



WINGING IT

A Chicago couple and their loved ones flock to Savannah for a vintage-inspired celebration.

By Kim Wade | Photography by Teresa Earnest

MOST COUPLES PICK A THEME OR MOTIF for their wedding, then plan. But Teri-ann Elliott and Chris Scott followed their hearts on a flight of fancy, crafting DIY details into a shabby-chic slice of Savannah sophistication.

Business Meeting

The out-of-towners first met during a conference for the global logistics company where they both work. Teri-ann was employed at the Atlanta office and Chris worked in Michigan. Their long-distance office romance heated up over the next six months—then got even more serious when Chris was relocated to Atlanta.

After the move, the couple spent their weekends exploring the South together.

“Chris is originally from Vermont and I’m from Seattle,” Teri-ann explains. “Savannah was the first trip we took together—and we instantly fell in love with the city’s charm.”

Taking Flight

When the couple became engaged, they immediately agreed on the ideal location for their wedding.

“Savannah was the natural choice,” Chris recalls. “It just felt right.”

They insisted on a small, nontraditional celebration, but gave themselves 14 ample months to get the details just right.

“I scoured the Internet and found some great venues in Savannah,” Teri-ann remembers. Then she began making calls.

“I didn’t realize Savannah was so popular for weddings,” she says with a laugh. “I called to ask about a venue and I found out things were already booked.”

Chris agrees. Even with more than a year to plan, his advice to couples tying the knot in Savannah is to start early.

“We picked the city because it was special to us, but it was also close to Atlanta so I thought it would be convenient,” Teri-ann recalls, laughing. She takes a deep breath, then adds, “Four months after the engagement, we found out we were being



Teri-ann and Chris

Season: Fall
Guests: 60
Planning time: 14 months
Palette: Chocolate brown, pale petal peach, butter yellow and honeydew green
Rehearsal dinner: Belford’s
Ceremony: Greene Square
Reception: Cha Bella



relocated to Chicago. I thought ‘How are we going to do this?’”

The move complicated—but didn’t deter—the couple’s plans.

“We wanted an outdoor wedding,” Teri-ann explains. “We also wanted a destination wedding with a unique stamp on it,” which meant they were sticking with Savannah.

Bird by Bird

Although the Hostess City provided the couple with the perfect stage, Teri-ann admits she did not have a clear idea of what else she wanted until she went dress shopping in Atlanta. Her gown—a sleeveless, V-cut, vintage-inspired Jim Hjelm satin silhouette draped in lace and adorned with a glistening, custom-made rhinestone belt—became her inspiration for what she calls a “vintage and rustic theme.” The same gown boutique also designed Teri-ann’s custom birdcage veil and delicate feather and rhinestone hairpiece.

Inspiration took over. “I found antique bird cages in a magazine and fell in love with them,” Teri-ann remembers, but she had no idea what to do with them. Her mother came to the rescue, transforming whimsical avian tokens into a makeshift altar for the outdoor ceremony in Greene Square—and hatching a subtle bird motif.

Teri-ann then switched her attention to selecting a palette.

“I wanted chocolate brown as the main color,” she says. “But I also knew I had to add in softer colors so I wouldn’t look back in 20 years and say, ‘What was I thinking with all that brown?’” So she added touches of pale petal peach, butter yellow and honeydew green to enliven the color scheme.

Etsy.com also proved to be a treasure trove of ideas and influences. Teri-ann spotted a delicate, old-fashioned bird cake topper and fell hard, knowing the love birds would perch perfectly atop her two-tier, red velvet cake with butter cream frosting.

She also incorporated old-fashioned black and white silhouettes of her and Chris created by artist Kathie Bogue. The images added a vintage touch to the reception at Cha Bella.

On Schedule

For this destination DIY bride, timing was everything. “I would give myself one week to focus on each project,” Teri-ann recalls. “When we picked out invitations, I the spent the week looking only at invitation ideas and nothing else.”

However, the bride also admits to spending too much time online researching vendors. She began to realize that the fastest way to get from one project to the next was to ask her chosen experts for recommendations.

“I didn’t know a lot about Savannah, so if I hired



someone for flowers, then I would ask who they recommend for cakes. Everything quickly fell into place.”

Letting Go

Once she had locked in the key details, Teri-ann took her mother’s sage advice and relinquished control to Chad Baker of Coastal Savannah Weddings, her day-of coordinator.

“If something bad happened the day of the wedding, I knew nothing about it,” the bride rejoices. “I’m so glad we hired Chad. He took care of everything so we could enjoy the day.”

Handing over the reins also opened up some much-needed time to enjoy the big day.

“After I got dressed, I spent a few minutes alone to take in everything in silence,” Teri-ann remembers. “It was a real Zen moment.”

The brief respite allowed the bride to prepare for her big entrance—and set the tone for the rest of the day.

“My favorite moment was definitely seeing Teri-ann appear from the old car we rented and walk down the aisle,” Chris recalls.

After the sweet ceremony, a pedicab cycled the newly joined lovebirds over to Cha Bella for a romantic soiree of small plates and signature drinks.

“It was exactly how we imagined it,” Chris says. “Beautiful, tasteful and—best of all—us.”



Behind the Veil

- The big day:** Saturday, Oct. 13, 2012
- Planning time:** 14 months
- Guests:** 60
- Coordinator:** Chad Baker, Coastal Savannah Weddings
- Rehearsal dinner site:** Belford’s
- Ceremony site:** Greene Square
- Officiant:** Dave Rasmussen
- Ceremony music:** Chris Dooley
- Gown:** Jim Hjelm
- Accessories:** Birdcage veil, feather-and-rhinestone hair piece and custom rhinestone belt by Wedding Angels Boutique, Atlanta
- Hair:** Lindsay Nix, Towne Salon
- Makeup:** Jules De Jesus, Dollface by Jules
- Bridesmaids’ attire:** Flynn skirt by Anne Cramer, Nordstrom top
- Groom/groomsmen’s attire:** Suits by Banana Republic, shoes by Allen Edmonds
- Reception and catering:** Cha Bella Restaurant
- Reception music:** Bride and groom’s iPad
- Cake:** Delectable Designs
- Photographer:** Teresa Earnest, Savannah Wedding Photographers, 912.228.9647, www.memoriesnmore.net

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