

2024

# Block Island WEDDINGS

*Close To Home, A World Away*



*The Man With Flour  
in His DNA*

**Your Special Day Deserves  
Something Unique from  
Aldo's Bakery**

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# THE Atlantic

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Photos: Tori M. Pedro Photography (Above), Trevor Holden (Bottom)



Jason: 30, from Woodbridge, Conn.  
Stephen: 30, from Bristol, Conn.  
Now reside in: Atlanta, Ga.





# JASON SAMUEL KLEIN & STEPHEN MICHAEL AREL *June 11, 2023*

Getting married on Block Island was a natural for Jason and Stephen as the island was where Jason spent most of his summers growing up – staying with his grandparents and working at local businesses. The island became Jason's second home, so when he and Stephen took their first vacation together after meeting on an online dating app, Block Island was the place to go and Stephen fell in love with it, too.

Jason and Stephen say "Block Island doesn't have to try hard to make a wedding special. The beautiful views, the perfect weather, but really it was like opening a new chapter of the significance the place has for us."

Jason and Stephen chose to have their ceremony at the home of Jason's aunt and uncle on Dories Cove Road and gathered natural materials, including driftwood from the beach to incorporate into the wedding decorations. Jason's father made a chuppah out of birchwood branches that he gathered at home in Connecticut and assembled on the island.

Of their rabbi, Jeffrey Goldwasser, Jason and Stephen say he is "one of the kindest men

that we ever have met and he made our day feel truly special."

Later, they enjoyed a reception, catered by Kimberly's, at the Block Island Maritime Institute where they enjoyed terrific food and dancing to the Horah. The couple says the fish and vegetable pasta was fantastic, as was the wedding cake – a semi-naked two-tier raspberry rose champagne cake from Ellie's in Providence, Rhode Island. It was so good, they are still talking about it today, say the couple.

"We felt our day was really authentic," say Jason and Stephen. "The glamour of the event and the beauty of the island were secondary to the experience of committing our lives to each other. A beautiful memory is waking up the morning of and being excited to spend the day surrounded by friends and family."

## Top 3 Pieces of Advice:

1. Visit the locations first so you can plan accordingly.
2. Stay positive and don't let the stress of planning ruin the day.
3. Make sure you get a plate and eat because it will be so busy you may not get a moment.



## The Details

WEDDING VENUE: **Private home on Dories Cove Road**; RECEPTION: **Block Island Maritime Institute**; CATERER: **Kimberly's**; CAKE: **Ellie's**; FLOWERS: **La Bella Rose**; MUSIC: **Megan and Jayme Hennessy**; PHOTOGRAPHER: **Hilary B. Photography**.

## WEDDING CHECKLIST 10 to 12 Months Out

### Pick a Date and discuss a budget

Decide on three different preferred dates for your wedding and list in order of preference. Remember that June and September are peak wedding months on Block Island – venues may have restrictions that don't meet your guest count or budget. Most hotels will have a three-night minimum required of your guests in July and August. If you are on a tight budget, consider having your wedding on a day other than Saturday.

### Come up with an estimated guest count

Make a list of all the people you would like to see at the wedding. Make an A list and a B list and be prepared to trim the guest list if budgets require.

### Discuss what kind of wedding and reception you envision

Formal or casual, tented or indoor, buffet, plated, or passed hors d'oeuvres

### Discuss what your priorities are

Food? Good music? Decor? Location?

### Book ceremony location and pay deposit

### Book reception location and pay deposit

### Reserve blocks of rooms for wedding guests

### Book ferry reservations for vehicles

### Begin gathering ideas from bridal magazines and websites

See what your tastes are regarding flowers, decor, cakes, dresses, invites. Gather pictures to show these vendors your vision.

### Select your bridal party





Julianne: 29, from New Canaan, Conn.  
Aaron: 29, from Framingham, Mass.  
Now reside in Waltham, Mass.





# JULIANNE BECK & AARON DAMESEK *June 17, 2023*

Like many couples across the northeast, Julianne Beck and Aaron Damesek dealt with rain on their wedding weekend. But they didn't let it spoil their fun and thanks to some quick-acting vendors who rearranged a few things, they took their vows under sunny skies.

"Our welcome party was at the National and they did a fabulous job accommodating us with the rain and moving everything under the porch at the last minute," say the couple. Because the party was on Friday night, the couple's guests had all morning on Saturday to explore the island, renting bikes, going shopping, and visiting the 1661 Farm and Gardens.

On the big day, "it was a somewhat stressful morning with how heavy the rain was and making sure that hair and makeup was happening on time," says Julianne. "Right before our first look we opened letters from each other, and it was a moment I won't forget – it really grounded me back in the day. And getting to see each other right after that was so wonderful and really relieved the stress of the day."

Julianne and Aaron met while in college and have been regularly visiting Block Island for over 10 years, so it was no wonder they chose the island for their wedding, especially since Julianne's parents have a home there. "Having everything at the house felt really intimate and I think the guests loved being able to walk



around the property and enjoy the view," says Julianne.

"We were somewhat untraditional – no bridal and groom parties, no flower girl or ring bearer. Our ceremony incorporated both Christian and Jewish traditions while focusing mostly on our love for one another and the importance of having our friends and family to bear witness."

"We used the Jewish tradition of stomping the glass at the end of the ceremony, which symbolizes how fragile life and love are, and a

reminder to cherish every moment together. We had personalized glass orbs created and hung from our altar arch within the flowers. Even though we haven't found one out in the wild, we loved having that special touch."

"Because of the rain, we had to switch the order of events and move our cocktail hour to before the wedding," say the couple. "Kimberly Ward was so flexible and quick thinking, and brought out cocktail hour appetizers and opened the bar for our guests waiting down in the tent. The lobster rolls and oysters were fan favorites. We pushed back the ceremony about 45 minutes to wait out the rain and were able to have a gorgeous, sunny ceremony. This certainly wasn't planned but everyone was a little more emotional during the ceremony after a few drinks!"

## Top Piece of Advice:

Use a planner who is a Block Island local. Using Julie Kiley was the best decision we made.

## The Details

WEDDING VENUE: **Beck family home;**  
WELCOME PARTY: **The National;** CATERING:  
**Kimberly's;** FLOWERS: **Painted Rock**  
**Designs;** PHOTOGRAPHER: **Hilary B.**  
**Photography** WEDDING PLANNER: **Julie**  
**Kiley.**

## WEDDING CHECKLIST 7 to 9 Months Out

### Finalize guest list

#### Send out a save-the-date

Your guests will require more information due to the special circumstances regarding a Block Island wedding. An informational insert or e-mail along with the save-the-date will encourage them to make their travel arrangements early.

#### Things to include:

- Any other events outside of the wedding day that you would like to invite them to, such as a rehearsal dinner or Sunday brunch.
- Transportation info: ferries, plane, taxis.
- Room blocks or recommended accommodations.

#### Book caterer and pay deposit

#### Book DJ or band and pay deposit

#### Book ceremony music and pay deposit

#### Book photographer and pay deposit

#### Book videographer and pay deposit

#### Book officiant and pay deposit

#### Book cake designer and pay deposit

#### Book a florist and pay deposit

#### Book bride and groom's accommodations

#### Book vendor accommodations and ferry tickets (if applicable)

#### Order bridal gown and accessories

#### Book rehearsal dinner location

#### Begin researching invitations and wording

If you are inviting all of your guests to the rehearsal dinner, consider integrating this into your invite and RSVP. Pocket-fold invitations are very useful for presenting information about multiple events, as well as gathering RSVPs.

#### Shop for wedding bands and get ideas for engraving

#### Begin researching honeymoon spots

## WEDDING CHECKLIST 4 to 6 Months Out

#### Book Hair Stylist And/Or Makeup Artist

#### Select and order invitations

#### Order bridesmaid dresses and accessories

#### Select and order tuxes and accessories

#### Meet with ceremony officiant and begin planning ceremony

#### Meet with caterer and begin finalizing menu details

#### Give guest list to bridal shower hostess

#### Make honeymoon reservations

#### Purchase wedding rings

#### Select style for escort cards, place cards, table numbers, menus, and programs

#### Order what can be ordered ahead of time

#### Schedule bridal gown fittings

#### Write all payment and contract deadlines on calendar

#### Balances due, final counts due, menu choices due, rental order due



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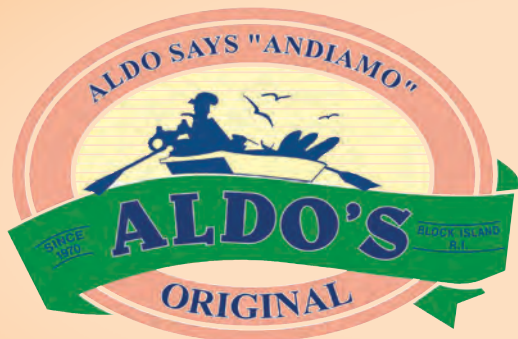


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# *The Man With Flour in His DNA*

Your Special Day Deserves Something Unique from Aldo's Bakery

By Rona Mann

Andiamo! (Translation: "Let's go!")

Many businesses brag about how many years they've been in business; and while that is enviable it speaks strictly to staying power and not always to sheer talent and expertise. Just as delicious pastry and imaginative wedding cakes are a combination of ingredients that blend well together to create desired results, so is the attention to detail that the bakery has in the wedding plans from start to execution to glorious finish. This is not just another vendor who takes an order, bakes a cake, takes the check, and moves on to the next transaction. His weddings are not transactions, but happenings...they're families and joy and moments that come once in a lifetime, and so Aldo's Bakery never takes any of it for granted.

Aldo Leone is a man with flour in his DNA. His parents, Aldo Sr. and Maria must have passed it on genetically. Aldo and Maria emigrated from Italy to Providence where Aldo learned and perfected his craft at an East Providence bakery. From the first, he learned nothing but classic technique in baking bread with tutelage from a well-schooled Italian baker. In 1956, Aldo was invited to be head baker at the Spring House and Narragansett Inn, an opportunity at which he readily jumped. While there, an abandoned fire station caught his eye, and in 1970 Aldo and Maria began building a long and storied tradition in that very place on the island. It didn't take long before both island residents and visitors flocked to the bakery for the authentic taste of homemade bread and pastries.

Now in its 54th year, the legacy that began with Aldo and Maria has been passed down to Aldo, Jr. and his nephew and partner, Stephen Papa. It's a legacy not only of a fine reputation started many years ago, but of knowing how to please customers. And when it comes to weddings, they take extra care to personalize everything from the first meeting with the wedding couple, showing them photographs, engaging them in a tasting, and most important, finding out what THEY want. "Often they bring along photographs of what they have in mind, and we do our best to duplicate it. We like hearing what impressed them at other weddings and what they didn't care for, so we work together to make this part of their wedding on Block Island as individual and special as every other piece of the event."

One of the many choices that Aldo's is proud to propose is their Del's Cart, as they are the only ones on the island to offer this. The bakery will bring the cart filled with Rhode Island's signature



Del's frozen lemonade to the hotel, the house, or the wedding venue before the ceremony. It is served by the cup, and is the perfect way to get the party going and let people know THIS wedding is going to be awesome! Some wedding guests elect to put a shot of lemon vodka in their Del's cup, but that would be served by the facility or caterer.

Aldo's can design a wedding cake or a wedding dessert to fit the wishes, the taste, and the budget of the wedding couple. "While some people still want the traditional three-tiered cake, some ask for a smaller symbolic two-tiered cake surrounded by cannolis, eclairs, and our very famous tiramisu. Another trend right now is the "naked wedding cake" which appeals to couples who don't want a lot or any frosting on their cake. Aldo's can offer a number of options from adding fresh berries on top or working with your chosen florist to add floral accents. They can even incorporate scenes by baking a beach scene complete with dunes and Adirondack chairs.

The unique ideas that have given Aldo's Bakery their 54-year reputation don't end strictly with the cake. "We can also help with breakfast ideas for the morning after by delivering baked goods, breakfast sandwiches, fresh fruit, and hot coffee to the hotels where guests are staying or invite them to our covered patio for a breakfast buffet," Aldo says, or deliver to visitors on moored boats just as Aldo, Sr. did. He would call out, "Andiamo!" as he cruised Block Island Harbor singing Italian arias.

Although Aldo, Jr. and his staff are not opera singers they love bringing fresh baked goods to those passengers, crews, and wedding guests on boats or pizza, oysters, and shrimp cocktail in the afternoon...and here's a very popular idea from Aldo's. You can purchase breakfast coupons for your wedding party and guests staying on the island so they can choose their own breakfast sandwiches and pastries hot and fresh before boarding the morning ferry back to the mainland. What a delicious end to the delicious experience of YOUR very individual, very special wedding.

When you meet a guy with flour in his DNA, you know you can't go wrong with Aldo's Bakery, the ONLY choice on Block Island for your wedding cake, dessert, Del's Cart, breakfast, and service right to your venue or boat. Andiamo!

For a personal appointment to talk and taste with Aldo, call (954) 609-7163 till MAY 15th. After MAY 15th: (401) 466-2198.



# ABIGAIL PATTIE & SOHAIL SYED *August 12, 2023*



## The Details

WEDDING VENUE: **Spring House**; REHEARSAL DINNER: **Dead Eye Dick's**; WELCOME EVENT: **Mahogany Shoals**; BAND: **King of Hearts**; CAKE: **Ellie's**; PHOTOGRAPHER: **Geist House Photo and Film**; FLOWERS: **Painted Rock Designs**.

Abby and Sohail met several years ago at Rhode Island Hospital where he was an intern in neurosurgery and she was a new nurse. A long way from home, Sohail was born in Pakistan before living in Canada and then Upstate New York. So, when it was time for a vacation together, Abby took Sohail to Block Island, her family's happy place. "The island has always brought a sense of peace, relaxation, and disconnect from the real world," says Abby, who has been coming to the island since she was a young child. One of the things they did on that trip was have dinner at the Spring House.

That was seven years ago, and now the couple say the island is their favorite place to go every year, so they planned on spending some time on the island before the wedding. "Being able to be on the island for the week leading up to the wedding was amazing," the couple say. "We were able to spend time with family and friends, going to the beach, eating sushi at the Oar, and enjoying buck-a-shuck oysters at the Beachhead. It is always so special going there every year, but being able to get married there was

the absolute best scenario."

Their time before the wedding included a rehearsal dinner at Dead Eye Dick's and all the members of the wedding party wore traditional Pakistani saris and kurtas to pay tribute to pay tribute to Sohail's heritage.

Just before the wedding began, there was a drizzle of rain, but all was clear by the time the couple exchanged their vows, with Abby's mother as the minister.

When asked what was the most single successful thing they did for their wedding, the couple say "Having the best party!" From the food – filet and swordfish prepared by the Spring House – to the dancing, everyone had a great time. They're still talking about the band, King of Hearts, and how well they performed, hyping up the crowd, and keeping everyone on the dance floor.

## Top 3 Pieces of Advice:

1. Spend time on the island leading up to the wedding.
2. Have alternate plans if the weather doesn't cooperate.
3. Book your vendors as soon as possible and try to use vendors on the island.



## WEDDING CHECKLIST 2 to 3 Months Out

Mail invitations

Mail rehearsal dinner invites

Order linen rentals

Order or start making favors

Confirm that bridal attendants have purchased their attire and accessories

Take rings for sizing and engraving

Purchase gifts for bridal attendants and parents

Don't forget a gift for the person you will be marrying

Decide who will be reading and/or performing in wedding ceremony

Finalize reception menu

Select ceremony music

Select reception music, must play and do-not-play lists and special dances and toasts



Abigail: 30, from Bristol, R.I.  
Sohail: 32, from Pakistan  
Now reside in: Peoria, Ill.





Jennifer: 48, from Madison, Conn.  
Adam: 52, from Guilford, Conn.  
Now reside in: Branford, Conn.





## JENNIFER CRETELLA & ADAM BROWN *August 19, 2023*

Jennifer Cretella says she has dreamed of getting married on Block Island since she was a little girl. "My love for the island started when I was 14 years old and we took our first boat trip to Block Island on my family's boat. I loved being anchored in the Great Salt Pond – it was always one of my favorite trips of the year, and still is! Over the years, I would watch from the anchorage the weddings that would take place at the Sullivan House and dream of one day having my wedding on Block Island. So to then meet Adam, a man who also considered Block Island to be his happy place, it was like we were a match made in heaven."

Jennifer and Adam met through a dating app in April, 2020 during "shut down" at the beginning of the covid epidemic. Their first date was a socially-distanced picnic in a gazebo in Branford, Conn. with take-out food from a deli. Two-and-a-half years later, Adam proposed in that same gazebo, with his children at his side.

Like their first date, the couple's wedding was also under unusual circumstances. "Initially we thought the most unexpected thing that could happen would be our guests having to come across on the ferries in heavy downpours and five- to six-foot seas," say the couple. "Little did we know that there would be a fire at the Harborside Inn later that night."

With the power and water going out at 3 a.m. the night before the wedding because of the fire downtown, the day of the wedding started chaotically. Some of the guests, including a groomsman, were staying at the Harborside and lost all their belongings, including clothes for the wedding.

"At 7 a.m. we started to get word that ferries were only running for emergency personnel and no other passengers would be allowed over to the island till possibly the afternoon, and we were set to get married at 11:30 a.m.," says Jennifer. One of the people stranded on the mainland was the photographer, Trevor Holden, who called the couple to let them know there was a good chance he wouldn't make it but would do everything in his power to try and find someone on the island that could photograph the couple's day.



"But," says Jennifer, "At 11 a.m. Trevor Holden arrived on the island along with four of our guests that found their way over, and on that beautiful Block Island day, with nothing but blue skies, the perfect amount of breeze and just the right temperature, Adam and I got married in the most memorable wedding ceremony and reception anyone could ever ask for. It was so beautiful, you would never have known there was a fire happening just a mile down the hill from us."

"It will certainly be a wedding no one will forget," says Jennifer, "and for Adam and I, who started dating in the middle of lockdown for covid, we know that if we can date through a national pandemic and survive the chaos that ensued from the fire at the Harborside on our wedding day, we can make it through anything!"

### Top 3 Pieces of Advice:

1. Start planning early.
2. Plan to make multiple trips to the island during the planning process.
3. Have a back-up plan for everything and anything. Remember, Block Island is an island, so it's not always so easy to pivot when something completely unexpected gets thrown at you.



### The Details

WEDDING VENUE: **Spring House**;  
REHEARSAL DINNER: **Dead Eye Dick's**;  
AFTER PARTY: **Mahogany Shoals**; CAKE: **Sin Bakery, Providence**; FLOWERS: **Painted Rock Designs**; MUSIC: **Megan Hennessy**;  
PHOTOGRAPHY: **Trevor Holden**.



Caroline: 33, from Summit, N.J.  
Daniel: 33, from Mount Prospect, Ill.  
Now reside in: Chicago, Ill.





# CAROLINE BRITTANY ANDERSON & DANIEL BARRETT HENNIG *August 19, 2023*



Caroline Anderson grew up spending her summers on Block Island in her parents' house on Minister's Lot, so she always knew she wanted to get married on Block Island. When her husband-to-be, who hails from the Midwest first visited, he fell in love with it instantly, she says, so the choice was a "no-brainer." They make sure to visit at least once a year, usually around the Fourth of July.

"The most special thing about having our wedding on Block Island was that our friends and family got to experience and fall in love with the magic of Block Island that truly doesn't exist anywhere else," says Caroline. "We got married the weekend of the Harborside Inn fire, and while the weather couldn't have been more beautiful, what I will probably remember the most, aside from marrying the man of my dreams, is how the island came together during such a tragic event."

There was some scrambling involved. Guests staying at the Harborside needed a new place to stay, and the band and photographer were temporarily stuck on the mainland. The photographer, who Caroline says made everything fun and lighthearted, even took his

own boat, a 24-foot Rampage Express, from Westerly, Rhode Island where he lives. The band was able to get over to the island when the ferries started allowing passengers again in the early afternoon. "Roxanne from Koru Eco Spa was a true lifesaver, acting as my therapist in all of the craziness, helping my parents with arrangements, all while making me and my wedding party look amazing," says Caroline.

Not missing a beat, the band was a big hit. "Boston Premier did an amazing job on all the songs and really got the crowd going," say the couple. "We had many people tell us that they were the best wedding band they have ever heard, and we agree! The best highlight from the night was the last song, Celine Dion's 'It's all coming back to me now,' which got everybody on their feet and singing."

"While I would like to assume our guests loved the ceremony and reception the best, I think what our guests really liked the most about our wedding was the fact it was located on Block Island. We had multiple people tell us that they are 'in love' and can't wait to come back, and others tell us that the island was quintessential New England and felt

like something out of a movie." Plus, the couple add, "everyone was obsessed with mudslides by the time they left the island."

## Top 3 Pieces of Advice:

1. Island time is a real thing, so be patient with high and off-season response times.
2. Over-communicate the logistics of getting to the wedding, especially if you have people flying in.
3. Make sure you have a clear understanding of how many rooms and beds your vendors need so you can factor that into the costs and plan accordingly.

## The Details



WEDDING VENUE: **Sullivan House**;  
REHEARSAL DINNER: **Block Island Oyster Bar at the Manisses**; AFTER PARTY:  
**Champlin's Marina**; CEREMONY MUSIC:  
**Murray Hill Talent, Infinity Strings**;  
RECEPTION MUSIC: **Boston Premier, Ceasar Cabral**; CATERING: **Block Island Gourmet**;  
FLOWERS: **Painted Rock Designs**; HAIR AND  
MAKE-UP: **Koru Eco Spa**; PHOTOGRAPHY:  
**Joshua Behan Photography, LLC.**



STEFANI COLONNELLI &  
KEVIN CHRISTOPHER FRANCESCHELLI  
*September 9, 2023*



Stefani: 34, from Montville, N.J.  
Kevin: 29, from Auburn, N.Y.  
Now reside in: Mountain Lakes, N.J.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

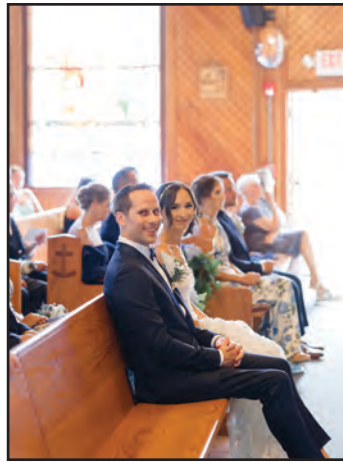
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Stefani Colonnelli and Kevin Franceschelli wanted to have an entire weekend with their guests, not just one day, so a destination wedding on Block Island was the perfect choice. Stefani has been coming out to the island with her family for most of her life, first by boat and staying at Champlin's Marina, and then in the family home near Cooneymus Beach. "Block Island is a very special place for me for another reason as well," says Stefani. "My dad passed away five years ago and he is buried on Block Island at the Island Cemetery. On my way to church on my wedding day, I stopped at the cemetery and left a boutonniere for my dad."

"After we got engaged in Hoboken, N.J. in October 2021 and we started planning our wedding, we knew immediately that we wanted it to be different and memorable, and Block Island is exactly that," say the couple. "Kevin is from upstate New York and I am from New Jersey," says Stefani. "Most of our family and friends have never been to Block Island before and we wanted nothing more than for everyone to celebrate with us in one of our favorite places."

The wedding weekend started off on a Friday night with a rehearsal dinner at the Block Island Oyster Bar & Grill for the wedding party, followed by welcome drinks and a beach bonfire

at Ballard's with the rest of the guests. "We loved being barefoot on the beach with a bonfire, live music, and cocktails," say the couple.

The wedding itself was at St. Andrew Catholic Church, with Father Joseph Protano presiding. "We included family throughout our ceremony," say the couple. "Our wedding party consisted of our siblings and my nieces were our flower girls," says Stefani. "My cousins played violin at the church as guests arrived, for the processional and the recessional. We also had my Godmother and Kevin's Godfather do the readings at the church and my grandparents brought up the eucharist. We dove off in my late great-grandmother's vintage Cadillac Calais, which my cousin tied cans to the back of as a surprise."

It was off to a reception at the Spring House, complete with a cocktail hour on the front lawn, dinner on the back patio, and dancing in Victoria's Parlor. "Cocktail hour is just iconic on the front lawn and veranda with that gorgeous backdrop," say the couple. The violinist, "Big Lux" was a real hit, as was the raw bar.

Things didn't end there, though. "The night was finished off with an after party at Yellow Kittens," says Stefani, adding, "The next morning my mother hosted a brunch for our guests at our home on Cooneymus Road."

"We knew it was a big ask to have our family and friends travel out for the weekend, but in the end, everyone was raving about how beautiful the island is and how great of a time they had," say the couple. "We truly had the best day (weekend, really) and are so happy with our decision to get married on Block Island."

### Top 3 Pieces of Advice:

1. Use local vendors – they know the island better than anyone else and will make your life so much easier.
2. Prepare your guests – this includes encouraging them when to book hotels, car reservations for the ferry, and sharing a list of things to do.
3. Enjoy every moment. The weekend flies by, but the memories last forever!

### The Details

THE CEREMONY: **St. Andrew Church**;  
RECEPTION: **Spring House**; DESSERT: **Aldo's Bakery and The Ice Cream Place**;  
REHEARSAL DINNER: **Block Island Oyster Bar & Grill at the Manisses**; WELCOME EVENT: **Ballard's**; COCKTAIL HOUR MUSIC: **Big Luxe**; BAND: **Pulse**; FLOWERS: **Beethoven's Veranda**; PHOTOGRAPHY: **Coli Michael Photography**.



## BLOCK ISLAND ENGAGEMENT

VICTORIA VON REINE & LIAM HOMEYER *September 9, 2023*



PHOTO: Hilary B. Photography

Victoria and Liam got engaged on September 9, 2023 on the bluffs of Block Island. Victoria had gone to the University of Rhode Island for college and ever since, the state of Rhode Island held a special place in her heart.

Once Liam and Victoria started dating, she would bring him to the Ocean State once a year so he could experience everything Rhode Island had to offer. It soon became one of Liam's favorite weekend getaways as well.

Block Island specifically, was a place that Victoria had so many summer memories from and couldn't wait for that weekend to show Liam around. They had just gotten off the ferry when Victoria wanted to grab a quick coffee, but Liam told her that they didn't have time since the line was getting long. Victoria was confused

since she didn't know that Liam had made any set plans.

They hopped in a taxi and headed to the bluffs. Once they started walking up the path, Victoria realized that Liam had planned a romantic walk for them through the bluffs. They got to the top and Victoria stopped to take a picture of the scenery, and when she turned around, Liam was on one knee. She had never been so excited and immediately said "yes" and started crying. That's when she saw someone emerge from the bushes taking photos.

She asked "is that for us?!" realizing that Liam had hired a photographer to capture the special moment. Victoria was so excited and shocked at Liam's amazing planning. He picked a beautiful place that meant so much to her and planned every detail. It was the perfect proposal!





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Julia: 27, from Guilford, Conn.  
Joseph, 27, from Guilford, Conn.  
Now reside in Boston, Mass.





# JULIA MCMAHON & JOSEPH NAULT *September 9, 2023*

Julia McMahan and Joseph Nault have known each other since childhood, but it wasn't until just before their senior year of high school in Guilford, Conn. that they started dating. The romance began when Joe threw a beach bonfire with all their friends, the perfect occasion for some serious flirtation.

Growing up near the Connecticut shore, their main criteria for a wedding location was something near the water, so Block Island was the perfect choice. "We grew up on the shoreline. Fell in love on the shoreline. Got engaged on the shoreline. It only made sense," say the couple.

Block Island was a familiar place for the couple. Julia is from a sailing family and together they spent much of their summers anchored in the Great Salt Pond on their boat *Fiddler*. From there, she spent many Saturdays watching weddings at the Sullivan House through the family's binoculars, hoping to catch a glimpse of the bride and groom.

When the couple first started looking at island venues "the decision seemed like it was going to be difficult until we were on the boat and pulled out the good old binoculars. Joe took a look and was sold on the Sullivan House," says Julia.

"Our officiant, Cam, is a childhood friend of both of ours," say Joseph and Julia. "He painted a great full-circle moment when he suggested that there is probably a young girl out in the harbor on her sailboat looking through her binoculars at our wedding, thinking maybe that might be her one day."

The couple and their families arrived on the island the Wednesday before the wedding so they could have a few days to enjoy exploring the island and have casual beach meet-ups. "It was so fun to be able to share some relaxing and quiet moments



with people before we were in wedding day mode," they say.

When the day of the wedding arrived, it was hot and sticky, but the sun was shining, and the reception was during the hottest time of the night, says Julia. "Kinga and Jessica worked together so well. They made our getting-ready time so upbeat and fun, and somehow managed to get everyone's hair and make-up to stay flawless with the humidity and dancing."

"The 100-percent humidity and high temps made for a very sweaty dance floor," say the couple. "There was a brief moment at the beginning when people were aware of how damp and sweaty it was, but everyone quickly embraced it and it ended up

bringing the dance-party energy that we wanted. We had a packed dance floor basically from the moment we opened it up until the last song played by the DJ."

The dancing continued at the couple's after party at Mahogany Shoals, where Dave Lefkin, who is also from Guilford, is "a weekend staple. Everyone was so impressed with him. He also surprised us by playing "Julia" by the Beatles for my dad and I to have a bonus father/daughter dance," says Julia. "We had about 50 people end up in the harbor by the end of the night. Some people were still fully clothed and in their dresses."

"We were honored to be the reason so many of our guests made

their first trip out to Block Island," say the couple. "We knew it would be worth everyone's travels, and from what we've heard, it did not disappoint!"

## Top 3 Pieces of Advice:

1. Book on-island vendors early and use as many as you can. So many talented people and it's very helpful to have people who already live on the island working for you.
2. Embrace the island and don't overdo it with all of the decorations and extra do-it-yourself stuff. The island brings so much to the vibe of your day and we are so glad we let it shine.
3. Book hotels and vacation homes early, especially for family groups, and book those car reservations for the ferry!

## The Details

WEDDING VENUE: **The Sullivan House**; WEDDING CATERING: **Block Island Gourmet**; DJ: **Arpeggio Wedding Entertainment**; REHEARSAL DINNER AND WELCOME PARTY: **The National**; AFTER PARTY: **Mahogany Shoals**; HAIR AND MAKE-UP: **Salt Hair Shop**; FLOWERS: **Painted Rock Designs**; PHOTOGRAPHER: **Katie Lovaas Photography**.

## WEDDING CHECKLIST 1 Month Out

**Order wine, liquor and/or champagne, if necessary**

**Select readings for ceremony**

**Meet with officiant to finalize ceremony details**

**Do trial runs for hairstyles and makeup**

**Schedule pedicure and manicure for day before the wedding**

**Schedule ceremony rehearsal time**  
**Decide when and where you will get your marriage license**

If both the bride and groom are legal residents of Rhode Island, you must obtain the marriage license from your local town clerk. If out of state, you must obtain your license on Block

Island (can be done as late as the Thursday before your wedding.)

**Be fitted for bridal gown**

**Select or write vows**

**Begin drawing up an itinerary of wedding day details**

Think about when you would like the following events to take place: bride and groom's first dance, parent dances, best man's toast, maid of honor toast, bouquet and garter toss. Are there special announcements or other special toasts that you would like to include in the reception events?

**Begin writing ceremony program**

**Purchase ceremony accessories**

Unity candle, ring pillow, etc...

**Purchase reception accessories**

Card box, toasting glasses, guest book, cake knife, garter, etc.

**Begin receiving RSVPs in mail**

**Track meal choices and accommodations**

**Write thank you notes as you receive shower and/or wedding gifts**

**Arrange for a babysitter if necessary**

**Get a pre-wedding haircut**

**Create a rain contingency plan**



Rececca: 30, from Pleasantville, N.Y.  
Eli: 30, from Chappaqua, N.Y.  
Now reside in: Redding, Conn.





# REBECCA ARCIDIACONO & ELI SOBYLAK *September 17, 2023*

Like so many brides, Rebecca Arcidiacono made many trips to Block Island as a child, while the groom discovered it later, as a teen. It's a special place for the couple, mainly for its quaint charm and simple beauty.

"The Spring House offered gorgeous views of the ocean and our weather turned out perfectly, even with Hurricane Lee causing wind and rain on both the day before and the day after our wedding," say the couple.

"We planned to have a bonfire on Ballard's Beach, but unfortunately, the wind had other plans for us. Instead we got to enjoy Ballard's patio and the fun space inside while the sun went down. Our high school friends gave hilarious speeches to set the stage for the rest of the weekend."

For an intimate rehearsal dinner, the couple chose the Surf Shack at the Block Island Beach House. "We enjoyed the gorgeous sunset and how it lit up the cozy bohemian space inside the shack. The flowers were picked from a private garden after Rebecca's grandmother saw a post on Facebook that an island resident was asking people to come cut her flowers since they would not survive the coming storm. "Within 20 minutes, my mom and grandmother were cutting gorgeous, vibrant, colorful wildflowers out of this garden. It was so fun," says Rebecca. "The owner of the garden was so kind and kept telling us 'oh, take those, take those!' The flowers were the perfect bohemian complement to the cozy space and it was another unexpected thing that felt very meant-to-be, and classic for Block Island." And to top it all off, "Chef Chris served us an amazing meal that night."

The couple says "We had many sentimental



touches through the wedding that I think made it unique to us and our family history." The engagement ring is from Eli's great aunt and is a sapphire surrounded by diamonds. The bride's wedding band was created from an old diamond watch that belonged to her great grandmother. And her gown was extra special, having been worn by both her mother and grandmother. Rebecca created pocket squares out of small pieces of the wedding gown fabric for the groom, her father, mother and grandmother with the dates of all three weddings embroidered on them.

"Our immediate family members were all included in the processional. We also had Eli's niece and nephews part of the wedding. Seeing them get excited about their roles in the

ceremony was very cool," says Rebecca. "Eli's dad officiated our ceremony and told a possibly-true, possibly-fictional story of how we crossed paths throughout our childhood before we met."

"I think what we'll remember most is how loved and grateful we felt this day," say the couple. "Our hearts were bursting and Becca could not stop crying after a few Sunny Martinis," adds Eli. "We just felt so grateful for everything everyone had done for us on this day. It was so emotional and meaningful to us."

## Top 3 Pieces of Advice:

1. Plan as far in advance as you can in order to give you time to enjoy the planning process. When the day arrives, just let go of controlling all the little things and just enjoy. Things will go differently than planned but it could end up better and what was meant to be.

2. The day goes faster than you would ever expect. Really soak it in and enjoy all the love around you.

3. Use local vendors as much as you can. Not only will they be talented in their areas, they will likely have worked the venue before, which makes coordinating seamless and smooth.

## The Details

WEDDING VENUE: **The Spring House**;  
REHEARSAL DINNER: **The Surf Shack at Block Island Beach House**; WELCOME PARTY: **Ballard's**; CEREMONY MUSIC: **The Golden Scrolls**; RECEPTION MUSIC: **DJ Jon O'Neill**; DECOR: **Ryan Designs**; CAKE: **Aldo's Bakery**; FLOWERS: **Harvest Moon Florals**; PHOTOGRAPHY: **Tori M. Pedro Photography**; VIDEOGRAPHY: **Caleb Silvia Videography**.



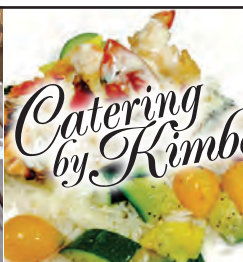
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MOLLY WELCH & JON TAGLIAFERRI *September 22, 2023*



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Molly: 30, from Ridgefield, Conn.  
Jon: 31, from Ridgefield, Conn.  
Now reside in: New York, N.Y.

Molly Welch and Jon Tagliaferri always knew they wanted a New England coastal wedding and loved the idea of planning for an entire weekend for friends and family to enjoy. "Block Island was the perfect fit!" they say. Little did they know at the time, but Tropical Storm Ophelia would prolong that weekend for a few more days. "Block Island made our wedding so special that it turned our short wedding weekend into a week long celebration!" say the couple, and even now, they wish they had had even more time with everybody on the island.

"We did our first look on Scotch Beach in front in front of the house Molly's family rented," says Jon. "Seeing each other for the first time on our wedding day on one of the most beautiful beaches on earth – it was truly magical. We were both barefoot in the sand and so happy to kick off the best day of our lives."

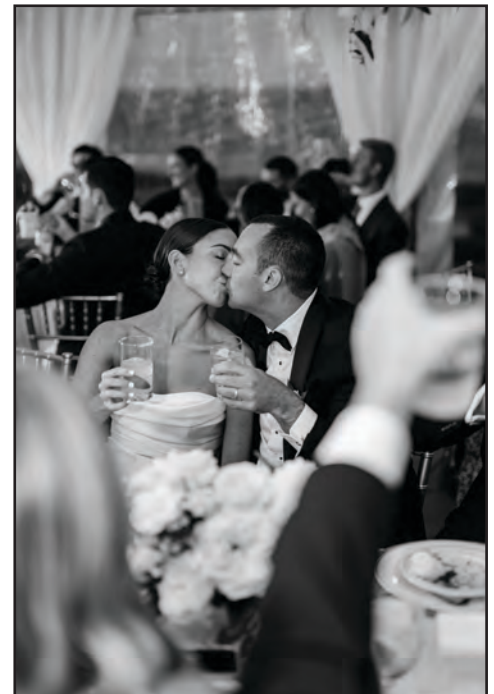
The wedding ceremony took place on the front lawn of the Spring House. "You can't get any better than that view!" say the couple. A cocktail hour followed on the lawn and the veranda, dinner served on the patio, and finally, dancing in Victoria's Parlor.

"How gorgeous the back patio dinner area looked decorated by our extremely talented wedding planner, Maggie Brucker, from Double G Events and how beautiful the florals were from Flowers by Justine. Molly cried when she first saw how beautiful the space was and how all of their hard work came together so well!"

Special touches included table numbers that represented each year of the couple's relationship featuring a photo and favorite memory for each year. "We even went as far as seating guests at tables that corresponded to the year that we shared our favorite memories with them."

"Our guests couldn't stop talking about how good the food was," say Molly and Jon. "The raw bar was a highlight for the cocktail hour, as well as the mini tomato soups and grilled cheeses. We also heard from guests that the drinks were very strong and delicious and the steaks that were served at dinner were the largest people had seen at weddings!"

"We had our band escort our guests from dinner on the back patio into Victoria's Parlor with the sax and trumpet to kick off our first dance! We loved this special detail because it got all of the



guests pumped to get on the dance floor."

The couple hadn't planned a departure event, which turned out to be a good thing, "because half our guests couldn't leave," the couple said, laughing. "We were interviewed by Channel 5 Local Boston News to speak about our experience of getting married on Block Island and getting stranded by Tropical Storm Ophelia. While being interviewed, we joked that our last name, Tagliaferri, was now Taglia-no-ferri since the ferries hadn't been running for three-and-a-half days at that point."

### Top 3 Pieces of Advice:

1. Be prepared for weather to take over your plans!
2. Get started on planning your vendor, venues, and accommodations as early as possible.
3. Plan accommodations for your vendors – we rented a house for 10 people and they loved all staying together.

### The Details

WEDDING VENUE: **Spring House**;  
REHEARSAL DINNER AND AFTER PARTY:  
**Winfield's and Yellow Kittens**; WELCOME  
EVENT: **Bonfire at Ballard's Beach**;  
WEDDING PLANNER: **Double G Events**;  
FLOWERS: **Flowers by Justine**; BAND: **One  
Step Ahead**; CAKE: **The Cake Box**;  
PHOTOGRAPHY: **Trisha Keeler Photography**.





# STELLA MARIE JOY HACKMAN & WILLIAM JEFFERSON YOUNG *September 23, 2023*



Stella Hackman and William “Billy” Young met on a blind date at a bowling alley in March 2019. Although Stella had requested that a friend who worked with Billy set them up, the date didn’t happen for another two years, so when it did, she was as surprised as anyone. “It was love at first sight,” says Stella, “and we’ve been crazy about each other ever since.”

The couple decided to make Block Island, where Billy grew up as a young child, their home. She works at the school, and he at the water company. When it came to choosing a place to get married, the couple say they wanted to celebrate in “our small, tight-knit

community that we are so lucky to call home.”

As for the venue, the couple says “We tried to pick a venue that showcased our favorite aspect of the island, which is being on the water.” They planned to get married outside on the lawn behind the Block Island Maritime Institute, but a rainstorm made them switch things up and they got married on the screened-in porch instead. “We ended up having to change the interior and porch layout for the food as well, but all of our vendors were super flexible and made sure everything worked out without stress,” says Stella.

When asked what they thought their guests loved most about the wedding, the couple said, “Definitely the food.” Catered by Kimberly Ward, fan favorites were the pulled pork, barbecue mac ‘n cheese, Asian noodles, corn bread, bacon-wrapped scallops, and the hummus board. The cake, a three-tiered chocolate cake with buttercream frosting, was made by the couple’s friend, Camryn Tierney.

That rainstorm turned out to be pesky in more ways than one. When asked what the most unexpected thing that happened

was, the couple answered, “The boats being canceled for three days after the wedding.”

The couple spent their wedding night at the 1661 and every day the boats got canceled, owner Rita Draper invited their families to enjoy a complimentary breakfast.

“The most unexpected,” also became the most unique. “All of our guests who traveled for our wedding typically don’t experience the island lifestyle and unplugged ‘shore days.’ Our wedding basically forced our wedding guests to take a five-day break from reality.”

“The island will forever be a part of our love story and being able to take the time to show our guests around and to have locals explain the history of the island

with them over the days that followed was very special to us.”

## Top 3 Pieces of Advice:

1. Have a plan B if you’re planning on doing an outdoor wedding with no tent.
2. Try to use all on-island vendors to avoid potential weather and transportation issues.
3. Give your guests at least six to eight months notice for booking travel and lodging reservations.

## The Details

WEDDING VENUE: **Block Island Maritime Institute**; CATERING: **Kimberly’s**; CAKE: **Camryn Tierney**; DJ: **Megan Hennessy**; HAIR AND MAKEUP: **Salt Hair Shop**; FLOWERS: **The Farmer Florist**; PHOTOGRAPHY: **Taylor Berry Photography**.

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## WEDDING CHECKLIST 2 Weeks Out

Pick up wedding bands  
Final bridal gown fitting  
Complete events schedules  
Finalize event tent and/or table layout  
Plan order of processional and recessional  
Have wedding program printed  
Print escort cards/chart, place cards, menus, ceremony program  
Wrap attendant gifts and attach a note of thanks  
Call guests who have not yet RSVPd

Confirm head count for vendors  
Confirm menu choices to vendors  
Obtain marriage license  
Purchase items for guest welcome bags  
Create a welcome letter with info for guest bags  
Include a schedule of events, transportation, what to do around Block Island, the couples favorite places, etc.  
Compile a list of where guests are staying  
This will make gift bag distribution much easier.



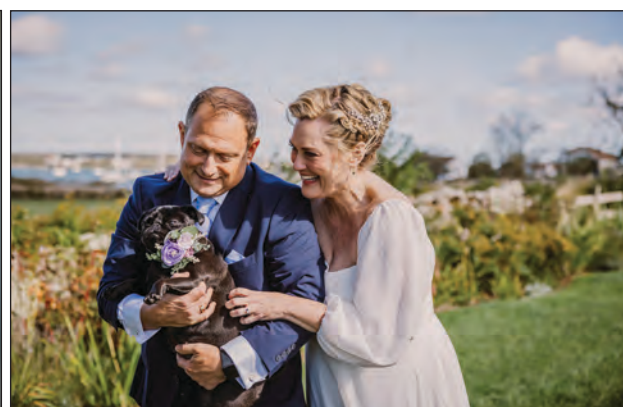
Stella: 25, from Jamestown, R.I.  
William: 28, from Block Island, R.I.  
Now reside in Block Island, R.I.





HEATHER FRAZIER JONES & FREDRICK CHARLES ZERILLI *October 8, 2023*

Heather: 54, from Norwalk, Conn.  
Fredrick: 52, from Alexandria, N.J.  
Now reside in: Killingworth, Conn.







Heather Jones and Fred Zerilli originally met and dated while in their 20s, but then went their separate ways until they reconnected years later after Heather's separation from her first husband. "One of our first weekend 'getaways' was to Block Island for my 50th birthday," says Heather, "and it was such a special fun weekend! We had such a great time, we came back for Labor Day weekend for his birthday that year and we just keep coming back. It's so different and relaxing having the island seemingly all to ourselves."

Most of Heather and Fred's friends had never been to Block Island, but the couple knew they wanted to share what made the island so meaningful and special. "We got lucky having one of the only sunny weekend days of the season," says Heather. "We had a beautiful sunny, but windy day with 40 friends and family with us. A highlight for me was having my 17-year-old daughter and 14-year-old son stand up with us and do some of the readings. My sister, Sarah, was a perfect maid of honor and Fred's lifelong friend Jeffrey was our best man."

Another highlight for Heather was having her 81-year-old father, who has Parkinson's, walk her down the aisle. After the ceremony, which had been moved to the back lawn of the Spring House because of the wind, guests threw flowers. "We had paper cones filled with dried flowers, including dried Heather, that said: 'As Heather and Fred exit as a pair, please toss your petals high in the air.'"

Dinner and dancing came later. The Spring House provided passed hors d'oeuvres and a sit-down meal. The mini lobster rolls were a favorite, say the couple, as was their signature espresso martini drink named Raisintini, after their little black pug, Raisin.

Finding a cake on Block Island in October seemed to be a challenge until one day the couple was getting coffee at Odd Fellows Café and saw a wonderful child's birthday cake being decorated with chocolate seashells by Kate Musso. "Knowing how delicious their baked treats were, I immediately asked Kate if she could make our wedding cake as well," says Heather. The result? A delicious chocolate cake with coconut buttercream filling for the top and a vanilla cake with strawberries and buttercream filling for the bottom. "Complete with edible lace, our monogram cake topper, and flowers from Melissa at Painted Rock Designs, it was gorgeous," says Heather.

The cake toppers became something of a theme as Heather found miniature antique porcelain and ceramic bride and groom cake toppers that she used on each table. A friend collected oyster shells for place cards and bleached and then painted them with different colors to correspond to guests' menu selections.

"I made and framed a fun sign for the table that read: 'The world is our oyster, and you are the pearls... Aww shucks! Please find your seats!'" Heather added.

"The sunshine and rolling waves below created the background for our magical day," say the couple. Heather added, "Our first dance to 'It Had to be You,' and my father-daughter dance to 'The Way You Look Tonight,' were so special. We had great music and everyone danced and we all had the best time. Even our pug Raisin had a great time when we brought her out on the lawn for a bit and everyone ran over to play with her. You could really feel the love."

### Top 3 Pieces of Advice:

1. Provide guests with lots of travel tips and information about the island well ahead of time. A wedding website is very helpful. This will save you lots of time answering the inevitable, "how do we get there, where should we stay, do we need a car, can I bring Fido?" questions.

2. Weather on Block Island is unpredictable and rain and win is probable. Be prepared to have plans A, B, and C for these possibilities.

3. Using almost all "on-island" vendors was really the best and simplest way to go. They know the island, the venues, and the people, so it's very helpful.

### The Details

WEDDING VENUE: **Spring House**; REHEARSAL DINNER: **Dead Eye Dick's**; CAKE: **Kate Musso, Odd Fellows Café**; DJ: **Jon O'Neill of Island Wedding Entertainment**; HAIR AND MAKE-UP: **Salt Hair Shop**; DECOR: **Ryan Designs**; FLOWERS: **Painted Rock Designs**; PHOTOGRAPHY: **Heather Hudson Photography**.

## WEDDING CHECKLIST

### 1 Week Out

- Prepare a must-have photo list for photographer and videographer
- Check weather forecast – rain plan?
- Call all vendors and confirm all details
- Complete escort cards and table numbers
- Plan ceremony seating
- Groom haircut
- Make sure all grooms attendants try on tuxes and have obtained all accessories
- Obtain/print final checks for vendors
- Prepare tip envelopes for vendors
- Finalize seating chart for reception and rehearsal dinner
- Designate people for wedding day errands
- Finalize wedding day time line and distribute to vendors and wedding party

### 1 Day Out

- Decide if a rain plan will need to be put into place
- Attend pedicure and manicure appointments
- Inform attendants of their duties
- Gather ceremony and reception items and give to your coordinator (or other designated helper)
- Obtain a beach fire permit from police station if having a bonfire. (Permit valid for 24 hours.)
- Rehearsal – bring marriage license
- Rehearsal dinner

### Day of

- Attend hair and makeup appointments
- Attend photography portrait sessions before wedding if applicable
- Provide snacks and drinks for attendants
- Bride and groom! Don't forget to eat something, and drink water.
- Make sure to sign marriage license!

### After

- Gather ceremony and reception items
- Return linens and any other rentals
- Change bride's name if applicable and notify important parties
- Mail wedding thank you notes within three months after wedding
- Review proofs and order photos/video and/or albums
- Settle financial matters



# Getting your Block Island marriage license

The Town of New Shoreham Clerk's office can issue a marriage license if you are planning a Block Island wedding and you live outside the State of Rhode Island. We also issue marriage licenses to residents of New Shoreham.

Call us to schedule an appointment (401-466-3200). We will meet with the marriage couple in person during regular business hours, Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. to see original documents, sign your worksheet and issue your marriage license.

Send your paperwork in advance: Please mail or e-mail good quality copies of your worksheet, birth certificates and proof of termination of previous marriage, if any. We will review your paperwork and contact you if we have questions. If any of your documents are not in English, ask us for translation guidelines. You must appear in person (see above) to obtain your license, so bring all original documents and your photo ID with you at that time. State law requires us to see your original documents before we issue the marriage license.

Worksheet: It is critical that you complete both pages of the worksheet. Include daytime telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, date of marriage, officiant information including name, address, phone number and denomination, and location of your wedding. You will sign the worksheet at Town Hall when issued your license. We keep the worksheet.

Birth certificate: We need to see an original certified copy of

the birth certificate issued by a state, county or city, and will look for a raised seal. We will return this document to you. We cannot accept a notarized copy, or hospital or baptismal certificate.

If this is not your first marriage: Provide proof of termination of most recent marriage/civil union. We can only accept original documents, either a final divorce decree certified by the Clerk of the Court or a certified death certificate. We will return this document to you.

Fees: The application fee is \$24.00. Per the State of Rhode Island, the first certified copy ordered in person at the counter is \$22, but the same document requested through the mail is \$25. In either case, additional certified copies ordered at the same time cost \$18. We accept checks or cash. Your certified copy(s) will be mailed to you after your officiant returns your signed and dated marriage license to our office.

Please be Advised...

Town Hall Hours: Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Closed on federal holidays, and the second Monday in August, a Rhode Island holiday.

Please call to schedule an appointment: 401-466-3200

New Shoreham Town Clerk, 16 Old Town Road, PO Box 220, Block Island RI 02807; [lpayne@newshorehamri.gov](mailto:lpayne@newshorehamri.gov)

## BI Wedding Resource Guide

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Atlantic Inn	2
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### WEDDING/EVENT PLANNING

Jenks Productions	860 365 5678
dennis@jenksproductions.com	
jenksproductions.com	

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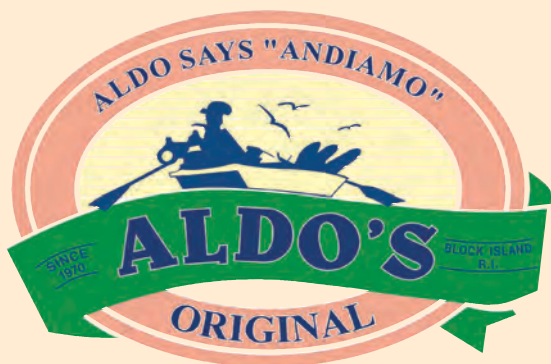
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Whether you are looking for a place to hold your

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- Bachelor/Bachelorette Luncheon or Dinner
- Welcome Dinner
- Rehearsal Dinner
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