

Grand staircases laid the foundation for the elegant affair, and luxurious crystal, chocolate brown, and ivory décor added to the opulence.



THE DETAILS

Venue

St. Regis Resort,
Monarch Beach

Wedding Coordinator

Kathy Jo Peterson Weddings
and Special Events

Bridal Gown Designer

St. Pucchi

Bride's Hair

Lorenzo

Bride's Makeup

RonAnne Fry

Floral Design

Square Root

Photography

Bleu Cotton Photography

Videography

1st Choice Video

Entertainment

Ceremony & Cocktail
Music: Poura
Reception Music: Du Bois
Entertainment

Catering

St. Regis Resort,
Monarch Beach

Cake

NancyKay Confections

Menus and Programs

Jill Parking Designs

Rentals

Classic Party Rentals

Linens

Wildflower Linen

It sounds like a modern-day musical a la *Grease*: Marty Laitre, at the time a hockey player for Edmonton, was in L.A. for the summer break. Jennifer Phillips had recently opened her first tanning salon, Portofino in Beverly Hills, when the pair met in a restaurant. They spent an inseparable summer together until it was time for Marty to return to Canada.

Both knew they'd found something special, and the frequent flier miles racked up. "I went to Canada seven times between August and May," Jennifer recalls. When Marty came back the following summer, he decided to stay for good.

Like many aspiring grooms, Marty wanted the proposal to be a surprise. So under the auspices of celebrating Jennifer's birthday, Marty casually asked her to describe the sort of engagement ring she might someday want—all while the one he'd already designed was burning a hole in his pocket. He drove her down to the Manhattan Beach marina, where a gondola was waiting. "I was just thinking he'd gone all out for my birthday," Jennifer says. The couple enjoyed wine and music as the sun set, at which point Marty produced a box from his pocket. "I got so excited when I saw that ring that I grabbed it and put it on," Jennifer recalls. "Marty was like, 'Is that a 'yes?'"

At the time Jennifer was traveling with Mariah Carey (as her personal body-makeup artist), so she began making plans from the road—with tons of help from her mom and wedding coordinator Kathy Jo Peterson. Eventually Jennifer assembled a collection of photos of potential wedding gowns and had them all shipped to L.A. "I flew in for one day and tried them all on," laughs Jennifer, who, like many brides, ultimately chose the first one she slipped into.

The couple wanted beachfront but not barefoot; they chose the St. Regis in Laguna Beach because it also had the elegant, grand, and luxurious feel they envisioned for their event. Jennifer utilized the hotel's sweeping exterior staircases to make what the couple's pastor called "the most elaborate grand entrance he'd ever seen." As guests waited on the stunning lawn below, bridesmaids and groomsmen descended the swirling, cascading tiers of steps in unison to the strains of live violin music. Finally, the bride, on her grandfather's arm, repeated the pattern, stopping to circle the mid-level fountain for dramatic effect. "Everyone always says your wedding day is a whirlwind, so I was determined to be calm and enjoy myself," Jennifer explains. "We worked so hard to create this beautiful day, I really wanted to take it slowly and savor every minute. I told my grandpa I was going to pinch him if he walked too fast!"

After Jennifer and Marty exchanged traditional vows, the couple joined two vials of colored sand to create one beautiful mélange, a symbol of their new unity. A special reading and a dove release were meaningful tributes to Jennifer's beloved grandmother who had recently passed away.

Guests moved inside to the luxurious reception, where tables were draped in quilted chocolate brown and topped with opulent arrangements of ivory orchids, roses, and tulips. The chairs were stunningly appointed with intricate bustles secured with Swarovski crystal brooches (the napkin rings matched as well).

When it came time for the first dance, the couple was ready...sort of. "We took lessons forever and Marty was dying," Jennifer explains. "I'd never practiced in my dress, and it was so big and heavy, we had to cut the routine short."

Jennifer calls the lobster and filet duo that guests enjoyed "amazing," and insists she and her groom actually found time to eat. The only glitch in the evening came when Jennifer spotted her five-tier wedding cake, which had been decorated with delicate pink flowers. "We wanted chocolate and ivory, not pink," says Jennifer, who adds that Kathy Jo swept in and saved the day by carefully removing the offensive frosted foliage with a few quick swipes.

The band jammed late into the evening, entertaining the crowd with everything from jazz tunes to popular oldies. Between sets, a handful of Marty's musician uncles whipped out their guitars and delighted guests with some classic French-Canadian music. "We sat around and sang until almost six in the morning!" Jennifer says.

While Jennifer had initially fantasized about having several hundred guests at her wedding, she insists she is grateful that she let Marty convince her to whittle it down to 120. "We were surrounded by the people we love the most," she says. "What could be better than that?"



duplicating details Chocolate brown table coverings were topped with centerpieces of ivory orchids, roses, and tulips; chairs were festooned with bustles mirroring the bride's train and fastened with Swarovski crystal brooches that matched the napkin rings.

