

She Said “Yes” — now what?

By Heidi Kerr-Schlaefer

The Surveyor

Many young women spend years dreaming of the day a sparkly diamond will be slipped on their finger. They imagine the most romantic place, the ideal time, and, of course, the perfect wedding. But once the ring is in place, and all the oohs and awes have been proclaimed and congratulations given, reality sets in.

Planning a wedding is no easy feat, even for the most ambitious bride. It is time consuming, stressful and last, but not least, expensive. Thankfully, many of these issues can be resolved by employing a wedding planner (also known as a wedding coordinator).

Cory Elam has over thirty years of experience in weddings and a year and a half ago, she and Lindsey Smith, decided to combine their expertise and form a wedding planning company called, “She Said Yes.” Having previously worked together as wedding coordinators at Sylvan Dale Guest Ranch, the two knew they had the right chemistry to make a successful team.

From weddings at the five-star Broadmoor Hotel, to backyard affairs, Elam and Smith have planned every type of wedding imaginable. Between the two, they have coordinated over 1,000 weddings. “We don’t have a set package for a bride, because we know each bride has something different that is special to them,” said Elam.

Many couples think hiring a wedding planner is out of their budget, but the truth is the right planner can help keep a couple on budget. “It’s very easy, especially with weddings, to impulse buy. We’ll help you adjust your budget so that you can have everything you want within the original budget you developed,” explained Smith. Working out a budget is one of the first topics Elam and Cory discuss with their clients.

“We know that money is tight for many couples, so we are giving discounts right now. We are working one-on-one with brides, creating a cost effective price for our services,” said Elam, who is conscientious about the state of the current economy.

The wedding business in the United States is a 40 billion dollar a year industry, and finding honest, trustworthy vendors is important to a successful and affordable wedding. Elam and Smith have many vendor connections across Colorado. “We know the good ones, bad ones and in-between ones, “

said Elam. “We have relationships with all those people and that’s why it makes us so effective when working with brides trying to stay on budget – because we can find a DJ in your budget, or a florist in your price range.”

Brides who chose “She Said Yes” are not restricted to a specific list of vendors. “For instance, if a bride has someone who was the photographer from their brothers wedding and the family absolutely loved him, we are open to meeting and working with that photographer,” explained Smith.

According to Elam, black and white weddings have been popular lately, and brides are allowing their bridesmaids pick out their own dresses, and often bridesmaids in the same bridal party wear differently cut dresses. Nontraditional deserts are all the rage, with cupcake towers and cookie creations replacing the conventional wedding cake.



“Casual but chic, is very in right now,” said Smith.

“We’re seeing a lot of cocktail style bridesmaid dresses. Also, couples are bringing a lot of themselves into their weddings.”

The two women recently planned a wedding where the reception table centerpieces incorporated photos of the bride and groom traveling, hiking and doing the things they like to do as a couple. “The whole room felt like they’d been involved in this long relationship,” remembered Smith.

After years of planning weddings, Smith and Elam have plenty of advice to impart to their brides. Brides often deal with a lot of stress brought on by trying to please everyone involved in their wedding. Elam has seen brides burst into tears over what kind of potatoes should be served at the reception. At times like this she takes the bride aside and reminds them that this is their wedding and their day. “I remind them that the most important thing about the wedding day is that at the end of the day, you will be married and that’s what this whole thing is about. It’s not about the food, or about the flowers, it’s about you getting married,” said Elam.

Smith’s advice is more conventional, but no less important. She urges couples who use a ring bearer in their ceremony to attach fake rings to the pillow, because she has personally witnessed wedding rings fly off the pillow and disappear into the grass. Not able to find the rings that day, the next day,

the family came back equipped with metal detectors. They eventually found the rings, but it’s not an incident Smith wants anyone to experience.

“Ideally, a couple should start looking for a coordinator as soon as they get engaged. They should find that coordinator that they can have a good relationship with. Interview a few coordinators and find one you have a good rapport with. Often brides pick a venue then look for a wedding planner, but we may even be able to steer you to venues you didn’t even know about. So ideally, get a coordinator early,” advises Elam. However, Elam and Smith realize not every couple wants to have



Photo by Heidi Kerr-Schlaefer

Cory Elam and Lindsey Smith of “She Said Yes” wedding planning.

a planner throughout the process, so the women offer “day of” event coordination services.

To learn more about “She Said Yes,” visit them online at www.col-oradoplanning.com or call 970-581-9404.



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