

Ashley John



Big Sky, Montana

We met when we were 10 and 11 at a summer swim team league in Roundup, Montana. He was from Glasgow and I was from Glendive, but our teams would compete in small towns all over Eastern Montana. The teams hosted a dance each Saturday night, so we spent many weekends together from those early ages until early high school. We both attended college at the University of Montana and dated there, but John finished his education in New Mexico. While we kept in touch, we were very far apart, so when John visited Las Vegas, where I had relocated for school, we reconnected. We realized the spark was as strong as ever, so we figured it was time to act on it permanently.

The Wedding

Our wedding was magical. I can't think of any other way to describe it. Friends and family arrived throughout the week before the wedding. We enjoyed dinners, a bachelor float trip, a girl's spa day, hiking, barbecues and even a whitewater raft trip. I loved the community feel of Big Sky and bumping into our friends and family everywhere we went.

The day was spectacular even though there had been rain the week prior. String music greeted the guests as they arrived at the pavilion tent. John looked so handsome, but his favorite part was watching me come

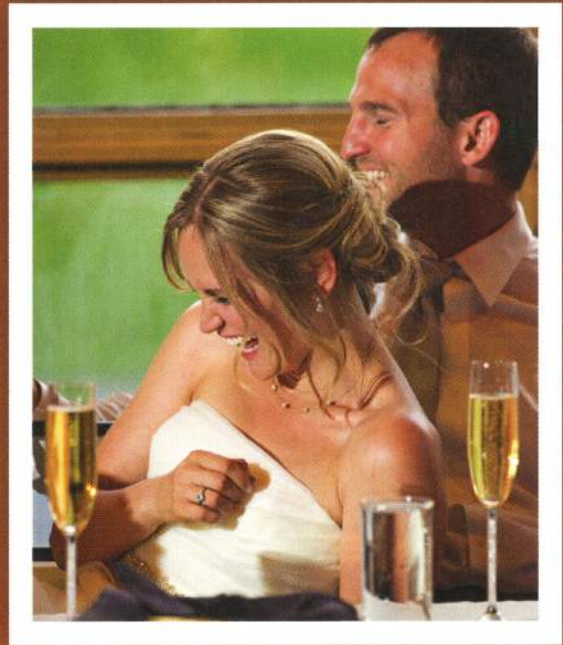
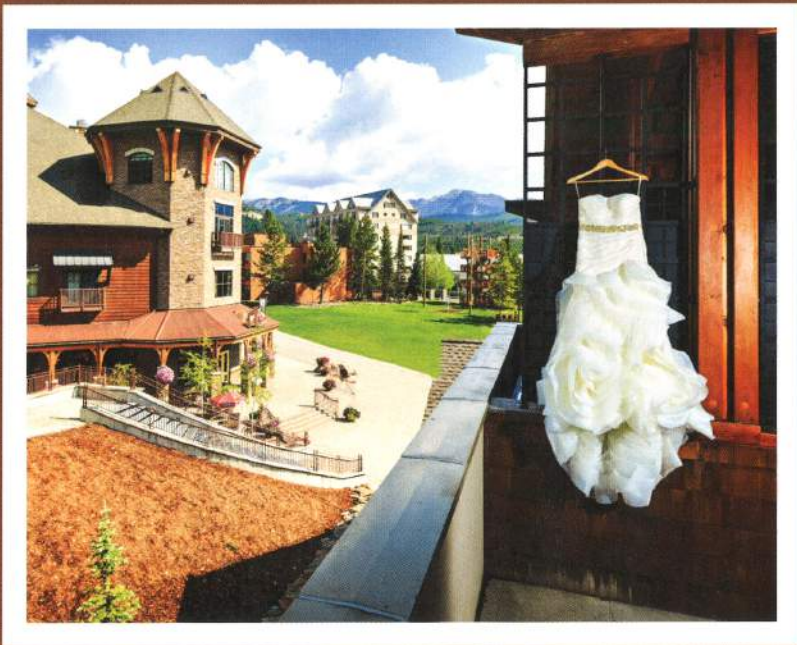
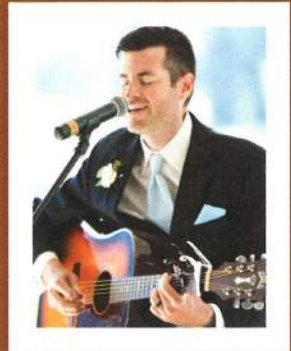
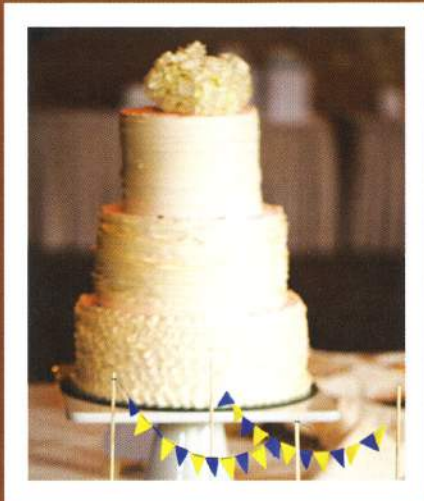
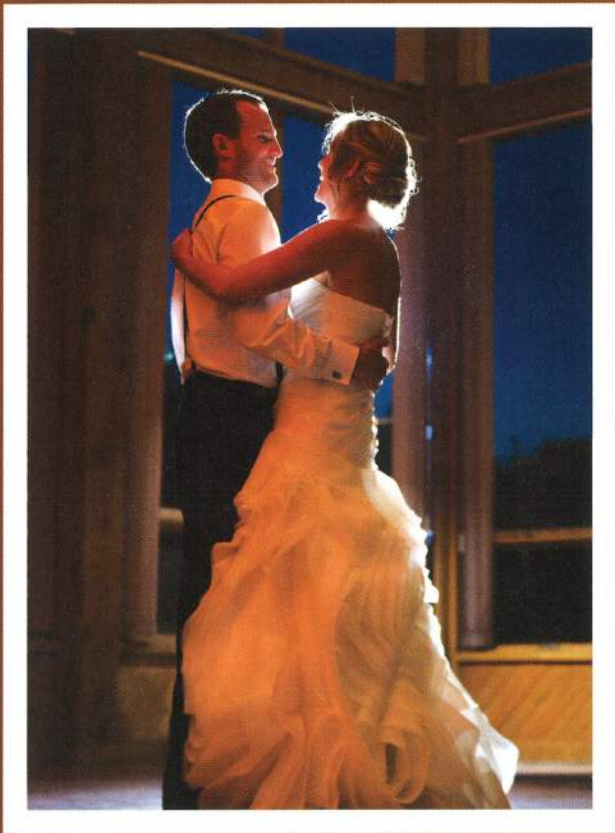
down the aisle. It was such a great moment to turn and see all the people who are important to us gathered around for our ceremony. We kept the ceremony short and sweet. A song from John's very talented brother and the poem Carrie Bradshaw wrote in the *Sex in the City* movie were the perfect special touches.

The reception was a perfect mix of all the people we love. A relative who could not be there surprised us with a touching video. The toasts were all great, with an especially touching and funny speech from my maid of honor. But the best part was the dancing. We have some talented dancers in the family who brought their A game to the wedding, and everyone else brought their love of a good time. Our friends had decorated our room with candy since we had been on the Paleo diet for the wedding. It was hard for us to call it an evening. When you put that many people you love in the same room, it's something you don't want to end.

Advice

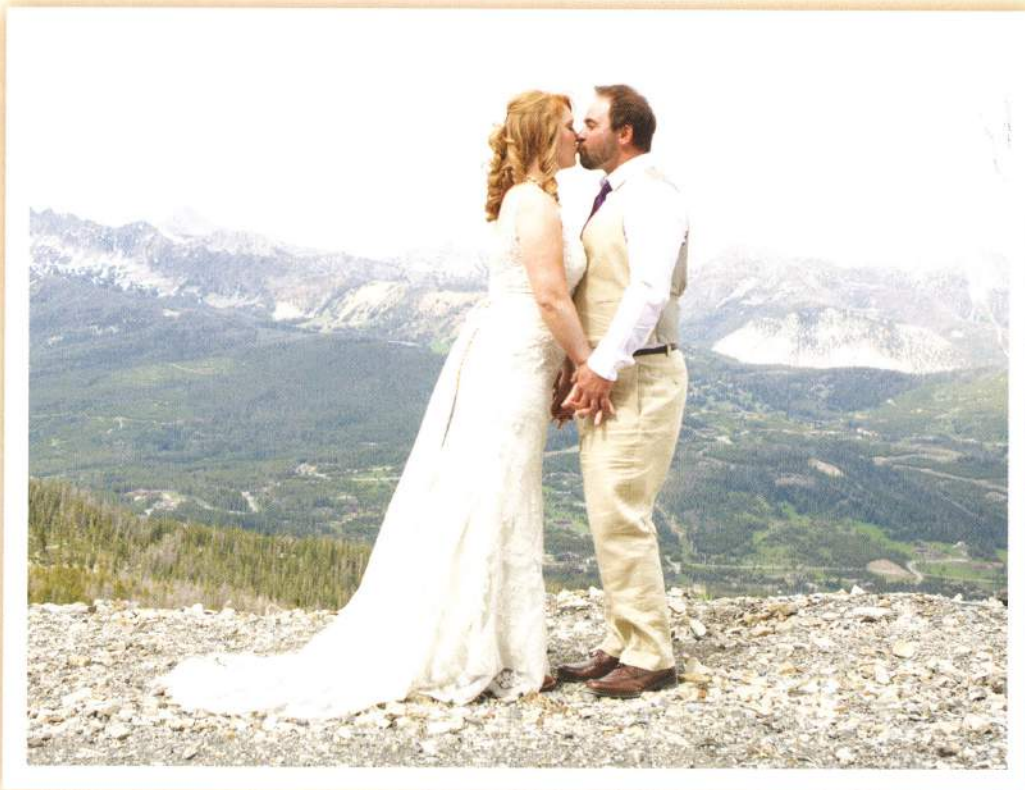
My best advice is that while the wedding might not be perfect, it will still be magical. To keep your sanity, don't fuss over the little details that don't pan out. At the end of the day, no one will even notice those things—especially if alcohol is involved!





Photography: Becky Brockie Rehearsal Dinner: Private Condo Ceremony Venue: Big Sky Resort, Pavilion Tent Reception Venue: Big Sky Resort Huntley Lodge
Wedding Planner: Margo Magnant, Big Sky Resort Florist: Bloom Catering: Big Sky Resort Cakes & Desserts: Sweet Pea Bakery
Bar Service: Big Sky Resort Photo Booth: Big Sky Photo Booth Band: Seasons Trio (String Trio for ceremony) DJ: Joe's DJ Service
Hair & Makeup: Hair Ninja Wedding Dress: Vera Wang Lodging: Big Sky Resort Cinematographer: Visual Lens

Margo Ethan



Big Sky, Montana

Ethan and I met at a bluegrass concert at the Filling Station in Bozeman, Montana. When our (to this day!) favorite band the Infamous Stringdusters played their opener, "Fork in the Road," our eyes met, and I smiled and blushed a bit. Ethan averted his eyes, later admitting that he didn't know why the pretty girl was looking at him.

Ethan surprised me with a thoughtful and heartfelt engagement in February of 2013 under the elk antler arches in the wintry town square of Jackson, Wyoming, just before a Stringdusters concert. I was so surprised that it took a while for me to actually say Yes! I still can't help but smile thinking back on that magical moment.

For our wedding at Big Sky Resort, Ethan and his groomsmen rode the ski lift ahead of us girls, waiting for us to arrive. Ethan had his back turned to me as I got off the lift and I tapped him on the shoulder for our high-elevation "first look"! There was not a dry eye among us. Looking back, I can honestly say that our time alone with our bridal party on the top of the mountain was the best part of the day. It was raw, emotional, unscripted and overwhelmingly perfect. I'm also so grateful to have had a few quiet minutes on the lift with my older sister Jill on the way up and with my husband-to-be on the way down.

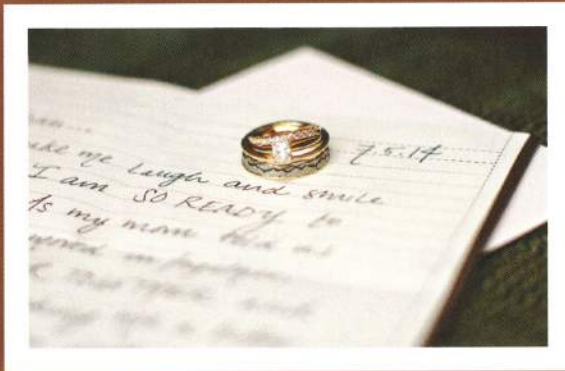
Our ceremony was held at the base of the ski lifts at Big Sky Resort, and we were married under a pine and willow arch my dad made for us. Our friend Jesse Korb, who was with Ethan the night we met, was our officiant. We wrote our own vows and made everyone cry, then laugh when we forgot the rings. It was amazingly heartfelt and very fitting for the two of us.

I must admit here, after going through the whole process myself, I have new respect for what brides go through. These amazing events truly are labors of love, but the bumps along the way can be difficult and even as a dedicated venue coordinator, I learned a lot throughout the process.

Advice

Disconnect in the final stretch. A few weeks prior to your wedding, consciously steer clear of Pinterest, wedding magazines, etc. They will only serve to overwhelm you of things you may have forgotten, or things you think you want to change. Trust that the decisions you have made up to that point will turn out, and trying to change things last minute will only cause you stress.





Photographer: Brooke Peterson Photography Ceremony & Reception: Big Sky Resort, Big Sky, Montana
Wedding Planner: Bride (Margot is the Wedding Planner at Big Sky Resort) Florist: Budget Bouquet Catering: Big Sky Resort
Cakes & Desserts: Bride's mother Bar Service: Big Sky Resort Band: Kitchen Dwellers Wedding Dress Designer: Allure Bridal
Gown Shop: Eskay Bridal Rings: Miller's Jewelry Lodging: Big Sky Resort Officiant: Jesse Korb, friend of the couple