



# IN THE PRESS



*Sacks Productions*

## Featured in Grace Ormonde Wedding Style Magazine | Spring 2017

*Docuvitae Photography*

This gorgeous wedding is featured in the Spring 2017 issue of  
Grace Ormonde Wedding Style Magazine!

“Life’s most wonderful moments often happen unexpectedly, and the best love stories always contain an element of surprise. Emina Cunmulaj was vacationing in the Caribbean, enjoying dinner with her best friend and his family, when she glanced over at a table on the other side of the room. Immediately, she noticed Sam Nazarian—a handsome stranger staring back at her. “I never believed in love at first sight until that very moment,” she describes. “We began to talk, and spoke every day for the next several months.” Despite having to maintain a long-distance relationship in the beginning, Emina and Sam’s love quickly blossomed. Five years into their courtship, the couple was living in Las Vegas and celebrating Emina’s 30th birthday. Sam had flown in her sister and friends, and Emina was whisked into a car for a surprise girls’ night out. Rather anticlimactically, the car ended up bringing the girls back to the house. “I was a little disappointed,” Emina laughs. When she went inside, however, she was greeted by a lively group of family, friends and a private chef. In front of everyone, Sam got down on one knee and popped the question. A lavish affair in Punta Mita, Mexico, was soon in the works...”





“...We wanted a destination wedding, but we didn’t want everyone to have to spend the whole day traveling,” Emina explains. “My husband had gone there ten-plus years earlier, and he was in love with the place.” Emina also spent much of the planning process traveling with wedding planner Sharon Sacks and her team to the location, and decided the wedding would take place on the 18th hole of the golf course, right between the St. Regis and the Four Seasons. From its inception, the wedding celebration was intended to be a memorable experience that would take place over the course of four days. On the first day, Sam and Emina’s guests arrived at the St. Regis for an all-white party. Every guest and staff member in attendance wore white, and the revelers danced the night away. An exceptional male and female DJ duo provided music, and a special performance was given by fire dancers. The second night was kicked off with an elegant, romantic dinner at the Four Seasons Punta Mita, right next door to the St. Regis. With the dinner party being on a Friday night, Shabbat, the wedding party celebrated the beginning of the Sabbath as well. Once again, a late night of dancing followed—this time, to the music of the Gipsy Kings. “Saturday was the wedding, and a day I will remember for the rest of my life,” says the bride, who wore a one-of-a-kind couture gown that was designed and hand-embroidered in Israel. With musical artist Stanaj performing a live rendition of “All of Me” for the newlyweds’ first dance, Emina reminisces, “Looking into my man’s eyes and being surrounded by so much love from family and friends made the night so magical. He gave me the wedding of my dreams.” – Grace Ormonde





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February 2020

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*+ Love and Marriage*

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# ANDREW OSBORNE: PROVIDING OUT OF THE ORDINARY EVENTS

## BEHIND THE SCENES AT OSBORNE EVENTS

**A**ndrew Osborne, a veteran of the hospitality business for more than three decades, took a few minutes from his busy events management business to describe his vision for the perfect occasion and some of his favorite aspects of the wining, dining and entertainment industry.

### What is Osborne Events?

We're a boutique Destination Management Event Company (DMC) located in historic downtown Leesburg. We manage everything for corporate groups, from airport meet-and-greet services, gala dinners at wineries and museums, in-hotel décor and theme events, entertainment, polo events, winery, brewery, distillery and cidery tours, historic tours, to full meeting production.

### Tell us about your favorite Middleburg event moments.

We produce so many events at gorgeous settings, from Loudoun wineries to the Salamander Resort & Spa, it's hard to choose just one! If I had to pick one that really stands out, it would have to be The National Sporting Library & Museum Polo Classic, held annually at Great Meadows in The Plains. It draws 1,500-plus attendees for the day to enjoy polo and socialize for a great cause. This event is logistically challenging with a 200' x 40' tent plus 11 other tents located around the beautiful grass polo field. With so many moving elements, including over 20 vendor partners, this event challenges our team year after year! We have the privilege of working with an amazing committee from the NSLM, and that helps make it a favorite event for me.

### Tell us a little about your vision and your schedule.

My goal is to build a niche of wonderful programs and events in Florida during the winter/early spring season, and then continue with the fabulous events we're doing in and around Middleburg and Loudoun. I'm blessed to have Wendy Salt join my Middleburg team, as Wendy comes with such a wide breadth of

experience in the events world. With the combination of Wendy being on board and the amazing flexibility through my partnership with Karen McKenna of Events and Logistics, it allows me to expand the South Florida events, and Osborne Events will be able to continue to offer five-star service to every client. Events & Logistics manages programs and events from the Palm Beaches to the South Beach Shores. Karen's creative edge is showing me personally a completely different look and vibe than the Middleburg area. It's very exciting!

### Your secret weapon the day of?

As catty as it sounds: me! I do everything in my power to be at every event. If I'm not able to be at the event in person, you can guarantee my hands are involved behind the scenes. As I'm not trying to become a conglomerate DMC factory as I call it, I believe this personal touch stands out. The other recipe to our success is embracing our most valued vendor partners who enable us to create an amazing experience for our clients.

### What's your favorite "wow" factor?

When we've created an event or experience, and I'm standing in the room or venue or field and the CEO and their partners, or the board and meeting planner walk-in and I hear, "Oh my goodness, this is just unbelievably amazing!!!" That is the No. 1 reason we do this. A second one would be pulling together an event that nobody thought was possible like our first annual in 2019 "Dinner on the Rooftop," a dinner for 263 guests on the rooftop of a parking garage under a clear top tent.

### What's your favorite tablescape?

I love to create layers when it comes to dinner table settings. To me a tablescape isn't just a linen tablecloth and a centerpiece. The last thing I want is to have a table that looks just cookie-cutter. Using textures, adding different heights, and incorporating fresh florals not only creates a beautiful tablescape, it adds an ambiance and energy to the entire room.



### How can people book you?

For event inquires, please contact Andrew at [andrew@osborne-events.com](mailto:andrew@osborne-events.com) or call 202-256-9519. Don't forget to visit our websites at [www.osborne-events.com](http://www.osborne-events.com) and [www.eventslogistics.com](http://www.eventslogistics.com) and follow us on social media. ML



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Featured in Washington Life Magazine  
April 2019

# WASHINGTON

THE INSIDER'S GUIDE TO POWER, PHILANTHROPY AND SOCIETY SINCE 1991

Toby Helme  
and Elle Leonsis

## SPRING WEDDING *SPECTACULAR*

WASHINGTON'S MOST STUNNING CEREMONIES AND RECEPTIONS  
SECOND DRESSES THAT DAZZLE • ART DECO JEWELS FOR THE BRIDE

*The 2019*  
**A-LIST**

### **GO GREEN!**

ECO-FRIENDLY HOUSEWARES,  
SHOES AND CARS IN TIME FOR EARTH DAY

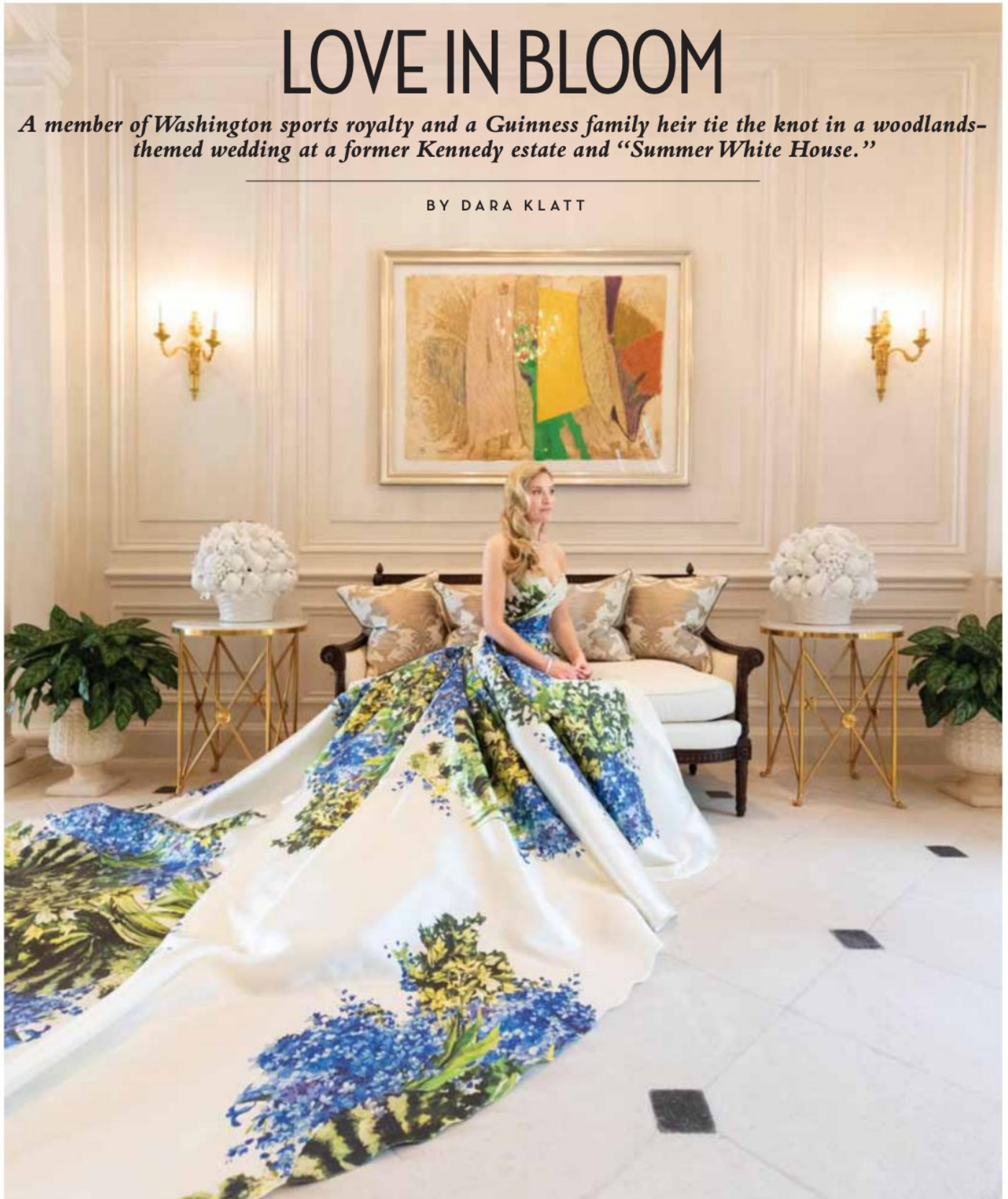
'FACE THE NATION' HOST **MARGARET BRENNAN**  
ON POLITICS, MOTHERHOOD AND  
THE WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENTS'  
ASSOCIATION DINNER



# LOVE IN BLOOM

*A member of Washington sports royalty and a Guinness family heir tie the knot in a woodlands-themed wedding at a former Kennedy estate and “Summer White House.”*

BY DARA KLATT





**ELLE LEONSIS AND TOBY HELME**

Sept. 1, 2018 | Marwood Estate, Potomac, Md.

When Elle Leonsis is asked what she loves most about her new husband Toby Helme, she gushes about his modesty, curiosity, humor, loyalty, handsomeness and cooking abilities and then confesses ... “I think I could write a sonnet on this.”

So it was, in true poetic fashion, that a certain “bolt of Cupid fell” when Helme, a Wiltshire, England native and student at Edinburgh University in Scotland moved to Washington for his junior year abroad at Georgetown University, and a mutual friend asked Leonsis to share her all-American knowledge of hotspots with the visiting Brit. The duo was taken aback by how easily they connected and how much they had in common.

Within a year of dating, Leonsis took a leap of faith, moving from Washington to London and making a home with Helme in Notting Hill. On a quiet night, he proposed with an Art Deco sapphire ring, which is reminiscent of the Greek evil eye emblem that symbolizes protection.

Their engagement would merge two prominent families hailing from complementing industries: beer and sports. Toby, a consultant at Smith & Williamson, is a grandson to Bryan Walter Guinness, 2nd Baron Moyne, and an heir to part of the Guinness family’s brewing fortune. Leonsis, now general manager of SnagFilms, was born into Washington sports royalty. Her father Ted Leonsis is the founder and CEO of Monumental Sports, which owns the Washington Capitals, Washington Wizards,



Washington Mystics and Capital One Arena.

While their wedding embraced a woodlands theme, with colors of hydrangea, blue and green, and the fairest flowers “o’ th’ season” suspended throughout like Shakespearean verse, the event paid homage to their family legacies as well.

Leonsis credits her mother, Lynn, with handling the planning in style and at her very own home, no less. Marwood, the 13-acre former Gore family estate that sits on a knoll above the Potomac River, was once rented by Joseph P. Kennedy Sr. and briefly served as Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt’s summer home in the 1920s.

“It surprised no one how immaculate the gardening and tent and little features all were,” says Leonsis, embracing her daughterly pride. “My mom is damn good at throwing a beautiful party!”



The couple with the bride's family: Zachary (left), Lynn, Ted and Melissa Leonsis



Sofia Lynn, Hannah Weiland Guinness, Sam Guinness and Bel Hutley



One of the most magnificent elements that helped “crown” the evening was the multi-colored floral “cloud.” Inspired by London-based artist Rebecca Louise Law, Leonsis and Helme had their florist, Victoria Clausen, orchestrate and assemble the display suspended above the dance floor.

And then, the dress. The day’s floral theme was inspired by the blue flowers on the bride’s custom Ramona Keveza ball gown. “The bold and beautiful pattern really made me feel like it was a work of art,” Leonsis says. “When I found a gown that was so striking and never worn before by a bride, I fell in love pretty quickly.”

Toby’s groomsmen were dressed by Charles Tyrwhitt, the same company that has suited up the Washington Wizards and Washington Capitals; his ushers embodied the proud tradition of Highland dress, wearing trews (or kilts) and doublets with sporrans.

Continuing with the familial nods, Helme’s father, Sir Tom Helme, gifted linens from his luxury British fabric company, Fermoie, which supplied table cloths, napkins, curtains, pillows and upholstered walls. “The dining tent felt like a forest thanks to his Savernake print,” Leonsis says. And to pay homage to Toby’s mother, the Honorable Mirabel Jane Guinness, and to her side of the family, the couple had a Guinness and salted caramel cake created by Fleur and Flour.

The Guinness delights didn’t stop there. BD3 Design expertly replicated an Irish pub,

“kitted out” with Guinness on tap along with a 20-foot-long oyster bar. Memorabilia from Donegal, Ireland, where the Guinness family has a beloved home, was also included in the theme.

The bride’s father played a memorable role, serenading the couple alongside his college roommate with a surprise rendition of “Banana Boat Song.” The true pièce de résistance – the Stanley Cup – was displayed during cocktail hour and the bride watched the man of her dreams pop a magnum bottle of champagne right into it while friends and family looked on.

After hours of sipping champagne and drinking Guinness, there also needs to be ... chili dogs. In true Washington fashion, the late night snack was provided by the legendary Ben’s Chili Bowl on U Street NW. “It was unreal,” Leonsis says, “seeing the older Brits try and love chili dogs for the first time. Such a great memory.” And that, perhaps, is a different sonnet for another day. **WL**



The bride with Alice Helme (left), Tyga Helme and Lily Helme



**NOTABLE GUESTS**

José and Patricia Andrés, Rorbert Altman and Lynda Carter, Mark and Sally Ein, Don Graham and Amanda Bennett, Arthur and Hannah Weiland Guinness, Mark and Judy Lerner, John and Gina Carlson, The Right Honourable James Stourton, and Chris and Lorraine Wallace.

**DETAILS**

**Bride’s First Dress:** Romoma Keveza **Second Dress:** Elie Saab  
**Wedding Planner:** Arney Walker **Caterer:** Susan Gage  
**Cake:** Fleur and Flour **Flowers:** Victoria Clausen  
**Music Coordinator:** Elan Artists **Linens:** Fermoie **DJ:** Chris Styles  
**Photographer:** Aaron Delesie



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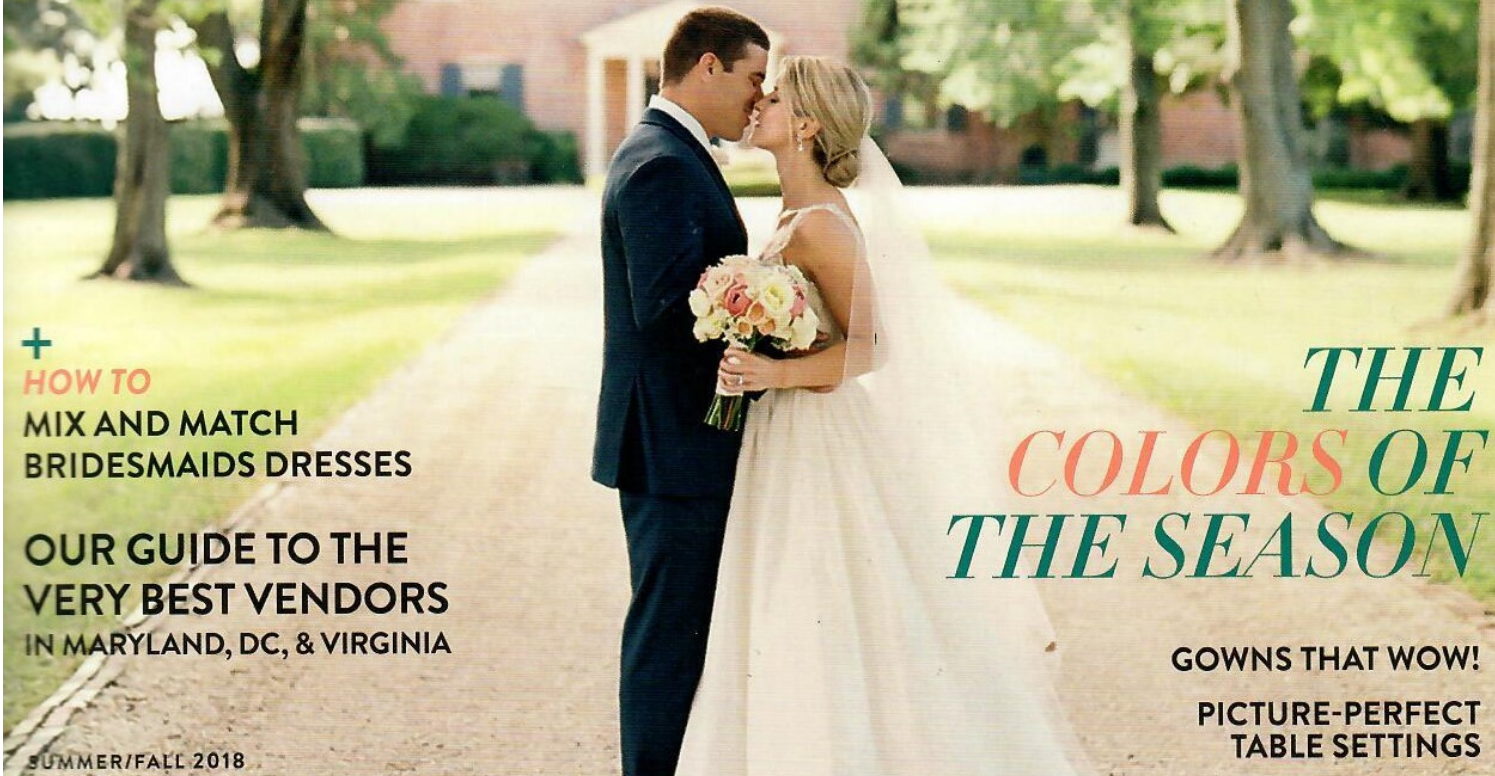


BRIDE WASHINGTONIAN  
& GROOM

Featured in Washingtonian Bride & Groom Magazine  
Summer/Fall 2018

BRIDE WASHINGTONIAN  
& GROOM

YOUR  
ETIQUETTE  
QUESTIONS,  
ANSWERED!



**+**  
**HOW TO**  
MIX AND MATCH  
BRIDESMAIDS DRESSES

**OUR GUIDE TO THE**  
**VERY BEST VENDORS**  
IN MARYLAND, DC, & VIRGINIA

**THE**  
**COLORS OF**  
**THE SEASON**

**GOWNS THAT WOW!**  
**PICTURE-PERFECT**  
**TABLE SETTINGS**



## Rebecca Grunfeld & Ryan Samuel

PRIVATE HOME  
POTOMAC, MD  
6.24.2016

Photographs by ABBY GRACE PHOTOGRAPHY

➔ A few years after a first encounter at Cafe Milano, Rebecca Grunfeld, an attorney, and Ryan, a real-estate developer, bumped into one another at a Wizards game (her dad is team general manager Ernie Grunfeld). A few weeks later, Ryan called Rebecca to ask her out for coffee, which turned into watching the US men's soccer team in a World Cup game at Logan Tavern, followed by an early bite at Le Diplomate. On Rebecca's grandparents' wedding anniversary a few years later, Ryan proposed in the home he and Rebecca had bought and renovated.

They married in an intimate ceremony at Rebecca's parents' house, where Rebecca's sister-in-law officiated and Ryan's two children (Rebecca's "bonus babies") read a book they made for the bride entitled *Ten Things We Love About Becky*. In the pool, inflatable swans adorned with floral wreaths added a whimsical touch, and reception decor included embroidered napkins, Chinese statues representing good health and happiness, and Rebecca's mother's china. For dinner: a family recipe for Caesar salad, beef tenderloin, penne alla vodka, and mushroom risotto. Dessert included mini cupcakes, Rice Krispie treats, and brownies à la mode, plus a vanilla funfetti wedding cake with strawberry buttercream.



**THE DETAILS**



- EVENT PLANNING & DESIGN:** Sara Muchnick Events
- FLORIST:** Amaryllis Floral & Event Design
- CATERER:** Susan Gage Caterers
- STATIONERY:** Shine Wedding Invitations
- CAKE:** Buttercream Bakeshop
- HAIRSTYLIST:** Hair by Giselle
- MAKEUP ARTIST:** Rachelle Glorioso
- BRIDE'S GOWN:** Oscar de la Renta; Your Dream Dress
- GROOM'S ATTIRE:** J. Crew suit, Tiffany cuff links
- VIDEOGRAPHER:** Bowen Films
- TENT:** Sugarplum Tent Company
- CALLIGRAPHY:** Meant To Be Calligraphy



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# REAL **weddings** & HONEYMOONS

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REAL WEDDINGS & HONEYMOONS / FALL 2017

Featured in Martha Stewart  
Real Weddings & Honeymoons | Fall 2017



*love*  
BLOOMS

WHEN WASHINGTON, D.C., COUPLE  
MATTHEW BLUMENSTEIN  
AND LISA MARIE O'QUINN MARRIED,  
THEY BROUGHT THEIR OWN BEAUTIFUL SPIN  
TO EVERY LAST DETAIL.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KT MERRY    TEXT BY LAURA WALLIS

*Better*  
**TOGETHER**

Matt and Lisa (who now goes by "Lisa Blume" professionally) took a walk on the grounds of the Goodstone Inn & Restaurant. His tux was by Giorgio Armani; her long-sleeved sheath gown with a deep-V neckline was by Inbal Dror.

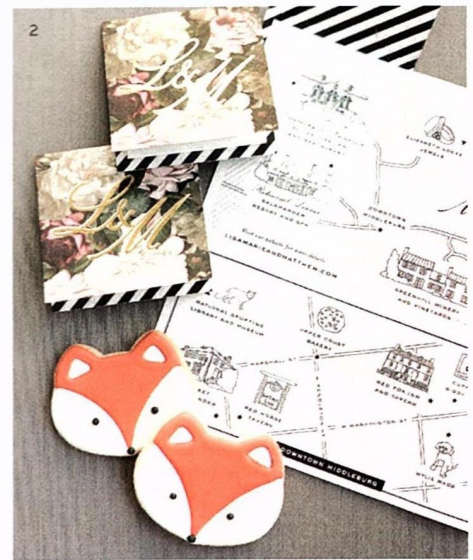






## Blooming BEAUTY

1. Jenn Pineau of Nature Composed created the bride's bouquet from mostly locally sourced blooms, including passionflower vine, eupatorium, swamp dogwood berry, elderberry, lisianthus, dahlias, and scabiosa, mixed with clematis and garden roses. 2. Welcome baskets held itineraries and illustrated maps of town, along with sugar-cookie foxes by District Baking Co. 3. The couple's dog, Jolene, was the ring bearer—she was escorted down the aisle by the groom's nephew, Nelson. 4. Lisa's best friends and a cousin made up her bridal party; the women wore a mix of solid and patterned dresses in the palette of the day: plum, aubergine, mauve, and emerald, combined with neutrals and forest green.







**Statement MAKERS**

**Opposite:** The florist draped panels of fabric in white and various shades of mauve, topped with a wreath of greenery, to form an ethereal ceremony marker that stood tall over an altar of planted flowers. Lisa collaborated on the concept, with lighting in mind. "I wanted the light to come through the fabric, but not too harshly," she says, "illuminating that magic hour before sunset"

**This page:** 1. Guests waited poolside as swimming attendants retrieved black-and-white beach-ball escort cards—one of the most striking visual details of the day. 2. Names were hand-calligraphed on each ball (staff on dry ground held table lists, in case there was any difficulty finding a name). 3. The table settings evoked classic still-life paintings with centerpieces of loose, lush florals. 4. A menu at each place setting was wrapped in the wedding's signature floral pattern.





1



2



3



4

### **Flower POWER**

1. A black cake created by Buttercream Bakeshop was a focal point. After the cake-cutting, gluten-free chocolate cake and lemon cakes were sliced in the kitchen for serving. 2. The team at Revolution Event Design and Production pulled off some big effects for the party, including the dance floor, which was covered in the wedding's floral motif on printed vinyl. 3. A selection of baked sweets was perfectly on-palette. 4. Guests held long sparklers to give the couple a bright send-off.

LISA AND MATT'S  
*Fabulous FÊTE*

“Being at the altar was a very powerful experience. Lisa and I kept looking at each other, and we had to look away—we’d start to well up.”

—MATT, ON HIS MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT

**By the Numbers**

**24**

Indie-rock concerts the couple saw together before getting married (plus three festivals)

**5**

Dress fittings for the bride’s body-hugging Inbal Dror gown

**2**

Courthouses in one day (Lisa picked Matt up from a trial in Maryland and drove to Virginia’s Loudoun County courthouse to get their marriage license—with wedding gear and dog in tow)

**1**

Fender bender (someone ran into Lisa’s car on the wedding day)

**500**

Feet of fabric that was hand-dyed for the ceremony structure

**500+**

Hand-planted flowers in the ceremony altar

**140**

Beach balls in the pool at cocktail hour

**SAY OUI**

In July 2015, Lisa was at a photography conference in France, and Matt had planned to meet her afterward for a quick vacation. But first he flew to Lisa’s hometown in Alabama to formally ask her parents for permission to propose. Blessing in hand, he headed to Paris. “We went to dinner that first night, then walked along the Seine,” Matt recalls. “I’d planned to propose the second night, but I had the ring. I couldn’t think straight. I had to do it.”

**GOING SWIMMINGLY**

One absolute must for Lisa was somehow utilizing the Goodstone Inn’s pool during the wedding. “It reminded me of [iconic 1930s Sunset Strip hotel] the Chateau Marmont,” she says. “So charming.”

Matt nixed the idea of synchronized swimmers, but planner Emily proposed the beach balls as escort cards, with “swim girls” to retrieve them. A quirky idea—and on the list it went.

**PRO SHOTS**

THE HARDEST THING FOR A PHOTOGRAPHER PLANNING HER OWN WEDDING? TRUSTING SOMEONE ELSE TO TAKE PHOTOS. “IT WAS A LOT OF PRESSURE, BECAUSE EVERYONE KEPT ASKING ME WHO IT WOULD BE,” LISA SAYS. ULTIMATELY, SHE CHOSE KT MERRY, BECAUSE SHE SHOOTS FILM AS WELL AS DIGITAL, AND HAS A GREAT PORTFOLIO IN BOTH COLOR AND BLACK-AND-WHITE. IT ALSO HELPS THAT THEY WORK IN DIFFERENT MARKETS. (“I DIDN’T WANT HER TO BE MY COMPETITION!” LISA SAYS.)

**Friday-night highlights**

Most of the couple’s 200 guests were staying at the nearby Salamander Resort & Spa ([salamanderresort.com](http://salamanderresort.com)), and the rehearsal dinner was held there, hosted by Matt’s mother, aunt, and uncle. Family members, the wedding party, and out-of-town guests were invited—120 in all—first for cocktails and hors d’oeuvres in the culinary garden, then dinner and dessert in the equestrian barn. Many family members and friends gave toasts during dessert, which Lisa describes as her favorite part of the entire weekend. Afterward, a “s’mores and cigars” reception for all the wedding guests let everyone join in the fun.

**HONEYMOON DISPATCH**

Let’s just call it a “double moon”: Two days after the wedding, Lisa and Matt took a six-day mini moon in Anguilla—in full recovery mode at **Malliouhana, an Auberge Resort** ([malliouhana.aubergeresorts.com](http://malliouhana.aubergeresorts.com)). A few weeks later, they embarked on their honeymoon in Croatia, organized with the help of Lesley Cohen of SmartFlyer ([smartflyer.com](http://smartflyer.com)). “Many of our friends said, ‘If you love Italy, you’ll love Croatia—and it’ll be less crowded!’” says Lisa. Their nine nights were spent among the **Villa Dubrovnik** ([villa-dubrovnik.hr](http://villa-dubrovnik.hr)), a luxury resort nestled cliffside over the Adriatic Sea; the **Marmont Heritage Hotel**, in Split ([marmont.hotel.com](http://marmont.hotel.com)); the **Hotel Monte Mulini**, in the seaside town of Rovinj ([maistra.com/hotel-monte-mulini-rovinj](http://maistra.com/hotel-monte-mulini-rovinj)); and the **Esplanade Zagreb Hotel** ([esplanade.hr](http://esplanade.hr)), in the capital city of Zagreb. Favorite memory: “The yellow and red submarines floating in the sea in Dubrovnik with tourists aboard! It really felt like we were in a Wes Anderson movie,” remembers Lisa.

**SOURCES**

**Location and catering** Goodstone Inn & Restaurant **Event planning and design** Karson Butler Events **Flowers** Nature Composed **Photography** KT Merry **Stationery** Cheree Berry Paper **Calligraphy** Meant to Be Calligraphy (envelopes); Laura Hooper Calligraphy (day-of items) **Cake and desserts** Buttercream Bakeshop **Music** Sage String Quartet (ceremony and cocktail hour); Rhythm Collective (reception) **Rentals** Bella Villa Antiques & Vintage Rentals (dessert lounge); DC Rental; La Tavola Fine Linen; White Glove Rentals (vintage pieces at cocktail hour) **Décor and swimmers** Revolution Event Design and Production **Bride’s gown** Inbal Dror **Groom’s tuxedo** Giorgio Armani



Climate Control Rental Services Provided by



Featured in MunaLuchi Bride Magazine  
Spring/Summer 2015

SPRING/SUMMER 2015

FOR THE BRIDE WHO CRAVES CULTURE & STYLE

# MunaLuchi

*Bride*

**EXCLUSIVE**  
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# Misty & Aaron

7.5.14 | MIDDLETOWN, MD

photographs by Inspired Photography by Susie



*written by Angela Conner*

"What is love comprised of?" It is a very deep question, and it was the powerful theme that drove Misty and Aaron's nuptials! This devoted couple wanted a wedding that was as vibrant as their love and personalities. So they chose a color scheme that symbolized the purity, preciousness and richness of their love: lush shades of pink with hints of gold.

Besides their color scheme, the couple found other creative ways to incorporate their theme into their decor. Misty shares, "Our [love] theme was everywhere: there were wooden table names in gold labeled by the things we felt love was comprised of, such as compromise, nurture, cherish etc. We also had banners made of our engagement photos that were placed on either side of the



entrance. One banner read 'Love is...Without Exception' and the other banner read, 'Love is...Aaron and Misty.' "

The couple took full advantage of the beautiful summer weather by having an outdoor wedding. The floral décor of hydrangea and orchids in shades of pink served as a beautiful compliment to the greenery surrounding their ceremony. Guests were embraced with dramatic sheer fabric ceilings and pink up-lighting as they entered the couple's tented reception space. They enjoyed a delicious gelato station, took tons of photos at a photobooth and danced all night. A real highlight of the night was when guests headed over to the personalized cognac and cigar bar. They learned how to roll authentic cigars, and left with a unique keepsake from the night. The Hammons truly provided their guests with an "experience," which only enhanced their celebration of love!

### QUICK FACTS FROM THE BRIDE

**wedding flowers** - cascading bouquet comprised of light purple and variegated phalaenopsis orchids and white mini calla lilies. the letter h was spelled out in rose petals at the top of the alter.

**favorite item on menu** - the tuscanry chicken was delicious!

**bridesmaids/groomsmen gifts** - I treated my two maids of honor and matron of honor to spa treatments to start off the activities. all of the bridesmaids were also given robes with their names embroidered on them. the groomsmen were given engraved flasks and shot glasses with their name and 'groomsman' engraved on them.

**first dance song** - "a couple of forevers" by chrisette michele



### Details

**BRIDE'S DRESS:** maggie sottiero / **BRIDE'S HEADPIECE:** etsy made by carole troum / **BRIDE'S SHOES:** badgley mischka / **BRIDESMAID'S DRESSES:** bill levkoff / **CAKES/DESSERTS:** edibles incredible / **GELATO STATION:** amore gelato / **CATERING:** the carriage house / **BEVERAGE SERVICE:** ye old spirit shop / **CEREMONY + RECEPTION:** stone manor country club / **CEREMONY MUSICIANS:** j & entertainment / **CIGAR ROLLER COMPANY:** cortez cigars / **EVENT PLANNER:** perfect planning by tara / **ENTERTAINMENT:** deejay tye / **LIVE ENTERTAINMENT:** dd productions / **FLOWERS/DECOR:** tierra flora design / **GROOM'S ATTIRE:** made by hickey freeman / **HAIR:** Gary Brown / (bridesmaids) kachina c. fleet of c'est chic concepts / **LIGHTING:** washington celebrations / **LINEN + CHARGER RENTALS:** select event rentals / **MAKEUP:** amber sguero / **PHOTOGRAPHY:** inspired photography by susie / **PORTABLE AIR CONDITIONERS:** airpac / **PHOTOBOOTH:** photo in a box / **STATIONERY:** lepenn designs / **TENT LINER:** lotus productions / **VIDEOGRAPHY:** understand the vision

\* perfect planning by tara & lepenn stationery are members of the coterie, munaluchi's exclusive wedding collective. visit page 145 to learn more about their companies.

Photography by Inspired Photography by Susie



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# In The Zone

Cooling technology for event tents helps to ensure that guests stay in their comfort zone.

Featured in InTents Magazine | Summer 2018

By Jake Kulju

The flexibility of tented environments has always been a selling point for party and event rental companies. Knowing that their event will take place under a properly cooled or heated tent offers clients peace of mind, regardless of a rising or falling mercury. While fans and air conditioners are the standbys for cooling, options such as evaporative coolers, heat exchangers and misting machines offer additional strategies for effective climate control and guest comfort. In addition, seasonal heat has different qualities in different geographical markets, requiring different solutions. The muggy, stifling heat of late August in the upper Midwest is different than the dry, scorching heat of Phoenix, Arizona. A plan that efficiently combines appropriate equipment, layout and effective operation helps tents to stay cool at a reasonable cost.



*Mid-day cooling loads can be much higher than morning and evening. Using a modular approach for the HVAC units, AirPac minimized power consumption for this event by only using some of the units during the evening hours, after the sun was no longer a factor. Photo courtesy of AirPac.*

## What are the choices?

Creating a comfortable tented environment begins with using the right equipment, which can range from simple pedestal or tent pole fans to full-on air conditioning units. One option is the heat pump. “We primarily use heat pumps for both heating and cooling,” says Tina Behnke, business development director for AirPac® Inc., a renter of portable air conditioning and heating equipment based in Front Royal, Va. The heat pumps require a minimal footprint in tented spaces, making them more flexible in terms of placement, and they work in any style of tent, she says.



*AirPac's GERO 4-ton modular split air conditioners require minimal material handling equipment and can be placed in tight areas. Indoor and outdoor sections are moved in place with a standard handcart and do not require ductwork that can interfere with design elements. Photo courtesy of AirPac.*

“We use no ductwork,” Behnke says. “Our units are modular and split system, with an indoor handling unit and outdoor condensing unit that are connected.”

Expansion cooling units are another option. “Our most popular item is a [direct expansion] cooling system,” says Wade Sorenson, president of Flagro USA Inc., a supplier of heating and cooling equipment for the construction and rental industries based in Savage, Minnesota. “There are vertical and horizontal direct expansion units. Vertical units replace a tent wall on tents. This allows both the cooling and returns in a small footprint. Horizontal units are set away from the tent with ducts running to the tent to provide cooling and return.”

Based in Sauk Rapids, Minnesota, Pinnacle Climate Technologies™ offers an array of ventilation equipment for the rental market under its Schaeffer and Master brands, including fans, misting fans, evaporative coolers and portable air conditioning units.

White tent fans are a top selling cooling item, says Pinnacle rental national sales manager Kate Boland. “They blend in with the tent so well,” she says. “[They] have a low amp draw, which makes them popular as well. You can plug in many of them to one circuit.”

## What's the forecast?

Regional and seasonal differences underscore the need for accurate system estimating. An underperforming climate control system can ruin an event and damage the reputation a renter has with a client or community. “The location and the date of the event are important,” Behnke says. “Climate control for a tent in May in Washington, D.C., is very different than in August.” She also takes into account the number of people attending the event and the size of the tent that needs to be cooled. “Without those variables, we can't come up with an accurate estimate,” she says.

Indeed, the idiom “It’s not the heat, it’s the humidity” is one that event rental companies must emphasize with their clients. “A lot of it has to do with the area of the country that they are in and what kind of relative humidity and temperature they are going to be dealing with during the event,” Boland says. “I have a tent cooling guide that I send [customers] on how to set up evaporative coolers or the tent fans. [The coolers] have oscillating fans on top on them, and one unit can cover 4,800 square feet of unobstructed air. That number helps determine how many a customer needs based on the size of the tent. For traditional air conditioning in a tent, we ask how many people they expect to host and the square footage of the tent.”

Sorenson formulates system size by considering the cubic area inside the tent, the desired interior temperature and how many people will be in the tent. He also recommends asking specific questions about the event. “Does the customer want spot cooling inside the tent or the entire area cooled?” he asks. “What power is available and how much space is there to place the units outside?”

### Where does this go?

The placement of climate control equipment within a tent can alter its efficiency. There is no one-size-fits-all guideline for setting up equipment for a tented event, but there are some basic rules that can help event professionals get the most out of their systems.

“We work with a venue manager, the caterer and the hosts to get a clear understanding of how the space will be used,” Behnke says. “Every tent is different and every event is different. Our units are modular, so we can move them if we need to, even during an event.”

A flexible climate control system allows event rental companies to keep up with an event in real time and make adjustments that keep clients happy and cool.

“At high-end events, we have moved [units] if an issue arises,” she says. “Sometimes one of the tent walls is being used as a projection screen, or has a wall of graphics on it that we can’t block. One event had a car in the tent and we couldn’t have our units near it [because of] photo ops.”



*AirPac’s GERO 4-ton modular split air conditioners require minimal material handling equipment and can be placed in tight areas. Indoor and outdoor sections are moved in place with a standard handcart and do not require ductwork that can interfere with design elements. Photo courtesy of AirPac.*

Boland advises considering wind when deciding where to place equipment in tents with open sides. “We generally suggest a tent fan every 10 to 15 feet,” she says. “If there is a prevailing wind, we suggest that they work with it and have all the tent fans moving in the same direction as the wind. If it’s going to be a closed wall tent, we suggest a racetrack pattern so you’re moving the air around.”

Sorenson recommends trying to keep a low profile with cooling equipment. “Most jobs can be accommodated by using the back side or ends of the tents where traffic is limited,” he says.

To maximize efficiency, Behnke communicates with other vendors and service providers who will also be using the tent. She recommends thinking about it like a home—the more it’s left open, the more air that escapes. “We tell the catering staff and service staff to be mindful of the doors,” she says. “They usually want to keep the tent cool, so they listen to us. We try to put condensing units and cabling out of the general traffic areas where people access the tent.”

### All Systems Go

Even the best-laid plans can change when weather threatens an event or more people than expected show up. AirPac takes a direct, low-risk approach to managing equipment at events for which the company provides rental units: the company always has a technician on-hand, coming in once the tent is up and monitoring equipment throughout the event.

“We don’t get a ‘do over’ for an event,” Behnke says. “We want to be there at the back end of the tent where everyone else puts their stuff to keep control of our [systems].”



For large and high-profile events, Sorenson recommends pre-event meetings. For smaller events, he advises leaving detailed instructions with customers. “Pick up/drop off [situations] are only for your small events that require only one or two [cooling] units,” he says. “With these, instructions to the customer are very important to determine that the customer knows [how much] power is needed.”

Today’s climate control suppliers offer more options than ever to keep event tents cool and comfortable. With the correct equipment and cooling plan, there is no reason for tented event planners—or their clients and guests—to ever break a sweat.

Climate Control Rental Services Provided by



## On Love: Shaina Vinayek and Frank DiGiovanni

by Lauren Loftus  
July 31, 2015



*StoryMotion Studios*

Their story sounds like the latest culinary trend: Indian-Italian fusion.

It was in Shaina Vinayek's kitchen that she and Frank DiGiovanni had one of their first dates. Both foodies, they were whipping up dinner, and Shaina, whose Punjabi parents had immigrated to the United States from India, suggested they use some small orange peppers Frank had never seen.

"She cut up four or five of them and put [in] seeds and all," he says of what turned out to be habanero chilies. "When we sat down and had our first bites, my entire face burned off."

Laughing, Shaina counters, "It was a big pot!"

Frank, who comes from an Italian family, thought he was an adventurous eater, but he had met his match in Shaina. "The one thing this woman brought into my life was spice, flavor," he says. The pair met in 2006 at the University of Maryland, where Shaina was friends with Frank's roommate. "She'd be bouncing around. She was always so much fun to see, just enjoying life," he says.

Shaina, who is entering Georgetown University Law Center in the fall, noticed Frank, too. "I thought he was really cute," she says. When visiting her friend, "I would wonder where he was when he wasn't there."

But Frank, now a Prince George's County police detective, didn't have the nerve to ask Shaina out. "I didn't party too much. ... I was just too shy," he says.

After graduating, their paths didn't cross again until a mutual friend's birthday party in 2012. By then, Frank had graduated from the police academy and built up some swagger. "I actually had enough confidence to flirt with her, and I was actually getting a response back," he says. But Shaina was working on a master's degree in public health at Columbia University in New York, and Frank, living in Annapolis, was wary of starting something long distance.

Not one to be forgotten, Shaina made the next move. By the next year, she had moved back to the Washington area for work. During a weekend in Ocean City with her cousin, she met a police officer on the boardwalk who reminded her that she knew a charming cop. So she texted Frank out of the blue just to say hi. In his typical courteous fashion, Frank texted back promptly and invited her to dinner with a few of his friends.

But the friends bailed at the last minute. "I was like, 'Oh, man, she's going to think I schemed up this whole thing to get her to go out to dinner with just me,'" Frank says.

Shaina, however, insisted they still go. Ever the foodie, she was eager to try out the French cuisine at Le Diplomate, a hot restaurant that had just opened on 14th Street NW. "Either way, it'll be a good night," Shaina recalls thinking. "Either the food will be good, or the food and the guy will be good."

The latter turned out to be true. They tried escargot for the first time and got caught up in conversation until a friend of Shaina's — her safety net — interrupted the date. "I forgot to text her not to come," she says. "I wasn't checking my phone, which for me is really abnormal."

Instead of ending the night early, Shaina asked Frank to join them for drinks and dancing. They met more of each other's friends, and what was supposed to be a casual Saturday dinner turned into an epic 12-hour first date.



StoryMotion Studios

"I came back Tuesday to take her out again," says Frank, who was still living in Annapolis. "You know how you're supposed to wait?" he says of the dating "rule" to wait three days after a first date to call again. "Well, rules were out the window."

Less than a month later, the two were officially an item. They bonded quickly over their similar upbringings — both had been raised by strong single mothers. Frank's mother, Kim, is a successful lawyer, and Shaina's mother, Niharika, was a prominent OB/GYN who now teaches at the University of Maryland.

Frank says Shaina's strong personality and ambition are her best attributes. "She's not going to shy away from things she wants to achieve in life just because she may not have the perfect equation," he says. "She's going to go do it."

Shaina, who worked full time while studying for the LSAT, loves Frank's calming presence. "I'm like the most anxious person in the whole world," she says. "So having that personal Xanax is so awesome."

They started talking about marriage early on, even scouting wedding venues before the question had officially been popped. Then one day in June 2014, the couple took a day off to check out the Gaylord resort at National Harbor as a possible reception location. Little did Shaina know that Frank had reserved the VIP gondola on the Capital Wheel and hidden champagne inside. When their car stopped at the top of the 180-foot-tall Ferris wheel, with views of Washington and the Potomac River below, Frank dropped to one knee.

"She started jumping up and down and shaking the cart," Frank recalls. The yes was implied.

On July 18, Shaina and Frank, both 27, were married at Stone Manor Country Club in Middletown, Md., and the wedding was a true amalgam of the couples' cultural backgrounds. After Frank rode in on a bejeweled horse, the pair met under a canopy of pink and gold for traditional Hindu blessings. Hand in hand, they circled the altar seven times while reciting seven vows for a long and fruitful marriage. They ended by feeding each other sweets to represent a nourished marriage.

A Christian ceremony followed, with Shaina and Frank saying their own vows, both promising to share the last dark chocolate peanut butter cup. Then it was time for dancing with their 275 guests.

In a nod to their first date at the French bistro, the couple honeymooned for two weeks in Paris, Bordeaux and Nice, doing what they love most — exploring new cafes and indulging in all things sweet and savory.

The newlyweds are most excited about getting back to experimenting in their own kitchen. "We talk about food all the time," Shaina says, adding, "It's all about the simple things." Good food, good company.

They mention a line from "Shantaram" by Gregory David Roberts, which was read at their wedding, saying that it explains things best: "There is so much Italian in the Indians, and so much Indian in the Italians. ... For them, food is music inside the body, and music is food inside the heart."

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## A Waterfront Garden Wedding at the Inn at Perry Cabin by Belmond in St. Michaels, Maryland

Lisa Blume Photography



Kathryn Jaffe (28 and a lawyer) and Ryan Boothe (32 and a business owner and lacrosse coach) celebrated their nuptials surrounded by their loved ones at a dreamy waterfront garden party at the Inn at Perry Cabin at Belmond in St. Michaels, Maryland. “Ryan really loves the water and wanted to incorporate that into our wedding,” Kathryn says. “And I really love beautiful gardens and flowers. The Inn at Perry Cabin was the ideal combination with absolutely gorgeous grounds and an entirely waterfront property. We really wanted a sophisticated, elegant wedding that was also relaxed and intimate.” Kathryn and Ryan decorated their picture-perfect venue with a soft and organic palette of ivory, blush pink, raspberry pink, peach and boxwood greenery, which added a subtle and sophisticated romance.

Drawing inspiration from the inn’s manicured grounds, Kathryn worked with her planner to incorporate custom botanical and garden designs in the ceremony and reception decor. Using boxwood hedges, topiaries and three custom-designed tablescapes, they captured the couple's garden vision. Kathryn, a fan of watercolor painting, had a custom watercolor design created to match the aesthetic of their garden venue. “Our planner and stationery designer created so many opportunities to incorporate that design,” Kathryn says. “The pieces are something I will hold on to forever.” From the invitation suite to the beautiful three-tier cake, the painterly floral design was a unifying element throughout the wedding. After saying “I do” with the picturesque Maryland waterfront as their backdrop, Kathryn and Ryan celebrated with a garden cocktail party and tented reception. During cocktail hour guests kept cool with rosemary lemonade and Shoo-Fly Punch (bourbon, ginger beer and lemon). Kathryn and Ryan worked with the inn to create a menu that highlighted local and seasonal produce, such as heirloom tomatoes, Silver Queen corn and Maryland crab cakes. “The inn provided the perfect reflection of us as a couple,” Kathryn says. “It was both elegant and relaxed.” — Marissa Hermanson













Climate Control Rental Services Provided by



## Portable Market Geared for Uptime

by Kimberly Schwartz  
June 29, 2015



*Crucial Data: Spot Coolers provide supplemental cooling during peak processing and backdrop cooling when necessary.*

As economic activity in commercial construction and manufacturing is growing across the nation, the market demand for portable equipment is increasing. The benefits of portables, including speedy implementation, reduced downtime, and cost-effectiveness, are continuing to gain recognition from end users. And, as end users experience these benefits and the resulting uptime, industry experts expect the portable market to continue to heat up.

### BRIGHT OUTLOOK

According to Tina Behnke, who handles business development for AirPac Inc., "The commercial construction, industrial, and institutional maintenance markets are driving growth in the rental portable AC and heating market." Plus, Behnke added: "Sales of portable air conditioners for the computer/server room market are also increasing. And, hospitality and special event cooling have increased significantly the past two years. All indications are these trends will continue."

Behnke was enthusiastic about all of these trends, especially the improved activity in construction. "The construction industry has been slow since the recession, so any increase is a good sign," she said. "Developers are building again, and the industrial and institutional properties are expanding." She also noted the U.S. Green Building Council's (USGBC's) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification program is continuing to change the construction industry with its rating systems for designing, constructing, operating, and maintaining green buildings. "With the LEED building requirements, portable air conditioners are often used during the construction/renovation process prior to final completion, which is great for the rental market," Behnke said.

In addition to construction, the outlook for manufacturing is also brightening, according to Eddie Stevenson, marketing manager for MovinCool, a brand of Denso Products and Services Americas Inc. "With the reshoring of manufacturing back to the U.S., we see people and process cooling applications heating up," Stevenson said. He added he believes the main driver behind the return of manufacturing to the U.S. is product quality improvement. Stevenson noted that spot cooling can be a particularly efficient solution in manufacturing applications. For example, he said, "Spot cooling an assembly line in a warehouse is much more efficient than cooling the entire space."

Garth Tagge, national sales manager for Spot Coolers, a United Technologies Corp. company, noted the growing trend of using portables to cool people, not just equipment.

“Equipment cooling was the primary application for portable air conditioning...While equipment cooling is still a large portion of the market, cooling and heating people is predominant in today’s market.” That’s why Tagge sees great potential in office and retail spaces. “In particular, short-term cooling in retail establishments and office/institutional buildings is increasing and represents the fastest-growing segment,” he said. Tagge added these spaces typically experience a need for portable equipment “due to a service, repair, or replacement requirement.”



*Printing Production: In this application, cooling is installed right at the printing process to minimize scrap and increase production.*



*Temporary Solution: Emergency spot coolers can be quickly rolled into place when maintenance is needed on the central air conditioning system.*

## RECOGNIZING THE BENEFITS

The growth of portables across many sectors can largely be credited to an increase in awareness and recognition of the units’ benefits. According to Tagge: “Customers — the end user, in particular — have finally been educated to the benefit of portable air conditioners. It took a long time for the benefits to become universally known and accepted, since portable cooling was such a niche product in a small, vertical market.”

Now, he said, the end user specifies them. “It’s widely known among the business community that portable air conditioners can ‘bridge the gap’ between AC system shutdown or failure and when the main systems become operational again.

It’s no longer necessary to shut down IT [information technology] operations, close your doors to the retail public, or suffer stagnant dead air in enclosed occupied spaces when the AC is off.”

Tagge also pointed out that uptime is just one benefit of portables, which also come in a variety of equipment capacities and types that can be quickly implemented at a customer’s site. “Units can be deployed on-site and be operational in hours from the shutdown event, providing some degree of relief,” he noted. Stevenson pointed out that using spot coolers to cool people “helps keep workforces in safe working conditions.” He also added that, while building owners and managers may be aware of portable cooling, not all are aware of all the benefits portable cooling can provide.

“We’re doing the best we can to educate building owners and managers and work with them so they understand a portable air conditioner can often prove to be the most cost-effective solution,” Behnke said. “Portable air conditioners often allow the tenant to get the cooling needed without excessive installation costs or a long installation process. It’s about finding a balance and offering benefits to both the building owners and the individual tenants in the space.” For instance, in applications where supplemental cooling is needed, she explained that “Portable air conditioning solutions can be put in place much faster and with much lower sunk costs than redesigning the central system to handle an increased heat load in a specific area. Portable air conditioners deliver the required cooling right where it is needed, often eliminating or minimizing costly ductwork and long refrigerant line runs.” Behnke said that, overall, “Portable AC systems are not meant to replace central systems but can save time and money when used correctly.”

## SIDEBAR: REGULATIONS ON THE HORIZON

As the portable market sees more growth, it may also face more pressure from regulatory agencies. Increasing regulatory action from the federal level on down has become a hot topic across the HVAC industry, and its impact may spread to portables soon.

“Efficiency is just beginning to impact the industry,” said Garth Tagge, national sales manager, Spot Coolers. “The very nature of portables allowed manufacturers to produce equipment that was more efficient by application versus efficiency by design.



*Comfortable Clients: Spot cooling helps keep employees safe and improves efficiency.*

The basic tenant of spot cooling is that you’re cooling a ‘space within a space’ and, therefore, by definition, you’re efficient because big energy usage is not required to cool every cubic inch of the space. You’re concentrating the equipment cooling power within a localized area. This, by nature, saves energy.”

However, Tagge noted: “Some models are now being subject to the more stringent energy-efficiency standards since they are typically used for cooling a space.

This is not true for portable units on wheels — mostly ceiling-mounted units. And, so far, these are limited to a handful of bellwether states such as California.” Tina Behnke, business development, AirPac Inc., noted her company is also keeping an eye on efficiency regulations and trends. “We’ll continue to monitor the U.S. Department of Energy’s [DOE’s] proposed regulations on energy efficiency and test procedures for portable air conditioners,” she said.



*On Demand: Uptime is a significant benefit of portable units, which can be deployed on-site and can be operational within hours of a shutdown event.*

# BEAT THE HEAT



AS SUMMER TEMPERATURES RISE, A CLIMATE-CONTROLLED TENTED ENVIRONMENT WILL KEEP THE PARTY COOL.

*by Jeff Moravec*



AirPac Inc. refers to this area as the “technical” side of the tent, where outdoor condensing units have been placed. The company is careful to put equipment where it will not be seen or heard. Photo courtesy of Anthony Taccetta.

It’s easy to understand why the use of air conditioning has been increasingly common for weddings and other tented events.

“Most people have been to that wedding without air conditioning where it was so hot you don’t remember anything about it except how sweaty you were,” says Tina Behnke, chief experience officer at AirPac Inc., which manufactures and rents climate control equipment in Front Royal, Va. “And who wants to look like you were in a mosh pit at a Grateful Dead concert?”

“It’s been pretty exponential growth when it comes to air conditioning in tents over the last four to six years,” Behnke says. “It’s all about creating a more comfortable environment, whether it’s with air conditioners or heaters when appropriate.

“It’s gotten to the point these days when some people won’t go to a wedding if it’s not going to be air conditioned,” she explains. “It can be a health hazard because the heat can cause medical emergencies.”

But as the popularity of climate control for tents grows, it’s important to make sure that the system is appropriate for the event, says Daryl Benz, national event specialist for Aggreko Event Services in Houston, Texas.

#### COOLING CAN BE EXPENSIVE

“HVAC for a tent can be expensive, so you want to make sure you are doing it right,” Benz says. “Aggreko has done small weddings for a few thousand dollars, up to huge ceremonies where it was \$120,000 just for the air conditioning.”

One trap that event planners fall into is underestimating the costs and amount of cooling they might need, but there are simple ways to avoid this.

For example, says Behnke, when prospective clients are touring a venue examining reception tents, or visiting the site where the tent will be installed for their event, they are not always thinking about the tent in the conditions representative of the day they’re having the event. “And even if they are touring in the summertime,” she says, “they may be wearing shorts or a sundress—they’re not getting married in that attire, and they’ve got hair and makeup to consider as well.”

But it’s not just the temperature that determines how much cooling or heating you might need, explains Erik Thornton, senior account manager at Portable Air in Cocoa, Fla. “It’s what kinds of activities that take place inside as well,” he



This L.B. White unit provides heating for tented events. The proper temperature in a tent is all about air circulation, says Chris Smith, company vice president, who recommends the use of a stir fan to blow air around. Photo courtesy of L.B. White Co.

says. "If it's just a speaking engagement, with not a lot of people moving around, there won't be a lot of people generating heat. But other activities that might generate more heat need different accommodations.

"The biggest thing is the actual date of the event," he adds. "For example, for

a June wedding on a Saturday with the whole thing from noon to 10 p.m., I first need to find out the average temperature on that date for that location. If it's in the state of Florida, that could be 90 degrees. From there, I'll figure out what type of tent you're using, what the square footage is."

According to Thornton, by Portable Air calculations, every 100 square feet of tent requires one ton of air. "If it's 90 degrees outside, I'm going to be able to maintain a 72-degree temperature inside," he says. "It doesn't matter if the doors are open or what's going on inside.

"You also need to plan for the number of people who are going to be inside," he notes. "So another rule that I use is every additional 33 people requires another ton. If there are 300 people coming, I'll need at least another 10 tons on top of whatever the square footage calls for."



## PANDEMIC REQUIRES BETTER AIR EXCHANGE

**M**anufacturers and vendors of climate control equipment faced challenges in 2020 because of the pandemic, mainly because any system pumping air into a space was automatically suspect.

"It was hard," says Tina Behnke, chief experience officer at AirPac Inc., Front Royal, Va. "It was really hard."

Initially, with so much shut down, there was not much call for climate control services. But then, as the need for COVID-19 screening increased, AirPac started servicing such activities. "We needed to be sure to make the air as clean as possible," Behnke says. "For example, we added UVC [ultraviolet-C] germicidal lights to the air intake on our heat pumps; as air is being circulated it is also being sanitized because it comes across the UVC lights. We had to do whatever we could to modify our product offerings, so we were doing everything possible to make the environment as safe as it could be for guests and event staff inside the tent."

Before COVID-19, companies designed climate control in tents strictly based on how much heating and cooling was needed. But with the pandemic, the number of air changes is an important factor, says Daryl Benz, national event specialist for Aggreko Event Services in Houston, Texas.

"Before, one or two air changes wasn't a big deal for a temporary structure," he says. "With COVID, you need at least four to six air changes. You don't necessarily increase the amount of cooling; you increase the amount of ventilation."



## NOT ALL EQUIPMENT IS EQUAL

Equipment matters as well, Thornton says. "An upright vertical package that goes right in line with the sidewalls of the tent gives a nice seamless look inside. It produces just like a standard AC would at your house."

However, he adds, "If it's a big speaking engagement, with a lot of speeches or people talking inside, the vertical uprights might not be the best scenario. In that case, we'd set up an air conditioner just outside the tent and duct it inside the tent. All of the sound of the air conditioning would be outside; inside, you'd just hear a little breeze."

The larger an event becomes, the more complex the heating and cooling system that's required, says Benz. "For a smaller tent, you maybe can use a simple stand-alone air conditioner, for

example," he says. "But if you get into huge structures, you might need water chillers and air handlers to supply the amount of airflow you will need."

Other factors?

"If you do a clear top or a translucent top, it can almost double the cooling power you're going to need compared to a solid white blackout top," Benz says.

"I've done weddings where they didn't want any ducts coming through the wall," he adds. "They wanted everything to come up through the floor, which may require you to add more equipment to get the proper amount of air distribution."

If a large air-conditioning system is overkill, L.B. White Co. LLC, an Onalaska, Wisc.-based company that made its name in agricultural heating and portable temporary heaters, has come out with a portable evaporative cooler

Aggreko Event Services provided the cooling units for this event. Daryl Benz, national event specialist for Aggreko, says event planners need to be careful not to underestimate the costs and amount of heating or cooling they might need. Photo courtesy of Aggreko Event Services.



## WHY COOL YOUR WEDDING?

When outdoor temperatures are expected to be high, it's important to keep a tented event cool. Tina Behnke, chief experience officer at AirPac Inc., shares four reasons why:

1. The bride: We've all heard of a blushing bride, but a hot, sticky, sweaty bride? Enough said.
2. The guests: If you can't cool the entire tent, think about having an area with spot coolers to keep the elderly (and even the cranky) comfortable.
3. The food: To avoid illness from spoiled food, serve food in optimum conditions and temperatures. Extreme temperatures present a problem with presentation as well.
4. The flowers: Most flowers prefer temperatures between 65 and 75°F. Unless you have exotic tropicals, the flowers you've paid a pretty penny for will wilt before the event is over.



"It's not just the temperature that determines how much cooling or heating you might need for an event," says Erik Thornton, senior account manager at Portable Air, which installed cooling equipment for this tented event. "It's what kinds of activities that take place inside as well," he says. Photo courtesy of Portable Air.

that works well for tents that only need slight cooling. "The system wets a pad and blows water over the pad, and it takes the temperature down 10 degrees or so, depending on the humidity, and it blows cool air throughout the tent," says Chris Smith, vice president of marketing.

## SYSTEM DESIGNED FOR SMALLER TENTS

"So many bigger tents use big machines that do both heating and cooling, and they can get as big as a small building," Smith says. "Our system is designed more for the smaller tent that's up for maybe a weekend, and our unit is just rolled in and out."

Smith offers another tip: "One of the problems people often have with a tented event is that it's hot in one area and cool in another. It's really about the air circulation. Make sure you have that air circulating. If there is a heater or cooler set up in one corner, put a stir fan down the road a little bit from it and have it kind of blow the air around. Or, instead of using one big unit use two smaller units and separate them a bit."

Also, aesthetics do matter at some events more than others. "There are general rental companies that have large trailer-mounted units," says Behnke. "You have ducts that go into the tent that kind of look like an octopus. Some people don't like that, so that's not how we do it. AirPac offers a more visually appealing alternative to ducted air conditioning.

"Just remember," Behnke says, "it's all about making the environment appealing and comfortable for your guests. What will they remember when they leave? You don't want it to be about how miserable they were." ●

*Jeff Moravec is a freelance writer based in Minneapolis, Minn.*