you have the essentials to plan your wedding successfully and without pulling your hair out. So, they've packaged together a little Pollyanna Planning Kit!

When you open the box you'll find a USB drive with over a dozen documents; a year-long planning checklist, tips to save money, day-of timeline, and many others! They all come with instructions, so you know how to tailor them to fit your wedding.

We also love that the kit is entirely gender-neutral and does not cater to one specific religion, so it's perfect for everyone.

Besides wine and a relaxing bath every now and then, this Kit will be your best friend during the planning process!

Malvi started as a personal challenge - to make a marshmallow with a flavour that could party, not just be a vanilla wallflower.

Inspired by summer bonfires, Girl Scouts, and experiences in top kitchens, Founder Laura Curtis whipped up incredible tasting mallows bound with shortbread cookies and sprinkled with toppings- and when we say incredible tasting, we really do mean it.

Laura named the new amply fluffy cubes of joy "Malvi", short for malvavisco which is Spanish for marshmallow. With flavours like Vanilla Salted Caramel, Raspberry Hibiscus, Fluffy Nutter, and Cotton Candy, Malvi lovers have banished bland marshmallows and will never look back.

And sure, they might be perfect for dessert bars and wedding favours, but we wouldn't judge if a few made their way into your tummy before the big day too.

We love a good confetti toss as you are making your way back down the aisle as married, but we don't like the environmental impact that paper confetti has.

If you dream of photographs with colours flying through the sky as part of your wedding album, never fear!

Everland Petal Confetti, based out of Australia, puts together some of the most beautiful collections of dried rose petal confetti we've seen. It's unique and includes the little details to make your first steps as newlyweds even more magical.

The flower confetti is all natural, real petal toss and each order is individually hand mixed and put together. That means you can design exactly the selection you want.

It's the little details for those once in a lifetime moments.

www.pollyannaevents.com

www.malvimallow.com

www.everlandfavours.com



ALANNAH & FRANCESCA

PHOTOGRAPHY BY NICOLA LEMMON PHOTOGRAPHY

www.nicolalemmon.com.au

MALENY, AUSTRALIA





It took a midnight meeting and some liquid courage for these two psychologists, who first met at work, to finally friend one another on Facebook.

A week later their first date ended in a romantic kiss in the rain, and when a goodbye at the airport, just a week after that, ended with a “I suppose I’ll be seeing you around when we get back” - it was the start of it all.

Fast forward five months and Chesca was starting to plan a proposal. It was instantly apparent that while they were each different in so many ways, together their relationship was fluid, it just worked. It was meant to be.

What followed that decision was a string of meetings with Warren, a local gemologist, and a secret video being recorded by Chesca, documenting everything that lead up to the proposal; well wishes from family and how their lives were about to change.

There were two proposals. One in Florence on their twelve month anniversary, the other, a little more dramatic thanks to some hot weather, was on Christmas morning. Wedding planning started, and they set a date – they had 18 months to plan their wedding day.

Maleny holds a special place in Chesca’s heart. When she moved to Australia at 15, her family would visit there. It reminded her of the home she’d left behind in the UK. Nestled just outside the small town sits Maleny Manor, a magnificent manor that boasts Sunshine Coast hinterland and ocean views. The manor held host to this bold, lush and luxurious winter wedding.

Deep reds, emerald greens, blacks and golds dominated the almost 1920’s inspired day. Lan would have liked to have had a few sneaky DIY projects. However, Chesca’s attention to detail (and Lan’s lack thereof sometimes)

meant that the two brides only took on a few small projects. Leaving most of the wedding day up to the creative professionals who helped bring together this perfect day.

They spent the night before the wedding apart. In separate spaces each surrounded by their family and friends. To make a moment of seeing each other for the first time special they asked their Dad’s to each partake in a first look before the ceremony. It’s a moment that will forever stay close to their hearts, fuelled with emotion, there wasn’t a dry eye.

Chesca and Lan wanted their wedding day to be a celebration of their love and specifically wanted the event to be free of rainbows and other stereotypical pride. For each of them, the fight towards marriage equality in Australia had shadowed most of their engagement. They wanted a day of commitment and love, one that should be seen equally regardless of their sexuality. However, mother nature had other ideas. Heavy rain began to clear moments before the ceremony, leaving prisms on every leaf; a glitter like effect across the entire grounds. And, as Chesca and Lan read their personalised vows to one another, a double rainbow appeared above them. A subtle reminder of the journey it had been to get to where they were.

As day turned into night Lan had just one more surprise for Chesca, a dapper suit she had custom designed, and a frighteningly hilarious rendition of Bonnie Tyler’s classic ‘Total Eclipse of the Heart’ to serenade her new wife with. A running joke between the two, who had been known to indulge in this particular song at Karaoke bars, had the guests in a chorus.

At the end of the song, Lan presented Chesca with a vintage pocket watch, a play on her Pop’s lifelong suggestion that the only worthy present was a gold watch and chain, Lan promising her new wife the most precious of gifts she had to offer – time.









Bridal Boutique A Bridal Affair, Jack Sullivan Bridal | **Cake** By Elizabeth & May | **Catering** Maleny Manor | **Celebrant** Jarrad Bayliss | **Ceremony Venue** Maleny Manor | **Cinematographer** Luke Bickley Studios | **Cufflinks** ASOS | **Entertainment** Ellen Reed | **Engagement Rings** Ringleaders | **Event Stylist** Love Birds Styling | **Florist** Mondo Floral Designs | **Furniture Hire** Love Birds Styling | **Gown Designers** Morilee, Jack Sullivan | **Guest Book** Paper Bound Love | **Hair** Hair by Nicola | **Invitations** Paperless Post | **Makeup** Natalie Hunter Make Up | **Photographer** Nicola Lemmon Photography | **Reception Venue** Maleny Manor | **Signage** Love Birds Styling | **Suit Designers** Hockerty.com | **Transport** Mystic Mountain Tours | **Wedding Favours** By Elizabeth & May | **Wedding Rings** Ringleaders

truvelle

www.truvelle.com







AMANDA & LAUREL

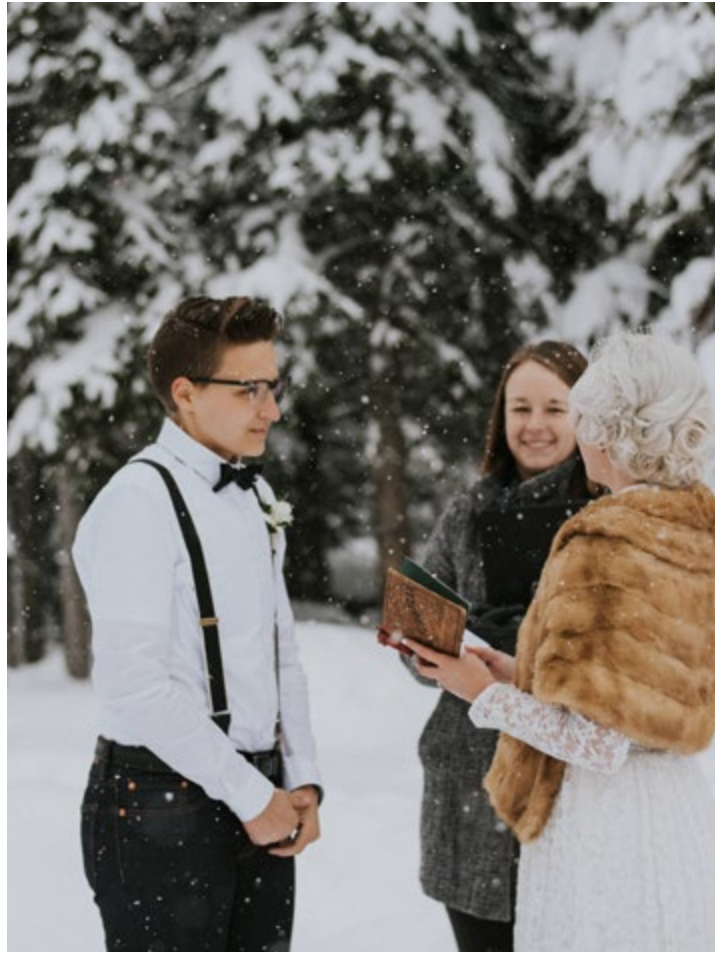
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SARA ROGERS

www.sararogers-photography.com

BANFF, CANADA









Back in early 2015, Amanda found herself in a new barista job at a local café. She would be replacing another barista, who happened to be Laurel, as she was heading over to Southeast Asia to study abroad.

Their journey together began on Laurels return to the United States, first as co-workers and quickly that relationship grew into close friendship. It wasn't long before that friendship developed into something so much more.

The first two years of dating was filled with adventure. The pair grew, as individuals and as a couple. They started a band together, The Evergreens, travelled to so many new and exciting places and created some unforgettable memories.

Amanda and Laurel have a favourite tree, one that holds significant meaning in their relationship. It's the tree where Laurel first met Amanda's pugs, Mr Bean and Miles Davis and it is where romance blossomed with summer movie dates together under the stars. A little over two years after they went on that first date together, Amanda asked Laurel, "will you marry me" under that tree. It was the perfect August golden hour, complete with a summer rain shower. Laurel replied, "yes". They each knew that a big wedding day wasn't them, rather an elopement somewhere outdoors in the mountains was more their style.

As fate would have it, some late night Instagram scrolling lead to photographer Sara Rogers. Amanda quickly fell in love with her perspective and her use of natural lighting. She also noticed that she had just posted a giveaway in celebration of Canada's 150th anniversary. With nothing to lose, but so much to gain, Amanda entered the day before the contest was over not thinking anything more of it.

Days later, an email appeared from Sara – "You are the winner!".

Beside herself, Amanda told Laurel that night who jumped into her arms, "well, I guess we're going to Canada!" they chimed in unison.

Their wedding day was spent in Banff, Alberta.

Wedding planning was stress-free, with just four key vendors; a celebrant, florist, photographer and hair and makeup artist, bringing the entire day together. Laurel found herself comfortable in a long sleeve, vintage-inspired, white gown while Amanda opted for a pant and shirt combination complete with black suspenders and bow tie.

Amanda and Laurel had planned with Sara to have their ceremony at the beautiful turquoise lake nearby. Unfortunately, a serious snowstorm interrupted plans, keeping them from hiking to the overlook. Not deterred by the wild weather, they found a clearing just off of the parking lot and decided, "let's do this!".

Surrounded by that tall, snowy evergreens, they each said their personal vows and began the journey to being a married couple. An afternoon was spent together exploring the natural landscapes of Canada, inside the forests, and amongst the grasses. Their photographer, Sara, there to capture each and every detail. Moody, dark florals a contrast to the white snow and dry landscape.

For Amanda and Laurel, they couldn't imagine a wedding together any other way. Their elopement meant they were able to completely put the focus on one another. Along the way taking mental notes to ensure that they will never forget the small, perfect, moments of that day.

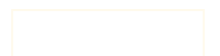




Florals Elements Floral Design | **Hair & Makeup** Jax Boivert and Tara Watts of The Pretty Haus | **Officiant** Jodi Hartung of Young, Hip and Married
Photographer Sara Rogers



SKETCH & ETCH
www.sketchandetch.com.au





HELLO, HITCHED IN PARADISE

*Contributed by Benjamin & Tarnie Carlyle, Hitched in Paradise
www.hitchedinparadise.com.au*

When your backyard happens to be the iconic Byron Bay, why wouldn't you choose to set up shop and pull together elopements for couples in the area? It's exactly what Benjamin and his wife, Tarnie, did.

Why do you do what you do every day?

How lucky are we to help create celebrations for loved up couples here in paradise? We get to work with some of the best vendors in the region, and our hearts are full of the beautiful moments we are witness to. It's such a high when it all comes together, and the couple wander off into the sunset, happily married.

Getting married doesn't have to be a \$30K experience! Don't get us wrong, we love a huge party just like everyone else, but not everyone has that kind of money these days. We provide an alternative to the 'traditional wedding experience', and so many of our couples have commented on how relaxed and fun their elopements were. As our business grows we find ourselves pinching ourselves, realising that this job is so amazing! I love looking back at our couples photo galleries and reliving all the good feels!

What is your key advice for couples who want to elope?

Keep it simple with your elopement plans, don't try to turn your elopement into a small wedding. The reason you're eloping is usually to avoid the stress and pressure of organising an event which involves too many other humans. Sometimes our elopements without any guests are that much sweeter. We think 10 guests is plenty to join in the experience, any more and it's getting crowded.

What's your advice on telling your loved ones that you've eloped/or you're about too?

Once you tell that 'one' friend or family member, you need to be mindful that they might not be able to contain the news. This can sometimes start a hamster wheel of their opinion towards your decision. If possible, only tell those that you want to come along and avoid telling others you know won't be able to keep your secret.

Unfortunately, sometimes this means not telling parents, siblings and besties. Ultimately, they will respect and appreciate your decision when you show them your gorgeous photos of your celebration.

What's the most memorable elopement you've pulled together?

Our Waterfall Elopement with Charlie & Mel, earlier this year has to be one of our more epic celebrations! In celebration of the new Marriage Laws in Australia, we found an adventurous couple and took them off the beaten path to celebrate their marriage. Charlie & Mel's love story was incredible, both being from opposite sides of the world and we loved that they were up for this idea, both being adventurous souls themselves. It was so simple. The girls wore thrift shop dresses, sharing their heartfelt vows as the ancient waterfall continued falling. It'll always be an elopment that was unforgettable for us.

The photos from Bird & Boy Photography take us back, with goosebumps, each and every time. We can't wait to head into the wilderness in the future for more adventure elopements!

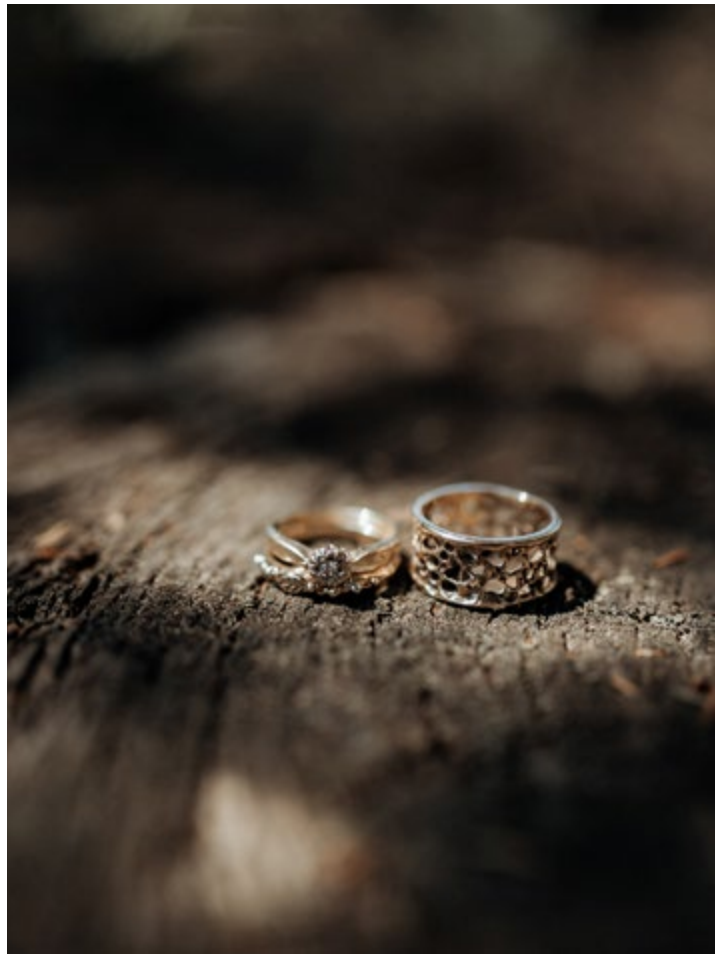


SARAH & SARAH

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANA GALLOWAY

www.anagalloway.co.nz

MISTLETOE BAY, NEW ZEALAND





Family and the outdoors are two loves that both Sarah and Sarah couldn't dream of having a wedding day without.

They met through a mutual friend, and it was quickly apparent that their shared love for hiking and being in nature would build a solid base to an incredible relationship.

There wasn't a formal proposal, instead, they each knew that they wanted to spend a lifetime with the other. They found themselves dreaming and planning their wedding, they mutually decided that it was a natural next step for them to take together. For Sarah and Sarah, it just felt right.

Sarah and Sarah narrowed their guest list down to 100, consisting of 70 adults and 30 kids. With so many friends and family coming together, some for the first time, it was important that the event created an opportunity for conversation so, planning a weekend-long wedding started.

They had fallen in love with the Queen Charlotte Sound a few years back while hiking the tracks through it. And, on remembering a few overnight stays at Mistletoe Bay is was decided, it was the perfect space to bring together their family and friends for the celebration.

The crystal clear waters and native bushland of Mistletoe Bay was transformed into a holiday venue; tents scattered the grounds, and everyone got involved in swimming, kayaking and lawn games.

The highlight of the weekend getaway was set to be the wedding of the Sarah's. A DIY affair, the entire celebration pulled together by Sarah and Sarah alongside the generosity of friends and family.

The lead up to the wedding was stress-free. Aside from an alteration gone

wrong, a dress that was taken up just a little too far, Sarah and Sarah's two and a half year long engagement meant there was ample time to plan things at a pace that was both comfortable and right.

Under an arbour draped in silk on Mistletoe Bay, surrounded by mother nature and their favourite people, Sarah and Sarah said their vows. They incorporated a ritual into the moment, partaking in a Celtic handfasting ceremony with Harakeke braided ties, a special link to one Sarah's Irish heritage. As each braided tie tied around their holding hands, a promise was made for their future.

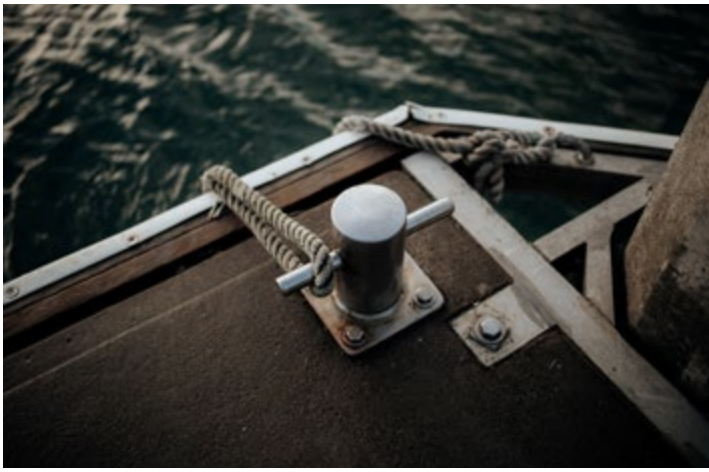
They each wore dresses that encapsulated their own personal style. Both soft in texture, Sarah's dark emerald green a perfect contrast to Sarah's soft cream gown. Two huge matching bunches of native florals, with hints of lavender, were carried by each of the newlyweds.

The carefree nature of Sarah and Sarah meant that on the day there were a few things that were overlooked and didn't go quite according to plan. While there might have still been plastic on some of the bouquets, one finger too swollen to accommodate a wedding ring and a few blank faces at moments where there was not clear direction, the day was unforgettable for all the right reasons.

Sarah and Sarah's wedding planning ethos of creating a wedding that they wanted for themselves, rather than one to please other guests, meant the day, and the entire weekend, was filled with everything that was important to them – their values, their style.

Mistletoe Bay Eco Village held host to the reception, a chance for everyone to let down their hair and put their best dancing on display before making the short stroll back to their tents to call it a night.









Bridal Dress Julian Danger, Shjark | **Catering** Jaks Island Catering | **Celebrant** Annie Leather | **Ceremony Venue** Mistletoe Bay Eco Village | **Earrings** Beehive Co-Op | **Entertainment** DJ Holger | **Flowers** Woodlea Floral Studio | **Hair & Makeup** Lucie Thompson | **Necklace** Benjamin Black Goldsmiths
Photographer Ana Galloway Photography | **Reception Venue** Mistletoe Bay Eco Village | **Sound Hire** Aham Sound Limited | **Stationery** Ben Mills, Minty Diamonds | **Tent Hire** FlexiTenz | **Wedding Rings** Louise Douglas Jewellers



DAMIEN MILAN PHOTOGRAPHY

www.damienmilan.com

BEAUTIFUL,

We are engaged

MARRY ME



HAZEL & JESS

Captured by Rebecca Frank
www.rebeccafrank.ca

I brought the engagement ring and then had a friend, who happened to be halfway across the country, look after it until I was 'ready'. I wanted to avoid any rash decisions and have the proposal well thought out. I called her Mother and asked for permission, followed by her Father and my parents. I packed a hiking bag, put our favourite love songs on a playlist and organised the hiking trail into the GPS. Then, almost nothing went to plan. We drove to the trail, it started to rain, and there were visible signs that wildlife were active close-by; cougars, wolves and coyotes to be exact. The backup plan was initiated. We turned back and went to a nearby waterfall. I set up a blanket and charcuterie board, put on the music and set up the GoPro. We were the only ones there as the sunset. As it was Thanksgiving weekend, we asked each other to name three things that we were thankful for, all my answers alluding to what was about to become my reality. I asked Jess to stand near the waterfall, I wanted to get a photo of her and our dog before it got dark. I will never forget the look on her face when she turned and saw me on one knee. It was perfect.

KAWAASKI
CANADA



LISA & PRUE

Captured by Dean Snushall Photography
www.deansnushallphotography.com.au

The proposal was a disaster. I am an awkward person and an over-thinker. I'm also not much of a big planner. Before I knew it, an engagement ring was ready, and I wasn't. I decided to just roll with it. We were flying out for a friend's wedding in Bali on Saturday, and the rings were ready the Thursday before we left – I knew it was a sign, we were meant to get engaged in Bali. We flew in, and I was an absolute nervous wreck. I always thought she would say yes, but I didn't have anything planned. The ring box was huge, and we were sharing luggage, I was sure she would find the ring. I was also acutely aware of the cultural differences of being in a predominantly Muslim country where homosexuality wasn't just culturally uncommon but also illegal under Sharia law. We settled into a nice restaurant on the first night; it was magical – picture a floating restaurant in the jungle. I don't remember what I said, something about how it would be an awesome place to get engaged. I'd asked her to marry me but didn't have the ring on me! Lisa thought I was joking until we made it back to our villa and by the poolside she finally said yes!

INDONESIA
Bali



KELSEY & COURTNEY

Captured by Kate Roberge Photography
www.katerobergephotography.com

We had decided to travel to New Zealand for Christmas and wanted to make it a trip that would be incredibly special for us both. We had discussed marriage and knew that we both wanted that for our future together. New Zealand is one of those incredible destinations; the landscape is beyond beautiful, and it holds real magic to it. We booked a photographer and made the decision to each propose during the shoot. We wanted that moment to be captured, and we wanted those images to be something that we could reflect on for years to come. The proposals were emotional. There were tears from the both of us, and from the photographer, and there were plenty of laughs. We made our way up one of the most dangerous roads in the world, climbed cliffs that we were too scared to look down from and ran along plateaus that looked out to even more of New Zealand's magical mountain ranges. We ended our adventure at sunset, underneath the cover of tall trees and beautiful berry bushes. It really was a day filled with so much love and intention. A day where we made a commitment to our love and to one another.

NEW ZEALAND
Coronet Peak



ALEXIS & LAUREN

Captured by Allie Wynands
www.alliewynands.com

Alexis had an idea that I was going to buy a ring, but she had no idea when, where or how I would propose. She'd always wanted a surprise party, and so, that's what I decided to give her. I had my best friend set up a table in front of a brewery with a poem I wrote her, a sign asking her to marry me and a whole bunch of other decorations. Our friends and family brought food, and the owners of Devils Creek Brewery not only decorated, but created Alexis and I a beer each that they knew we'd love; banana for her, cotton candy for me. Alexis thought we were going to dinner, just the two of us, it was nearly my birthday and it was the perfect cover. We walked in, our favourite song playing and she saw the table, I got down on one knee, and after some crying, she said yes. A few months later, Alexis decided that she wanted to ask me back and in the middle of a Ron Pope concert, she did just that. She got down on one knee during one of our favourite songs, Ron Pope stopped singing, asked who had just got engaged and pulled us up to the front of the stage. Alexis had even organised for 15 of our closest friends to meet us after the concert to celebrate.

Collingwood



Love in Abundance

PHOTOGRAPHY BY LOVE HER PHOTOGRAPHY

www.loveherphotography.com

Bridal Dress Brides by Design | **Flowers** Signature Floral Design | **Hair & Makeup** Elicia Rudd Hair and Makeup | **Lovers** Chloe & Justine
Styling Heart Strings Hire and Style | **Venue** Guild Hall Fremantle









MIKAYLA & TEAGAN

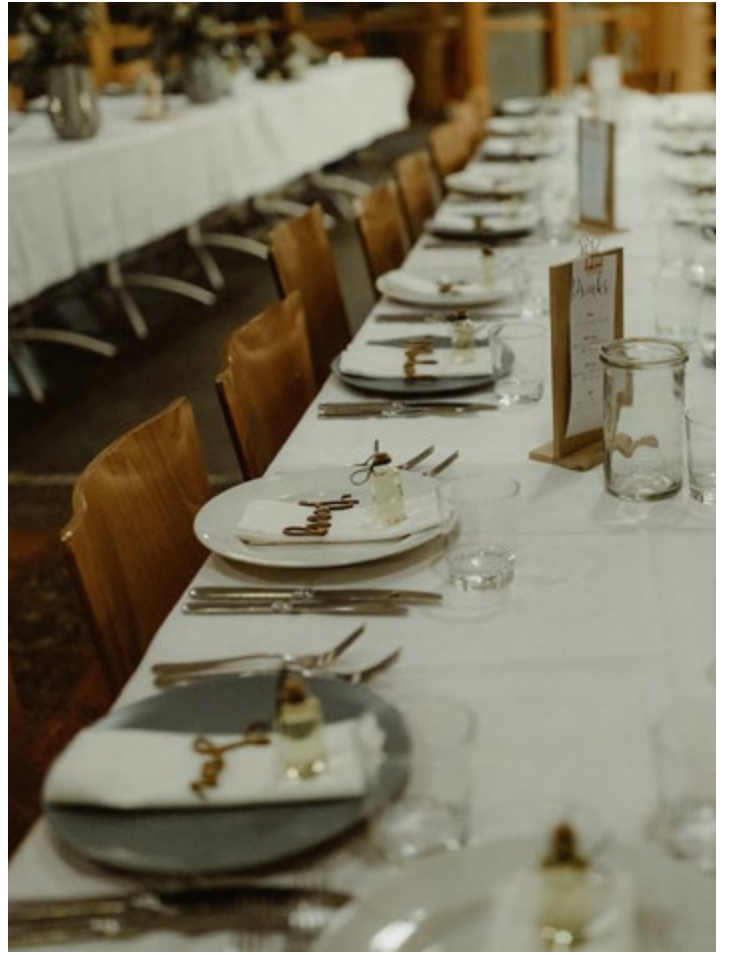
PHOTOGRAPHY BY CORINNA & DYLAN

www.corinnaanddylan.com

WAMBOIN, AUSTRALIA









Like so many love stories do, this one started with two women, each dating one another's best friend. Mikayla and Teagan hit it off, they knew that they would make great friends, but at the time their respective partners weren't too fond of the blossoming friendship.

As those relationships ended years passed and they lost contact. Mikayla reached out on hearing some good news about Teagan's Mother's health on the grapevine. A few days later they caught up for a casual after work drink, that quickly turned into five - they've been inseparable ever since.

Mikayla had made it clear early in the relationship that she would be the one to propose. In July she brought an engagement ring and booked a weekend away in October to a luxury cabin in the sticks.

On the drive down, Mikayla had mentioned that she just didn't have the cash to spend on a ring right now. Teagan questioned how she couldn't, eventually getting to a frustrated point of, "you can just propose without a ring!". Little did she know as she exclaimed, that she was leaning on the very centre console hiding that very ring she wanted.

One of Mikayla's specialities was homemade gifts and so a surprise present that evening would be just that. She gave Teagan a love letter and a string filled with photos of their time together. As Mikayla cried, Teagan suggested that she had one more 'homemade gift'. She asked her to close her eyes and then as she opened them asked, "will you be my wife?".

Although they had planned a 12 month engagement, another health scare for Mikayla's Mother meant that the wedding date they had set needed to be brought forward four months. Their Spring wedding date became a winter one and wedding planning ensued.

Wedding planning was relaxed, they agreed on a venue that could host both the ceremony and the reception all in one place; one with good food and better wine. Contentious Character, NSW, stood out, not just for having catering, but for having enough character that they both didn't feel they need to contribute to what was already perfect.

They dress shopped separately but coincidently ended up choosing the very first dress they each tried on. Both white in colour, one a full sleeve lace, the other a modern satin silk gown.

Neither new bride felt that anything could have gone 'wrong' enough to ruin an incredible wedding day. For Teagan walking into the ceremony and seeing the setup and then looking up to see her bride standing under the arbour waiting was a highlight. Mikayla is lost for words when trying to find a way to explain what seeing Teagan for the first time felt for her.

A childhood friend of Teagan, Geoff, had made a drunken comment years earlier that he wanted to be the one to marry her and Mikayla. Although the laws in Australia did change in time for the wedding, they chose to look in Geoff as their stand in celebrant for the day and do the legal ceremony separately. It was a choice that both Teagan and Mikayla won't regret, it was right for them.

Stood inside the wine cellar of the venue, Teagan and Mikayla read their vows to one another, sealing their commitment to each other with their first kiss as wife and wife.

A reception followed, an opportunity for all the people Teagan and Mikayla love the most to be in the same room celebrating the new commitment that they had made to one another in their presence.





Accessories Lovisa | **Bridal Boutique** Affordable Bridal, Kylie.J Bridal Brunswick | **Bridespeople Outfits** ASOS | **Catering** Contentious Character
Ceremony Venue Contentious Character | **Cinematographer** Sophie Black of Yesterday Videography | **Desserts** Doughnut Department
Engagement Rings James Allen | **Florals** Purchased at Capital Flower Market, arranged by the bridal party & the Mothers of the brides | **Hair** Angelic
Hair and Beauty, Steph Tye | **Makeup** Jacqueline Leigh Makeup, Tara Florence Makeup | **Photographer** Corinna and Dylan | **Reception Venue**
Contentious Character | **Robes** Cotton On | **Signage** DIY | **Stationery** Vistaprint | **Transport** Deane Transport Services | **Wedding Rings** James Allen



www.woodsandbloom.com

WITHOUT MY FAMILY

Words by Anonymous

They don't love me. They aren't proud of me.

That was the initial thought when I told my parents that I had proposed to the love of my life and that we were planning our wedding day.

I don't really know what else I expected. My parents have never been accepting of my sexuality. Growing up I always knew that I was attracted to other women, and by the time I turned 17 I knew that I could not hide that part of my identity any longer. I confided in two of my closest friends, who were a little taken back, but supportive of me. It gave me the confidence to come out to my parents. I told my Mum first, whose initial response was a lot of tears and some key advice; "don't tell your father".

Eight years have passed since then, nearly nine. My Father did eventually find out, but it is something that's completely unspoken of between us. In the past, girlfriends would come to family affairs as a 'friend' or, be left off an invitation and it always broke my heart. I always carried just a glimmer of hope that maybe, someday, they would see just how happy I was and that everything would be okay.

When I met her, the one, there was an instant connection. She was beautiful, intelligent and charismatic. She was shy but left me feeling intrigued.

It didn't take long for us to fall completely head over heels with one another. In fact, after date number three I knew that I'd marry her. On Valentines Day last year, around 18 months after that first date, I asked her to be my forever.

She said, yes.

An engagement is a bubble of feelings that are indescribable. We were elated and quickly started gathering ideas of what our wedding day would look like. As excited as I was, I had this heavy cloud over me. I knew that I would love for my parents to be there with me to celebrate one of the most important dates of my life, but I didn't know how they would respond.

Two months after the proposal I worked up the courage to ask. It was something I decided I wanted to do alone, I couldn't help but want to protect my new fiancé from any adversity that might come from what I was about to say.

I sat down with my parents in the lounge of my family home. I told them how incredibly happy I had found myself in a relationship. How this person made all the puzzle pieces in life fall into place so seamlessly. I told my parents how I couldn't imagine my life without this woman and how I'd asked her to be my wife, to marry me, and spend forever together.

My heart sank as tears welled in my Mothers eyes and my Fathers gaze became vacant, lost in thought.

My Father, who I'd never had an open conversation with about my sexuality, said; "women marry men, not women". My mother responded, "it'll never be a real wedding or real marriage".

It's hard to articulate how that moment felt. The truth is, I've gone over it seemingly hundreds of times with my counsellor, and I still don't know how I honestly feel.

Both parents declined my invitation to be involved in the wedding day and said while they love me, they couldn't be there to support my choices. They asked that I refrain from inviting other family members who were unaware of my sexuality.

I walked out of that house with a broken heart, but my head held high. While I knew I didn't have their support, I did have the incredible support of friends who have become family over the last few years.

Over the last 18 months, I've struggled with feeling invalid as a daughter and with feelings of guilt for the shame that I've undecidedly brought upon my parents. I've felt alone in the struggles of planning the happiest day of my life without the support of my parents. I've cried, and I've pulled myself back up.

The support of my wife-to-be has been incredible. As cheesy as it is, I really couldn't do this without her.

While my relationship with my parents is more strained than it has ever been, I feel confident in myself and the way in which my life is taking course. In my heart, they will always be my parents, but the truth is that I feel like our relationship is drifting apart.

Maybe one day they will see just how beautiful my life is and accept me for me.



LAUREN & MELISSA

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAWN PHOTO

www.dawn-photo.com

AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND





On the four year anniversary of the day they met, Lauren and Melissa eloped to a country they had never visited.

Lauren always knew she would be the one to propose and after lying about some credit card debt that didn't exist, she orchestrated the most perfect surprise proposal. On vacation to New Mexico, Lauren proposed at the top of the Tent Rocks National Monument while their friends hid in nearby bushes.

Neither Lauren or Melissa had ever visited New Zealand, although Lauren had fantasised over the lands of Rivendale, The Shire and Mordor since she was in middle school. They each knew that they wanted something small and very intimate for their wedding. After weighing up the options of a destination wedding with friends and family versus an elopement, they decided there was no question that an epic and private adventure was for them.

In the lead up to the wedding day, they each got caught up in planning the details, the adventures, the excursions and where they would stay, forgetting that they needed to find outfits to wear. Lauren didn't have an interest in making a fuss over finding the perfect dress. Instead, she took her best friend, and after many dress changes, one caught her eye. The pattern on the lace and the Stevie Nicks bell sleeves had her sold before she had even tried it on.

For Melissa, she had never envisioned herself in a traditional white wedding dress. A suit was slowly pieced together, and a custom tie was on its way from St Louis. It wasn't until the day before they were due to head off to New Zealand the outfit came together.

The beauty of this particular elopement was that there was no theme. No time constraints, no schedule, just Lauren and Melissa, their love and all things spontaneous. They each wanted their wedding to reflect their love and the incredible country that New Zealand is – wild, unexpected and unique.

There were no decorations, no catering and no florists, although Lauren did spend time handcrafting her floral crown from local New Zealand flowers.

Lauren and Melissa had always planned to do the 'official things' at the courthouse but to make it out to the ocean for their vows and photographs. After the official marriage, they devoured celebratory hot dogs, fries and beer as newlyweds with their photographer, Dawn Photo, and her partner.

Not deterred by the torrential downpour that had begun, Lauren, Melissa and Dawn soon made their way down to the ocean. As the rain started to clear, the sand resembled black glass and the sun burnt a brilliant orange behind them. Lauren and Melissa read their vows to each other from the pages of *The Hobbit* and *Lord of the Rings*. Rain sprinkled lightly over them as they popped a bottle of champagne and celebrated their very first moments as wife and wife.

Upon their return home, they held a 'Happily Ever After Party' to celebrate a month of marriage with their friends and family. It was an opportunity to have the best of what weddings and elopements have to offer - an unforgettable romantic adventure and a fun-filled party with all their loved ones.

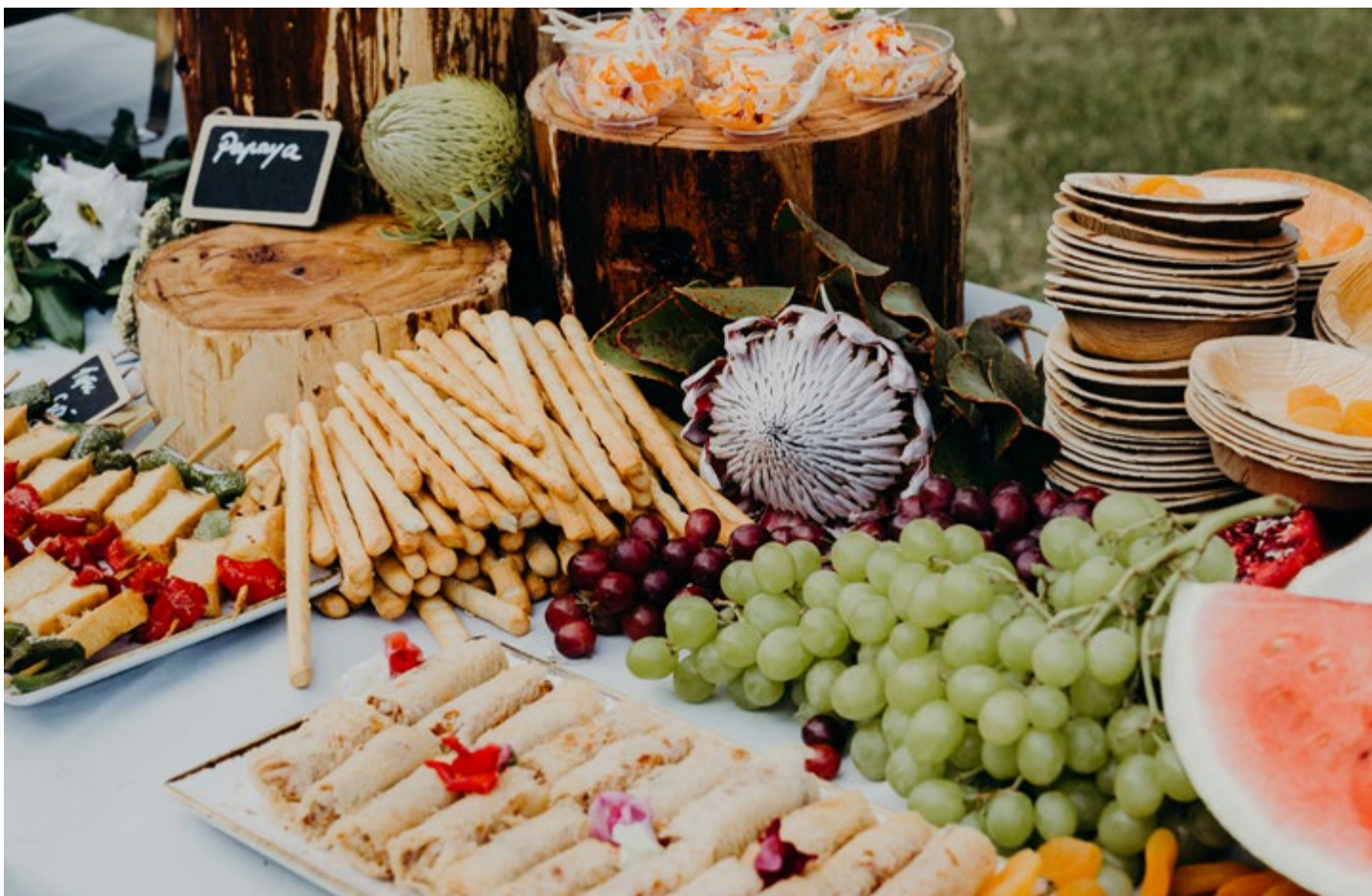








Accessories Madewell | **Bridal Boutique** Pence & Panache | **Engagement & Wedding Rings** Kube's Jewelers | **Gown Designer** Madison James | **Hair & Makeup** Lexia Dyer | **Hair Piece** Hair Floaters, Etsy | **Legal Ceremony Venue** Auckland Courthouse | **Photographer** Dawn Photo | **Shirt** Banana Republic | **Shoes** Madewell, Free People | **Suit** J.Crew | **Tie** The Lonesome Traveller | **Vow Ceremony Location** Piha Beach



A WEDDING THAT MATTERS

With Gena & Leticia

Photography by Smith + Archer, www.smithandarcher.com

We make decisions each and every day that are based around our values. As a couple, we are environmentally conscious and actively try to give back where and when we can.

So, when it came to our wedding day, we knew that it didn't need to be any different. Here's how we changed a few things to make a big difference on, and after, the big day.

The Invitations

While there is a certain romance about a paper invitation, we didn't want to contribute to paper waste and so, opted for a wedding website. Surprisingly, most of our guests took to the modern digital wedding invitation really well!

The Outfits

Neither of us had really put much thought into what we would wear so when we were introduced to the world of wedding gowns we quickly felt overwhelmed. Leticia opted for a second-hand dress she found on Still White. While it wasn't a perfect fit right 'off the rack' it did only need minimal alterations. Saving the environment and money!

We also both decided to donate our dresses after our wedding day. While Amy took hers into our local Salvation Army store, Leticia donated hers to Angel Gowns Australia – a charity that transforms gowns into outfits for stillborn or newborn babies that sadly passed away.

The Food

We are vegetarians, and while a lot of our guests weren't, we opted to keep our menus true to ourselves. We used a local caterer who works closely with local farmers to bring together meals that didn't just taste good but had low food miles.

We were also conscious of food waste, and so, encouraged guests to take home what was left over.

The Florals

We toyed with the idea of opting out of any florals but thought we'd both regret not having them. So, instead, we kept it minimal, only choosing flowers that were in season and able to be sourced locally. We bulked out what we did have with plenty of foliage and green.

After the wedding day, we took what we had around to Amy's Nans nursing home and the smiles that they brought the residents really did make it all feel so special.

The Favours

We never considered traditional wedding favours. Instead, we donated on behalf of our guests to a charity close to our hearts, Beyond Blue. So with a donation made in their name, and a container full of food for tomorrow, we think our guests felt included and left knowing that we really did appreciate them coming out to celebrate our wedding day.



IT IS NOT THEIR WEDDING

Contributed by Lorna Morello

Photography by Jamie Carle, www.jamiecarle.com

We were in an incredibly happy place right after our engagement. We were overwhelmed with emotions and overcome with excitement at planning a life together married.

But, with our engagement came recommendations. We both knew that it was bound to happen, family and friends of ours have been through the process of wedding planning themselves. But, we really weren't prepared for what was about to come our way.

I started to feel overwhelmed with a pang of guilt that maybe our wedding day wouldn't be 'enough'. I knew our loved ones weren't trying to stress us out. Instead, they were just trying to offer up advice. They wanted to be a part of the experience, and they wanted to help. The guest list grew from 46 to 63 seemingly overnight, because we had to invite a second cousin and an Aunt that I hadn't spoken to for close to two years. Our budget blew out, in fact, it doubled (and then some) trying to cater to the advice of others.

We both found ourselves consumed by wedding inspiration, pages deep into magazines and scrolling through websites and social media. We saw so many beautiful things that were so far out of our budget and started to compare our wedding, that hadn't even come to fruition yet, to others.

Then, I snapped. "Let's just elope. It'll be so much easier. I don't want this whole wedding thing anyway".

But the truth is, I did want a wedding. I wanted my parents and my dearest

friends there when I made my vows. I wanted a party, a celebration of the love that Andrea and I have for one other. I wanted to make a statement with my wedding day that all love is equal and our right to marriage is equal.

Weeks past and we didn't make any progress on wedding plans. I regularly found myself telling the family that I'd just been too busy at work to put any energy into wedding planning, that we'd pick up where we had left off when things had calmed down. The truth was, we were seriously contemplating eloping, and I didn't have the heart to tell anyone, I found myself not wanting to disappoint them.

Andrea said something during that time that changed everything; "Honey, it's our wedding day. There wouldn't be a wedding without us. It's a celebration of our love, not theirs. Let's make this about us".

And so, we did.

We sat together and wrote down our non-negotiables, five things each that we needed to have for ourselves on our wedding day. As a couple, we worked on the top five things that were important for us to focus our efforts, and budget, on. We got that guest list down to only the people we wanted there and cut back on things that didn't matter to us. There wasn't stress, it felt natural and wonderful.

Our wedding day was beyond extraordinary and more beautiful than I could have ever imagined. It was us, and a true celebration of the people we are. It was perfect.



M EVENTS & HIRE

www.meventshire.com





HELLO, KINGS & THIEVES

*Contributed by Benjamin & Carisse, Kings and Thieves Photography
www.kingsandthieves*

Kings and Thieves is a pretty rad business name for partners in life, and work, Benjamin and Carisse Urquhart. Their photographers and truth be told, their work is just as epic as the name suggests.

They pride themselves on not staging anything, capturing your day as it happens is their jam.

If you want authenticity, inclusivity and realness when it comes to your wedding day these two might just be the perfect pair.

Who are Benjamin & Carisse?

Hey, what's good? We are elopement & wedding photographers based in the Mighty Blue Mountains, shooting here and abroad. We've been shooting weddings, elopements and lovers full-time for around two years now.

Why photography? Why weddings?

Why photography and weddings? For the last five years photography has become an obsession and a passion. Before we took Kings & Thieves full time, I had been pursuing a career in structural engineering for the better part of a half decade. I started when I was a kid, basically, and thought that I wanted to work in engineering for life. As time went on, I started to find my identity, something I had struggled with personally for most of my life and began to realise I wasn't exactly fitting the mould in the office. Around this time Carisse and I got married, and after seeing the work of our own wedding photographer, we wanted to suss the life out for ourselves.

What's your equipment of choice?

Fujifilm XT-2 + lenses. Polaroid.

Favourite part of the wedding day?

The freaking party!! By this point, most guests are buzzed, and if the vibes are right, there's gonna be some action on the dancefloor.

Wedding or Elopement?

Elopement, 100%. Picture this. You + your partner. Your best buds. Rad AF celebrant and photographer. Epic cliffside nuptials. Strip back the formalities of the day and focus on what's important to you, being intimate, wild, and real.

Give us your best wedding advice.

Be in the moment. Don't let wedding planning stress sweep you away, especially on the big day. You've spent so long planning a giant party, after all! Get hitched how you want, and to hell with the rest.

If you had an ideal couple, what would that couple look like?

Our best couples are ones who aren't afraid to be themselves. You, the real you, is the perfect you. And that's who we're going to photograph.

When you're not shooting weddings what would we find you doing?

Ben - Probably brewing beer and spending time with the kids.

Carisse - Reading one book, then the next + spending heaps of time with the kids and family.



HAYLEY & NICOLA

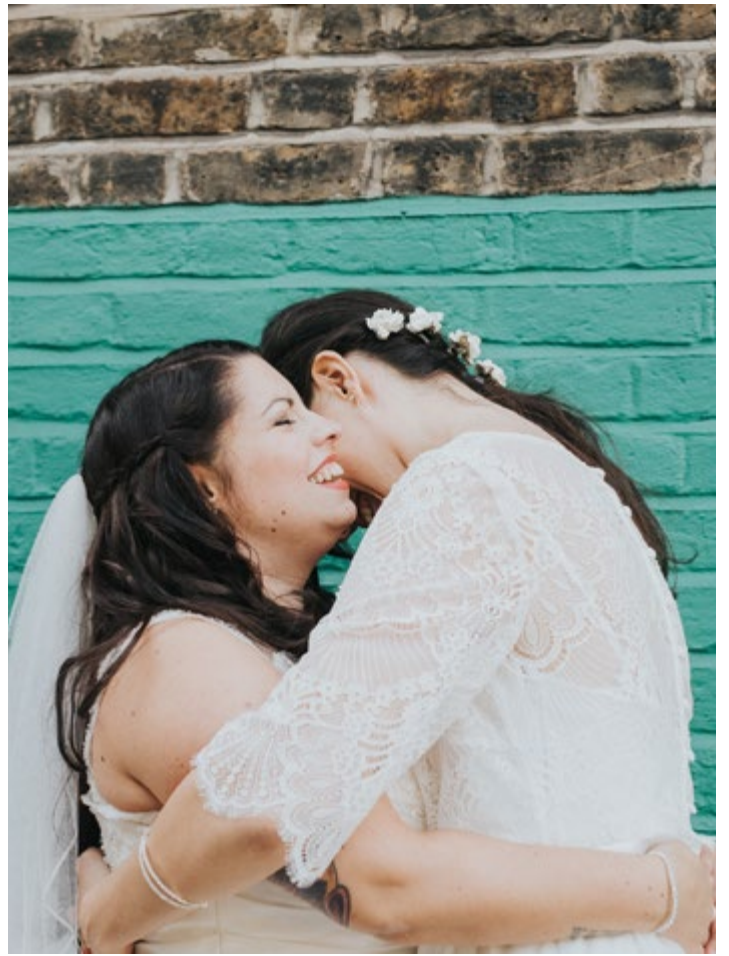
PHOTOGRAPHY BY LUKE HOLROYD

www.lukeholroyd.com

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM









To celebrate their 30th birthdays, which were only two months apart, a trip was booked to New York. Hayley knew right away that it would be the city she proposed in.

They scheduled a late-night trip to visit the top of the Rockefeller Centre. While they shared a cuddle overlooking the lit-up city, Hayley's heart started to race as she asked her girlfriend of seven years, "will you marry me?". There might have been 20 or more people up the top of the centre that night, but at that moment, it just felt like the two of them.

Initially, fuelled with excitement, there was no shortage of wedding ideas. But, when it boiled down, Hayley and Nicola wanted to wed in a place that was so special to them both. Islington is where Hayley has lived her entire life, and it's in that same city that both Hayley and Nicola have set up home and life together. They saw the beautiful Council Chamber at a wedding open day and knew instantly that it was the place.

It also means that they now get the opportunity to walk past their wedding venue every weekend and each time they do, they take time to reflect on their favourite memories.

The shabby chic, rustic vibe of the reception venue, Dead Dolls House, influenced the entire theme of the wedding day. Taking inspiration from the earthy tones and wood, Hayley and Nicola chose whites and shades of pink as a contrast – nothing too extravagant.

While Nicola dreamt of a princess gown, her shorter stature meant that she needed to look outside of the box. The second dress she tried on sent her Mother and bridesmaid into tears, she knew right away it was the one. Hayley, who wouldn't consider herself a girly-girl, worried that

she wouldn't find anything she would feel comfortable in. However, fears were dispelled when she found something perfect early in the search.

What was set to be the happiest day of their lives had a challenging start.

Unfortunately, Nicola's Gran passed away on the morning of the wedding. Having everyone that was special to them in one place made it every bit more emotional. In honour of Nicola's late Gran and Grandad, she included a charm with their photograph in her bouquet to carry with her and wedding favours from Cancer Research UK.

For Hayley having a quiet minute and a pot of tea with her Mum amongst the morning chaos was a memory that she will always reflect on fondly. That, and the moment that Nicola started making her way down the aisle towards her – a moment that evoked an emotion that she didn't know existed within her.

Hayley and Nicola chose to share their vows with a small selection of their loved ones, just 17 guests, a relief when it came to sharing their emotional personalised vows. However, they spent the evening dancing away with a total of 30 guests, the perfect end to a beautiful day.

While a few things might not have gone according to plan, both brides are certain that none of their guests noticed, or cared.

For the newlyweds, marriage means having a best friend walk beside you through the highs and lows of life while building a future together. For Nicola it's having a pot of tea brought to her before she even knew that she needed it. For Hayley it's finding someone who loves her regardless of the flaws, someone she can't imagine being without.





Bridal Boutique Berketex Bride, Monsoon | **Cake** Tessa's Treats | **Catering** Dead Dolls House | **Ceremony Venue** Islington Town Hall | **Engagement Rings** Warren James | **Entertainment** DJ TBX | **Florals** Dandie Creations | **Gowns** Maggie Sottero, Monsoon | **Hair & Makeup** Kelly Harrington Hair and Makeup | **Photographer** Luke Holroyd | **Reception Venue** Dead Dolls House | **Shoes** ASOS, Monsoon | **Stationery** Ginger Ray | **Transport** Traditional London Taxi via Gett | **Veil** Berketex Bride | **Wedding Favours** Cancer Research UK | **Wedding Rings** Fraser Hart



QUEER BODIES & SHARPE SUITS

*With Leon Wu, Founder of Sharpe Suiting
www.sharpesuiting.com, @sharpesuiting*

Back in 2013, inspired by the lack of high-quality formal wear for masculine and androgynous women and trans men, Leon Wu founded Sharpe Suiting.

For Leon, who identified as masculine-of-centre at the time, it was that uncomfortable feeling of heading into standard tailor shops that sparked an idea. Sharpe Suiting quickly turned into a national queer-owned suiting brand that focuses on the individual; their style and their identity.

Why is Sharpe Suiting so important?

The people in my community have experienced frustration in not being able to find apparel that fits and/or enables them to feel comfortable with who they are. I cannot count the number of times myself or a friend has walked into a men's clothing store only to walk out feeling defeated. The last time, I went with a buddy of mine to go shopping for a suit she could wear at a wedding. She had tried on over ten different suits when the salesman finally turned to us and said, "I'm sorry, she does not fit anything we have in the store." My response to the salesman was, "I'm afraid it's the other way around. Your store does not have any suits that fit her".

Until now, tailoring and custom suits have historically been a marker or a 'right of passage' for a boy becoming a man where the father takes the son to be fitted. Now, at Sharpe, we have mother's coming in with their daughters, LGBTQ+ brides and grooms with their partners, and even whole wedding parties. You can see the transformation in the client when they finally come to a place where they feel comfortable and actually have a suit that fits. They feel at ease, stand straighter, look and feel more confident.

Where does the name come from?

Prior to my suit-making days, I performed as a drag king under the name of "Trey Sharpe". So, naturally, I took on the name for the company based on my passion for bending gender (and performing gender nonconformity) on stage.

Also, coincidentally, *sharpe* per Urban dictionary's definition means a male or female from the upper-class society.

What does being gender neutral mean to your brand?

For Sharpe, gender-neutrality means gender equality.

What are your top priorities when it comes to designing each piece?

We create high quality suits and dress wear with an intellectual approach, a classic feel, and a modern twist. Our mission is to create these garments for the queer community and beyond. We want to build longstanding relationships with our ever-changing community, build confidence in our clients, and in turn, raise the bar on queer suiting.

Every collection or capsule we release has a specific purpose and underlying theme.

Our latest capsule for Fall 2018 is inspired by Jamie Wilson (an American transgender musician) and from that collection 3% of all proceeds from online sales will go to helping homeless youth campaigns.

It remains to this day that 40% of homeless youth are LGBTQ+ identified. The youth have been such a huge support to the Sharpe label however, the majority may not be able to afford a custom suit. We want to keep inspiring our youth to be better. As a brand we want to stick around to be that fashion label they aspire to wear one day.

Tell us more about the fabrics you use.

We offer over 350 different high-quality fabrics to our clients including Super 110s-180s wool, linen, cotton, and various blends. More importantly, we can put together any design or cut you like. We use our own formula, called "Andropometrics™", to achieve whatever look you are going for and our designers are experts at helping you create your dream suit.

How much do trends and seasons influence your work?

Our client's individual styles and our passion for visual activism are bigger influences to Sharpe designers than the trends we are already attuned to in pop culture or the Zeitgeist.

We like to balance a mixture of what's already trending alongside our clients individual styles and personalities to celebrate their identities and ultimately build their confidence.

Sharpe Suiting has also donated more than 100 suits to LGBTQ+ youth centres, non-profit organisations and queer prom students across the United States since their inception.



DOWNTOWN

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KELLY BALCH

www.kellybalch.com

Behind the Scenes Photography Wisteria Photography | **Florals** The Bloemist | **Hair & Makeup** Blushing Beauty **Location** The Garey Building | **Lovers** Lauren & Mandy | **Planner** Party Crush Events | **Producer & Stylist** The Dream Choice | **Sweets** Sweet Lady Jane | **Table Setting** Baura
New York, West Elm | **Videography** Sami Lane







@erinpssti

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The Cowboy Hand
EST. 1978

The Cowboy Hand
Summer difficult
It's not easy
to stay
happy when
it's hard
to succeed





HAPPY HOUR

FRONTIER
WHISKEY

#FRONTIERWORKS

... THE BULLEIT DISTILLERY ...

PLEASE DRINK RESPONSIBLY ...





HELLO, PRECIOUS

*Contributed by Precious, Precious Celebrations
www.preciouscelebrations.com.au*

There's one Melbourne celebrant whose curly ginger hair sits a little higher than most, and her name is Precious. Precious, and yes, it is her real name, is an incurable romantic and adores taking the love stories of couples and bringing them together in a ceremony to remember.

Who is Precious?

Hello! And, what a huge question!

Who am I? I'm still figuring that out, but my best guess is that I'm a half Australian, half Brit, Melbourne based Marriage Celebrant.

I am hugely passionate about creating fun, personalised wedding ceremonies that suit my couples. Outside of this I am an avid Earl Grey tea drinker with a pretty good vodka collection and am known for wearing sequins in everyday outfit choices. I love living in Melbourne's northern suburbs but will travel whenever I have the opportunity. All-time favourite cities are London, Berlin and Paris, but I recently went to the US and found New York incredibly intriguing.

What's the first job you ever had?

The first job I ever had was one at the local McDonald's flipping burgers and hosting kids parties. Which admittedly was a very odd choice for a

lifelong vegetarian, but at the age of 16 and living in a small town it was quite literally that or working in the butcher's department of Safeway. And that was an absolute no go!

From there I moved into retail, and then hospitality, which got me through University and across to London, before heading back to Sydney for a short while where I start in recruitment, which took me to London and back. A few other jobs I've held along the way have been as a door bitch at the Dalton Superstore (a gay club in London), stage manager at both Secret Garden Party and Mossvale Music Park festival and I've dabbled in being a Netball Umpire.

How did you find yourself a wedding celebrant?

I first knew that I wanted to be a Celebrant when two amazing girls I knew got engaged. I was working with one of them at the time in London and marriage equality was not really in conversation, let alone legal in Australia. All I could think of is that I wanted to help make that happen in any way I could.

So, when I moved back to Australia, I decided to become an Authorised Marriage Celebrant and studied my butt off while also preparing for my own wedding.

What does being a Celebrant mean to you?

It's hard to describe just how much being a Celebrant means to me. I love that my work is getting to know people at their best and helping them to create something special.

It's even better being able to take old, outdated traditions and injecting new life into them to create something truly unique and special to my couple.

A lot of people are really only interested in the big party side of the wedding because, realistically, they've just been to boring weddings. But there is this big new wave of celebrants coming through and disrupting the norm, creating wedding ceremonies that are truly amazing with lots of love, laughter and personality injected into the ceremony.

What has changed during your time in the wedding industry?

Everything and nothing!

Marriage equality being voted in was a huge watershed moment for the industry, but not in the way that people were really expecting. A lot of people outside the wedding industry thought that there would be this massive rush for people in same-sex relationships to get married, but what they didn't really account for is the huge change in society that would be happening too.

What has been a standout, favourite moment, of being a celebrant?

Okay, undeniably it's going to be when marriage equality was passed into legislation. I mean, how could ANYTHING top that?! I got sent home from my day job for crying too much. I went straight to the pub to meet up with a girlfriend of mine and started drinking prosecco to celebrate.

A more personal favourite moment would be one of the weddings I conducted that ended up in a big group hug with 8 confetti canons exploding when I pronounced them married. That wedding was full of fun, love and laughter – my favourite three things in a wedding ceremony.

What are your 'words I live by'?

My ex gave me a book called "The Four Agreements" by Don Miguel Ruiz that really has to be the best life advice I've ever been given. The premise is that there are too many rules in life and that instead we really need to cut it back to four simple rules:

1. Always be impeccable with your word,
2. Don't take anything personally,
3. Don't make assumptions, and,
4. Always do your best.

By living to these standards, you'll always be sure that you're giving it your all, and coming to life from a place of empathy and understanding. You'll start to realise that the person that was rude to you in the street or on the phone didn't mean to be rude to you, but maybe they are in the middle of a tough situation and needing some empathy themselves.

What's your guilty pleasure?

Internet shopping and then blaming it on my Celebrant career. I mean I NEED to be better dressed than all of the wedding guests (but never better dressed than the couple) and this means a lot of variety in my wardrobe. Well, that's my justification anyway.

What's the best advice you'd give to two people planning a wedding day?

Start with the three big things first – the venue, the photographer and the celebrant. These are generally the only three wedding vendors that can't do multiple jobs in one day and they also happen to be the vendors that will make the most significant impact into your wedding. They will totally set, then create, the vibe that you're looking to create.

Then, just relax. Too many people put a huge amount of pressure onto having the most 'perfect day' for their wedding day which is impossible to force. Instead, focus on having a really great time with your partner and settle in to have some laughs with all of your favourite people. Because this is what it's really all about.

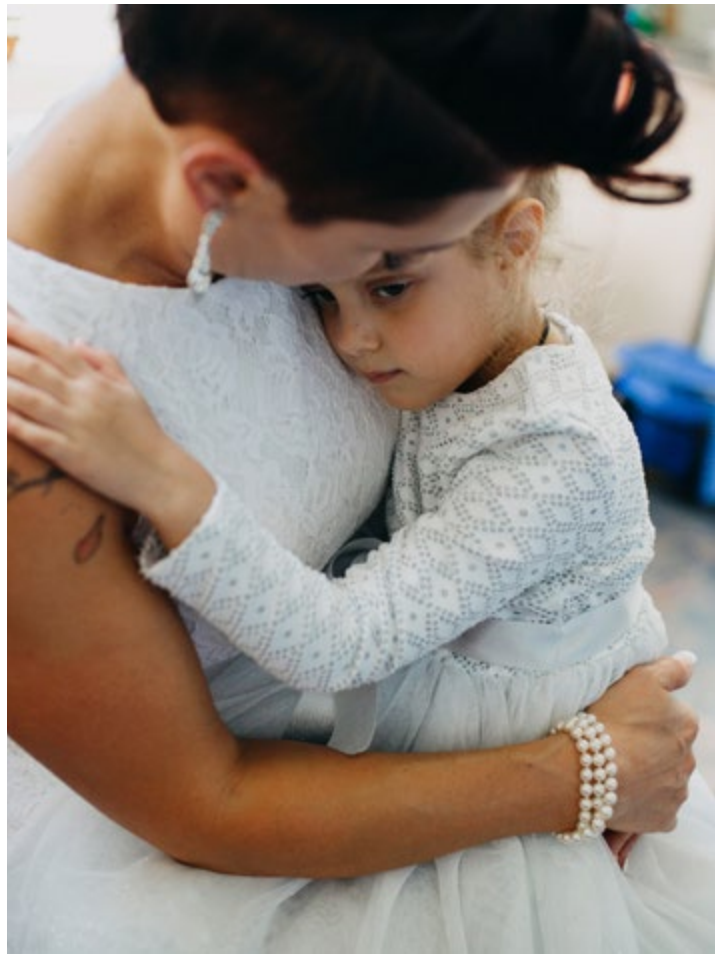


LEE & NICKY

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KYRA BOYER

www.kyraboyer.com

HEALESVILLE, AUSTRALIA





Lee, a creative and tattoo artist, asked Nicky to marry them as the sun shone through the windows of an Irish castle – it was a moment that felt perfect for them both.

They had watched from afar the journey of Temora House come to life and seen first-hand the incredible work their friends Mitch and Andy Smith-Stuart had put into making it a wedding space. Lee and Nicky couldn't have been married in a better venue.

The inspiration for the wedding day was; cheeky working class 1930's men wooing the wealthy woman, like the story of Jack and Rose from Titanic. The theme was brought together with an overall raw and wholesome feel, native florals and high-quality meats and cheeses. With Italian and Maori heritage, it was important that there were infinite amounts of food.

For Nicky, who didn't have a dream dress in mind, found the process of finding a gown challenging at times. The more she looked, the more confused it all became. While she had seen one that she loved, it didn't quite fit, and there just wasn't enough time to have the alterations made. So, after a prewedding health kick, one week before the wedding day she made her way back to Raffaele Ciuca Bridal and walked out with that very same dress that now fit perfectly.

Wedding planning had begun before marriage equality passed in Australia and as laws changed so did the need for a registered celebrant. On a tram ride home one afternoon while talking about finding a celebrant at short notice, Nicky was interrupted by another passenger who let her know that their partner was a celebrant and might be available to solemnise their wedding. As a mark of fate, the very next day at the office another colleague also suggested the very same celebrant, Debra Holder.

With Debra, they signed their legal documents to the entertainer, Lewis Ciavarella's, interpretation of 'Stand By Me'.

Photographer, Kyra Boyer, was there to capture every moment in a way that was candid and heartfelt. It's easy to see the admiration and respect that each of Nicky and Lee's four children have for their parents as they chose to take the next step in a life together.

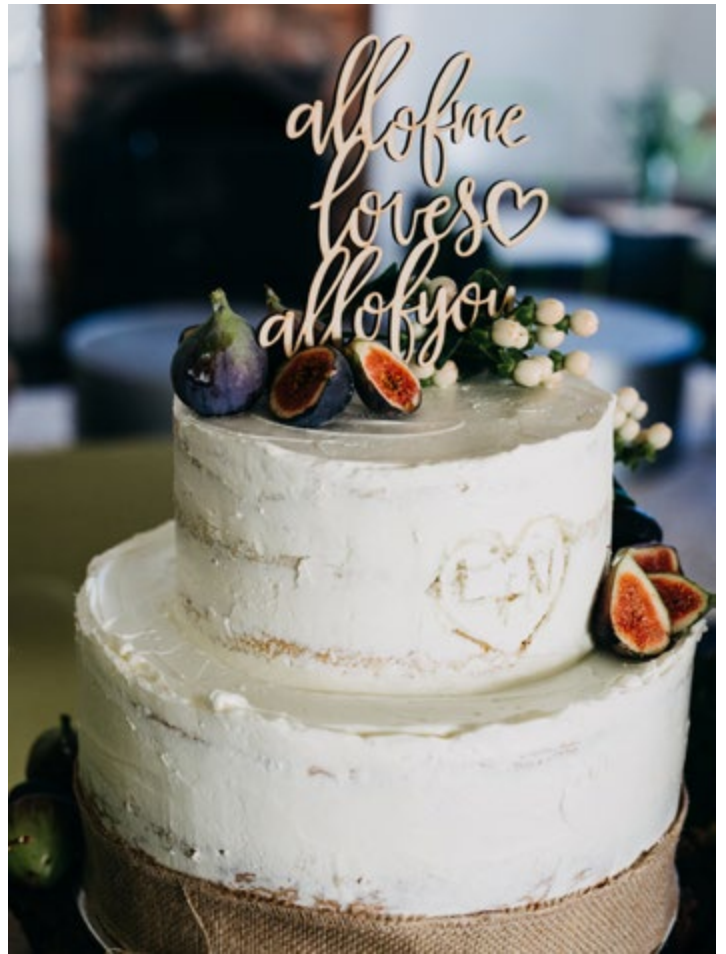
Lee describes their favourite moment as the moment that Nicky rose from the top of the stairs; before them was the most beautiful woman they had ever laid eyes on. They had spent the night before apart, so that moment when they first locked eyes had something unforgettable in it.

While most of the day went smoothly, there was a near miss when it came to the dessert bar. Although they had taken extra care to order a nut-free dessert bar, unfortunately, there was a little mix-up in the order. As Lee took a sweet to their mouth, someone yelled "nuts!". For Lee, who happens to have a life-threatening nut allergy, it was a close call to disaster. Although it meant some desserts just couldn't be served, having a groom alive and partying was far more important.

Although a wedding budget was set, Lee and Nicky found it was impossible to stick to it. As planning the wedding progressed the list of little things they had forgotten to account for, or didn't realise they would need, continued to grow. However, they wouldn't have done anything differently if they were to go back and do it all again.

For Lee and Nicky, their marriage has cemented a trust for their children and their families that they are together until the very end. Through the hard and the happy times.









Barber Electric Brain Barbershop | **Bow Tie** ASOS | **Bridal Gown** Designer Raffaele Ciuca Bridal | **Bridesmaid Dresses** Unique Vintage California
Cake Nick Idour | **Cake Topper** Sugar Boo | **Catering** Mario Fijan, Hilda Ellis | **Celebrant** Debra Holder | **Ceremony and Reception Venue**
Temora House | **Cinematographer** Ange Ciavarella | **Cu links** ASOS | **Desserts** Green Refactory | **Engagement Rings** Tadhg Kearney Jewellers
(Ireland) **Entertainment** Lewis Ciavarella | **Event Stylist** Nicky Vescio, Mitch Smith | **Florist** Lee Vescio, Tesselaar Flowers | **Groomsmen Suits**
Wild West Mercantile | **Hair and Makeup** Shaow and Rouge | **Jacket** Johnny Bigg | **Photographer** Kyra Boyer | **Shirt** RM Williams | **Shoes**
Timberland | **Suspenders** Wild West Mercantile | **Wedding Bands** D and R House of Diamonds (Las Vegas)



ANNA & JACKIE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JENNY CLAIR PHOTO

www.jennyclairphoto.com

ASHEVILLE, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA









When Anna and Jackie found themselves living at Ohio Wesleyan University College in the Interfaith House, they had no idea that their worlds were going to collide magically. They bonded over their spiritual journey and mutual love for hiking, travel, art and social justice.

On their four year anniversary of dating, they woke before sunrise and drove to the top of Mount Mitchell, North Carolina, and set up camping chairs to watch the sunrise. They each knew that marriage was a decision they would make together and so as the sun rose above the clouds, Jackie asked Anna to marry her, and Anna asked Jackie to marry her too.

Their wedding day was inspired by their love. Every decision made during the planning was guided by their love for one another, their love for their friends and the love that both Anna and Jackie feel from those people. They chose The Farm - A Gathering Place for the wedding, bringing their favourite people back to Mount Mitchell, the same place where they each proposed marriage.

Florals were kept minimal, classic and simple. The centrepieces and mantle arrangements were created by Jackie's Mom. Anna and Jackie, each opted out of carrying bouquets choosing to wear rainbow enamel pins, that were also each handed out to guests as the wedding favours, instead.

Both brides wanted to be comfortable, wearing outfits that they felt themselves in. While Anna chose an all-white wedding suit, Jackie opted for a light smoky grey. To tie the outfits together, both featured off-white flower embroidery, paying homage to the traditional wedding dress.

It was important that the ceremony paid respect to their religious and spiritual background. Jackie's Uncle officiated the ceremony, co-officiated

by the pastor from their church, who prayed and lead the service. One of the couples best people read a poem of significance and another a scripture passage to guide the couple as they take this next step in their lives together.

The most anticipated moment for both Anna and Jackie was the moment they were pronounced wife and wife. They walked back down the aisle together as the guests waved rainbow streamers that they had pulled together as a DIY project.

After the ceremony they had a quiet moment with their photographer, Jenny Clair, who asked; "what does it feel like to be married?". They looked at one another with tears filling their eyes and huge grins appeared as they realised for the first time they each now had a wife.

Leading into the reception most of the décor was provided by the venue, which allowed time for Anna and Jackie to spend more time on some additional creative items. Their guest book was made up images from their engagement, a space for friends and family to leave small notes and well wishes. There was also a space, a memory hutch, where they were each able to have photographs of family members who had passed away, meaningful to having them present in spirit.

Jackie also created colouring clipboards that included custom images specific to their wedding day for the children that were coming along to the celebrations. She put together small buckets of crayons, stickers and bubbles to help them have a good time together.

As they left the reception those rainbow steamers made an appearance once again. A sendoff as Anna and Jackie left, married.





Cake A La Cupcakes | **Catering** The Farm – A Gathering Place | **Celebrant** Dale Osborne | **Ceremony Venue** The Farm – A Gathering Place | **Earrings** Dillard’s | **Engagement Rings** Minor Jewelry | **Entertainment** DJ Jakub, Brighthouse Entertainment | **Event Stylist** Erica Batstone | **Florist** Julie Amanna
Flower Girl & Page Boy Outfits Old Navy | **Gown Designer** BHLDN | **Harp Player** Jaime Webb | **Headpiece** Connie & Luna | **Music** Brianna Robinson
& Grace Thompson | **Photographer** Jenny Clair Photo | **Reception Venue** The Farm – A Gathering Place | **Shirt** H&M | **Shoes** Steve Madden
Signage The Farm – A Gathering Place | **Suit** ASOS | **Wedding Favours** Fundraising for a Cause | **Wedding Rings** Tiny Sparkle Studio

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Sweet Wonderful You is the bees knees when it comes to getting hitched. Sassy, sweet & oh-so-organised, Erin is a valued member of the Dancing With Her community. If you're looking for a celebrant who nails it every time, we suggest you look into having her a part of your day too.

www.sweetwonderfullyou.com



ASHDOWN & BEE
Stylist

Ashdown & Bee is a small creative team based in Sydney, specialising in styling and designing spectacular weddings and events as well as creating bespoke handcrafted signs. Their artistic and cutting-edge style sees them designing events and signs filled with atmosphere, fun and love.

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AUSTRALIA



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September Creative event stationery is highly influenced by an obsession with typography, colour and the natural surroundings. Beautiful paper goods, stunning acrylic place cards and cake toppers set the tone for your big day. September will work with you to create something so totally you.

www.septembercreative.com.au



LAUREN CAMPBELL
Photography

Capturing the connection between two people and the emotion surrounding their wedding day is my passion. The approach I take is that of a quiet observer, sharing in the events as they happen. The quiet and joyous moments, the real connections and all the beautifully intricate details. I'd love to tell your story.

www.laurencampbell.com.au



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www.emilychelsea.com



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Small Yard Flowers pulls from local flower farmers in the Pacific North West and from her own organic micro urban flower farm to provide seasonal, unique, and heartfelt flowers for your special day.

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Mae & Co Creative is a unique and purposeful styling and planning company in Portland, OR- the heart of the Pacific Northwest. Specialising in intimate weddings and events, elopements and brand styling; Mae & Co loves nothing more than creating beautiful and intentional designs for your special day.

www.maeandcocreative.com



ALEXANDRA GRECCO CO
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The Alexandra Grecco bridal line features ethereal gowns for the less-traditional bride. Each collection stems from an organic, yet focused vision. Finding inspiration everywhere from the intricacies of architecture in the historic French Quarter, to the soft, pastel hollyhocks of Il de Ré, inspiration continually evolving.

www.alexandragrecco.com



LIBBY TIPTON
Stationery

Hailing from the Pacific Northwest, Libby procures bespoke wedding stationery and paper goods for clients both locally and worldwide. Incorporating custom calligraphy, watercolour details, and personalised illustrations are her forte.

www.libbytipton.com



REVEL PETALS
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Seeking to mirror the wild whimsy of nature, Revel Petals specialises in creating eco-friendly floral designs for weddings and events in the Portland, Oregon. If you're outside Portland, the team are available to travel.

www.revelpetals.com



NATHALIA FRYKMAN
Photographer

Not just a photographer, I'm your safe place and best bud. With a background in Journalism and Business, my passion for imagery lead me to a career in photography and love is my favourite subject to capture. From wild romances to self-love, I'm ready for it all! Mention Dancing With Her & get 10% off.

www.nathaliafrykman.com



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SERENA GENOVESE
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www.serenagenovese.com



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I'm a creative and award winning destination wedding photographer, based in Manchester. I don't just take photos, I tell stories, or more specifically, I tell your unique story. I shoot weddings all over the UK and Internationally in a style combination of documentary & fine art with a cinematic touch.

www.gingerbeardweddings.com

AROUND THE WORLD



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www.longtableevents.com



FABRIZIO SIMONEEN
Photographer

I'm Fabrizio, a wedding photographer who travels around the world telling great stories. My life has been governed by objectives. I consider myself a passionate person with a great love towards photography, I like everything that is different.

www.fabriziosimoneen.com



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A SPECIAL THANK YOU

Dancing With Her couldn't exist without an incredible network of humans from around the globe who support the publication. Whether you follow along on social media, have picked up a copy at a local store or you've found us on the world wide web, we are so grateful that you're here.

This list isn't exhaustive, but it is those who contributed directly to bringing this third volume of Dancing With Her Magazine to life- it really couldn't be without them.

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FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Sure, it might be famous for being one of the most diverse business centres in the world, but the truth is, Hong Kong has so much more to offer to newlyweds on their honeymoon than meets the eye.

Hong Kong sits in a special administrative region of the People's Republic of China. While it's still rich with Chinese culture, it also heavily influenced by its once British colonies. At first glance, it might resemble a concrete jungle, if you will, but it's true that Hong Kong's mountainous terrain is so steep that more than 40% of its mass is made up of parks and nature reserves. With beautiful beaches and a cultural mix of both new and old world charm, Hong Kong, which is made up of more than 300 islands, really does have it all.

While there might not be marriage equality or anti-discrimination laws, it doesn't seem like it's too far coming. Hong Kong has such a rich and diverse LGBTQ+ history and culture; you just need to know where to look.



HONG KONG

GETTING THERE

Hong Kong sits at the south of China's mainland, and you'll arrive at the not-so-big Hong Kong International Airport from anywhere you come. The public transport system in Hong Kong is amazing. You could grab a taxi, but it will cost you considerably more, and it's almost easier to not.

An Octopus card, which is super easy to grab from the airport, will get you on all forms of public transport. A must when you're getting out and about. Trust us, you'll want to skip the walk through the bustling, and near vertical streets by the end of the day.

Depending on what holiday you are looking for, you'll either find yourself staying on Hong Kong Island or the Kowloon side. The island is indeed more commercial, and it's where you'll find the nightlife, but Kowloon has a little more of traditional China that you'll grow to adore.



WHAT TO DO

Go up. It might sound a little strange, but in a city where they're capped out at our wide it can grow, buildings are getting higher, and sometimes the hidden gems are up a ride in an elevator. You'll find anything from fairytale themed cocktail lounges to bowling alleys and book stores to rooftop bars.

A trip to Hong Kong couldn't be without taking a quick minute (it's only 10 minutes or so) to ride on the ferry between Kowloon and Hong Kong Island. We'd suggest the Star Ferry at night because the iconic Hong Kong Island skyline indeed does hold up to its reputation - it's best seen from Kowloon.

Take time out from the big city life and head out to one of the beaches, find waterfalls and discover local villages and markets. Cheung Chau is a standout, with some of the best hiking that Hong Kong has to offer and the views are breathtaking.

If you want to spend time in the city, head up the longest escalator, the Mid-Level Escalator, taking you to SoHo District, South of Hollywood Road. You'll find loads of trendy bars and boutiques, art galleries and vintage stores. Nearby you'll find a thriving art scene bringing together some of the most incredible artists and jewellers from around the globe.

If all you want to do is spend time getting lost amongst the provinces, take your Octopus card and get lost. There really is so much to explore through the small streets lined with towering buildings, some old, some new.

Also, do yourself a favour, book into the local LGBTQ+ walking tour. Host, Benita Chick, has been working with the community across Asia for years and spending a few hours strolling through the city learning about the sometimes traumatic history of how LGBTQ+ people have lived is incredibly enriching. You'll even get the opportunity to stop by local gay bars.

WHERE TO STAY

Hong Kong isn't known for affordable accommodation, in fact, the cost of housing and living in Hong Kong is some of the most expensive in the world. However, for honeymoon accommodation, there are some incredible options.

Something a little cheaper - *Airbnb* has some really unique and affordable options. You'll find the spaces are generally pretty small but aren't honeymoons about cozing up with your new married status? Opt for ones that are close to public transport or not too far to walk from.

Prices start at around \$60USD per night.

Something a little more- *Residence G* is a vibrant lifestyle hotel. Industrially designed and inspired with a subtle urban accent. It reflects the rhythms of metropolitan Hong Kong with cutting-edge guest rooms and loft. There is also a French restaurant downstairs you'll want to try, is there ever too much french pate and good wine in your life?

Prices start at around \$230USD per night

Going all out - *Hotel Icon* is one of, if not the most, inclusive hotel in Hong Kong. Suites overlooking the iconic skyline are nothing short of incredible and if you really want to go all out, go for an upgrade, you will not be disappointed- need we mention the bath overlooks the city, fills from the roof and your minibar is all inclusive? They'll even leave a personalised gift for your arrival. Hotel Icon also boasts one of Hong Kong's best breakfast and seafood buffets, don't miss them. The team are incredibly LGBTQ+ friendly, the only hotel in Hong Kong with a Pride Package that includes the LGBTQ+ walking tour and non-discrimination policies for staff.

Prices start at around \$260USD per night.



WHAT TO EAT

Hong Kong is a multicultural city, which always translates into a city with everything when it comes to food. Whether it be French or Indian food, Hong Kong's food scene is as diverse as its people.

However, no trip to Hong Kong would be complete without some ever delicious Yum Cha. Expect to wait in some longer queues for the good places, One Dim Sum is a must. Don't be afraid to over-order!

You'll be surprised at the cleanliness of the city, so let your hair down and devour some of the street food, particularly around Kowloon.

For sweets, don't miss out on a delicious eggette. Oddies Foodies is a standout. These crispy sweet waffles filled with delights (try the apple pie!) severed with delicious soft serve are a calorie-rich sweet you deserve.



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Hotel ICON is named among the Top 25 Hotels in Asia in the TripAdvisor Travellers' Choice 2017

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www.thedudley.com.au

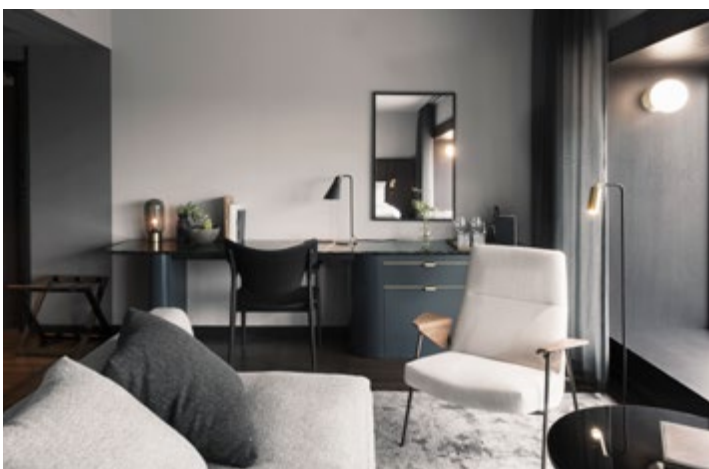


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www.fourseasons.com/thailand



AT SIX

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Contemporary yet timeless, At Six is an international meeting spot in central Stockholm. Here you'll find a cocktail bar breaking new grounds, a kitchen where every dish is cooked with craftsmanship and devotion and Scandinavia's first slow-listening bar. At Six is a place to see, be seen at and hide away in.

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ACCOMMODATION



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www.undercanvas.com



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United States of America

Colony Palms Hotel has been known as one of Palm Springs' most iconic and luxurious hotels since 1936. A one-time retreat for Hollywood's elite, the resort retains many charming features while infusing modern style. The hotel is a tranquil, secluded oasis unto itself, but also ideally situated close to the city centre.

www.colonypalmshotel.com



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The lodge has 42 spacious guest rooms, all of which have a private terrace. On offer are more than 30 different excursions; from bike rides to volcano treks, picnics at high-altitude salt lakes and visits to geyser fields, amongst others. The lodge also boasts a private open deck observatory for stargazing.

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