

# YOUR DAY

*Your Way*



There are many ways to say "I do."  
*Here are three unique unions that may be your inspiration.*  
By Christopher Confero Photography by Arden Ward



I am often asked what I would define “my style” to be. Rather than typecast myself to one certain look, my goal is to amplify my client’s style through my level of execution. I do not want to be defined as one person or idea, however, as a collection of a team that brings life to your story. My approach to design means that having my hands on every piece of the puzzle ensures one cohesive production for my clients.

Take a look at three different weddings I was so blessed to be apart of. Each one completely different, yet with all the same finishing details; every hemstitch linen napkin is hand pressed, every table linen is crisp and kisses the floor, and every seat is edged to the table happily awaiting a guest to arrive. Having a Conféro wedding means that everything will be practically perfect no matter the scale.

## The Destination Wedding

Destination weddings can be tricky to execute when you don’t always know exactly what you are getting into. There are always a few curveballs that come along with the fabulous tropical and foreign terrain. Now don’t let me drive you away from saying “I do” abroad. If you prepare properly (which includes hiring a professional planner like myself,) you have nothing to worry about!

A destination wedding doesn’t mean you have to travel out of the country necessarily, just that you venture away from home and give your guests a vacation from their everyday lives. I’ve traveled from New Orleans to New York and all the way down into the Caribbean to do destination weddings for my Southern couples. The wedding that I’ll be sharing with you took place in New Orleans, Louisiana.

My couple, Heidi Clemmensen and Jonathan Burke, are both originally from The Big Easy so it was only fitting to return home with their families to tie the knot. We all still live in Birmingham so planning the wedding from three states away required multiple weekend visits and extra strategic planning. When you are six hours from home, you can’t just scurry back to your office to grab something you left behind!

This ceremony and reception took place in a lofty venue in the French Quarter. Exposed brick and wooden beams gave an industrial background for us to build our fanciful décor on. Sometimes a theme can happen organically and that is exactly how it came about for this event. I used circles in everything from the linens, to the flower containers, to the suspended décor above the altar. It gave much needed continuity to such a textural space. There were certain aspects of the culture we had to include; a kings cake, the second line at the end of the evening both of which are customary in New Orleans.

Traveling away with family and friends almost insists that you become closer over the days you spend together. It relaxes and excites you at the same time. So if you are thinking about a destination wedding, be brave and take the leap! You’ll be so happy you did!



EVENT, LIGHTING & FLORAL DESIGN:  
CHRISTOPHER  
CONFERO DESIGN  
BRIDAL GOWN:  
THE WHITE ROOM  
CEREMONY & RECEPTION  
VENUE & CATERING:  
THE CHICORY  
GROOM'S ATTIRE: &  
GROOMSMEN'S ATTIRE:  
MR. BURCH FORMAL WEAR  
HAIR & MAKEUP:  
TONYA JONES  
LIGHTING, PHOTOGRAPHER:  
ARDEN PHOTOGRAPHY  
STATIONERY:  
DKH MEDIA



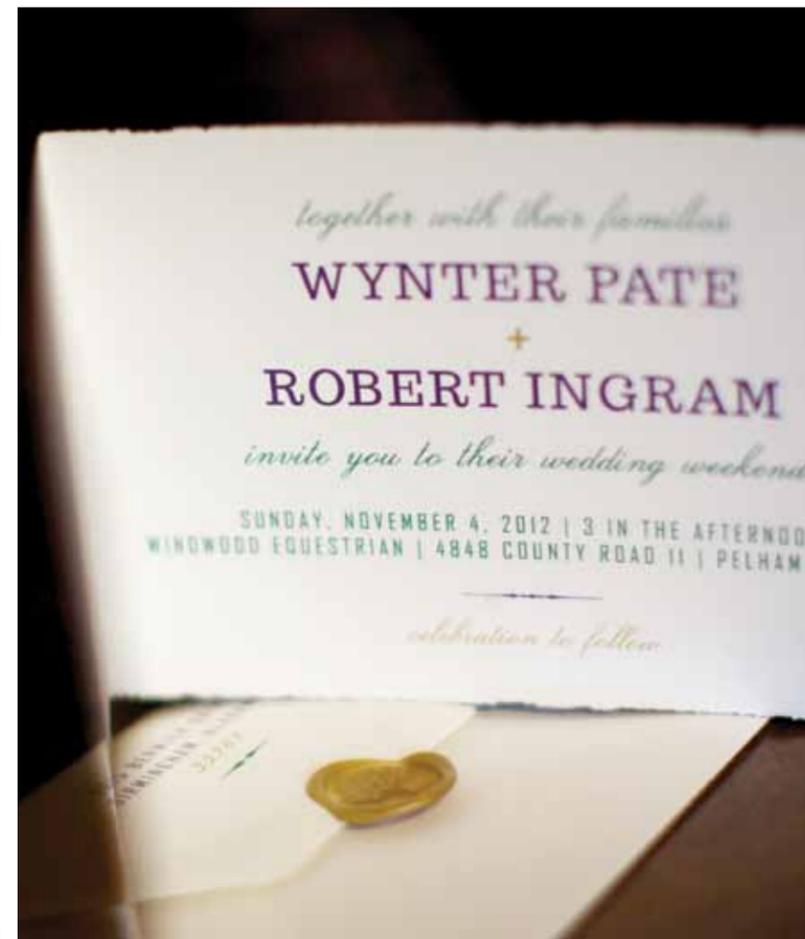
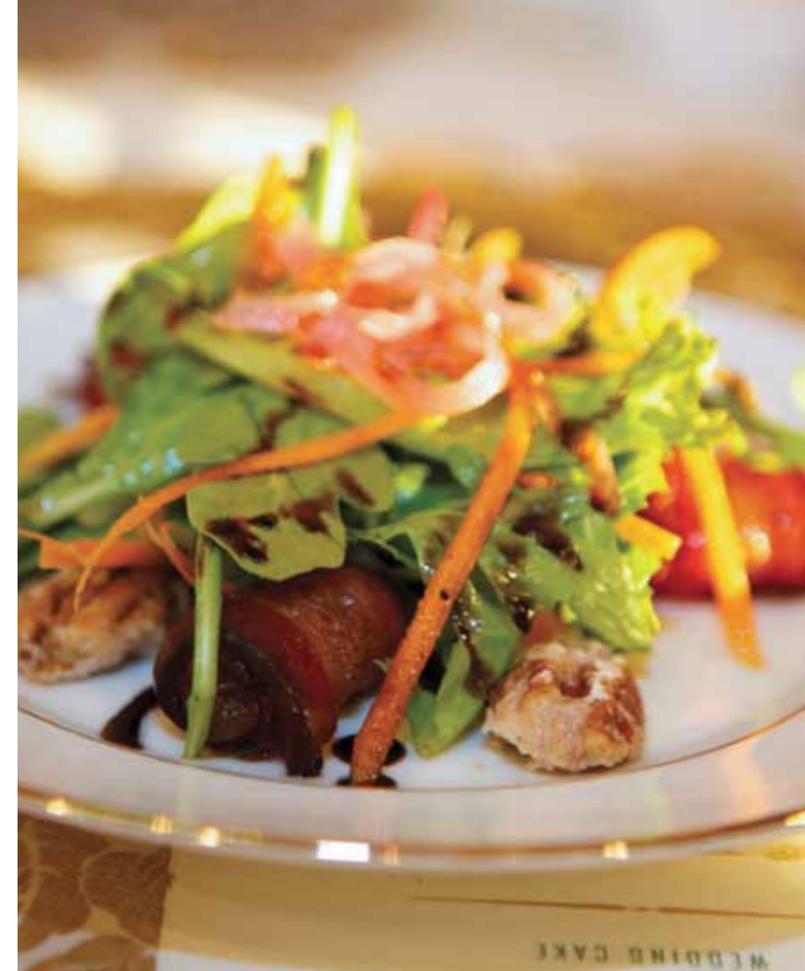
## The Budget — Conscious Wedding

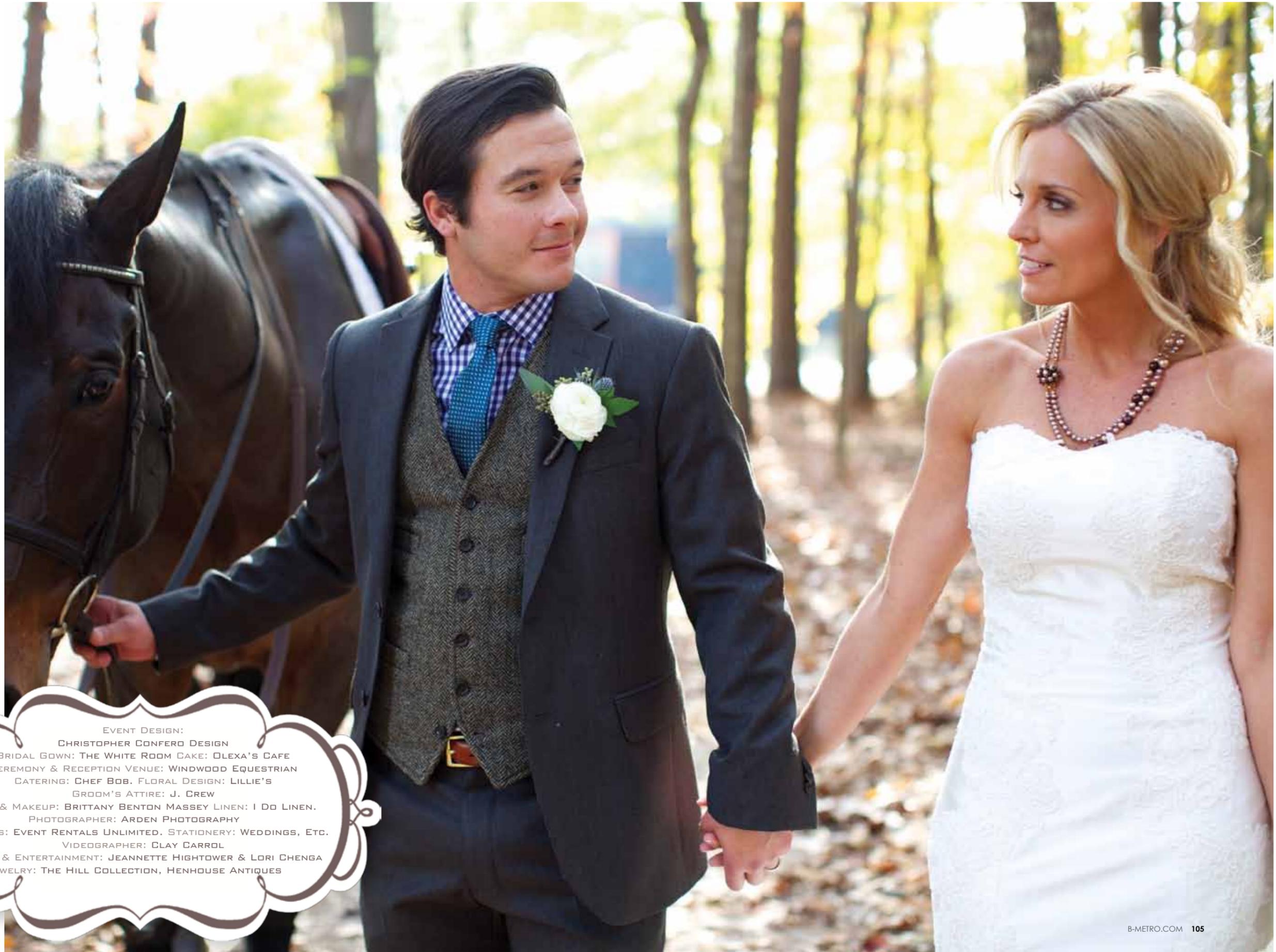
My theory on budget is that style has nothing to do with whatever number your budget may be. If you have a monetary limit on your wedding plans, the only thing you need to do is decrease your guest count. I always tell my clients, “If you haven’t talked to someone in the past year, they have no business being at your wedding.” You have to view every person who walks through the doors as a \$300 commitment.

The wedding I am about to share with you is one I planned for a couple of dear friends of mine, Wynter Pate and Rob Ingram, who both happen to be in the wedding business as well. There wasn’t so much of a budget restriction on this event, but rather a desire to only include immediate family, which kept the bottom line under control. I didn’t necessarily skimp on any of the fine details that I usually incorporate in my design, but with only 14 total guests, it kept the sticker shock from rearing its ugly head.

The design to this wedding was all about contrast. A rustic setting was paired against custom linen, gold accents and family heirloom silver. Three generations gathered to witness a beautiful ceremony and share an intimate meal. As guests arrived on the cool fall day, I had wait staff butler pass hot cocoa and spiced cider, which was a special touch that set this wedding apart from others. As guests moved into the equestrian stables, they were introduced to the beverage bar where they could refill their drinks and then make their way to the dining table. I had a 96” round table built for all 14 guests to sit around together. The gold floral pattern linen gave a luxurious base to all of the other table elements while a sheer gold chair jacket gave a soft touch to the wooden seats. On the table top, I layered gold Arte Italice chargers, gold flatware, and hand calligraphy scripted place cards and menus.

Just because there were only 14 guests at this wedding, you can see that no detail was left unnoticed. If you take pride in everything you do and do it to the best of your ability, things will always have class and sophistication.





EVENT DESIGN: CHRISTOPHER CONFERO DESIGN  
BRIDAL GOWN: THE WHITE ROOM CAKE: OLEXA'S CAFE  
CEREMONY & RECEPTION VENUE: WINDWOOD EQUESTRIAN  
CATERING: CHEF BOB. FLORAL DESIGN: LILLIE'S  
GROOM'S ATTIRE: J. CREW  
HAIR & MAKEUP: BRITTANY BENTON MASSEY LINEN: I DO LINEN.  
PHOTOGRAPHER: ARDEN PHOTOGRAPHY  
RENTALS: EVENT RENTALS UNLIMITED. STATIONERY: WEDDINGS, ETC.  
VIDEOGRAPHER: CLAY CARROL  
MUSIC & ENTERTAINMENT: JEANNETTE HIGHTOWER & LORI CHENGA  
JEWELRY: THE HILL COLLECTION, HENHOUSE ANTIQUES



## *The Extravagant Wedding*

For me to label a wedding extravagant, you should know it had to be absolutely way over the top on every level! But truly any wedding that I work on has luxurious elements that are thoughtfully designed to ensure my clients and their guests have a night they will never forget. The wedding of Brandi Bielkiewicz and Paul Bronold was certainly just that.

When I first met with Brandi, and I asked her what she wanted the theme of her wedding to be, “bling” was what came up over and over again. If you follow my work, you know I’m not really a “bling” sort of guy. The challenge was to turn “bling” into something timeless and classy, just like my bride.

We settled on a simple black and white color pallet because I knew the star of the show needed to be the sparkle I would use in other elements. I chose to design with countless stems of white phalaenopsis orchids in all of the floral pieces and accent everything with crystals and rhinestones. For the ceremony, every pew lining both sides of the aisle received a floral treatment that led your eye to the 12-ft. tall arrangements, which flanked both sides of the altar. For the reception, mixing combinations of textures and patterns gave the party a super luxurious feel. From the high back leather sofas we used at the 36-foot long head table to the acrylic ghost chairs used for guest seating, nothing about this space was average.

A few other over-the-top elements we included were a 250 glass champagne tower, a 6-foot-tall Kettle One Ice Bar and a choreographed first dance for the bride and groom. It was truly one of the most memorable nights of my career. I hope it’s inspired you to include a few lavish ideas at your next event!



EVENT & FLORAL DESIGN:  
 CHRISTOPHER CONFERO DESIGN  
 BRIDAL GOWN:  
 DIANE'S FORMAL AFFAIR  
 BRIDESMAID GOWNS:  
 BELLA BRIDESMAID  
 CAKE: GIA'S CAKE  
 RECEPTION VENUE & CATERING:  
 THE CLUB  
 CEREMONY VENUE: ST. FRANCIS XAVIER  
 GROOM'S ATTIRE: HONG KONG TAILORS  
 GROOMSMEN'S ATTIRE:  
 MR. BURCH FORMAL WEAR  
 HAIR & MAKEUP: JEREMY STEPHENS  
 LIGHTING DESIGN: AG LIGHTING  
 MUSIC & ENTERTAINMENT: ATLANTA BEATS  
 PHOTOGRAPHER:  
 ARDEN PHOTOGRAPHY  
 RENTALS: EVENT RENTALS UNLIMITED.  
 STATIONERY:  
 SONIA DAVIS DESIGN  
 TRANSPORTATION:  
 VINTAGE AUTO  
 VIDEOGRAPHER: WAGES FILMS  
 ICE SCULPTURE: ICE BY DESIGN  
 JEWELRY: DIAMONDS DIRECT

