

Shape your wedding into a beautiful occasion that goes beyond the look, to one that shares your story.

An inspiring book-meets-planning tool, *Storied Weddings* encourages you to examine your tastes, family history, hobbies, style, and other bits and pieces of your story to weave into your celebration, your *storied wedding*. Showcasing florals, venues, cocktail recipes, bouquet recipes, table setting ideas, color pairings, and more, this book also features charming stories and photos from real couples and insightful pro tips throughout. A helpful Q&A brings a spark to the process—incorporating these questions encourages you to really personalize every detail to bring to life your vision for a timeless celebration that is perfectly you.



Aleah
&
Nick
Valley

storied
weddings

storied weddings

*Inspiration for
a Timeless Celebration
That Is Perfectly You*



Jacketless Hardcover
8 x 10 in, 224 Pages
200 color photographs
Pub Date: November 2018

ISBN-13: 978-1-4236-4941-0



9 781423 649410



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SMITH



Aleah & Nick Valley
Valley & Company Events

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Invitations & Monograms



Wedding stationery will set the tone for your wedding festivities and style. The possibilities for stationery are really limitless—couples can send elaborate invitations layered in special boxes, invitations inside bottles, an invitation printed on vellum, or have their menus printed on fabric or even acrylic. Nothing is off limits when it comes to finding a personal style for your wedding stationery. This will also become a tangible piece of your wedding story that guests may hang onto forever, kept on their refrigerator or tucked safely away in a box with photographs or other keepsakes. Stowed securely away in our office, we have several boxes of stationery suites and paperie (such as boutonnière and bouquet tags, programs, and menus) from weddings and events that we created with our couples and their stationery designers.



Ceci New York's elaborate floral-laden invitation suite is a shining example of the formality of an invitation and includes layers and the appropriate components of an invitation suite.



“For a new element, we have been experimenting with holographic foils and printing on acrylic. We have had some really great successes combining a classic watercolor and floral look with really beautiful foiling techniques.”



“If I had to pick a favorite signature touch for an invitation suite, I would choose a hand-painted watercolor and a personal logo that captures the vibe of the couple, especially when that same watercolor appears again on your day. We have used a couple’s custom watercolor prints for all kinds of things—from their programs to their dance floor to the pillows or linens at their after-party. Think of it as your personal branding that you can then carry beyond the wedding into your daily life and beautify your world every day.”



“Elements of the paper goods can be carried through the ceremony with welcome signage, programs, and vows, to cocktail hour and printed or embroidered napkins, menus, and take-home favors. I’ve seen menus, logos, and monograms or duograms transferred onto nearly any type of surface—printed onto cocktail trays for the bartenders, carved into an ice sculpture, or made into a floral display.”

— Ceci Johnson



top: A hand-painted whale crest by Libby Tipton tells the story of a couple’s love of the ocean. It also becomes a keepsake for them and the emblem for their family.



This something blue setting was inspired by subtle ocean waves and crystal-clear glass, suggesting a timeless setting anchored by billowing blue fabrics flanking the sailcloth tent and gauzy table runners dancing across crisp, white Swiss dot linens. We dreamed of creating a private setting surrounded by a woody environment, like many of our private home or estate weddings.

Whether you are hosting several hundred of your closest friends and family or an intimate gathering of a dozen, a tented wedding can feel

so intimate and welcoming. It can be dressed up or down with greenery garlands, fabric pole covers, lighting (like bistro lights or up-lights), and with virtually any kind of seating configuration. In a vast open space, a tent can give a sense of definition and place for your guests to get comfortable for the night. A small sailcloth tent can be utilized for a lounge or dancing tent or as a stand-alone bar and landing point for guests to sit back and enjoy their cocktails while watching the bustle of the evening unfold.



opposite: A decorative pale blue wedding cake created by Lilac Cake Boutique sat atop its own small round table, creating an added focal point under the cozy tent.

above left: Monogrammed napkins are fitting for post-ceremony festivities and are a charming way for a couple to showcase their personalized style. The couple can use these napkins in their new home to entertain, or for every day.

above right: Mix and match clean details like crisp white linens and plates with antique silver to create an unexpected interest.



Grooms have so many ways to dress up their style. From cuff links to bow ties, shoes, pocket squares, and cologne, any of these particulars can be stamped with a groom's own mark. As with a bridal suite photo, the thoughtful way a groom puts his look together can be photographed to help document the day with his own panache. By laying out his groom's suite and incorporating details special to him (like a grandfather's watch, father's cuff links, or a friend's borrowed tie), and including details of the wedding, his look can be captured in time.

Incorporating a family member's jewelry is a noted way to tie in heirloom pieces on your wedding day. Whether it's your grandmother's brooch cinched onto the handle of your bouquet, earrings from your fiancé's mother that you wear at the rehearsal dinner, or an entire collection that belongs to your own mother, these pieces can carry sentimental significance.

We always share with our photography partners early on what the details of the morning will look like—what our couples and their wedding parties will be wearing, the getting-ready space, and other details that will become part of the getting-ready photos. This helps to set them up for successfully capturing both bridal and groom "suites" before the wedding.

Work with your photographer to create a collection of your bridal jewelry, along with stationery, your veil, and dress that they can photograph—your perfect style moment will be documented so beautifully by adding in your bouquet or flower buds used in your centerpiece.

Whether you dream of walking down the

aisle in simple and sweet ballet flats tied in satin ribbon, barefoot, or in decadent heels studded in jewels, capturing your shoes also becomes part of your wedding style and story. We encourage our brides and grooms to choose elements of style that will be comfortable, first and foremost, and to practice wearing each item to make sure comfort and style are present. Many years ago a sweet bride's gown was altered so tightly that she couldn't sit down at the reception and she nearly passed out—needless to say, she changed mid-reception! Aleah has also sewed many a groom's pants back together after they split on the dance floor! The sign of a great dance party? Yes! But not a good indicator of comfort.

Hair and makeup should be tested in a trial run a couple of months prior to the wedding so you know how your hair will look with your veil and you can gauge the style of makeup and its lasting ability. Think about having your engagement session or another portrait session scheduled on this day so you can actually see how your wedding makeup will look on camera.

Keep in mind that your wedding look should be comfortable and your makeup feel special, but not overdone. You do want to look and feel like yourself, don't you? On the contrary, wedding makeup should be done to last and to stand out in your photos. This is why a hair and makeup trial makes all the difference.

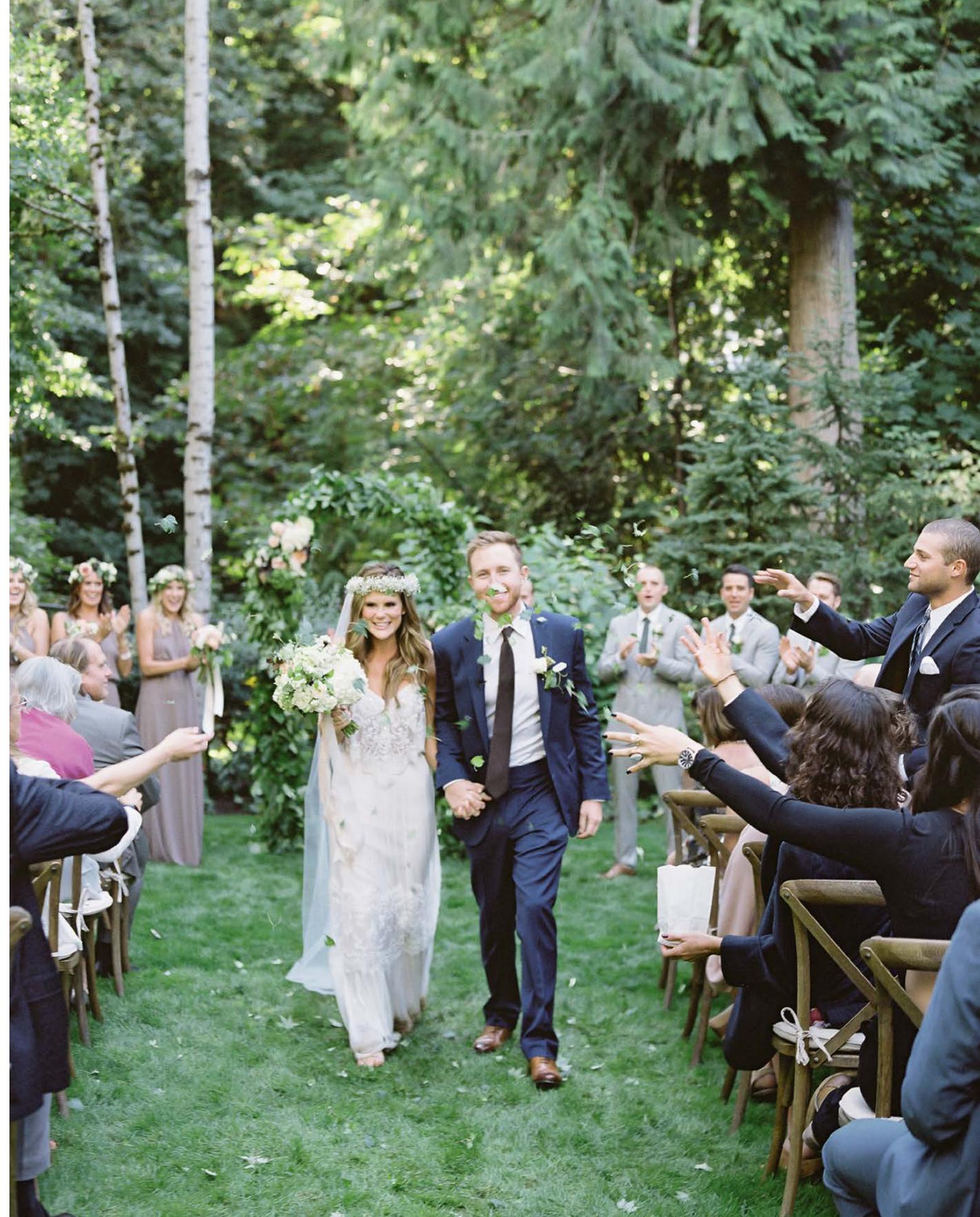
A groom's collection is photographed, capturing the details of his favorite shoes, English cologne, wooden cuff links, and bow tie. This collection becomes the start of his own chapter of the wedding day. A groom's collection of his wedding day accessories is styled "to a T" and laid out on a wooden slab to enhance the feeling of the day.

Ashley & Max

Bohemian Estate Wedding



Ashley and Max's wedding planning took place in about four months—not an unusual feat for us, but about eight months shorter than our average lead time. It just meant that we put our getting to know each other time into high gear! The wedding took place in the beautiful woodsy home where Ashley grew up, which gave us the flexibility to create a seamless and pretty magical layered wedding with experiences and fun transitions around each corner.

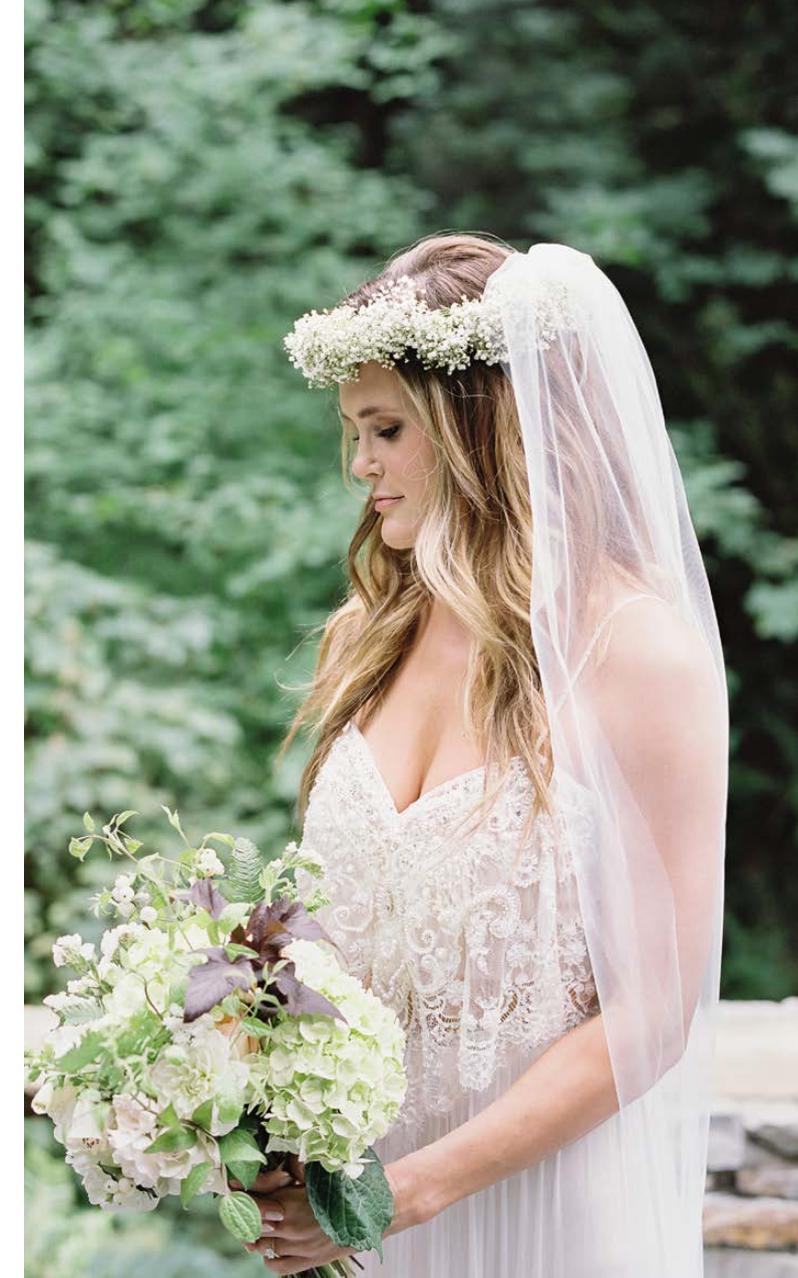




Ashley recalls the favorite parts of her wedding day:

Max and I live in La Jolla, which is where Max grew up. Since we were getting married at my mom's home in Sannamish, we wanted to be sure to incorporate aspects of Max's hometown, too. We had two catering stations: a Pacific Northwest station featuring local salmon and veggies, and a San Diego station featuring delicious street tacos. It was relaxed and fun—exactly what we were hoping for. We had a blast dancing together and a bunch of us finished the night off with some late night swimming in my mom's pool.

I loved my dress. It was nontraditional and not at all what I pictured myself ever getting married in—but it was perfect for the day. I wanted to feel comfortable (which was why I opted for flats) but still elegant—and not (completely) out of place walking through the woods.



My mom wore baby's breath in her hair when she married my dad. I remember looking at their wedding photos as a little girl and thinking how absolutely stunning my mom looked. I always knew I wanted to incorporate baby's breath into my hair somehow. The flower crown Aleah created for me captured the essence of that little girl inside me who wanted wedding hair like her mom (with a modern, ethereal twist!).



Getting married in the woods I grew up in was magical—it's one of my favorite places in the world. We even got to take pictures in my childhood tree fort! All the animals in the pasture had these darling floral collars Valley & Co. made for them. So cute!



Max and I wanted to feel comfortable, relaxed, and at peace (which was part of the reason we opted for a smaller home wedding versus a traditional wedding venue). My uncle, who also happens to be my godfather and one of my closest friends, married us. He really understands me and was so thrilled for us—it genuinely showed throughout the ceremony.

Our Style Exercise

Rank by priority what experiences are most key to your wedding story:

- ___ The ceremony and your vows
- ___ The venue or destination location
- ___ Activities and experiences that conform to family traditions
- ___ Sensory experiences that highlight your likes and hobbies (music, objects, videos)
- ___ The dining experience
- ___ The look and ambiance—including flowers, linens, textures, and lighting
- ___ The entertainment—including ceremony musicians and music throughout
- ___ The party aspect
- ___ Unexpected treats for your guests (like activities we have mentioned)
- ___ Guest comfort
- ___ The attire of you and your wedding party
- ___ The photography or videography of your wedding
- ___ A unique and spectacular invitation suite

“I think every bride will look back at her wedding at some point and giggle about the elements that demonstrated the trends of the time she was married but I also believe that brides should put thought into their own personal style and let that shine throughout the wedding. If she takes the time to define her style to the vendors in her wedding, it will really shine through.”

—Kimberly Schlegel Whitman

What season or month of the year have you always thought you would like your wedding?

How have you always envisioned your ceremony (family church, formal mass, in a park)?

Who do you want to marry you (priest, judge, family member)?

Who do you want to walk with you in the processional?

Do you want traditional or hand-written vows?

How long do you want your wedding ceremony to be?

What tone do you want for your ceremony?

What do you enjoy most at weddings?

What is something you absolutely don't want at your wedding?

What does your perfect night out with friends look like?

How can you incorporate that perfect night into your wedding day?

What are ten of your all-time favorite foods?

What are five words you would want to use to describe your whole wedding experience?

What are five words you would want to use to describe the visual aspects of your wedding?

What kind of décor do you have in your home or want to have in your home that you would want to see at your wedding?

Find 10-15 photos that really resonate with you—and try to avoid photos from other weddings online (or stick to just one or two that really speak to the overall look that you've been dreaming of). These images can be from travel adventures, memorable dining experiences, an incredible dessert that still makes your mouth water, moments of your life that have stuck with you, a picturesque garden that left you in awe, the building you live in, and anything else that evokes emotion. Does your collection of images say regal and refined? More casual and edited? Stylish and off of the runway? Or everything in between?

“On the actual wedding day, literally everything lends itself to communicating personal style. My advice would be to pick the things that are most important to you and focus on them. Maybe it's the flowers and the tablescapes. Maybe it's the booze and the band. Maybe it's the dress and accessories. Whatever it is, make those essentials the most personal and special they can be.”

—Alexandra Macon



What they ate and drank

Starters

Fennel-apple salad with celery, toasted walnuts, arugula, pecorino and cider-mustard vinaigrette

Dinner

Tangerine-glazed salmon with a creamy pine nut sauce, whipped potatoes, and summer vegetables, or

Pepper and spice-rubbed beef tenderloin with a wild blackberry-syrah sauce, whipped potatoes and summer vegetables, or

Savory Tuscan vegetarian risotto with roasted tomatoes, baby squashes, grilled zucchini ribbons, and Parmesan cheese

Something Sweet

Carrot cake with cream cheese

Classic red velvet cake with cream cheese

Vanilla cake with summer raspberry filling

Lemon cake with summer raspberry filling

Libation Offerings

Canyon Road Winery, California: Chardonnay, Pinot Grigio, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon

Spirits: Belvedere vodka, Bombay Sapphire gin, Tanqueray gin, Maker's Mark bourbon, Johnny Walker Red Blended scotch, Captain Morgan's spiced rum, Sauza Blue agave tequila

Beer: Bud Light, Pyramid, Red Hook, Stella Artois, Beck's non-alcoholic

