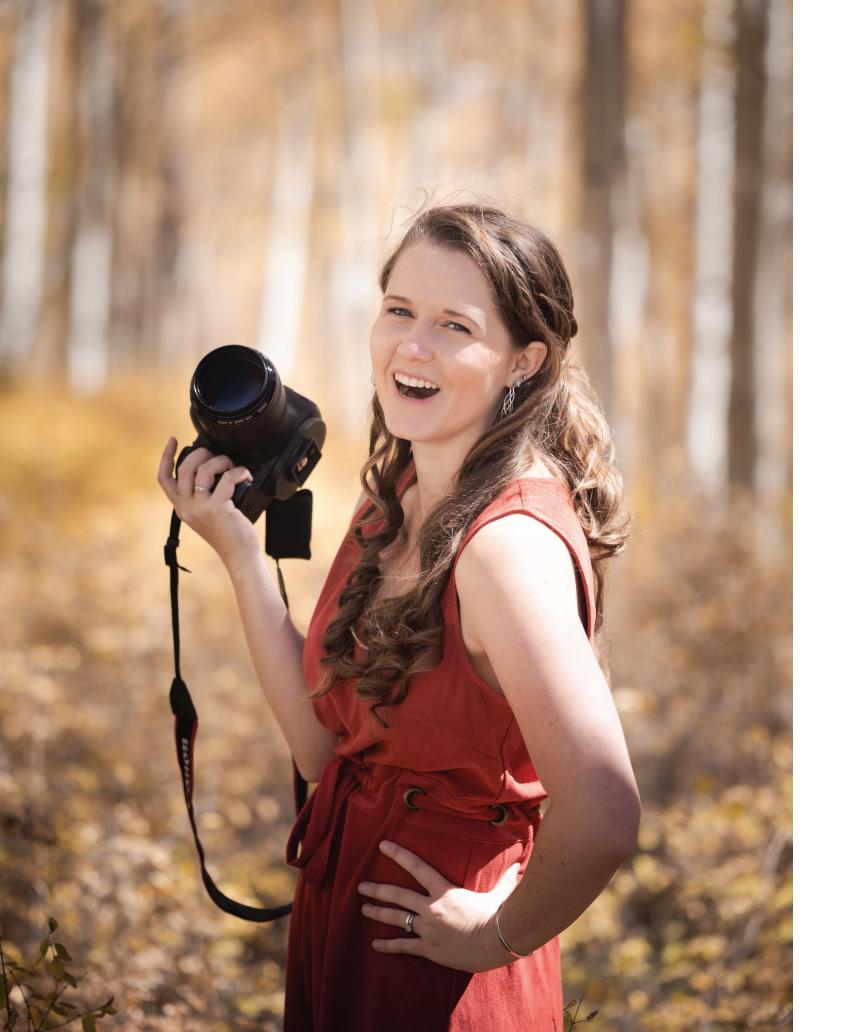
THE

WEDDING

A Guide for all Kara Cavalca Couples





WELCOME

Hello and Welcomel This is such an exciting time for you! I'm sure your mind is racing with all the things that need to be done in preparation for your big day! It's all very exciting, but I know it can also be kind of overwhelming. You're planning the day that will start the rest of your lives together! It's a pretty big deal! By the time you get the hang of everything it will be show time! My goal as your "memory insurance agent" is to make the imagery aspect of the planning processs simple. Photography is more than just images, videography is more than just a record of events, it's the part of your day that you'll be able to look back on! Cakes get eaten, flowers die, but images only increase in worth as time goes by. (I swear I didn't even mean for that to rhyme haha.) You deserve not only beautiful imagery, you also deserve an amazing experience. The goal of this guide is to help you plan your wedding day in a way that will allow me to provide you with the BEST experience possible to capture YOUR story the way it was meant to be told. The first step is to plan your engagement session, and then we can start chatting about all the wedding day details as we get closer to your date! I am beyond excited to be working with you!! I cannot wait to get to know you two better as we continue this journey together!

GET TO KNOW KARA



You may have already gotten a hint of this already... but I LOVE what I do! Documenting your wedding day is such an honor! Since we'll be spending a lot of time together on the big day, I want to make sure you really feel like you know me! So, here are some basics ..

I am a professional extrovert, that means that I love getting to hang out with my clients and get to know your stories and become not just your photographer or videographer but your friend. It also means I love sitting at my computer alone editing for hours while I watch Netflix in my sweatpants haha. I have seen every episode of F.R.I.E.N.D.S. at least 10 times (okay lets be real, more like 20). So in a nutshell this is the perfect job for a professional extrovert like me.

Now why do I love weddings specifically? Well you could say weddings lets me do everything! Over the course of a single day, I get to be a candid action photographer, a fashion and commercial photographer, a photojournalist, a portrait photographer, a landscape photographer, even a food or club photographer during reception time! But the REAL reason I love weddings is because I love STORIES and I want to make sure yours is entirely about and for YOU!

Because I did not have that.

I got married to the most wonderful, beautiful Brazilian man in 2015, Natan Cavalca. We actually had two weddings (before covid made it cool), a small one just for us and a larger one for family and friends a year later. The first wedding our photographer worked so hard to make sure everything was wonderful for us, he was all about our story and our experience. The second wedding our photographers were more worried about themselves, about their status, their portfolio, and what they wanted. That was really hard for us, we ended up not getting some really important moments because the photographer said they didn't "fit their story of the day." So having gone through that I made it my mission in my business to make sure not only that your imagery is beautiful, but that the story is there and that it is uniquely yours! That you look back on your images and remember having had an amazing experience! Connection, community, stories, love, beauty, these are just a few of the things this job is really about for me.



WEDDING DAY FAVORITES

You may not realize this but every photographer has parts of the wedding day that they favor! Below you can read through three of my favorite parts of the wedding day and why these moments are close to my heart!







DETAILS

I love starting off the day with beautiful details! It's a great way to warm up for the wedding day and gives me some fun creative time. I also love details because, again, they help create your story. The image above is so much more than just a necklace on a beautiful bouquet, that necklace is a pendant containing the bride's mother's ashes so she could have her with her throughout the day. These details make the day YOURS.

Also notice how fabulous her nails are! You have to have documentation of those fun little things as well!

COUPLE

Portrait time with the couple is hands down my favorite part of the day! These are the images I want to plaster all over my walls. I also love this time because many times it is the only bit of alone time the two of you get during your busy wedding day (alone with me of course) and I love giving some space for your love to unfold! These are the moments you can look back on and just feel the love oozing right out of the image. This is also another fun time for me to get creative and for some of your individual personalities to come out, adding to your story!

FIRST LOOKS

So of course I love first looks with the couple, especially when they have written letters to each other or give each other little gifts to make that moment even more intimate and sepcial. However I don't just mean first looks with the couple, I love ALL first looks. First looks with the bridesmaids, first looks with parents or siblings, first looks with children, every first look is so filled with emotion and love and it just feels like the intensity of the day is fully realized in those first looks!

I'm not crying you're crying!... okay I'm crying too.

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YOUR ENGAGEMENT SESSION

Now that you have picked a date, a photographer and probably a venue as well, you can celebrate! Those are some of the toughest decisions in wedding planning and you can cross them off your list! Yay!! Now on to some of the fun stuff, like your engagement session! I include engagement sessions in most all of my wedding packages because I truly believe that they are an important part of this whole process. During your engagement session, you'll have the chance to get to know me, experience how I shoot and how I handle posing and lighting. This session will make a HUGE impact on how the wedding day flows. I'll arrive on your wedding day already knowing how you two interact, what your best poses are and how to photograph you in a genuine way! What I will learn about you during your engagement session is invaluable! You will feel like such a pro on your big day because of the great practice you had during your engagement session, and that's how it should be! Plus you get some beautiful images together!

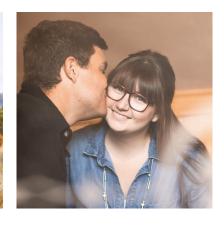
Your engagement session can be scheduled anytime before your wedding day. I normally suggest booking it at least 3-6 months in advance to avoid stress and give you time to use them in announcements if you wish! We can chat about dates, times and locations that best fit your style and schedule. Keep in mind that lighting is a huge factor in how your images turn out, so we can talk about what impact different times of day will have on the look of your imagery. I tend to shoot either early in the morning, or in the late afternoon/evening time to get the best light. As we start to plan for your engagement shoot, we will need to start brainstorming about location ideas. I LOVE it when couples pick a location that is special or sentimental to them in some way! If you can't think of anywhere specific, I can help you decide on a location! As long as the light is great, I can make ANY location look awesome! Do not shy away from crazy ideas! The more creative, the better! Be sure to keep reading to find out more about outfit ideas and inspiration!

ENGAGEMENT PREP

It's always a little intimidating to have your picture taken even if it's just a photo on an iphone that is taken by a friend. We still want to look nice, make sure nothing is in our teeth and that our hair is behaving! I realize that preparing for your engagement session can be a little overwhelming. Here are some tips for outfits and accessories that will make the preparation a little more managable!







- COORDINATE instead. If everyone wears the same matching clothes at a session the images might come across as more posed than you want, or like you are one person with lots of limbs and two heads!
- Don't be afraid to be BOLD! Accessorize and make your you aren't familiar with. outfits your own! Scarves, bold necklaces and fun shoes are always welcomed!
- MOST PATTERNS are actually ok, in moderation.... however, graphics are not favorable for portraits. If you're wearing a pattern, make sure it's not overwhelming and distracting.
- Empty your pockets! Literally. You don't want to have key chains or phones showing through your pockets. (This is for the guys especially!)

- Don't try to MATCH...try to pick outfits and accessories that Most often, couples like to have one casual, everyday outfit and then one outfit that is dressier! This will give your shoot two totally different "looks". I recommend beginning with the dressy outfit first!
 - Make sure you're comfortable in what you're wearing, and that it fits your personality and style. This isn't the time to try out new styles
 - BE ON TIME! The sun is only out for so long! The later you arrive, the less time we have to shoot! And nobody wants that!
 - Clean the ring! I love to shoot a few rings shots during your session, so you want to make sure it's at its prime sparkliness.
 - Relax! You don't have to be a pro at this! I'm going to help you along the way and you're going to do great! Enjoy this time together, and make a date out of it! Plan dinner afterwards and celebrate!! And if you need a little help, a drink beforehand never hurt!



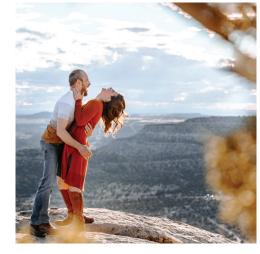
OUTFIT INSPIRATION

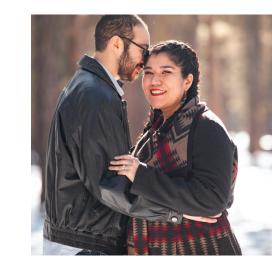




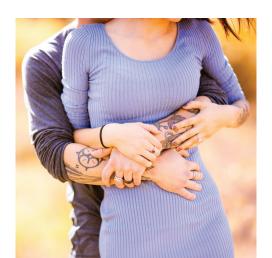


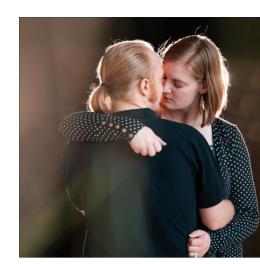




















ENGAGEMENT SESSION

Great Approx. Start Times

WINTER Dec-Mar 3-5pm

During December through Mid-March 3-5pm is a great time frame for your engagement session. However, the time changes in Mid-March and so that will make the start time one hour later.

SPRING Apr-May - Varies

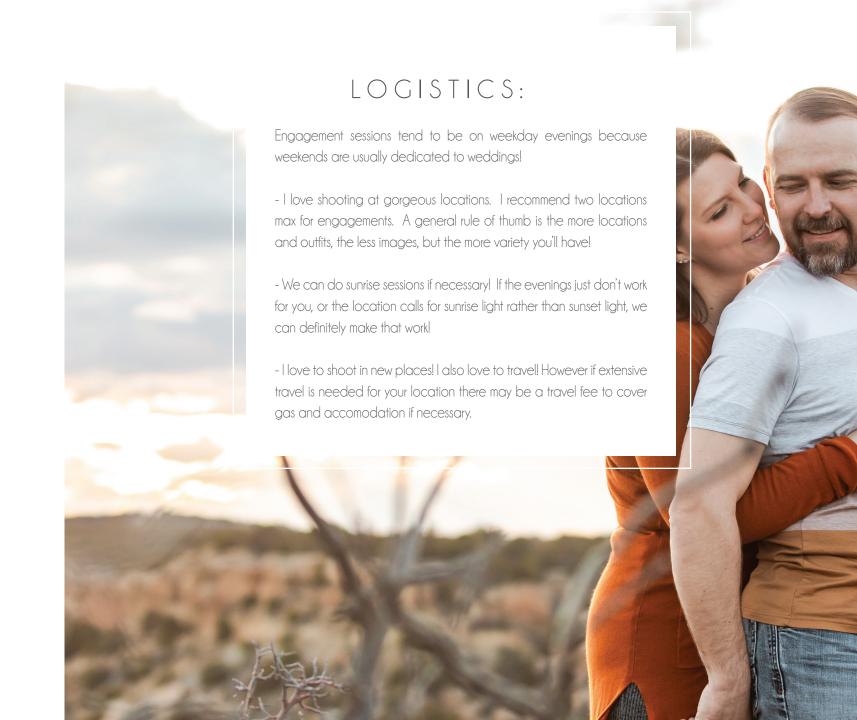
The sunset time drastically changes throughout the course of these two months and so our shooting times change as well. You can plan on approximately 5:30-7:30 in April and 6:00-8:00 in May being the best times.

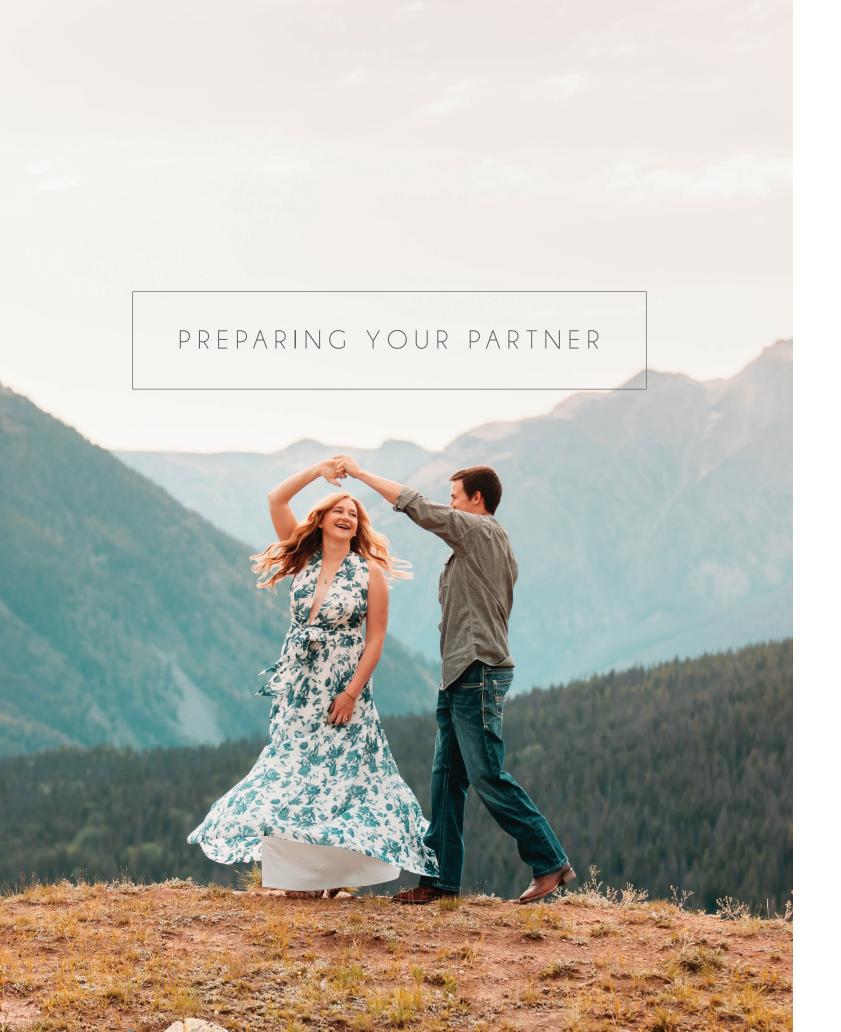
SUMMER Jun-Aug 6:30-8:30pm

I like to start summer engagements sessions later in the day due to light and heat! Starting around 6:30 will give us some beautiful light and lower temps so we don't get all sweaty.

FALL Sept-Nov - Varies

The sunset time changes drastically during these months as well. In Sept, you can plan on 5:30-7:30 until the third week and then you can plan on 5-7 until Mid-Oct. After the first week of Nov, 3-5pm.











PREPARING YOUR PARTNER

If you're a little anxious about how your partner is going help your partner know what to expect. First of all, I highto react to this whole "picture" thing, you're not alone. It recommend sitting down with them and going through I receive so many emails from about this exact topic! some of my blog posts, this will allow you both to set If you're worried about your partner not being into it, appropriate expectations for your session. I also recomor feeling "unphotogenic" I have great news for you... mend that you allow for plenty of time to get ready for there's no such thing as unphotogenic. I am constantly and get to your shoot! There is nothing worse than when surprising my couples by discovering their hidden modeling skills and our most common response from, the but not least, remember to have patience with each not excited partner, is "that wasn't bad! I actually had" other and don't assume anything. Maybe even have a fun". Boom! Mission accomplished! When they are saying that taking pictures was FUN, I know I have done my be tea) to help with the pre-session jitters. I think you'll be job! Your engagement session is supposed to be fun surprised how much you will both enjoy your session and and relaxed, not forced or awkward. As you prepare how easy it really is for you to look amazing! Trust me you for your shoot, there are a few things that you can do to will be amazing!

a couple shows up late feeling stressed and cranky. Last



SAMPLE TIMELINE

Bridal Details 1:00-1:30

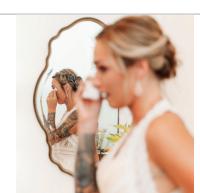


Like I said before, I love details. They are an important part of the story. I love having some time to shoot the rings, dress, shoes, jewelry, tie clips, invitations etc. Make sure to have all your important details together in one place the morning of, so I can create some magic with them!

While I'm shooting details, I'm also capturing some shots of the bride and her girls getting ready! If the groom is getting ready nearby, I'll try and go snag a few quick shots of them too, but guys get ready so fast much of this can be done at any time throughout the day.

After the details have been photographed, and the hair and makeup is all on point, it's time for the bride to get into her dress! This is a big moment! I usually ask the mother of the bride and all of the bridesmaids to be dressed by the time the bride is ready to get into her dress. This ensures that everyone will look nice in those images. After the bride is in her gown, she can put on her jewelry, veil, shoes, etc. and I will shoot some additional bridal portraits!

First Look 2:00



1:30-1:50 Bridal Prep



This is one of my favorite parts of the wedding day! I will find the perfect location for your First Look prior to the getting ready portion of the day!

Don't stress about that one bit! I will make sure the location is private and as secluded as well as beautiful!

Here's the page that can be somewhat intimidating! The TIMELINE! I know this isn't the most exciting aspect of the wedding day, but this is the one thing that can make or break your photography! These next two pages will outline an ideal wedding day working off of a 6pm ceremony timeframe. This ideal timeline is also based off of a wedding day that includes a first look. Many of my couples choose to do a first look, or a first touch, and you can read more about those options a few pages over! Remember that all wedding days are different, and your timeline may differ due to your unique wedding day vision and story!

Portraits 2:15-2:45



After the couple takes their time with the First Look, I will begin taking a few romantic portraits of the two of them while the initial excitment is still present! I will find the locations for these shots as well! Remember, the LIGHT determines where we shoot and so I can't fully commit to any portrait locations until the day-of. As we shoot these portraits, the wedding party can start making their way to us for Wedding Party portraits! Couple portrait and bridal party portrait times can also be swapped if necessary.

Wedding Party Portraits 2:50-3:20



of the guys & girls both separately
AND together! After bridal party
portraits are complete, the bride will
go into hiding so that early guests
don't sneak a peek, and the ushers
will begin their duties.

During Wedding Party portraits, I will

make sure to take some great shots



Now it's time for Wedding Party shots! It's good to buffer in extra time throughout the day just in case we have some unexpected things that hold us up! One way to make sure we stay on schedule for Wedding Party portraits is to have someone put the boutonnieres on the guys BEFORE portrait time.



3:30-4:00 Bride in Hiding

THE TIMELINE CONTINUED...

Reception Details 3:30-4:00



If the reception is in the same loca-

tion as the ceremony, I will use this

hiding time to shoot the reception

emony and reception are in differ-

ent locations, I recommend having a cocktail hour outside of the main

reception area if possible so that I

can grab some great shots of your

reception before the night begins

and guests start laying down purses

and coats on their seats!

decor UNTOUCHED. If the cer-

ceremonies are about 15-30min long. If your ceremony is longer than 30 mins, we'll make adjustments to the timeline! Talk to your officiant about how long they generally do their ceremonies for. Cherish these moments! Your ceremony will pass by so quickly!

It's time to get married!!!!!!!!!! Most

Family Portraits 5:00-5:45

Family formals normally take place immediately following the ceremony. This is best because all the family members should be there and we can catch them before they sneak off to cocktail hour!



Ceremony 4:00-4:45



We'll need about 30-45 mintues for family formals depending on the number of groupings you need. I will send a questionnaire before the wedding where you can list out the different groups that need to be captured. Remember this is also a time to get great group shots with your college friends, or you childhood summer camp group, just because it is "Family Portrait Time" doesn't mean friends aren't involved too! It's YOUR day!

A Few "Just Married" Portraits 6:00-6:30



6-7:30 is the BEST time of day for portraits in the late spring, summer and early fall! This is when the sun is glowy and golden and not so harsh. I love having a few extra minutes with the bride and groom to take a few "Just Married" portraits right after family formals! And I may continue to steal you away for bits of time as light changes.

APPROXIMATE TIMES: as their entrance! Which is really fun!

DETAILS & PREP: 1.5 HOURS

FIRST LOOK & PORTRAITS: 30-40 MINS

BRIDAL PARTY: 30-40 MINS
FAMILY FORMALS: 30-45 MINS

EXTRA PORTRAIT TIME: AS MUCH TIME AS YOU'LL GIVE ME!

Reception Begins! 6:30



The reception begins when you get

there, you get introduced and then it's

food time, toast time, cake time, dance

time etc. By this part of the day, the time-

line isn't as strict, but keep in mind how

many hours of coverage you purchased!

For example if dinner takes longer than

anticipated and you can only fit in cake,

bouquet or dances into the time i have

left, I'd go with dances! I've also had lots

of couples choose to do their first dance

Depending on the hours of coverage you've purchased I may or may not be there for the final exit of the reception. If you're interested in having your exit photographed, there are several options for this! You can either add additional coverage or plan a faux exit then go back to your party! I have had GREAT success with this, you get your exit and the party never stops!



The Exit

22

Another cute idea is to have a "last dance" alone while everyone is outside getting ready for your Grand Exit. This gives you another great moment to just be TOGETHER and soak up the whole day.

arent involved too! Its YOUR day!





Portrait & Timing Tips for: WINTER, SPRING, SUMMER & FALL

WINTER

Winter weddings are gorgeous! However, they do take some additional planning simply because of the early sunset time. The hard part about a winter timeline is the fact that the sun starts to set around 4pm. This means that all of your portraits have to be done before then! This isn't a problem if you're having an early afternoon ceremony, or maybe a morning wedding with brunch! (That is so fun!) Either way, take into consideration that if you want a 3:00 wedding, it might be dark soon after you finish the ceremony.

SPRING

Spring weddings are wonderful because they are the perfect temperature! However, if you have allergies I recommend having plenty of Claritin or Zyrtec on hand just in case they start to flare up during portrait time. Spring weddings normally mean the potential for some blooms! If we happen to find any type of blooming tree or plant, it will be worth it to plan few extra minutes for portraits with it! You'll LOVE the result!

SUMMER

Summer weddings are amazing! I love that there is so much daylight! In some months, the light will last until 8:30pm! So, if you're having a summer wedding, you'll need to plan on having a few minutes to slip out of the reception for your sunset portraits! You will NOT regret this! This is the absolute best light of the day and you're going to want to have portraits during this time period. Usually these portraits happen during dinner or open dancing so that no one even notices that you're gone for a few minutes!

FALL

Fall weddings are my favorite! This is probably because Natan and I got married in the fall! I love the temperature and the colors! Most of my fall brides worry about color, and I just want to encourage you that all I need is one tree with some color in order to make it look like fall! A little bit of color can go a long way!! Your portrait time will vary depending on your wedding date! We'll be sure to discuss this when we approve your final timeline!







Let the day begin!

This portion of The Wedding Experience really sets the stage for the entire day. The next few pages will share tips and tricks that will ensure a seamless morning of preparation and beautiful portraits!



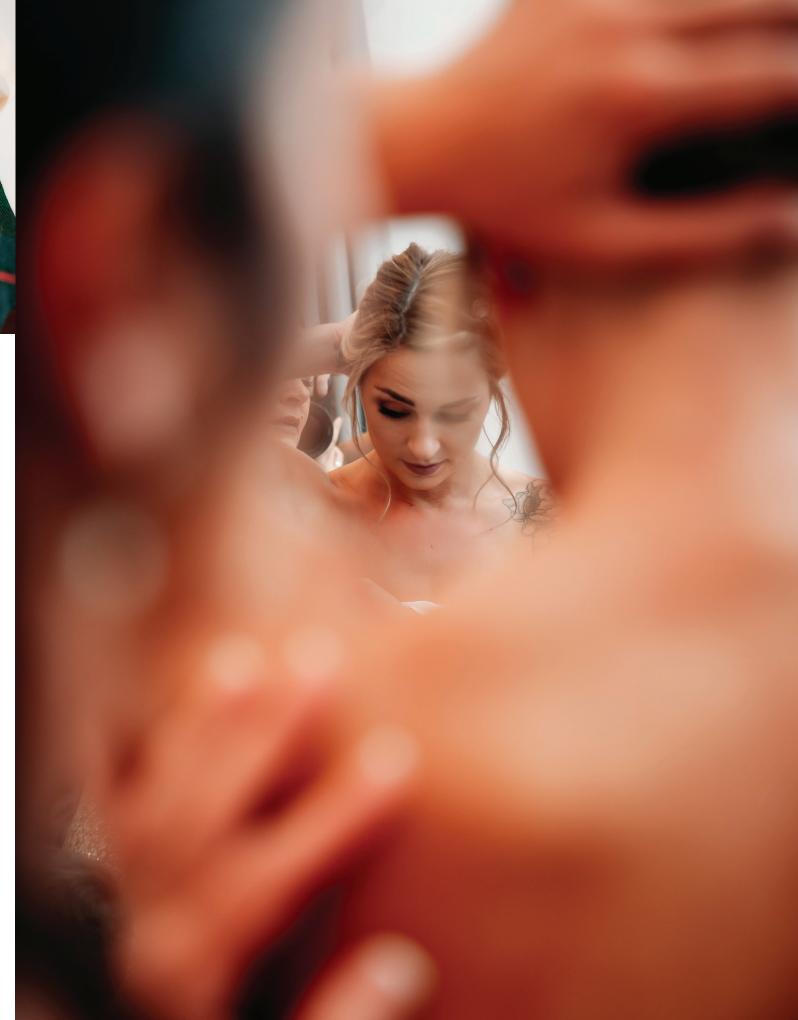




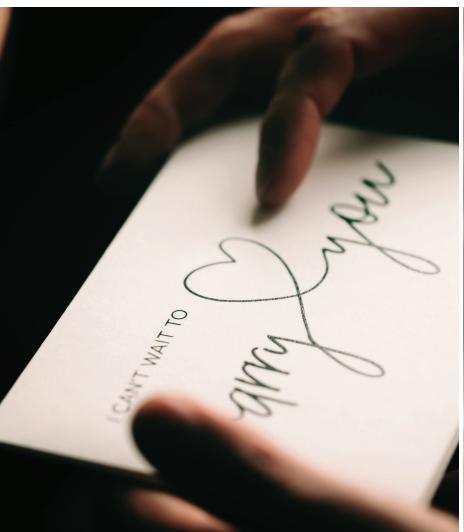
GETTING READY

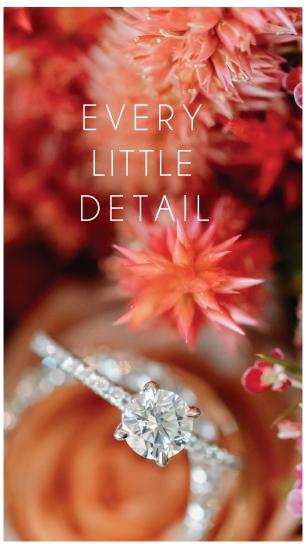
It's the morning of your wedding! Hopefully all of the little details are taken care of and you're relaxing with your best friends while you're being all pampered up. If certain items haven't been checked off of the to-do list at this point, it's time to hand them over to someone else. Delegation is a key part of a stress-free wedding day. I know it's hard to hand over the decorating duties and all of the last minute things that need to be done, but it really is important to relax the morning of your wedding. The rest of the day is going to be fast paced and filled with a lot of emotions! Take advantage of this down time! There are a few things to consider about the "getting ready" portion of the day. Do you want to share a "first look" with your parent or any other person who plays a huge role in your life?

Will you be exchanging gifts during this time? If so, how will that exchange take place? Do you want all your wedding garments and details photographed before you put them on, or would you rather have them memorialzed when they are on you? Are there certain people in your life who would appreciate being there to see you get dressed? Some people want very few people around for this moment. Others love having important family members present and helping out in the photos! It's totally up to you! A few other things to consider... as you get ready to put on your final wedding garments, refrain from putting any jewelry on until after you are dressed. I love shooting all of those final steps when everything else is already in place!















RINGS, SHOES, JEWELS ...

The whole day begins with the DETAILS! This is one of my favorite parts of the wedding day, because it allows me to prepare and get my creative side warmed up for the rest of the day! I photograph a bride's details in a way that matches and showcases the style and vibe of your entire wedding. So, in some ways, the details set the stage for the look of the whole wedding and I love having ample time to stylize, and shoot everything from the dress, to the tie clips, to the jewelry, to grandma's handkerchief or grandpa's watch! To the right, you'll find a list of the most common details that I shoot. I ask couples to gather any details they have before I arrive so that I can walk in, say hello, give you a big hug and then begin working on all the fun detail pieces! (And be assured that I will take GREAT care of every little thing I touch, I promise!)

WHAT TO BRING

```
dress

veil / hair pieces

rings (all three)

shoes

bouquet & bout

jewelry

tie clips

cufflinks

invitation suite

borrowed & blue

garter

letters
```

literally any other details that have significance to you!

DAY-OF REMINDERS







GATHER the goods.

If possible, collect all of your details before I arrive so that I can begin quickly and have more time for some "getting ready" shots of you and your peeps!

EXTRA elements.

Sometimes, depending on the theme and "look" of the wedding day, there may be some extra elements that you could include when you gather your details. For eample, if you're having a country themed wedding, you could include a piece of burlap or lace. If you're having a rustic themed wedding that includes some wooden elements, maybe save a small piece of wood for me to use when I'm shooting your rings and jewerly. This REALLY makes for beautiful, consistent album spreads!

KEEP all three rings. The most common detail missing when I arrive are the rings! Moms, officiants and planners will tell you to hand over your wedding band to the best man before the day begins. However, if you can, hand it over during the bridal party portraits so that I can shoot some great ring shots in the AM! If this doesn't work out, no worries, I can always shoot the ring shot at the reception while you are eating.

BRING the bouquet.

Don't forget the Bouquet! Have the bouquets and bouts delivered before the first look so that they can be included in the portraits and detail images. No worries, if it's hot, we'll be sure to keep them in water as much as possible before the ceremony!

When you're planning a wedding day timeline, the best advice I could give is to ADD CUSHION TIME! Sometimes the most simple things can take an extra 20 minutes and then all of a sudden, the whole morning is thrown off. I have seen "getting the bride in her dress" take almost 40 minutes because of a button malfunction. It's a smart idea to add in an extra ten minutes here and there so that we have some wiggle room to work with! This way, if one part of the day gets thrown off by 20 minutes, I can help you compensate that time in other areas. There are so many different things to think about when you're planning a wedding day, and so here are some tips for the preceremony timeline! I realize that every single wedding day is different and so not all of these tips will apply to every wedding day schedule. A few other things to consider are, first, that you are the most important people of the day, and therefore cannot be late to anything because nothing can start without you! Second, is that no matter what happens or how thrown off the timeline might get, you will still get to marry your best friend! And as long as you are married at the end of the day, everything has been a success! That is really all that matters, is that at the end of the day, you will start your forever together.

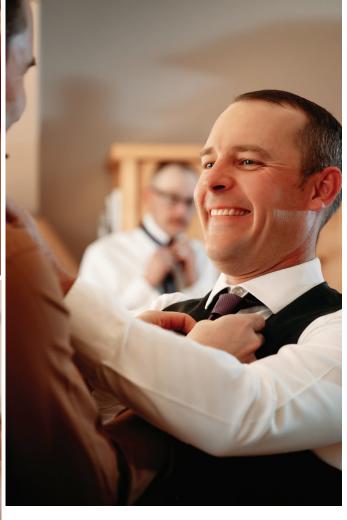




TIMING TIPS







BOUQUETS AND BOUTS

the bride is getting ready.

TRAVEL TIME

You will need your Bouquet & Be sure to think about the travel | lencourage brides to have at Bouts for your First Look! Have time and TRAFFIC to and from least their makeup first, before them delivered to the room where your getting ready location and their hair, especially if you don't your venue!

HAIR & MAKFUP

want any photos without your makeup done!

GROOMSMEN PREP

I will hop over to the guys getting ready if they are getting ready in the same location as the bride or we can get "getting ready" shots as the arrive at the venue.

GETTING IN THE DRESS

I'll instruct the bride to get into her dress close to a window and it would be fabulous to have bridemaids and family members the day of! dressed when this is happening!

CREATE A CUSHION

A 10 minute cushion every now and then is a GREAT idea! It's amazing how fast time slips away

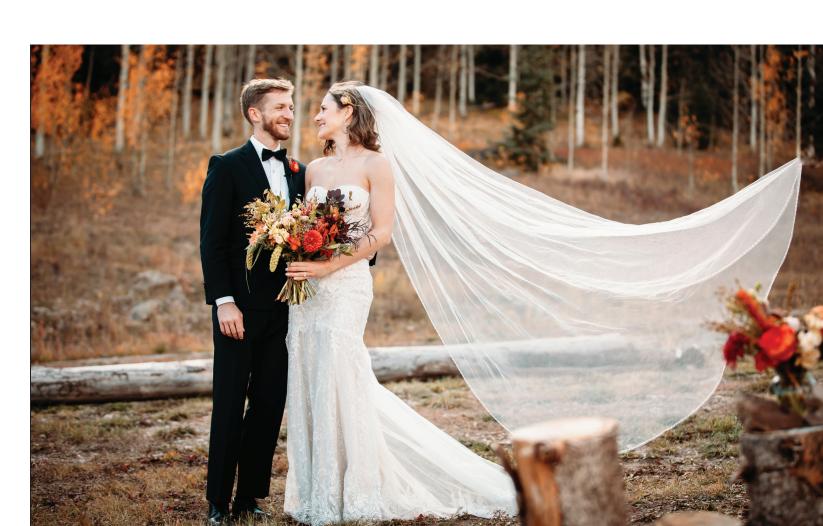


THE BOUQUET

There are so many expenses when it comes to wedding planning. Many couples have to prioritize what they want to invest in. I just want to give a little tip that can save money and make a huge impact on the way your images turn out. If you're having trouble making a decision about your florals, here is what I suggest. I recommend making your bridal bouquet a big priority! When I'm photographing a wedding, if the bride has a gorgeous bouquet, I can make the entire day look like there were beautiful florals everywhere! I can use the bridal bouquet to spruce up bridal details, reception details AND even bride and groom portraits as well! So even if you plan on going a more cost effective route for other florals and decor, I highly recommend still getting a your DREAM fresh floral bouquet! You can invest less on the bridesmaids bouquets or table decor since they will not be photographed nearly as much!

VEIL OPTIONS

If you are opting for a First Look but still want your walk down the aisle first look moment to be unique, a great way to do this is with a veil! A bride can forgo the veil during the first look, and put it on for the first time as she walks down the aisle. This way it is something new for your partner to see when they see you again! Another reason to forgo the veil during the first look is, often your partner is so excited to see you that they accidently pull the veil out when they throws their arms around you! Also, saving the veil for the ceremony ensures that I will definitely get some "Just Married" portrait time that is different than your First Look portrait time, because we will definitely want to get that "Veil Blowing in the Wind" shot because it is just so fun! Having said all this, veils are not something you HAVE to have, but they do create some really fun photo opportunities!







I have confessed my deep love for "First Looks" numerous times on my social media, and I tend to point them out in every blog post. There is a reason for this. They're AWESOME! However, not everyone is aware of how awesome they are, because they get caught up in how "non-traditional" they seem to be, and they are worried it will take away from their special aisle moment. I can talk about those brides because I was almost one of them! I wanted a REACTION. I wanted Natan to be so surprised and overcome with joy when I walked down the aisle that he bawled at the first sight of me! Isn't that the dream? Haha. Who doesn't want that reaction? Luckily, I was able to have the best of both worlds, because Natan and I decided to share an intimate "First Look" moment on our wedding day, AND he still LOST IT when I came down the aisle. He was in tears and so was everyone who was watching him!! YESSS!! I felt like a million bucks. Walking down the aisle on my wedding day was a moment that I will treasure for a lifetime!! But more importantly, so is that First Look moment!

After experiencing my own wedding and so many others, I've come to this conclusion. Some couples love "traditions".... but what couple's REALLY want when it comes to their partner seeing them for the first time, is a REACTION. Those who are not interested in a First Look usually think that by seeing each other beforehand, they will lose part of that reaction. They also assume that it will not be as emotional or as intimate as it would be if they were coming down the aisle. What I have found (this is starting to sound like a research paper!) is so ironic! Everyone knows that wedding days are a bit stressful for the couple.

The whole day is focused on them, they need to look their best, they need to be on time, the groom has no idea what side the boutonniere is supposed to go on and little by little... the tension grows.

It's before the ceremony and the gravity of what is about to happen starts to sink in and the calm, collected couple is now starting to feel a little anxious. So what happens next? One person waits in a little room somewhere for their que from the coordinator. It seems like it's taking FOREVER. Finally, the coordinator leans her head in and hurries them to get ready. With clammy hands, they enter the ceremony and what do they find? they find anywhere from 80-300 people and they're all looking where? Right at at them! Because everyone has expectations and anticipation about their first reaction. This is the farthest thing from a private, intimate moment. Sure, it's SO powerful and SO wonderful. ... I already said that walking down the aisle was one of the BEST PARTS of my WHOLE wedding day!! It's magical!! But when I walked down the aisle... Natan wasn't a nervous wreck... he had spent the morning with me and our best friends and the pressure was OFF. By the time our ceremony rolled around he was ready to ENIOY our beautiful day!

The nerves were gone and when the nerves are gone... true emotions are free to be expressed. And OH were they expressed! (Seriously, he bawled!). Having a First Look gives you TWO different experiences and opportunities to share your true emotions with your partner, first intimately and personally, and then in front of everyone, together!

For many people, the nerves kick in before they see their partner Decause when they see them, everything becomes VERY real! So and there isn't a DJ control when the nerves start creeping up, instead of keeping them in a check. It's wonderful! secluded space until their time to enter the ceremony, what if you took them to a private place... no people, no on-lookers, no distractions.... and you let the love of their life, quietly call their for the ceremony. The name and have them turn around to see them for the first time. They would turn around and finally get their first look at their stunning soulmate and not only would they get to see them... they front of the ceremony twitch... it is no long that moment with them for as LONG as they wanted. As they show off their wedding attire, share personal intimate words, joke a little and laugh... the nerves start to diminish. After all, they are the one person who can make them most comfortable anyway.

Because they aren't on a time crunch... they casually move into their romantic portraits. No one is around, the coordinator isn't announcing "15 minutes left", and there is no pressure. It's just the two of them and their photographer.... capturing the excitement and the joy of their wedding day. This is their time to be TOGETHER... and to be totally ALONE. (with me of course). Without onlookers, or the pressure to "get to the party". After their romantic portraits are done, they meet up with their friends. Their wedding party joins them, makeup can be touched up, suits can be tweaked to perfection. After a few minutes the wedding party portraits begin and they're FUN. They're FUN, because there is time to make them FUN.

There aren't any guests waiting impatiently at the cocktail hour and there isn't a DJ coming to find the photographer to get a time check. It's wonderful!

After portraits are done, the two sides separate and prepare for the ceremony. The guests begin to arrive and the ushers are in place. Pretty soon it's time for the processional music to begin and one by one, the wedding party makes their way down to the front of the ceremony. Now when hands are clasped, and fingers twitch... it is no longer out of nervousness but excitement! The music builds, the guests stand, and here comes their soulmate, their best friend, their companion down the aisle.....they are stunning.... ABSOLUTELY stunning. The closer they gets, the bigger they smile.

Now let me put a disclaimer on here before we continue...my clients are not required to do a First Look by any means! I used to feel bad for sharing this option with couples who were against it, because I didn't want to push anything on them. However, I've seen the benefits of a first look over and over again, and so I only share this because I want the BEST for my couples! It's totally ok if couples choose not to share a first look! I will not be upset, or disappointed if you choose to not to do one!

Keep reading to find out more of the benefits of sharing your first look privately! For couples not interested in a First Look, lets start chatting soon about how we'll create a special timeline to fit everything in!









FIRST LOOK | Why it's Worth It

40% MORE PORTRAITS

You're investing a lot into your wedding photography. With a first look, you'll receive 40% MORE portraits of the two of you... and those are the images you will decorate your first home with! (Believe me, our house is PACKED full of our portraits!) With a first look, you make the most out of this large investment and get the most for your money.

ENIOY THE SURPRISE FREELY

You actually get to have intimate time on your wedding day with your partner. Most couples don't realize that when you come down the aisle and totally SHOCK your partner with your gargeous-ness... they can't even tell you how amazing you look. They can't touch you, embrace you or even SPEAK to you. You have to wait until 30 minutes later when the ceremony is over for them to react and tell you how amazing you look. And after 30 minutes of the ceremony, the reaction isn't the same as the initial first glance.

EXTEND YOUR DAY BY 3 HOURS

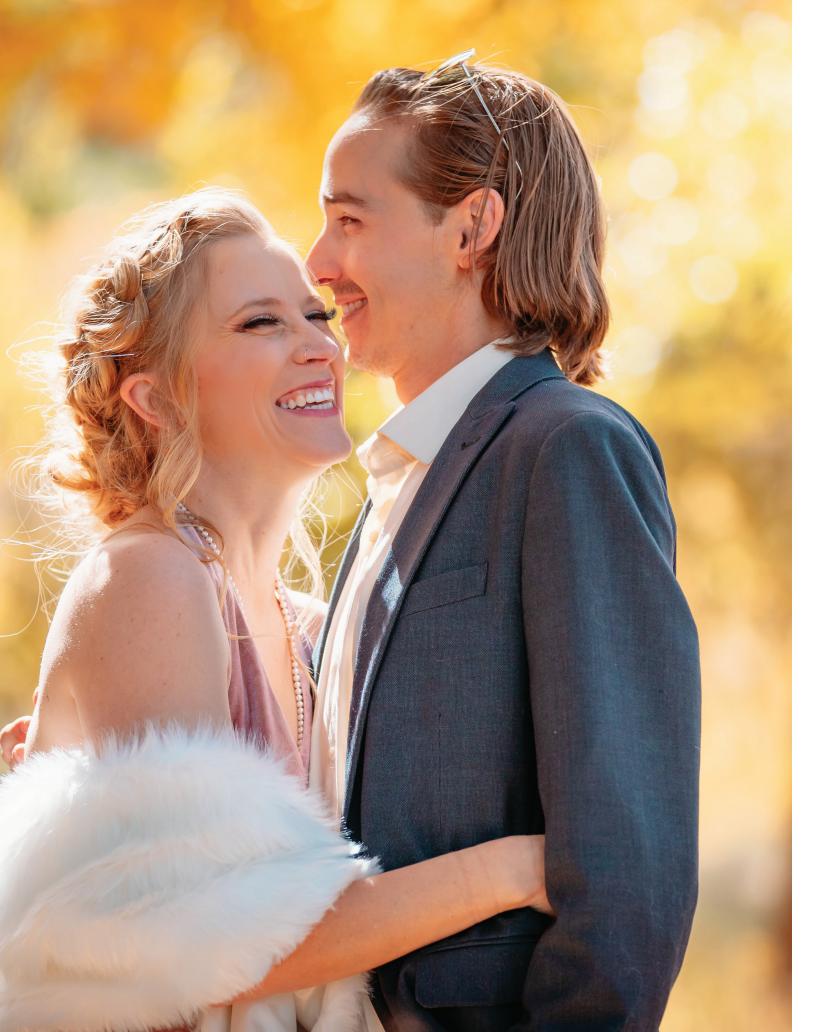
First Looks allow you to extend your wedding day. Normally the wedding day would start when you come down the aisle, then the ceremony would end, you would rush through portraits so that you're not late for the introductions and then it's reception time. With a first look, your wedding day feels extended! Instead of being rushed for your bridal party portraits... you actually get to enjoy them and have fun hanging out with your BEST friends on your wedding day. The WHOLE first half of my client's wedding albums are filled with images just from this time together before the ceremony.

YOUR ONLY ALONE TIME

First Looks allow you to be TOGETHER and alone on your wedding day, which also gives you the opportunity to share some more intimate thoughts and feelings with your partner. I've done first looks where the couple did entirely different personal vows, ones they didn't want to say in front of everyone, and then they could laugh and cry, and cry some more, without worrying about everyone looking at them. Then that put them in the PERFECT mood for romantic portraits. Normally portraits are a little rushed after the family formals, and it can take a minute to really get back into that "lovey dovey" mode.... especially with family around, and guests waiting for you to join the party! When you have just shared your first look, you're READY to love on each other, and I always capture some super sweet images during those moments!

DIMINISHES NERVES

You get rid of your nerves! I'd say, literally 1/2 of my couples who have decided to do a first look, at least one partner was not a fan of the idea at first. However, because they have never experienced their wedding day before, they didn't know how nerve racking it can be. I have testimonials from so many couples who initially weren't a fan of the first look idea... but afterwards admitted to being SO much more relaxed and ready for the ceremony!



FIRST LOOK EXPECTATIONS

If you have never seen your partner cry or get emotional, you can't expect them to be overly emotional on your wedding day. Some people just embrace their partner and never cry.... and that's OK. Some people show very little emotion when their partner is coming down the aisle and that's ok too. Just enjoy this amazing day, and try not to put any expectations on your partner. If you take this advice to heart, I could potentially be saving you a lot of disappointment on your day. One thing I have noticed after shooting so many weddings is that the stress and nerves that come with a wedding day can sometimes make it hard for some people to truly express their emotions. It's just a lot to take in all at once. This is a great reason to share a first look and also a great reason to give some grace to your partner! Sure, you desetve to feel amazing, but my encouragement to you is to enjoy this time together, no matter what their reaction is like!

FIRST TOUCH | First Look Alternatives





Do you like the ceremonial idea of a first look, but still don't actually want to see each other?

Then maybe you'd like to do a first touch!

A first touch is a great option, it gives you another fun little event for the day, it gives you the opportunity to read letters to each other, say a little prayer together, just have that little moment to ease the nerves before the ceremony. I have had many couples choose to do some version of a first touch or first moment without actually seeing each other. And if you are getting video coverage for your big day, this is a great little event to put in your timeline that will add content and more storyline to your day, especially if you choose to read personal letters to each other!

It is such a cute little personal moment between just the two of you before you go out in front of all your guests.

Things you can incoporate into your first touch

first hug
(blindfolded or eyes closed)
letter reading
prayer
blessing
poem
gift exchange
music















The Father / Daughter

FIRST LOOK

This is for all of the brides who have a sweet spot in their heart for their dad. I have to admit that Father/Daughter first looks usually make me cry. For a lot of dads, this is when everything feels real and it hits him... "My baby girl is getting MARRIED!" These are precious moments to photograph and I highly encourage any daddy's girl to make time in their timeline for this moment. It doesn't take long at all! The hardest part is making sure that family member shows up on time! If they don't show up on time, the whole timeline can get thrown off, or we'll have to skip this particular first look. And it doesn't have to be Daddy/Daughter, we can do Mother/Son, or Mother/Daughter, or Mother/Son, or even Grandma/ GrandSon or Uncle/Niece, really whatever realationship is important to you that you want a first look moment of.



THE CEREMONY

Here it is! The moment everyone has been waiting for! The music is playing and the guests have been seated. Ushers make their way to the back of the church, and the coordinator is lining up the wedding party while giving the musicians a 5 minute warning. You are about to walk down the aisle to the love of your life. You may have been dreaming of this moment your whole life! Vows will be shared and promises will be made... this is what it's all about!! In a world full of wedding blogs, Pinterest and bridal magazines, it's easy to be overwhelmed and consumed by the "prettiness" of the event. While details do matter and planning is necessary, it's important to never lose sight of the real purpose of this amazing day! Commiting to your best friend, your soulmate, for the rest of your life!









LIGHTING

Ceremony lighting is really important. If you get married outdoors at 12pm, the lighting will be extremely harsh and not only will there be harsh lines of light on your faces, you will also be squinting. I suggest planning an outdoor ceremony 2 hours before sunset if you are having a FIRST LOOK. If you are not interested in sharing a first look, then I would suggest having your ceremony 3 hours before sunset to ensure that you will have plenty of time for all of your portraits afterwards. The lower the sun, the more romantic the lighting. If you are having an indoor ceremony, it is always best to have EVEN lighting at the altar. If there are two spotlights on the bride and groom, I will not be able to expose the rest of the bridal party. It is better to have soft, even light acorss the whole altar.

ORDER OF SERVICE

I have seen so many couples do so many AMAZING things during their ceremony. I've photographed couples washing each other's feet, symbolizing that they want to serve each other for the rest of their life. Some couples share in communion while some light a unity candle. I've seen sand ceremonies, rope ceremonies, I've even seen a couple mix and share a special cocktail! The options are limitless!! As you plan your ceremony, make sure you design it to be exactly what the two of you envision it to be. This is your day!! If you have the freedom to be creative, then by all means, be creative! Natan and I had a less than traditional wedding, we had long vows and our officiant had all our guests (it was small) say something and be involved in some way during the ceremony. Many people may have advised against these things, but we're really glad we went with what we wanted!

PROGRAMS & DETAILS

The BEST advice I have for the program-making process is to remember that not EVERY guest needs a program! A lot of families and groups may only take one program for their whole group, and if you printed one for each person, that means you could end up with hundreds of extra programs! Yikes! Think of the trees! Also, before ordering your programs, have SEVERAL people check it for spelling and grammatical errors. You can even do one big program board that people can photograph with their phones! Programs and the ceremony decor are things that the couple can plan in advance but then delegate the actual job of setting it up to a friend or coordinator. The last thing you need to be doing the morning of your wedding is running around setting up floral arrangements!

COORDINATION

Hiring either a full event planner or just a day-of coordinator can be SO helpfull. Couples realize very quickly that if they do not have someone in charge of the coordination of the day, that responsibility will automatically fall on their parents or family members, the photographer or THEM! When a photographer is in charge of the timeline and the coordination of the day, the images can suffer, because instead of focusing on imagery they are running around making sure everything and everyone is in line with the wedding day plan. All of my most stressful wedding situations were caused by a lack of organization and coordination. It's so important to make this a priority. If you need any recommendations on wedding coordination services I would love to share some of my favorite vendors with you!

ELOPEMENT Weddings

If you are planning an elopement or intimate wedding, a lot of the details in this guide will not apply to you! Your details, your timeline and even your preparation for the big day will be much simpler. However, it is a good idea to start thinking about a few key components of the day such as: your ceremony time and your ceremony/portrait locations (some destination weddings require some planning to find portrait locations without tourists in the background). Be sure to check the sunset time at your wedding location before settling on your ceremony time. As your wedding day draws closer, we'll begin to chat about the timeline of the day and the travel arrangements. Get excited!! This is going to be amazing!!



Sample List for

FAMILY FORMALS

About a month before the wedding, you'll receive a questionnaire from me that will ask you to list out the family formals you want me to capture. Family formals are so important, but nobody's favorite part of the day. So to help get through these quickly and painlessly I have a few tips! First tip is to have your officiant announce that family needs to stay after the ceremony so we don't have to constantly be collecting family members from cocktail hour! On this same note, it can be quite helpful to have someone from each side assigned to collect family members if they have disappeared.

Here is a sample family formal list to help you start preparing what shots you need. The clearer this list is, the quicker we can get through it. Try to think of your groups in adding and subtracting, giving it a nice flow! For edample if you want a photo with your parents, and a separate photo with your parents and siblings, let's put those back to back so we can just subtract the siblings instead of having to bring everybody back after they've already left the shot. Also keeping in mind older and younger family members who might not want to or be able to sit through the whole family formals time, and putting them at the top of the list so they can be free to go sooner. Focusing on the order of this list can really help the time go faster!

(Replace Bride and Groom with Bride 1 and Bride 2 or Groom 1 and Groom 2 for same sex couples.)

B&G with Bride's Extended Family

(Parents, Siblings, Grandparents, Aunts, Uncles Nieces, Nephews etc.)

B&G with Groom's Extended Family

(Parents, Siblings, Grandparents, Aunts, Uncles Nieces, Nephews etc.)

B&G with Bride's Grandparents

B&G with Groom's Grandparents

B&G with Bride's Immediate Family

(Parents and Siblings)

B&G with Bride's Parents

Bride with her Parents

Bride with Mom, Bride with Dad

B&G with both sets of Parents

B&G with Groom's Parents

B&G with Groom's Immediate Family

(Parents and Siblings)

Groom with his Parents

Groom with Mom, Groom with Dad

B&G with all family members if time allows

(we can also start with this one real quick so anyone not involved in any other photos can go)



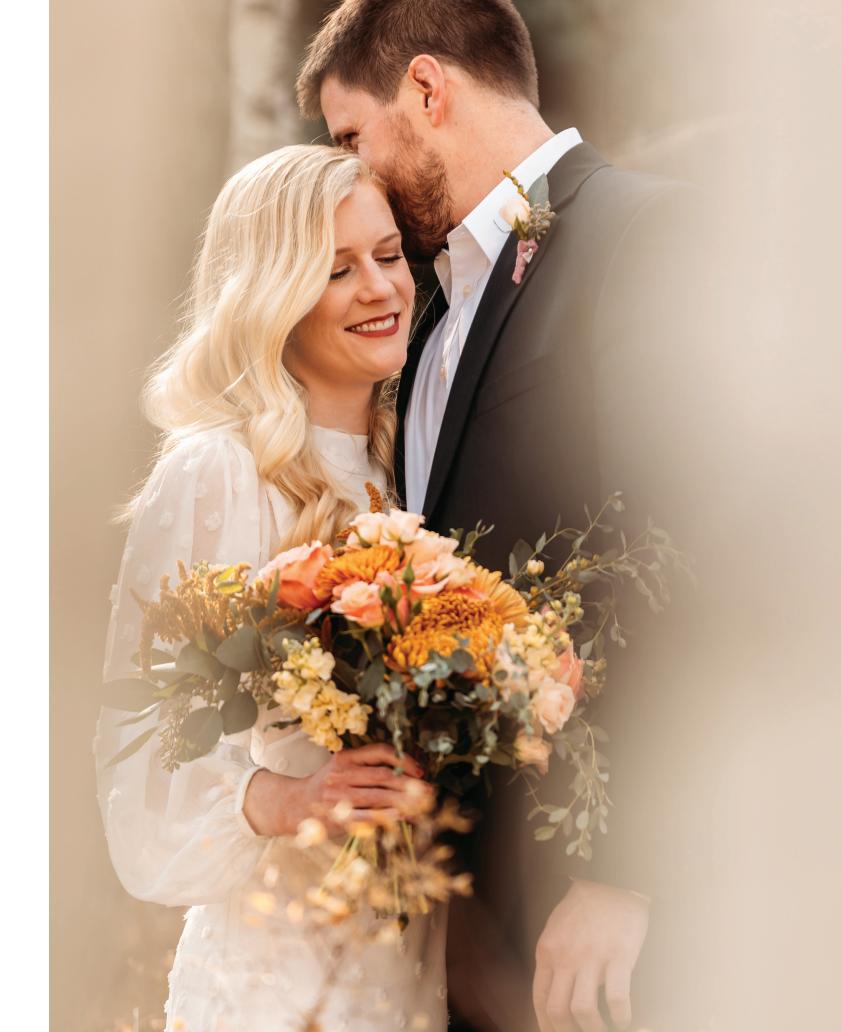




ROMANTIC PORTRAITS

If we're being honest, all of the wedding day images are important, but the real favorites are almost always from my time with the Wedding Couple! These romantic portraits of just the two of you will be the images that you frame beside your bed or over your mantle, and they will also be the images that will fill your album for generations to enjoy. These images are always my favorite not only because of their beauty, but because this is such a sweet portion of the day. For this brief moment in time, you will be alone with your partner on your wedding day (with me there stalking your cuteness). You will have a chance to love on each other and really connect before the craziness begins!

Romantic portraits are normally done before the ceremony (after the "First Look") and then I also LOVE shooting a few "just married" portraits after the ceremony as well! I may also pull you away for some sunset photos, or if the light drastically changes during cocktail hour and looks AMAZING! If you're not interested in a first look, we will make sure to include more time after the ceremony for these portraits!







THE CASE OF A RAINY WEDDING DAY

One of the most frequently asked questions that I receive during wedding season is "Soooo, what do you do if it RAINS?!". I want to reassure you that even if it rains, you will still have beautiful portraits and BRIGHT colors in your images! Overcast skies mean vibrant colors! I know that rain isn't ideal, and no couple wishes for rain on their big day, but if it happens, it happens..... and it's going to be JUST fine!! Some of my favorite weddings have been on rainy wedding days! Here are a few things to remember:

- 1. The most important thing to remember is that, rain or shine, you are marrying your best friend. And no matter what happens, you will walk away from the day, committed to spending the rest of your lives together. Whatever happens that day is now part of your love story, and I'll be there to capture every beautiful bit of it!
- 2. Let me worry about the pictures. You have enough to think about. If there is a chance of rain, I'll be sure to do some extra scouting to find a covered location or two, for us to use for you first look, romantic portraits and wedding party portraits.
- 3. Take it one step at a time. Don't think about your entire day and what will happen if it rains. That will only overwhelm you! Definitely have a rain plan for your venue, but then let your vendors do the work of handling the rest of the day if rain is in the forecast. And more likely than not, if it does rain, it will also stop at some point, and those can be the most beautiful moments!



This was right after the rain that soaked their ceremony stopped, and a bit of sun started to peak out from the cloud. This photo so perfectly shows that the rain can't keep us from taking beautiful images! Don't let the fear of rain steal your joy. You can't control it, and we promise we will make the best of it!!! Sometimes the BEST images are made because of rain!



your wedding party.

Lets chat about your wedding party! This is when the fun REALLY begins! I know from experience that all couples want their closest friends to have an AMAZING time during their big day, and I will make sure that happens! Wedding party portraits should be a ton of FUN! After you share your first look, depending on the locations and the timing of the day, your wedding party will join us for portraits! If all goes well, we will be able to accomplish ALL of your wedding party protraits BEFORE the ceremony. This means that your peeps will be free to mingle at cocktail hour after the ceremony if they wish! If there are flower girls and ring bearers involved, they can either join us for the pre-ceremony portraits or we can take one final group photo after the ceremony, before family formals. Be sure any groomsmen arrive with boutonnieres on, and any bridesmaids arrive with bouquets (if applicable)!

RECEPTION DETAILS











The party is here!! Receptions can be a blast! However, it's important to make sure that you have your event well thought out. This is the job of your coodinator and your DJ/Band. Your caterer will also play a big role in the design and set up of your event. I once did a wedding where it took over an hour and a half from the time dinner was schedule to the time everyone actually got their food. Every aspect of your reception affects the overall outline of the evening. For example, if you're not having a plated meal, your reception will need to be set up in a way that allows movement so your guests can get up and get their food, this also encourages guests to mix and mingle. If you are having a plated dinner, you will more than likely need escort cards as well as full place settings. Whatever the style of your event, make sure that you plan out all of the aspects of the evening. Your coordinator and DJ can help you set up the evening so that guests won't leave early or experience long periods of waiting for the next thing to happen.

Much like the ceremony, you have the freedom to make your reception your own! It's your party, it should be exactly how you want it to be! Here is a list of some example events that happen often at receptions:

- Wedding Party Introductions

- The Shoe Game

- First Dance

- Blessings

- Father-Daughter Dance

- Cake Cuttina

- Mother-Son Dance

- Toasts

- Anniversary Dance

- Bouquet and Garter Toss

- Money Dance

- Large group portraits with friends

- Traditional Religious Dances

- Grand Exit

A neat idea I've seen for an entrance is to have your first dance happen as soon as you enter your reception. This way your entrance is more grand, and there is also a chance of utilizing some natural light for your first dance images!

RECEPTION TIPS

The fun has begun! It's time to relax, dance and celebrate!! Your reception should be a BLAST! The last thing you need to be worrying about is your timeline. Your coordinator and DI/Band should take care of making sure that everything stays on schedule so that you can enjoy your night. Here are some helpful tips that will help your reception flow smoothly.

- GUEST CONSIDERATION: Take your guests into consideration when planning your timeline. If you have a lot of elderly guests that will not be staying until the very end, make sure you schedule the cake cutting at a relatively early time so that they can be a part of it. This is also a good idea if you have lots of kid guests who will just be DYING to dig into that cake.
- KEEP IT MOVING: Chat with your coordinator about how you can plan your reception in a way that will keep guests engaged and moving all night!
- MAKE IT YOUR OWN: If you want to have a special dance with your grandparents, or sibling, or aunt or uncle, do it! Make your reception a reflection of who you are and don't feel tied to traditions. Also, make sure you give your DJ or Band a "Do Not Play" list if there are some songs you really don't want to hear during your reception!
- DON'T GET CAUGHT UP in the formalities and the details. Sure, details are pretty and fun to photograph, but they can steal the joy of the day if you get too caught up in them. Plan your centerpieces, welcome table, etc. well before the wedding date, and teach your coordinator or family friend how to set them up so that you aren't even thinking about those things the day of!
- RECEPTION COVERAGE: If you haven't purchased enough coverage time for your photography to last until the exit, that's okl We have several options! (See next page!) I recommend planning your timeline so that you can have at least one hour of dancing photographed. The guests who dance during the first hour will still be dancing in the third hour! And I will always check in a half hour before my time is up, that way if there is anything we want to squeeze into that time we can, and if you feel you need to add more hours, we can do that too!

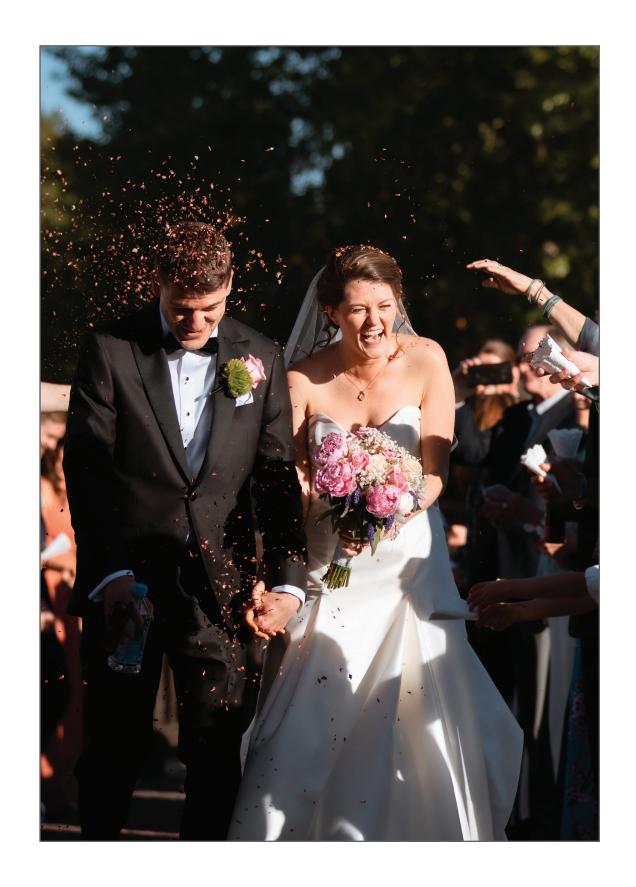




RECEPTION:

CONTROLLED EXITS

Exits! If your coverage ends before your official exit, (which is very common) you have the option of planning a faux exit! This can be helpful in a number of ways. Of course there is the money you save not having to pay your photographer or videographer to stay late into the night just for this moment. There is also the fact that sometimes by the time the official exit comes around, many guests have left and it doesn't look quite as exciting with only a few people there. So instead of saving your grand exit until the very end, you can plan a faux exit before people start to leave, and then just go right back to the party and dancing the night away with no other "plans" hanging over your head! It is the best of ALL worlds!



CUSTOM LEGACY ALBUMS



Having digital images is wonderful, but having a printed keepsake that tells a visual story of our wedding day is priceless! Have you ever looked through your parent's wedding album? Can you imagine your kids having to look through your wedding album on an iPad? Or the cheap shiney pages of a shutterfly album? There is something different about a rich, thick paged, archival heirloom photobook or album. It feels like the kind of thing your kids could show their kids, and their grandkids, keeping your love story alive for generations to come! If you haven't already invested in a Custom Legacy Album of your own, you can always come back to me at any time and order one. I am not a photography business that pushes product sales at all. However, these albums are important not just for our couples to have... but for their future generations to enjoy as well.

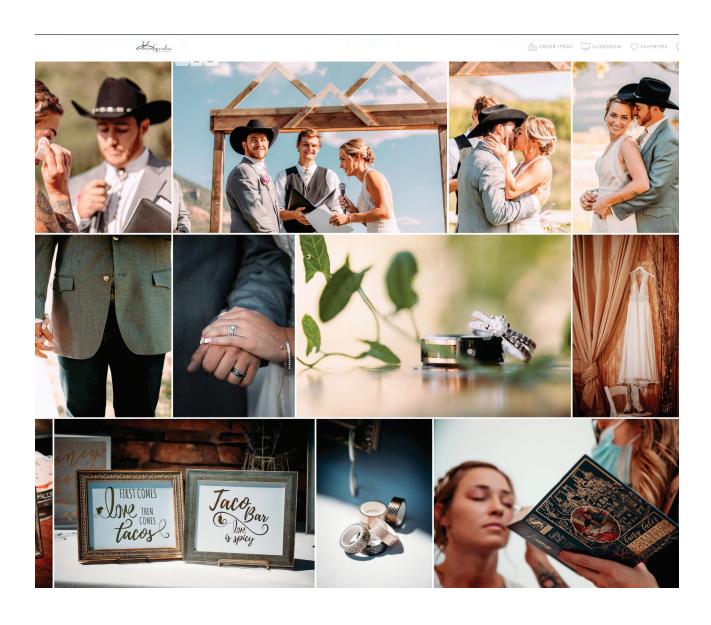
SIZE OPTIONS:

8x8, 10x10, 12x12

SAY THANK YOU WITH A PARENT ALBUM:

When I first started out, I had way more parents ordering wedding albums, than the couples themselves. Parents do so much to make their children's wedding day a dream come true, making a physical reminder of the beauty of that day a perfect thank you gift! After the wedding chaos is over and life returns to normal, or if you want to surprise your parents with their very own albums from your wedding for Christmas, let me know before October 1st so we can get them designed and ordered!





YOUR ONLINE GALLERY

Years ago you had to order prints of ALL the images that you wanted to have forever. That isn't how things work anymore! We want you to have ALL of your memories in your possession forever and ever! We also want you to share your images freely and without any hesitation. This is why we deliver your images via an online gallery! This means that you don't have to wait on a package in the mail, and you'll have access to them wherever you are! I've listed some important information that will help you understand your online gallery and all that it can do on the next page! Enjoy!:

DOWNLOADING PHOTOS:

You will be able to download your edited images directly from your online gallery, and they will be high resolution! This process is very simple! You can download individual images or the entire gallery! I include a PDF exmplaining all the inner workings of your online gallery with your original online gallery email!

CUSTOM USB:

Unfortunately your online gallery won't last forever. So in addition to your online gallery, you will get all your images on a custom wooden USB. If you got video with your wedding package as well, the video will be included on this USB. So you will have all your wedding imagery safely stored in one place! I know how easy it can be to lose digital files in the depths of your computer, so it is great to have a phsyical item containing your whole wedding day story!

ORDERING PRINTS:

You can actually order professional and long lasting prints from within your online gallery and have them shipped directly to your house! All prints are printed in a high quality professional lab to ensure not only color and contrast accuracy, but protection against UV and other photo aging dangers! You are more than welcome to print images on your own. However, I would warn you to avoid Walmart, Target, Costco, Walgreens, CVS or any other drugstore type printer. I cannot promise that your colors will print true-to-life if you choose to print at those stores.

SHARING, WATERMARKING & EDITING:

You have the freedom to share your images in any way that you choose! These are your images, and I want you to love them so much that you can't help but share them! I don't believe that it is necessary to watermark my images, so know that any images downloaded from your gallery will be watermark free! All I ask for is some type of credit whenever you use an image on social media! I only have ONE rule when it comes to what you can and cannot do with my work. I always encourage my clients not to re-edit their images, this includes heavy instagram filters. I take a long time to edit your images to perfection, and I don't want someone to see my work with a instagram filter and think that is what all my work looks like. However, if you have an image or two that you want to print at a very large size and you find an imperfection, I will gladly perfect it! The main thing is just communicating with me!































THANK YOU!

Last, but certainly not least, THANK YOU for trusting me with your special day. I am so honored to be capturing your memories, your STORY, and I cannot WAIT to celebrate alongside you on your big day! Enjoy this season of planning but also remember that your MARRIAGE is more important than the wedding. The wedding will come and go in a matter of hours, but your marriage will stand the test of time. Continue to make time for one another, even with all that needs to get done. As you continue to plan, please feel free to contact me with ANY questions you may have along the way! Depending on your date, our next step would be to finalize an engagement session! Also, about one month before the wedding, you'll receive an online questionnaire that will provide me with everything. I need to know for your big day! Two weeks after that I will reach out to go over all those details and make sure we are all on the same page and feeling ready and confident! I hope this guide has been helpful as you continue to plan and prepare for your wedding day!