A Perfect Union

As Valentine's Day nears, what better way to celebrate love than with a dream wedding?

Couple: Lauren and Jordan Wright
Reception and ceremony: Pleasantdale Chateau, West Orange, NJ
Officiant: Alvin Talkington, the bride's uncle
Dress: Melissa Sweet, Priscilla of Boston
Bridesmaid Dresses: Priscilla of Boston
Shoes: "Something Blue" by Manolo Blahnik
Florist/Décor: Evention
Photographer: Anthony Vazquez, Anthony Vazquez Photography
Band: Original Faze 4, Faze 4 Orchestra
Videographer: Your Cinematic Wedding
Hair: Jessica Williams
Make up: Daniela Klein
After party DJ: Magic Moments
Honeymoon: Italy (Positano, Rome, Lake Como)

BC: Describe the planning process.
LW: I loved every second of planning. I appreciated every detail and every decision made, as this is something you do once. I wanted my wedding to be a magical experience, and it was just that. Everything was perfect—the ceremony outside overlooking the pond with the gorgeous fall foliage back drop; the cocktail hour in the main part of the chateau with candles everywhere; the reception in the ballroom with spectacular table centerpieces, warm-up lighting surrounding the room and our script logo of our initials shining on the dance floor; and the after party in the Oak Room. They were all unique moments in time.

Time truly stood still for me as we wed. It was magical. It was a little windy during the day and I was concerned we wouldn't be able to do our candle lighting ceremony with our guests. I didn't want it to look ridiculous so I contemplated canceling it. At the last moment Jordan and I decided to go through with it. The second I walked out of the Chateau to make my way to Jordan at the front lawn, the wind stopped entirely and there was not an ounce of cold in the air. I remember standing in front of everyone as dusk started to set, holding Jordan's hands and saying to myself that I needed to remember this exact moment. It was like my mom and all her angels

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Anthony Vasquez Photography

had the world stand still and nothing was going to penetrate that moment. It was honestly mind blowing. Reciting my vows was pretty powerful as well. With every word, it was cementing my family—Jordan.

BC: What did you envision as the wedding of your dreams?
LW: I anticipated an evening of elegance and class surrounded by people that we truly love and who have made an impact on our lives. I set the bar high for myself in planning this once-in-a-lifetime event, and every detail and moment fulfilled our dreams.

BC: What were some of the most special moments you'll always cherish?
LW: The night before my wedding, my bridesmaids spent the night with me. We went for manicures and pedicures, had dinner and then spent quality time with each other. It felt really good to have my girls by my side the night before my big day. And the same for Jordan. All of his groomsmen got together for dinner and some quality time. He had a blast.

My grandfather walked me down the aisle. I am very fortunate to have my grandparents still in my life. While it was devastating to not have my mom by my side, it became a special moment for my grandfather and I, and for that I am grateful.

Instead of wedding favors, we gave each guest a note on love that my mom had sent me months before she passed. It was a deeply beautiful impacting moment for people leaving the wedding and was a way for my mom to be part of the night.

Our wedding song was *Every Time I Close My Eyes* by Baby Face featuring Kenny G. As all of our guests surrounded us on the dance floor, a spotlight shined from above as we danced. The bandleader came out on the dance floor circling us as he played Kenny G's saxophone solo. It was breathtaking and made the hair on your arms stand up! So special!

During the ceremony we had a candle lighting ceremony. Each person lit a candle all the way up to Jordan and myself. It was a way for us to connect, through light, with each person attending. It was also a spiritual way for me personally to connect with my mom. People say that spirits are connected to natural candlelight and I wanted her to be there.

My girlfriends and I started a tradition that we initial the name of our next friend that is getting married in blue thread onto a white handkerchief. We give the handkerchief to each other at our bridal showers. It is something we plan to carry on with our own children.

We asked my aunt and Jordan's godmother to speak during our ceremony, something from their heart. It was beautiful what they had to say.

Last but not least, instead of having a regular bridal shower, I had a honeymoon shower and it was a blast! We were headed to Italy for two amazing weeks and instead of getting another set of pots and pans that we already had, I wanted gifts that I could really use. Guests were so creative with their gifts, from an Amazon Kindle to pizza boxes filled with pizza dough with rolled up Euros ($$) as pizza toppings, it was so fun much.