

BLISS ON THE BLUFF

Inspired by their waterfront destination,
a creative duo plans an effortless event
on the banks of Bluffton's May River.

By Meaghan Walsh
Photography by Allison Reisz

College sweethearts Brian Burbank and Kate Nordstrom live in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, but when it came time to tie the knot, this carefree pair hit the road.

"We decided it would be fun to do a wedding near the coast within driving distance," Kate says. "We took a weekend trip down to the Hilton Head and Savannah area, and that's when we knew we wanted to get married in the Waterside Chapel at the Inn at Palmetto Bluff."

Located in Bluffton, South Carolina, and filled with tall Gothic windows, exposed beams, fixed pews, and Early American chandeliers, the Waterside Chapel is the epitome of old-fashioned romance. Situated on the banks of the winding May River and draped with live oaks, its grounds are punctuated by the once grandiose ruins of the Wilson Mansion.

"We were taken aback by the beauty of the Lowcountry," recalls the beatific bride, "and it will always have a special place in our hearts."





Brian Kate
real weddings



LOCATION OF CEREMONY: Waterside Chapel, Inn at Palmetto Bluff, Bluffton, SC

In just five months, Brian and Kate brought together family from 16 states and one foreign country—Norway—to celebrate with them. They kept their guests in the loop via an in-depth, Web site packed with plans, local information, and pictures of their planning trips to Palmetto Bluff.

“[The Web site] got them all excited to travel there!” Kate enthuses.

Sweet Simplicity

Working in a short time frame and with a modest budget, the pair made their own invitations, programs and reception table cards.

“It was fun to create something unique and personalized, and it helped set the style for the wedding,” Kate

recalls. “For example, instead of table numbers, we named the reception tables after various places we’ve been together over the years and included pictures of us at each location. I found nice paper . . . and designed and printed everything off of my home computer.”

To ensure that their guests had plenty of time to relax and enjoy their surroundings, Brian and Kate simplified their event plan as well. Instead of the usual packed agenda, they rented a beach house and planned an extended weekend party.

“Thursday through Saturday were spent exploring the island, going to the beach and eating good food,” Kate reminisces. “We had an informal rehearsal dinner cookout with friends and family at the house on Hilton Head

Behind the Veil

Palette: A range of pinks

Date: September 14, 2008

Planning Time: Five months

Number of Attendees: 70

Planner/Event Designer: Bride

Rehearsal Dinner Site: Rented beach house,
Hilton Head Island, SC

Ceremony Site: Waterside Chapel, Inn at Palmetto Bluff,
Bluffton, SC

Officiant: Reverend Joe Wadas

Ceremony Music: Alyssa Jae, Hilton Head Entertainment

Gown: Victorian Rose Bridals, Raleigh, NC

Accessories: Pearls, gift from groom

Hair: Vanessa's Hair Boutique

Makeup: Shauna Phillips, Makeup by Shauna

Bridesmaids' Dresses: J. Crew

Groom's/Groomsmen's Attire: Attendants' own black suits

Reception Site and Catering: Inn at Palmetto Bluff

Reception Music: DJ Alan Palchak, Hilton Head
Entertainment

Florist: Amy Harvey, Harvey Designs

Cake: Publix

Videographer: Hart to Heart Media

Photography: Alison Reisz, 847.840.1168,
www.allisonreisz.com



“I Do” Declare!

“Enjoy every moment of the engagement, planning, and wedding festivities because it goes by quickly!”

—Katie Nordstrom

Saturday evening. My sister, also my maid of honor, then drove with me to stay at the cottage at the Inn at Palmetto Bluff the night before the wedding.”

Although blue is Kate's favorite color, she chose to complement the lush greens and beiges of the natural environment with dark, vibrant pink bridesmaids' dresses and flowers. The ceremony went off without a hitch, and the couple and their 70 guests feasted and danced the night away on the grounds at the Inn at Palmetto Bluff.

Memorable Style

“Brian and I had a lot of fun putting an event together that reflected our personalities,” Kate recalls. “Following

the advice another couple had given us, we made sure to enjoy every minute of the engagement because . . . it goes by very quickly.”

With that in mind, Kate and Brian made capturing the fleeting moments their top priority.

“It was important to us to have an excellent photographer (Allison Reisz) and videographer (Hart to Heart Media) to capture the wedding,” says Katie. “We couldn't have been more happy with the results. My grandparents from Sweden weren't able to travel to see the wedding, so they will love seeing the photographs and video. Looking at the photographs takes us right back to our special day and brings back all of the emotions. We cherish this.”