

# INSIDE

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**Anna Post**  
helps you bridge the  
cultural divide





*The natural choice*

ASHUN FREEDMAN & TAYLOR WILLIAMS  
AUGUST 8, 2009 NEWPORT BEACH, CALIFORNIA  
PHOTOGRAPHED BY JON BARBER



From the start of their relationship, things always seemed to naturally come together for Ashun Freedman and Taylor Williams. Instant chemistry, easy conversation, and a pure love for one another resulted in a heartfelt proposal at the couple's home after years of courtship. Ashun and Taylor loved everything that the Newport Coast had to offer and began their search for a wedding venue in the beachside area. After touring a variety of locations, the couple settled on a resort that was not only

exquisite, but that they felt held magical qualities as well. "As soon as we drove onto the grounds, the decision was made for us," confides the bride. "It was beyond beautiful – everything about it was complete perfection." Finely detailed architecture, perfectly manicured landscaping, and dynamic ocean views were only some of the features the seaside venue held that captured the couple's attention. "The entire resort was grand and elegant, yet simple all in one – just like us," adds Ashun.

**Beauty**  
Trina Duarte for  
The Studio Agency, hair

**Bridal Designer**  
Kenneth Pool

**Bridal Salon**  
The White Dress

**Bridesmaids**  
Priscilla of Boston

**Calligrapher**  
Mimio

**Caterer**  
The Resort at Pelican Hill  
The Fry Girl Inc

**Consultant/Designer**  
Mary Dann Wedding  
and Party Coordinators

**Entertainment**  
Enchanted Evening  
Productions;  
USC Trojan Marching Band  
Vox DJs

**Floral Design**  
Growing Wild

**Flower Girl**  
Us Angels

**Invitations**  
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Wrapsody

**Lighting Design**  
Level 4 International

**Linens**  
Elegant Designs Specialty  
Linens

**Mother's Gown**  
Balenciaga, MOB

**Photographer**  
Barber Photography

**Rentals**  
Chameleon Chair Collections  
Classic Party Rentals

**Shoes**  
Stuart Weitzman

**Venue**  
The Resort at Pelican Hill

**Videographer**  
Isabel Gonzalez Videotique



Since the couple wanted an elegant affair with luxurious elements without being too flashy, the bride worked with wedding consultant Mary Dann-McNamee to find creative ways to incorporate a beachy theme that maintained a glamorous appeal. A grassy area with a beautiful rotunda was chosen by the couple for the ceremony. “The moment we walked through the area, we knew it was where we wanted to be married,” reveals Ashun. The ocean view served as the inspiration for the unique décor, which included a champagne-colored custom 140-foot aisle runner, and gold chairs draped in chiffon fabric adorned with a large bullion-hued starfish. Floral arrangements comprised of the celebration’s signature color scheme of white, green, and blush pink were dotted throughout the area, while hundreds of rose petals lined the middle row.

The ceremony began with Ashun and Taylor’s respective extended family walking down the aisle. “Family is very important to us and we wanted everyone to feel included,” explains Ashun of their processional choice. The bride, who wore a stunning gown with a crumb-catcher neckline, also wanted to include her paternal family’s Jewish wedding custom of breaking the glass at the conclusion of the vows. “My now-deceased 94-year-old grandfather loved that part of the ceremony, and I am very happy he got to experience that with us,” says the bride.





A six-piece orchestra played “Back in Black” by AC/DC as Ashun and Taylor made their way up the aisle, leading guests into a cocktail area brightly decorated with colors of the sunset. Shimmery green tablecloths and floral mixtures in jewel-toned hues were meant to evoke visions of a sun setting over the ocean. Guests were offered delightful libations that paired wonderfully with the resident oyster bar. “All of the seafood that was set out was a hit with guests,” exclaims the bride. “I really wanted the food to match the theme!”

As loved ones entered the reception area, they were met with a non-traditional guest sign-in table. Video cameras were set up so that each attendee was given an opportunity to say a few heartfelt words to the couple. “Everyone’s special messages made for an amazing video that was uploaded to a custom Video Memory Book,” explains Ashun. The groom agrees, “It not only captured guests’ sentiments, but it also documented the activities of the day.” The custom draping of the grand ballroom glowed in contrast to the evening’s incredible ocean view that could be seen through oversized glass doors. Towering vases made up of dreamy assemblies of orchids, hydrangeas, lilies, peonies, and roses decorated tables covered in hand-beaded golden linens. Plenty of candlelight created a romantic ambiance for the sit-down dinner service served on custom china and stemware that complemented the color scheme of the evening. The four-tiered wedding cake artfully reflected design elements from the bride’s gown and was as tasty as it was beautiful. “It was perfect!” remembers Ashun.







The University of Southern California marching band commenced an evening filled with energy and a night filled with happiness. Taylor advises other couples to take the time to look around and absorb the extraordinariness of it all because the day goes by much too quickly. He admits to heeding that advice and reveals that watching Ashun walk down the aisle was more incredible than he had ever imagined. “Your wedding day is the beginning of the rest of your life, and the best day of your life – so embrace every moment.” NICOLE PALACIOS

