



REAL

MARTHA STEWART

weddings

SPECIAL ISSUE

Natural Beauty
LOOK LIKE
YOUR MOST
STUNNING
SELF

Fashion Forward
SUPER-CHIC
STYLES &
FLATTERING
SILHOUETTES

Fresh Ideas
FLOWERS,
CAKES, DECOR,
HONEYMOONS
& MORE!

OH HAPPY DAY!

100+ Pages of
Unforgettable
Ceremonies,
Celebrations
& Details

EXCLUSIVES

Marry Me's **Casey Wilson's**
Wedding Weekend &
Matthew Morrison's
Glee-ful Hawaiian Luau

MAINE EVENT

After childhood teammates reconnected and fell in love as adults, they planned a three-day East Coast celebration full of rustic details and rollicking good times—proving that when it comes to weddings, throwing like a girl is an amazing thing.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY YUNHEE KIM TEXT BY HANNAH MORRILL



UNTAMED BEAUTY

Lauren Martin carried a free-form bouquet of peonies, anemones, succulents, seed heads, and blackberries, tied with an accordion-pleated silk ribbon.

Opposite: Vanessa Kreckel (left), in Claire Pettibone, shared a sweet moment with her future wife, in Anne Barge Black Label, before their nuptials.



Vanessa Kreckel and Lauren Martin go back. Way back, to the 1980s, when both were growing up in eastern Pennsylvania. As grade-schoolers and throughout high school, they played field hockey and softball together. If you ask Vanessa, who is two years older, she'd say she was the cooler of the two. Lauren remembers it differently: "I thought she was annoying; I hung out with her best friend's younger sister." In 1993, Vanessa went off to college and the two didn't cross paths again until 2008, when the magic of Facebook rendered them "friends." Lauren was now a physical education teacher living in New York's Hudson Valley, and Vanessa owned a graphic-design and letterpress firm, Two Paperdolls, in Philadelphia. "The best day ever was when she invited me to 'like' the Two Paperdolls Facebook page," says Lauren. (Vanessa swears she was oblivious to these cyber flirtations.)

Off-line, the best day ever was still to come, when the pair met again at a mutual pal's Boston wedding in 2010. "I walked in and was like, 'Is that *the* Lauren Martin from high school?!" She was grown-up, gorgeous, and gay," says Vanessa. After a night spent laughing and catching up (and with Lauren copping to her Facebook crush), Vanessa says, "I pretended that I didn't know how to drive back to Philly and thought it would be a swell idea to follow Lauren to her place and find my way home from there." They've been a couple—well, really, a family—ever since: Landon, Vanessa's now 9-year-old son from a previous relationship, fell in love with Lauren, too. "The first time he met her, he told me, 'I know she'll be my mom someday,'" remembers Vanessa.

Another "best ever" contender was Mother's Day 2012. By that time, Lauren was living with Vanessa in Pennsylvania and pregnant with their son Cash, now 2. That morning, Landon walked in with a poster Vanessa had made detailing the women's relationship. "He gets down on one knee and says, 'Laur, will you marry us?'" recalls Vanessa. "Who could say no to that?"

After baby Cash was born, the pair started scouting wedding locales in earnest, hoping to find a New England barn. Lauren suggested Maine, and after the family spent a weekend there, they settled on The Barn on Walnut Hill, a four-acre estate 20 minutes north of Portland, and invited 100 guests for a summer weekend soirée.

The celebration started with a chartered whale watch in Portland's Casco Bay. "The Bloody Marys were gone before we even left the dock," says Lauren, who, along with Vanessa, met up with guests that night at a local brewery for a backyard-style barbecue. The next day, on June 28, 2014, in a sun-dappled forest, Vanessa, carrying Cash, walked down the aisle with her father as a band played "Ho Hey," by The Lumineers. Lauren, escorted by Landon, followed, to the sounds of Bon Iver's "Skinny Love." The 35-minute ceremony, officiated by a friend, featured vows the couple had written themselves and a sweet speech from Landon.

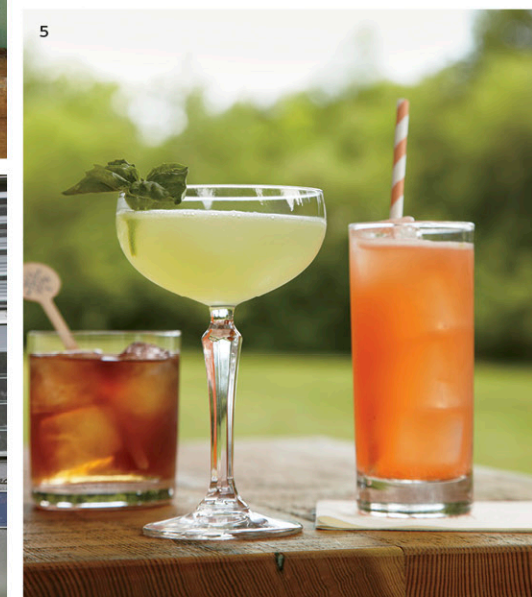
Next order of business: partying down. After freshly shucked oysters and cocktails on the lawn, guests moved inside the barn for a dinner of dry-aged beef and poached Maine halibut. A DJ spun a mix of new and old jams as revelers ate slices from five kinds of pies (served instead of cake) and took turns at the penny-candy dessert bar. At night's end, the newlyweds left amid a sparkler send-off—capping off what both women agree was the ultimate best day ever.



PERFECT PAIRS 1. The brides' sons hung out by the vintage Airstream, which was filled with snacks and games for the kids—and just the kids, as the sign denoted. **2.** Laser-engraved wood covered the programs. **3.** The couple wed in front of a canvas scroll custom-printed with a quote from the 13th-century poet Rumi.



Opposite: Vanessa, a graphic designer, created the letterpressed invites.



PARTY STARTERS 1. Burlap bags, stocked with provisions, a "hangover kit," and the weekend's itinerary, welcomed guests. 2. Artisanal liquors, whiskeys, and local bitters were on offer at the bar. 3. Die-cut escort cards printed with guests' names and a map of Portland hung from a wall on the barn's facade. 4. With their flower-girl duties completed, Lauren's nieces guarded the "No Grown-Ups Allowed" Airstream. 5. Among the six made-to-order cocktails available, the basil gimlet (center) was the biggest hit.

DOWN EAST DETAILS 1. Tofu fritters with arame (Japanese seaweed) were passed in paper-lined vintage boxes during the cocktail hour. 2. Table numbers referenced important numerals in the newlyweds' lives—nine, for example, represented how many miles they hiked on their first official date. 3. "I'm a sucker for quotes," says Vanessa, who chose selections from Pablo Neruda, a Chinese proverb, and others, and had them foil-stamped on the drink napkins. 4. Vintage furniture arranged on the lawn offered ample seating for celebrants.



LIGHT SHOW 1. For dinner, all 100 guests sat at two long tables under Edison bulb fixtures. Vintage vessels, holding a mix of blooms, plants, and herbs, helped set the boho scene. 2. The newlyweds started the dance party by twirling to Lionel Ritchie's "My Love." 3. More inspirational quotes appeared on the hemstitched linen napkins.

VANESSA + LAUREN'S BARNYARD BASH

By the Numbers

28
Years between meeting and marrying

45,000
miles, approximately, traveled between the Hudson Valley and Philadelphia during their two years of long-distance dating

453
Images Vanessa saved to their Pinterest wedding board

2
Images that Lauren contributed

10
Friends of the couple who accompanied them dress shopping

4
Items in the welcome-bag hangover kit: Advil, 48 Hour Energy Drink, Visine, and hand sanitizer

67
Guests who joined the whale-watching excursion

12
Minke whales that were spotted during the trip

324
Winter Point oysters shucked during the cocktail hour

A SPECIAL NOTE

Included in the wood-covered program was a letter Vanessa wrote to Lauren's father, who passed away in 2006. "Lauren's dad was her favorite person, and vice versa. I knew celebrating this moment in her life without him was going to be really difficult," says Vanessa. "By writing the letter, I wanted to honor him, tell him I would take care of his daughter for the rest of her life, and also let him know I'd come a long way from our field-hockey days!"



The most beautiful part was that our kids were there with us on the day we became a legal FAMILY.



VANESSA, ON HER FAVORITE MEMORY OF THE DAY

The Logistics

THE ACCOMMODATIONS
Lauren and Vanessa stayed in the adjoining 1887 farmhouse of **The Barn on Walnut Hill**, in Yarmouth, Maine (thebarnonwalnuthill.com). Other guests settled in at various hotels in Portland, including **The Westin Portland Harborview** (westinportlandharborview.com) and **The Portland Regency** (theregency.com).

THE DAY BEFORE
On Friday, attendees met on the Portland waterfront for an **Odyssey Whale Watch** expedition and a boxed sandwich-and-chips lunch on the boat (odysseywhalewatch.com). That night, everyone started the partying at **Bunker Brewing Company** with a pig roast, brews, and rousing games of cornhole (bunkerbrewingco.com).

THE FAREWELL BRUNCH
At a buffet at The Westin, the newlyweds enjoyed spirited retellings from the night before over Bloody Marys, waffles, and mimosas.

The Readings

The ceremony, which was officiated by Vanessa's childhood best friend's husband, also featured selections from these texts:

"We Are Six," by A.A. Milne

The Goodridge Ruling, which legalized gay marriage in Massachusetts in 2003

PIES TO DIE FOR

"Everyone has a wedding cake," says Vanessa, "and nobody eats wedding cake!" Instead, her and Lauren's dessert bar featured five types of homemade pies: chocolate-pecan, blueberry chess, strawberry and rhubarb, lemon icebox, and whoopie pies, a Maine specialty.

THE VOWS

The couple recited promises to each other that they'd written themselves. Lauren, who went first, surprised her wife with an original poem. "It was hilarious—and it rhymed!" says Vanessa. (An excerpt: *You are gorgeous and smart, my perfect mate / And as everyone here knows, always fashionably late.*) "My vows were more serious and emotional," Vanessa says, laughing.

SOURCES

Location The Barn on Walnut Hill **Event planning** Jubilee Events **Catering** Eventide Oyster Co. **Floral and event design** Flora Fauna **Photography** Carla Ten Eyck **Videography** I Do Films **Stationery and calligraphy** Two Paperdolls **Music** Carte Blanche (ceremony and cocktail hour); Ray Jarrell (DJ) **Rentals** New England Country Rentals; Revolve Furniture **Lighting** Ryan Designs **Brides' gowns** Anne Barge Black Label (Lauren); Claire Pettibone (Vanessa) **Hair** Catie & Amy **Makeup** Diva Borelli **Boys' attire** Trico Field; Forage (bow ties) **Wedding rings** Anne Sportun; Todd Reed **Custom fabrics** Spoonflower