





michelle & jason

APRIL 26, SANTA ROSA BEACH

photography by Paul and Mecheal Johnson

It was a series of disasters that led to happily ever after for Michelle Muessle and Jason Dauble. The two met while working at the same night club/event center in Atlanta, and while their first impressions weren't quite disastrous, they were less than stellar. "We couldn't stand each other in the beginning," reveals Michelle (who's now 34 and a director of sales and events). But Jason shared a desk with Michelle's brother (he also worked at the club), and eventually the two clicked. "Her brother approved of me dating her even before she did," admits Jason (who's also 34 and a general manager of a restaurant).

Things progressed smoothly from that point, until it came time for Jason to propose. He whisked Michelle to New York City for her birthday and planned to pop the question on a romantic carriage ride through Central Park. But disaster struck in the form of the Republican National Convention: The park was being closed early due to security concerns. Jason's second plan, a scenic proposal on the observation deck at the Waldorf-Astoria, was also foiled, since >>





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the entire area had been reserved for a private party for the convention. By this time the two were exhausted and decided to turn in for the night, but Jason wanted to give it one last shot. “As I was brushing my teeth in my PJs, I turned around to see Jason on one knee with a ring in his hand and tears in his eyes,” remembers Michelle. “I was thrilled, started crying, and said yes through a mouthful of toothpaste.”

Planning their destination celebration proved less disastrous than the proposal, especially since Michelle is an event planner and Jason is a professional chef. “We love being creative with events, and this was our golden opportunity to pull out all the stops,” says Jason. “Even with a small budget we were able to create a luxurious party.” They began with a beachy theme, introduced through hand-painted palm trees on natural paper invitations.

The Royal Flush House on Santa Rosa Beach provided a picturesque beachfront ceremony site—that is, until a monstrous rainstorm threatened the celebration. “We’d decided to have the ceremony under a tent, but out of nowhere the sun broke through the clouds, and the weather was beautiful,” says Michelle. She quickly phoned Jason to convince him that they should move the ceremony back to the beach, and he agreed but pointed out that there was no time to move the chairs or rearrange the sound system. “I didn’t care,” she says. So they hurried everyone over to the beach, and Michelle walked down a sandy aisle as her uncle played the bridal march on an acoustic guitar. “Everyone huddled around us arm-in-arm as we said our vows,” she says. “It was perfect!”

Michelle wanted lots of color to play off the blank canvas of the beach. Hot pink and coral linens at the reception brightened things up >>





Style tip: Choose an unexpected color combo. Instead of the more typical beachy blue hues, Michelle and Jason set a stylish tone with coral and hot pink.





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considerably. She gave total creative license to her florist, who came through with an amazing array of Bugatti roses, Coral Charm peonies, and orange French tulips arranged in square glass containers to match the shape of the tables. “I didn’t pick out one single flower,” says Michelle. “I knew my florist would do a beautiful job, and he did.”

Champagne flowed freely during the cocktail hour, and hors d’oeuvres such as mini grilled-cheese sandwiches with tomato gazpacho shots, oysters on the half shell, jumbo shrimp cocktail in martini glasses, and citrus marinated crab claws were the perfect light accompaniments to the bubbly. The couple chose their dinner menu just as carefully, and made-to-order salad stations along with grilled chicken and beef kabobs, sliced teriyaki tenderloin, and seared sea bass with tropical salsa were fresh with Florida flavor. Neither Michelle nor Jason are big cake fans (“We’d rather spend the money on champagne,” jokes Michelle), so vanilla and chocolate cupcakes iced with pink and orange flowers provided a sweet ending to the meal.

With all wedding day disasters averted, the newlyweds spent the remainder of the evening dancing with their loved ones. “It’s so important to really sit back and enjoy the moment,” advises Michelle. “Instead of stressing about the weather or who didn’t come or what flower isn’t in season, just enjoy it and don’t sweat the small stuff.” The couple took their own advice, enjoying every last minute of their celebration before heading upstairs to their honeymoon suite. —*Susan Berryman* >>





MICHELLE & JASON'S INGREDIENTS

SITE The Royal Flush House, booked through Resort Quest, Abbott-Resorts.com **PHOTOGRAPHY** Paul and Mecheal Johnson/Paul Johnson Photography, PaulJohnsonPhoto.com, Panama City **OFFICIANT** Rev. George Schmidt, Way of Life Unity Center (850) 685-4942 **GOWN** Michelle found her strapless lace sheath during a Henry Roth trunk show at New Natalie's Bridal. "Henry was at the trunk show, and I was able to meet him," says Michelle. "I even sent him a photo after the wedding, and he responded right away; it was such a nice touch!" New Natalie's Bridal (404) 352-1616, Atlanta, GA **VEIL** Her ivory chapel-length veil was embellished with silver and gold embroidery. **SHOES** It was a beach wedding, so Michelle was married in her bare feet with sand between her toes! **HAIR** Head to Toe Salon (850) 231-0000, Corey **MAKEUP** Michelle received assistance from a friend who is a makeup artist. **BRIDESMAID DRESSES** The bride let her two attendants (her sister and sister-in-law) choose their own hot pink dresses to wear for the celebration. "They both have good taste, so I wasn't worried at all," she says. **FORMALWEAR** Jason wore a khaki linen suit from Banana Republic with a pink dress shirt and tie from Mark Shale. His attendants wore linen Banana Republic pants with traditional guayabera shirts. **INVITATIONS** MyPersonalArtist.com **FLOWERS** John McDonald of TWELVE (404) 541-2357, Atlanta, GA **RENTAL EQUIPMENT AND CATERING** Townsend Catering (850) 534-0662 **MUSIC** A friend of the couple is a DJ, and he spun tunes for the reception. **CAKE** Cupcakes from Southern Style Desserts (850) 654-1716 **FAVORS** The couple provided guests with flip-flops from Old Navy and personalized bottled water from TheKnot.com/shop. **TRANSPORTATION** Jason's friends decorated a six-person golf cart that the couple used to shuttle guests around the property. **ACCOMMODATIONS** The Royal Flush House; Gulf Place; WaterColor Inn (866) 426-2656 **HONEYMOON** Michelle and Jason spent one night in a suite at WaterColor Inn, and then another four days in Rosemary Beach. They're planning a late honeymoon to Jamaica.