

BRIDES

REAL WEDDINGS

A Summer Camp-Themed Wedding in New Hampshire

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Photo: Jenna Wakani

At their first introduction, Patrick White made Ariel Brewster an offer she couldn't refuse: A free room, complete with a private bath, inside his Riverside Drive apartment. "The catch was that he lived with an elderly woman — a retired logic

professor — who kept student boarders to help her with groceries, household tasks and errands," says Ariel, who, along with Patrick, was attending Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism at the time. After "we'd lived together — and shared eldercare duties — for a few months," Ariel says, the pair started dating.

It was years later, while attending a wedding in Scotland, that Patrick proposed. "One rainy afternoon, we took a gondola up to see Ben Nevis — supposedly the tallest mountain in the United Kingdom — and Patrick proposed at the top," Ariel says. "It was cold, windy and wet, so we were actually crouched behind a boulder when he pulled out the ring."

The couple exchanged vows huddled beneath a tent on yet another rainy day, in what the bride describes as a camp-inspired wedding weekend. "The whole weekend had a cabin-in-the-woods, drinking-around-the-campfire vibe. Gingham, lace and burlap. Old-timey. And wet," she says of their wedding day. "Very wet."





Photo: Jenna Wakani

"We never wanted to do something big or expensive or traditional," the bride says of the couple's unusual choice of venue — the Loch Lyme Lodge, a summer-camp-turned-rustic-family-resort in New Hampshire. "I wanted something cute and small-town. I had always dreamed about serving strawberry rhubarb pie at my wedding instead of cake — that kind of thing."

The lodge "is furnished with patchwork quilts and old *New Yorker* covers and very rustic antique furniture — a total hodge podge, but we loved it," Ariel says. "When we visited and were walking around, we said to ourselves, 'This could turn into a really fun summer camp-style weekend for our family and friends.'"





Photo: Jenna Wakani

Rain ruined the couple's plan to wed by the lodge's lake. At the last moment, the ceremony was moved beneath one of two white-and-yellow striped tents, where there was no defined aisle. The last-minute location change "made the flower girl duties kind of tricky," the bride says.

Patrick's nieces and the pair's flower girls Eloise and Simone White were asked to hand guests white daisy mums as they entered the tent. "I think Eloise was a little too shy for it, though," Ariel recalls. "Simone loved it."





Photo: Jenna Wakani

The couple, though both writers, declined to write their own vows. "I guess I wanted to avoid all those cheesy poems I've heard a million times at weddings. And the overwrought lovey-dovey stuff. We just wanted to be married," Ariel says.

A justice of the peace — who doubles as a neighbor and family friend — married Ariel and Patrick, and "had a nice little spiel about growing old together," the bride says. "Short but sweet."



Photo: Jenna Wakani

On a clothesline strung up in the ceremony tent, two friends hung photos of guests throughout the ceremony and into the evening. "It made a nice little arrangements of guest photos in real time," Ariel says.



Photo: Jenna Wakani

The bride, with the help of her sister and mother, designed all the couple's floral decor, including matching bouquets. Ariel ordered flowers from a local grocery store and picked them up "Friday morning before the wedding and kept them on the porch of our cabin until we arranged them Saturday morning," she says. The blooms were a pastel-hued mix of freesia, peonies and ranunculus.





Photo: Jenna Wakani

The bride's sister, Emma, "and I carried matching bouquets we arranged ourselves with sprigs of mint, yellow and peach ranunculus, white freesia and pink peonies," Ariel says.

Emma wore a calico print dress, while Patrick's brother and best man, Silas, sported a blue gingham tie.



Photo: Jenna Wakani

A local bluegrass band, Old Fogey Mountain Boys, crooned to guests during the couple's cocktail hour and into dinner. Guests sipped on craft and domestic beers and wine, and lemonade from a "jar from Pottery Barn, full of Pimms, but it fell off a table during set-up and shattered all over the dance floor. Oops!" says the bride.







Photo: Jenna Wakani

Guests sat at two rows of 12 burlap and lace-covered picnic tables as they ate bar-b-cue buffet fare. "Bonus: picnic tables come with free bench seating," the bride says. The bride purchased bamboo cutlery that she tied with grey and white twine and placed atop red gingham napkins. "We also put rolls of brown paper towels on the tables, since we were serving ribs," she says.



Photo: Jenna Wakani

"My mom put out sap buckets filled with flowers, flea market-sourced whiskey crates and wooden fruit crates filled with annuals, and a few potted white shrubs," for floral reception decor, the bride says. On the tables sat a "combination of teeny bud vases and some birch-bark-wrapped vases I bought on Etsy."



Photo: Jenna Wakani

"We also had lots of picnic blankets and wool Pendleton blankets — all second-hand-store finds, or borrowed — for extra seating, but because it was pouring, people ended up using them as throws and wraps, huddled under the tent!" Ariel recalls.



Photo: Jenna Wakani

The couple didn't have a wedding cake. Instead, they offered guests strawberry shortcake and apple pie on palm leaf plates for dessert.



Photo: Jenna Wakani

Ariel, Patrick and their guests danced until "the music had to be turned off," the bride says. But the party "reconvened around the campfire," with beer, Jim Beam and marshmallows making the rounds around the fire pit in true (adult) camp style. "The next morning, the campfire was littered with empties and soggy hot dog buns!" Ariel says. "Tres chic."

Jillian Kramer

Venue: Loch Lyme Lodge || Bride's dress: The English Department || Bride's Shoes: Lands' End || Hair Piece: Pemberly Collection || Suit: Tom's Place || Bridesmaid's Dress: ModCloth || Catering: Blood's Catering || Band: Old Fogey Mountain Boys || Photography: Jenna Wakani

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