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ALISSA MORRIS & JEFFREY MILLER
SEPTEMBER 10, 2005 DANA POINT, CALIFORNIA
PHOTOGRAPHED BY JOHN SOLANO



A place to remember

Even though Alissa Morris' best friend was the sister of Jeff Miller's best friend, the two never crossed paths in the six years they were acquainted with the siblings. It seemed fate was banking on the right opportunity—a Fourth of July party in 2000—to finally set off some fireworks between the two. It did, and the party's oceanfront setting became a very significant spot for the pair over the course of their relationship. Jeff brought Alissa back there one spring evening at sunset to ask her to be his wife, and he surprised her with an engagement celebration that brought both sets of families together.

Beauty

Mara Roszak, Chris McMillan Salon, hair
Hannah Wolman, Creative Illusions, make-up

Bridal Designer

Vera Wang

Bridal Salon

Barneys New York

Bridesmaids

A.B.S. by Allen Schwartz

Calligrapher

Arlene Williams

Consultant

Caravents, Inc.

Entertainment

Higher Ground, BobGail Productions,
ceremony & reception

Floral Design

Square Root Designs

Formalwear

Gucci, groom
After Hours, groomsmen

Headpiece/Veil

Monique Lhuillier

Honeymoon

Four Seasons Peninsula Papagayo, Costa Rica

Invitations

Two Upon Ten

Jewelry

Michael B.

Lighting Design

The Ritz-Carlton Laguna Niguel

Lingerie

Cosabella

Mothers' Gowns

Monique Lhuillier, MOB
Morgane Le Fay, MOG

Officiant

Charles Bergman

Photographer

John Solano Photography

Registries

Crate & Barrel
Gearys Beverly Hills
Williams-Sonoma

Rehearsal Dinner

El Adobe, San Juan Capistrano, CA

Rentals & Linens

Caravents, Inc.
BobGail Productions

Shoes

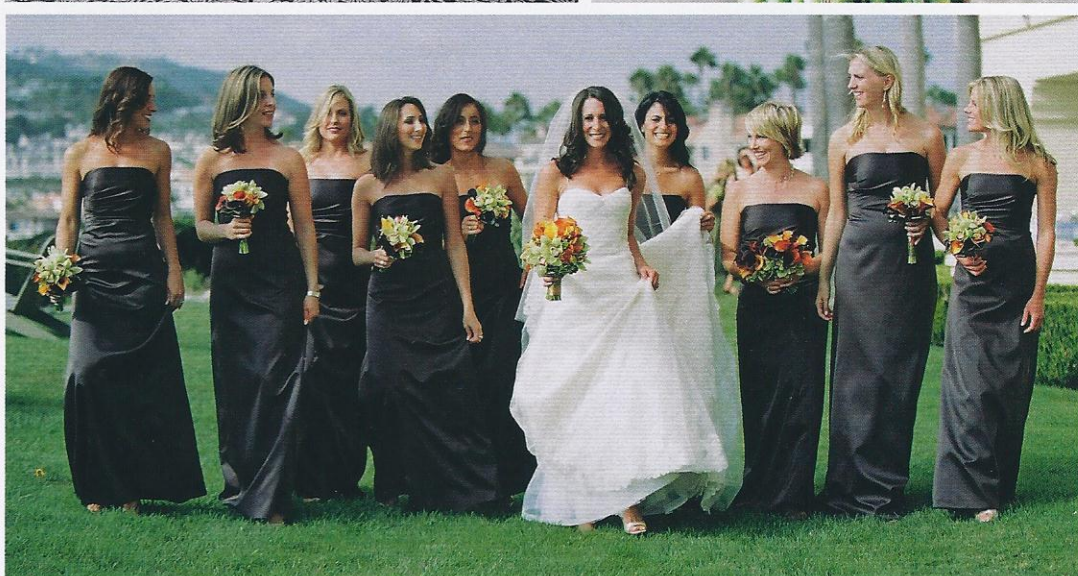
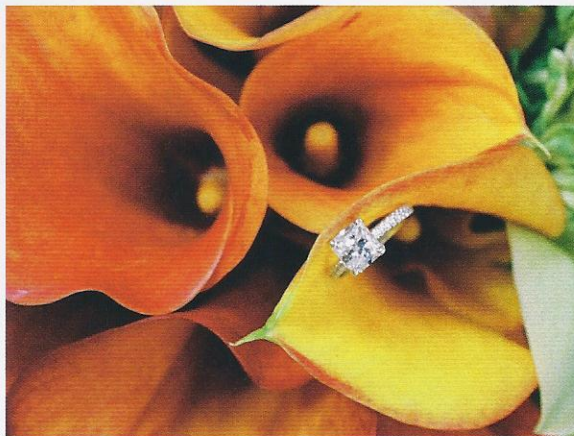
Vera Wang

Venue

Ritz-Carlton Laguna Niguel, Dana Point, CA

Videographer

Vidicam Productions





Having attended close to 30 weddings in the years preceding their engagement, Alissa and Jeff had a very good idea of how they wanted their big day to come together. With the help of their wedding consultant and enthusiastic mothers, the pair focused on planning a grand event centered on celebration. “We really enjoy our friendships and we really enjoy having fun,” says Alissa. Surrounded by 260 guests (including an 18-member wedding party), the couple enjoyed a seaside wedding at The Ritz-Carlton Laguna Niguel. Offering views of some of the most beautiful landscapes near Los Angeles, the location inspired even their local guests to enjoy a mini-vacation

in honor of the wedding. It was also a fond reminder for Jeff of the nearby spot where he has, since childhood, spent much of his free time surfing.

While neither Alissa nor Jeff is especially religious, they wanted to incorporate elements of their Jewish backgrounds into the ceremony. As Alissa walked down the aisle to meet her fiancé, a cantor sang “In My Life” by the Beatles (her parents’ own wedding included a Beatles song). They also said, “I do” beneath a traditional, red fabric-draped *chuppah* made of blooms in late summer colors—green hydrangea, burnt orange calla lilies, and crimson roses.

Once they were pronounced husband and wife, Alissa and Jeff welcomed their guests into a reception that proclaimed: "Eat, drink and be merry!" Guests enjoyed a meal of lemongrass prawns and soba noodle salad followed by filet mignon and sea bass at richly adorned tables. Each seating arrangement—from the extremely long "king table" accommodating the entire wedding party and their dates, to smaller round tables—was dressed in deep crimson and chocolate brown linens. Tight arrangements of flowers sat above wide glass vases containing a branch of orchids or a single lily submerged in water. Coordinating satellite arrangements and votive candles accented the tablescapes, creating a dramatic glow around the ballroom.



But the tables were often left unattended, as guests favored the bustling dance floor. "There was a break-dancing circle at one point and a raging Hora to start the night," recalls Alissa. "We couldn't keep people in their seats!" The dancing only paused when waiters revealed a flower-covered wedding cake and chocolate fondue fountain. Even after the band finished its last set of hits, ranging from classic rock to current favorites, a DJ kept guests partying long into the night. The bride and groom also hosted revelers in their suite until almost breakfast. "I think the most unique thing about our wedding was how much fun everyone had, which is exactly what we wanted. I think our vendors were even blown away," admits the bride.

But when guests finally did bid the newlyweds farewell, they were given something sweet for the trip home: small gold organza bags filled with various flavors of jellybeans. Each bag had a personal, handwritten note from the grateful bride and groom who were off continuing the fun in Costa Rica.

JACQUELYN KISKER

