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weddings & events

The Magazine

THE BEST CELEBRATIONS START WITH US



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DJ Michael Celebrates

30 YEARS

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PUBLISHER'S DEDICATION:

This issue is dedicated to the memory of Chef Brett Newsom. Many of us in the special event industry, know that Brett set the gold standard. Brett has certainly inspired us through his food and event ideas. I would often say, "His food would cuddle in your stomach." His memory lives on through everyone, like me, who was inspired by his catering, service and passion for our industry. Rest In Peace Chef Brett Newsom 1938 - 2021

Michael Variale

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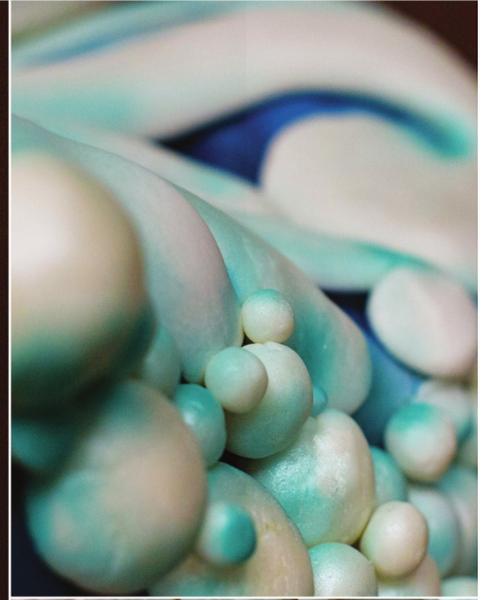
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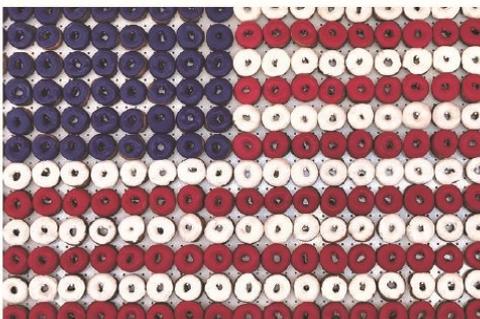
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Warm Donuts: After Party Treats

There is perhaps nothing more nostalgic than an old-fashioned cake donut eaten warm just off the donut machine! Dreesen's and the DeSanti family have been making their famous (locally!) donuts since the 1950's, first in the multi-generation butcher & grocery store Dreesen's Market in East Hampton, and now through Dreesen's Catering and their various licensees.



Donut Dessert Table

Dreesen's Catering is a full service catering company located in East Hampton, owned by the latest generation in the Dreesen's family, Rudy DeSanti. They have a Dreesen's Donut Truck that is used for catered events, because who wouldn't want a donut truck at their event?! They serve their traditional trio of plain, powdered sugar & cinnamon donuts fresh from the truck, and send your guests home with a gift bag. They have a line of custom donuts available as well as beverage service (coffee, tea, hot chocolate, hot apple cider). Donuts can be customized to your event or season- colored glazes or sprinkles for birthdays or holidays, maple glaze, summer favorites like donut berry shortcakes, fall pairings of pumpkins spice cinnamon or apple cinnamon donuts served with hot apple cider!



Apple Cinnamon Donuts with Hot Apple Cider

Dreesen's also has portable tabletop donut machines, so if the food truck option is a little too casual for your event, they can set up inside your venue or under your tent and make donuts fresh right in front of your guests, with a small donut display table as well- think donut walls, tiers, cake plates & platters! Mini donuts and donut holes with dipping sauces are also an option.

New donut products are always in the works like, **Donut Biscotti**. They are perfect for gift bags at the end of your event. Plus, **Coffee & Donuts Ice Cream** flavor that combines Montauk's own John's Drive In's Coffee Ice Cream with their Cinnamon Donuts. They are heavenly delicious.



Donut Biscotti

Did you know you can enjoy Dreesen's Donuts at several locations on the east end and in New York City? They are available at M&R Delicatessens in East Hampton and Montauk, Santa's Christmas Tree Farm in Cutchogue, the newly renovated Chequit Inn on Shelter Island, R&D Foods in Brooklyn, and Balthazar Restaurant and Bakery in Manhattan. In addition, several more locations will soon be serving Dreesen's Famous Donuts. Licensing programs are available for businesses.

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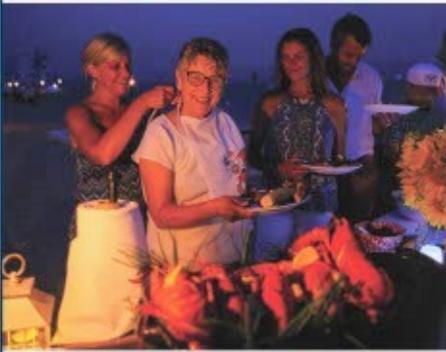


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How to Hire the Best DJ or Band?

by Michael Variale, EastEndEntertainmentNY.com

The event date and location are set. **What's next?**

Entertainment! Entertainment is probably one of the most important decisions you will make. The music entertainment sets the auditory vibe and is constant throughout the celebration. Entertainment can enhance or break your special day. Entertainment creates the festive vibes and is ultimately responsible for all the transitions.

Did You Know:

- 72% of all couples said that they should have spent more time choosing their reception entertainment and made it a higher priority.
- 78% of couples said they wish they had made the entertainment their highest priority
- 81% guests said they remembered the entertainment the most.
(TheKnot)

Things to Consider to make a confident decision:

1. How important is the entertainment to your event?
2. What is your music vision? There are various options and styles. (DJ, band, live musician, DJ/hybrid combo)
***Do they have experience playing your requested music genres?
3. Are there any special location requirements needed?
 - How many sound systems are needed? (Ceremony, Cocktails, Reception, After Party)
 - Is there a need for wireless speakers for areas?
 - Does the entertainment company need to bring their own power?
4. Additional audio/video services for the rehearsal dinner or after-party?

Do Your Research

1. Carefully view the company's website & social media pages. (view pictures, videos, reviews and available packages)

2. Ask venues and event professionals who they recommend & why?
3. Research the owner's name
4. Read reviews from various sources to get an accurate portrayal of a business

Make the Call

1. Allow the company to describe their style & allow them to describe their experiences.
2. What type of events do they do most?
3. How many events they do a weekend/year?
 - Quantity vs. Quality of events
4. How many songs are in their repertoire?
 - Are the songs all on a hard drive or they have to depend on Wifi to download the songs? What happens if the Wifi signal or power is lost?
5. How many songs can be requested?
6. Do they take breaks?
7. What kind of equipment is used? Is there a backup system?
8. Are there any additional costs?
9. Do they have event insurance?
10. How many years experience does your assigned DJ/Band have total?
 - How many years are they with the company?

Remember, not all entertainment companies are created the equal. There are many variables that effect pricing, like; experience, sound systems, presentation, organization, personalities and the laws of supply and demand. Consider, there are a only about 20 prime Saturday's in a year (Memorial Day Week - Columbus Day Weekend). Book your event professionals, as soon a you are ready.

Feel free to contact us with any questions

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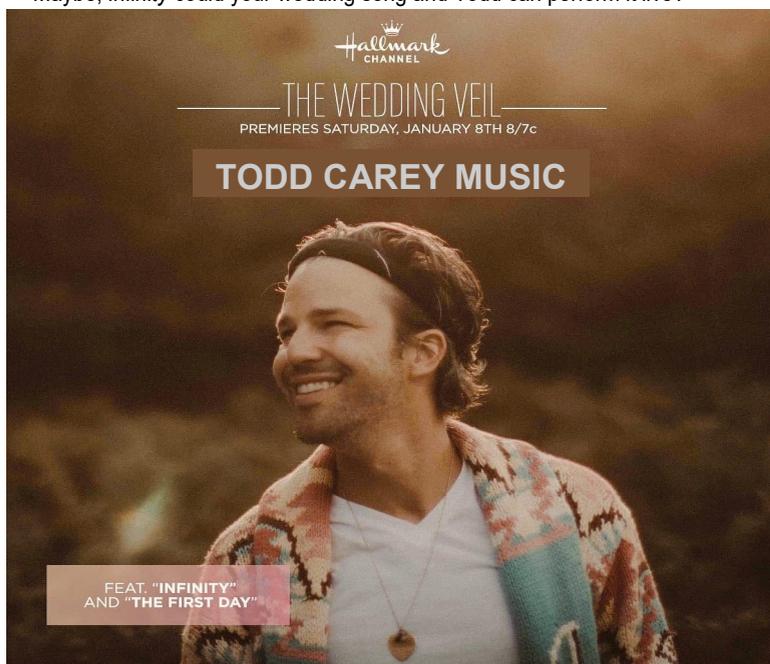
To Infinity with Todd Carey Music

by Michael Variale

Recently, I had to opportunity to collaborate with Todd Carey and his band for a wedding at the Peconic Bay Yacht Club. First off, Todd is down-to-earth, kind, and passionate about his music. His band members were from the same mold. Todd songs, *Infinity* and *The First Day* were featured in the 2022 Hallmark Movie, *The Wedding Veil*. Todd has a silky smooth voice with catchy lyrics that's accompanied by groovy vibe.

I encourage you to check him out on itunes and Spotify. Some of my favorites are; *Wanna Love*, *Matthew Mcconaughey*, *Higher Love* (an original), and *Love & Fools*. Visit ToddCareyMusic.com

Maybe, *Infinity* could your wedding song and Todd can perform it live?



Infinity

Baby, I ain't never been good at math
I usually use my fingers to subtract, or add
Something I know is greater
And I don't need to calculate
And that's a fact

Chorus

'Cause as long as one plus one will equal two
That's as long as I'll be needing you
And as sure as five plus five is ten
Girl, my love will never end
Gonna hold you like there's ten of me
Gonna love you 'til infinity

Now, baby, I ain't never learned much in class
I was scared if I raised my hand, they'd call me last
But we ain't that complicated
And I ain't got no reservations
I don't have to ask

Chorus

Now it ain't bad love
That we don't add up
When this life tries to divide us
Oh, our love keeps multiplying times 1000
We keep on counting
Ain't no minusing, girl, all that you are
Ooh, yeah, yeah

Chorus

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DJ Michael Celebrates 30 Years Doing What He Loves

"Life is a gift, so go out and celebrate", Michael's mother would often say. Michael Variale of East End Entertainment, is celebrating 30 years as a professional wedding and special event disc jockey. Twenty-five years ago, he never could have imagined making a career out of being a DJ.



Photo: Mark Kopko

Michael is certainly not your stereotypical DJ. Michael graduated St. Anthony's High School, received his bachelor's degree from SUNY Cortland, Masters in elementary education from Dowling College and was a school teacher for 20 years.

Michael's vast knowledge of music all stems from his home environment. Growing up the radio was always on. His parents would often be singing and dancing to 50's & 60's Doo-wop, American Standards, Motown and Disco. Like most kids, he really did not have much appreciation to listening to his parents' music. However, after awhile he grew a liking towards their music.

When he went out on the town, it was about going to a place with great music. Some of his favorite places were Canoe Place Inn (CPI), Dockers Waterside Restaurant, The Seaport, Images and Webster Hall. Enjoying this wide variety of music built a solid music foundation and one of the keys to his success in the business.

Professional DJ Debut

In the Fall Semester of 1991 at SUNY Cortland, Michael and his college housemates were bouncers at City Limits, a local Cortland college bar. Michael recalls, being a bouncer was very boring. He would often ask Karen, the bar manager, if he could practice before the bar opened. He was permitted to practice for one hour before the bar opened, from 9-10pm, and then it was back to being a bouncer. After returning for the Spring of 1992 semester, Michael heard the regular DJ failed out and was given the opportunity to DJ on Wednesday, Friday & Saturday nights. Michael hand carried a milk crate of 100 cds, about a half mile, up and down the hill to the DJ booth. The booth was certainly not hi-tech. It comprised of 2 Sony Discmans, Radio Shack 2 channel mixer and microphone. A few bar napkins were placed underneath the Sony Discmans to prevent the song on the Compact Disc from skipping. All in all, it got the job done. The elevated, enclosed DJ booth was Michael's sanctuary. He played a mixture of classic rock, classic happy hour tunes, and the new artists at the time like, Pearl Jam, Nirvana and No Doubt. Michael was given a one dollar and hour promotion to \$7 an hour or \$28 from 10p – 2am, to be the DJ. Michael realized playing music was so much fun and no longer had the urge for adult beverages. He completed his bachelor's degree in 1993 and returned to Long Island to start his teaching career.

Getting the Gear:

Michael had a little over \$4,000 saved in the bank. He spent just about all of it to purchase two new Sony Discmans, Radio Shack mixer, a Crown amplifier, Shure wireless microphone and a pair Electro Voice (EV) 1503 speakers. He would have purchased the EV 1803 but, they didn't fit in his cousins Toyota Celica. Michael's dad did not think it was a wise purchase. He recalls saying, "Dad, where can you start your own business with \$4,000? If it fails, I will have an awesome sound system for the house". Needless to say it worked.

It's About the Music:

The success of any event is having the right music. Acquiring music was an expensive task and was a lot different than downloading an MP3 file. One of the benefits of growing up in Lake Ronkonkoma was that there was an awesome music store called Record Stop. Anything that was hard to find, Bruce and Mike at Record Stop, would have it. If the needed song was not on a greatest hits or a compilation, Michael would have to purchase the entire Compact Disc (CD) for \$18 or double CD for \$30 just for that one song. His CD collection was enormous and very heavy to transport the flight cases.

Early Lessons Learned

Michael's dad taught him a few key concepts; play the music at an appropriate volume and know the age of the crowd. At one of his first events at the Sons of Italy Lodge in Hampton Bays, in which his grandfather and uncle were founding members, he was blasting freestyle artists like TKA, Corina, and the Cover

Girls. His dad walked over and said, "Mike, look at the crowd. These people are senior citizens; you have to play the music that they want to hear." Try the 50s and 60s music." Just like that, people were dancing to Sinatra, Dean Martin, Bobby Darin, Elvis, Dion, Four Seasons, Four Tops and Temptations. Michael also learned that the term *dance music* is defined differently by literally everyone. Early in his career, Michael realized the keys to a successful event are being musically prepared and knowing how to read the crowd.

Hamptons DJ Debut

In Michael's DJ career there were three business owners that helped propel his business in the Hamptons, Larry Hoffman of Dockers Waterside Restaurant, Chuck Herman of Canoe Place Inn, (CPI) and Scott Rubenstein of East Hampton Indoor Tennis and The Clubhouse Hamptons.

During the Summer of 1993, he made his Hamptons debut at Dockers Waterside on

Saturday's from 2:00 – 10:00p. At Dockers Waterside Restaurant, Michael was encouraged by Larry Hoffman, owner, to motivate the crowd through music and not over the microphone. This advice inspired him to create his own unique style that is sophisticated and fun. Every once in awhile he will still pop in and spin his summer fun tunes along with reggae covers and deep-house covers.

For the Summers of 1995 & 1996, he went on to mix dance classics from the 70's and 80's in the Classic Disco Lounge, at the legendary Canoe Place Inn (CPI), in Hampton Bays. The CPI has been totally renovated to host special events again in 2022. Maybe a return to CPI is in Michael's future.

In 2000, Scott Rubenstein, of East Hampton Indoor Tennis, hired Michael to DJ the Annacone 2000 Fundraiser. It was his first of many star-studded events in his career. The tented gala took place in the present location of The Clubhouse Hamptons (see ad after story). Since then they have collaborated on many events.

Event Music Theory

While Michael was DJing events on the weekends, he also was an elementary school teacher for 20 years. He learned that there are some similarities between the two jobs. For example, creating a lesson plan is similar to creating a wedding outline. There are certain objectives that should be completed by a particular time. The more prepared, the better the results are in both occupations. In addition, a students' attention span is about 7-10 minutes, then they need some sort of change. For adults it expands to 10 to 12 minutes, before mixing in and out of music genres. While playing within any music genre, sometimes quick mixing songs is a very effective way in keeping the dance floor energized. This DJ technique allows more songs to be played throughout an event. It also keeps the crowd energy level high without talking on the microphone.

For Michael, preparing music for a wedding or special event is like putting together a jigsaw puzzle. Each song represents a piece of the puzzle. The edges symbolize the special requests and specialty dances. The different areas represent the variety of music genres. The artwork of being a DJ is knowing how and when to mix a song or music genre into an event. This is why music knowledge, preparation and knowing how to read the crowd are essential to any successful event. Music sets the event in motion and the positive vibes stay in motion with each song played.

Building the Team

Michael has surrounded himself with an amazing team. Michael's mother would also say, "Treat others the way you would like to be treated." The core members of the team have been with Michael for over ten years. In 1995, Michael would sometimes be subcontracted as DJ to play with a band his cousin Joe played trumpet in. Over the years, he became friends with the members of the band including, Jonny Ray (guitarist/vocalist), Eric (vocalist/percussionist), and George (percussionist/DJ), who have been now part of East End Entertainment since 2004. That same year, through Michael's teaching colleagues began offering string ensembles with Sara, Meghan, Kristen & Christine for wedding ceremonies and cocktail hour. A few years later, he added DJs JR, David, Dan, and Bill into the mix. For Michael, it's comforting to know, that he has a wonderful and reliable team. Many of the other vendors are familiar with their faces and appreciate the professionalism that is exemplified at each event. The goal is to focus on the quality events and not quantity.

- Continues on the next page



Continued - DJ Michael Celebrates 30 Years



L > R: Michael, Sanford, Eric, & Jonny Ray

Listening to the needs of the clients:

For Michael, being DJ encompasses many vital roles. The music is the heartbeat of the party that is filled with emotions. In addition to playing music at the right time, there are a multitude of questions that need to be answered prior to an event. Many of these questions are listed on his custom event outline form. Many clients rely on his experience to help customize the flow of a wedding or special event. During the planning process, Michael will listen to the goals of the client and gather all the information. He wants to make sure that each has its own unique flair. For Michael and the client, a venue walkthrough is very helpful. During this time, Michael listens to the clients and offers his thoughts. He might notice that there might be a need to add additional sound support in other rooms with wireless speakers, or inform parents where to stand for the first dance.

A few years ago, four months before Alyssa and Andy's rustic décor themed wedding at Pellegrini Vineyards, they had an idea of using pallets as a DJ front board. Michael brainstormed a few ideas and created his first décor front board, *North Fork Rustic DJ Booth*. It was from their wedding Michael began designing other themed DJ front boards to match the décor of other venues, like *Hamptons Beachwood White* and *Montauk Driftwood Grey*.

Conclusion:

Michael is ever grateful for all the friendship he has made and continues to make as an event professional. Michael said, "It makes it really easy when your office for the day is either overlooking the water, a vineyard, an orchard, a golf course or an estate. On top of which, I get to collaborate with many industry's best professionals, who makes the client's vision a reality." It's no wonder why people have been relying on Michael's expertise for 30 years and counting.



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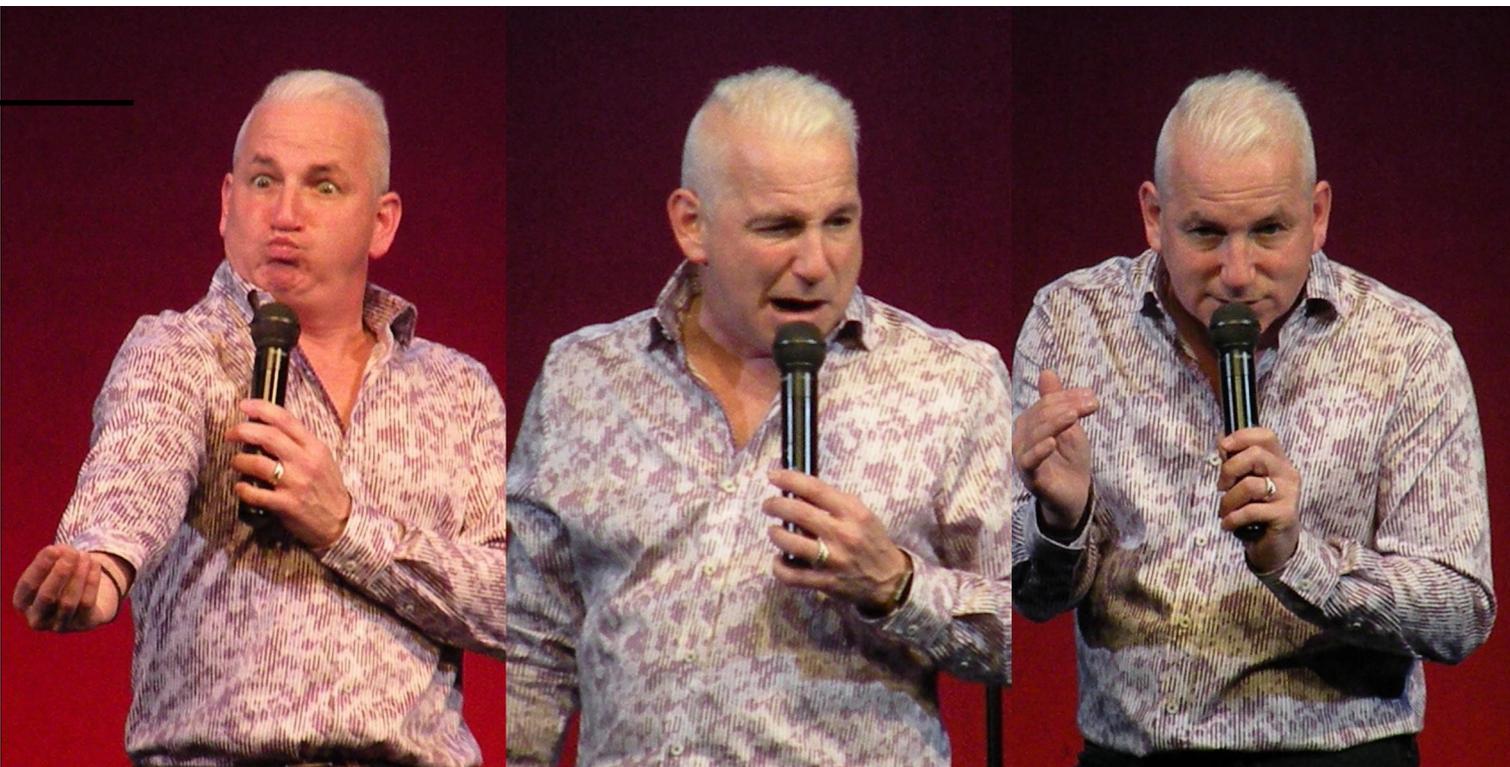
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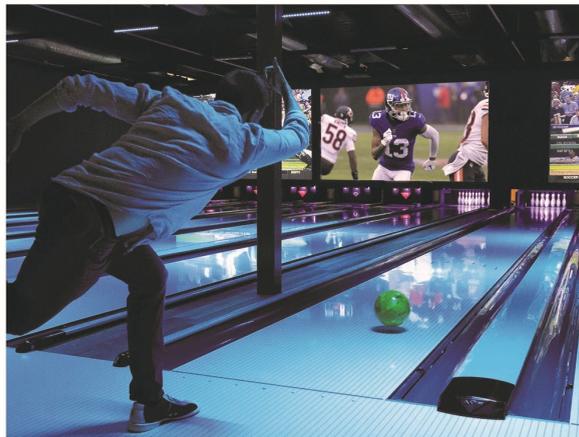
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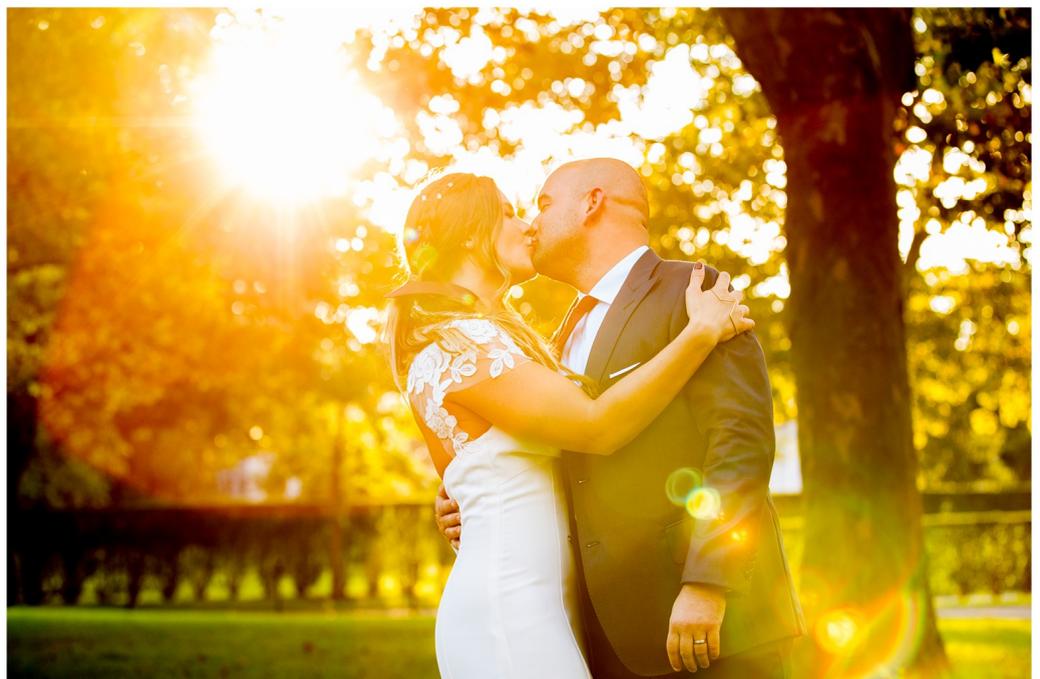
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Let the Readings Define - YOU

by Reverend Dan Callahan

One of the most effective ways a couple can express their love is through the ceremony readings. They uniquely communicate their connections to **who** they are, **what** they are about, **when** their relationship started and **where** they are from.

Who? Who reads the readings can have a huge impact on your guests. Often I'll read them. Sometimes couples want to give family or friends a special honor by having them read. Make sure the person selected is comfortable reading in public. This past summer one couple had wanted four very significant people to read- each of their two siblings. The challenge was they had decided to have only two readings. They arrived at a simple solution - each pair of siblings read alternating lines of their assigned reading. I'd never seen this done before. It flowed beautifully and was quite moving. There was a deeper level of significance to each of the readings.

What? Couples select readings that define them. They can choose readings that are; traditional, religious, readings, romantic, contemporary, or creative. If couples need some guidance, I provide them with many options.

When? I believe it's important to for couples give some time to reflect on the readings especially if they are looking for a high level of personalization. On the other hand, if couples wait until few weeks before their wedding ceremony, they may miss out some opportunities. For example, like providing for themselves to have enough time to reflect and discover which readings are "them" and give potential readers with enough time to prepare to read the readings effectively.

Where? Usually readings are somewhere in the beginning of the wedding ceremony. If the couple is going to have Unity Ceremony as well, they can alternate or bookend it with two readings. It makes for a good balance and rhythm pleasing to their guests.

Recently a couple came upon two readings they loved so much, they combined them for their Final Blessing. They put 'Today I Married My Best Friend' with 'From This Day Forward'. It worked out wonderfully!

If you're looking to personalize the ceremony, consider all these ways to best use readings in your wedding ceremony.



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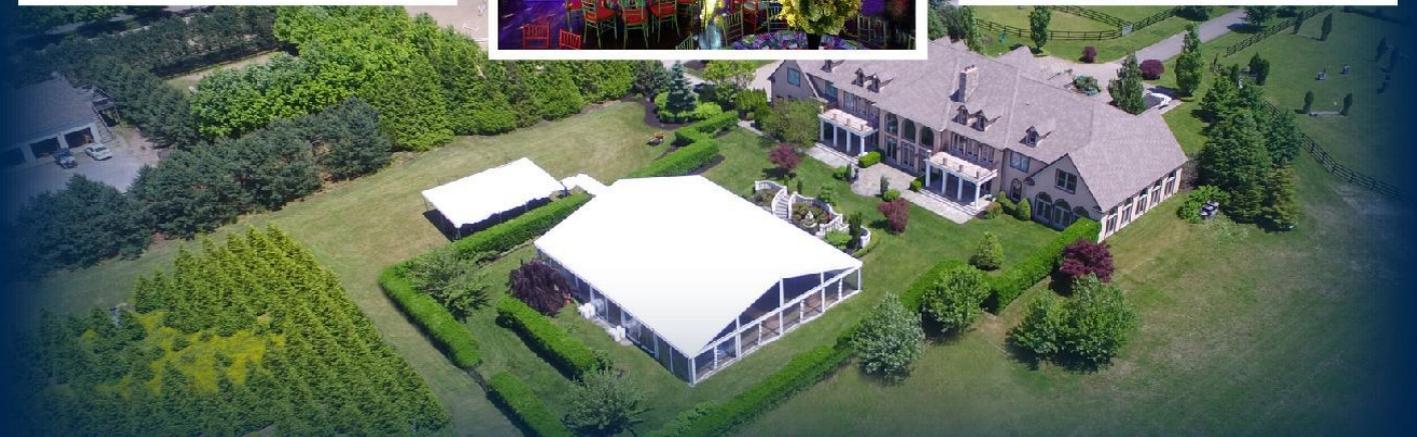
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