





kendall and patrick 05.27.12

highlands, nc

When love stories don't include a pet alligator, but Kendall Winger and Patrick Gaudin own the beginnings of their romance in the nursery of one such reptile, that's not the university of Design in geographics class where Patrick collected Kendall's pet alligator for his keychain, an instant conversation starter. Kendall explained that the keychain was a memento of her family's beloved deceased pet alligator Big Ben, but Patrick was skeptical. A conversation over a phone call to Kendall's mother confirmed the story and a great friendship began.

Kendall and Patrick remained friends and both dated other people during college. They graduated and Kendall moved home to New Orleans while Patrick stayed in Atlanta, but the pet alligator became their couldn't-stop-being-again. "From that point forward our friendship became the foundation for our relationship," Kendall says. "Her ties on the most important ingredients to last a lifetime. Respect, loyalty, adventurous passion, love and lots of laughter."

Seven years later, Patrick and Kendall were on vacation with Kendall's family on Maui, in a private island retreat in the Caribbean. "After seven years of dating, proposing was certainly on my mind and I knew I had to go for it," says Patrick. "I knew the time was right." His answer to surprise Kendall, but now looking back in the ring design. With that in mind, Patrick bought a 12' x 12' clear cubic acrylic sheet in his backyard in order to use as a stanchion processing until they could return home and design a table setting around a family stone. They drove out to the beach one evening before dinner and Patrick proposed as the sun set over the water. "We worked around this goal at the beach which felt like the edge of the world," Kendall says. "It was so stunning, I walked a long time for his proposal and now I completely understand why. It was perfect. The dreamy kind of proposal that happens in movies."

Kendall and Patrick made the easy decision to marry in Highlands, NC, where Kendall's parents have a home. "Patrick and I fell in love going to the mountains and while my parents were building the house, we spent a lot of time in Highlands," says Kendall. "The property is amazing, so when we got engaged, there was no hesitation about where it would be."

Kendall designs homes for a living and was determined to bring her interior style to their wedding. "I had a clear vision in my head, but what was missing was the person that could make it happen," she says. "Steve Roland and James of Ellen's Arts from New Orleans, the moment these two creative geniuses came on board was the instant the wedding personally came to life." A theme of southern elegance and rustic charm. Patrick's vision was clear, and with the same mountain backdrop, while a palette of neutrals and soft tones reflected Kendall's home designs, Kendall and her mother also enlisted the help of Elizabeth Palmer of I Do Events, adding her valuable expertise to their team. "Elizabeth knows Highlands and Atlanta better than Facebook," says Kendall. "So she was responsible for coordinating all the details and heading up the entire team. I really feel so lucky to have had her as a best."

Kendall and Patrick's spectacular suite of paper goods and ceremony invitations featured intricate floral accents and their sweet sign featuring two curved branches with "K + P" between them, the logo appeared throughout the event on signs, hats, guest bags, robes, robes and even the wooden guest books. "Everyone's absolute favorite were the distressed raw linen that displayed 3D pictures of Patrick and I on the rocks where he proposed," says Kendall. "The view frames were set in three awesome boxes to save-the-dates and our guests went nuts over them. They were so cute and fun!"

Kendall and family were seated on vintage pews, accented by tulip pillows handmade by Patrick's alter mother with "Oh Happy Day," her initials and their wedding date. Before served chilled Champagne, Jan Polinger, Chicago and Lincoln and passed mini appetizers, including potato bombs and jello, smoked salmon with avocado and cream cheese and blueberry salad. "We worked really hard making a ceremony to put on," Kendall says. "We didn't follow a whole lot of rules."

Kendall and her father walked down the aisle in an instrumental version of "Forever Over the Rainbow". Her flower girl and bridesmaids followed in a duet pop on the traditional procession that allowed Kendall and Patrick to watch as their mothers walked their rings down the aisle. Kendall carried flower girl carried small bouquets with messages written in gold on ivory ribbon that read, "You will marry the boy next door," "You'll marry your best love," and so on. They handed them to Kendall to tie together into one bouquet, which her best friend (and best friend's perfect counterpart) of white roses, white Lululemon, Queen Anne's lace and white lily. Kendall and Patrick exchanged vows in front of an arched sign with a theme of girly-vibe "brides" and all had been made of their able branches. The tree top were made of bare tulip magenta branches hung with white and moss, with tiny white birds perched among the limbs.

Kendall wore a custom made gown by New Orleans gown designer, Susanna Parris. "I searched exactly what I wanted and brought it to Susanna," says Kendall of her long, figure skimming gown of stretch tulle covered in beaded white patterns, with soft Champagne-colored underlay. Patrick wore sleek black tuxedo pants by Christian Dior with an ivory dress jacket by Ralph Lauren Black Label and Gucci shoes. His groomsmen wore traditional black tuxedos with blue color, while Kendall's bridesmaids wore pale rose colored metallic, mesh dresses. Each of Kendall's seven bridesmaids chose their own dress in different shades of nude. The couple's best friends wore pretty ivory dresses and their best mothers wore black and tan and bowties.

A Chapel Choir sang a powerful rendition of "Oh Happy Day" at the close of the ceremony and guests mingled under a canopy reception tent after dining cocktail hour. The happy news included fun activities on a miniature car cruise, musical staves on survey polka-dot with custom-toned music, miniature tables with sweet food, red glass tomatoes with goat cheese and second helpings on toast points with tangy marinade and smoked fish.



Over ten thousand candles were used to light the tented reception and five thousands of LED pillar candles were suspended from the ceiling. "I wanted everything to glow with candlelight," says Kendall. Lighting embellishments over the long family table were made of steel frames wrapped with garlands and clear spheres all with LED pillar candles and white, sand-colored marigolds from the farm, along with a touch of white eucalypti leaves, were suspended over the dance floor for guests to enjoy. Farm tables were set with a variety of centerpiece arrangements including white peonies, green in-wild olives, white roses, white hydrangea, Queen Anna's lace, white ranunculus, succulents and orchids accented by raw, natural elements including pine, birch and forest "logs".

Kendall worked with Sun in My Belly catering in Atlanta, GA, to create a variety of gourmet fare for guests to enjoy throughout the evening. Everyone dined off-right leg, taking occasional breaks to visit a 3 miles station or lounge on blankets and pillows arranged in the pasture for grazing. Cuisine options featured steak plates, beef tenderloin and veal, and girls, while a warm station served risotto and bouillabaisse. Cheesy macaroni and homemade bread soup ups with a gifted cheese garnish were passed as a late night snack, along with warm chocolate chip cookies and milk. "The staff were authentic, Cole (the florist) did a fab job and served coffee and pastries in a traditional bag from New Orleans, a nod to Kendall's hometown.







Kendall and Patrick drove away in a classic, English-made Morgan and guests departed on golf carts through the canopy-lined wedding grove. In lieu of favors, the couple made donations to a New Orleans dog rescue charity and handed out small line-art bags with notes inside that read, "Your gift fits gone to the dog."

"It isn't? Well you know it and lucky we fell in love on the wedding!" says Kendall. "I am sure everyone says that, but it was the happiest day of our lives - not only because we got married, but because we were surrounded by all the people we love most in this world." SAH

Wedding Consultant: Stacey Fletcher of So French Affairs, Texas and Event Design: Abundant Media, Creative Location and Reception Venue: Home of Order + Power, Hotel Lulu's Estate, Mary Roberts Park, Historic Village Station, Fair Inn and Custom Backgrounder, March Wedding, 40+ vendors: Catering: Lark + Bee, musicians: Echoes and Wedding Grooves, Photo: Henry Design, Ceremony musician: Josh Cooper (guitar), Reception Entertainment: Jesse + Sara Band, DJ: "Curtain design by bride and made by Suzanne Porter, non-toxic water, reusable glass bottles for water, biodegradable paper plates, green and gold monochromatic theme, table linen drive policy, off-site bar, vintage crates, transportation: food delivery of flowers, cinematographer: Jason Crow Film.

Photography: Vue Photography, www.vuephotographyonline.com



