



One doesn't always expect to find love in a medical school anatomy lab course. However, Page Druce and John Axley eventually struck up a friendship and along the way, a romance blossomed.

John recalls the times the pair would spend talking about everything and anything. "I felt so fortunate that our relationship started off as friends," he shares. "I think this helped us really get to know each other much better. It was about a year into [our relationship] that I had no doubts that this was the girl I wanted to marry." With that conviction and a blessing from his beloved's parents, the groom-to-be began planning a proposal to his sweetheart. Knowing her fondness of games, John designed a customized jigsaw puzzle from an image of the pair and their two cats, including "Will you marry me?" printed along the bottom.

After carefully removing the parts with text, John handed over the creation as a Valentine's Day present. "When we got towards the end, it became clear to Page that we were missing pieces," the groom recalls. "I blamed the cats for knocking them off under the couch and then 'found' the additional pieces." Confides Page, "I didn't finish putting them all together before I looked up and John had this beautiful diamond ring in his hand. It was all just so surreal and perfect."

After twelve months of planning, the bride and groom welcomed family and friends through the wooden doors of a quaint alabaster chapel resting amongst the ancient trees of a South Carolina forest. The bride praises the work of her mother and wedding planner Kelli Corn Weddings and Events for the design of their big day. "My family, especially my mom, helped with all of the finer details, which were countless," she says. "The flowers, the décor, thank-you bags, signage, and so many more little beautiful touches were all her and Kelli's doing."



PIECE OF ME

PAGE DRUCE & JOHN AXLEY

April 9, 2016 Bluffton, South Carolina | Photographed by Wollwerth Imagery

RESOURCES

Beauty
Madison Hughes for Wedding Hair by Charlotte

Bridal Gown
Romona Keveza

Bridal Gown
Calvet Couture

Bridesmaid Gowns
Aidan Mattox

Cake
Minette Rushing for Savannah Custom Cakes

Consulting/Design
Kelli Corn Weddings and Events

Entertainment
Mo' Sol band for Sam Hill Entertainment
Sean Driscoll, classical guitar for Hilton Head Entertainment
The Voices of El Shaddai

Floral Design
Kim Cheney for August Floral Design

Formalwear
Calvin Klein

Invitations/Calligraphy
The Lettered Olive

Jewelry
Gioelli Dalban; Tiffany & Co.

Lighting Design
Technical Event Company

Linens
La Tavola Fine Linen

Mother's Gown
Oscar de la Renta

Photography
Wollwerth Imagery

Rehearsal Dinner
Bluffton Oyster Co.

Rentals
InventivEnvironments
Ooh! Events; Polished! Snyder Events

Shoes
Jimmy Choo

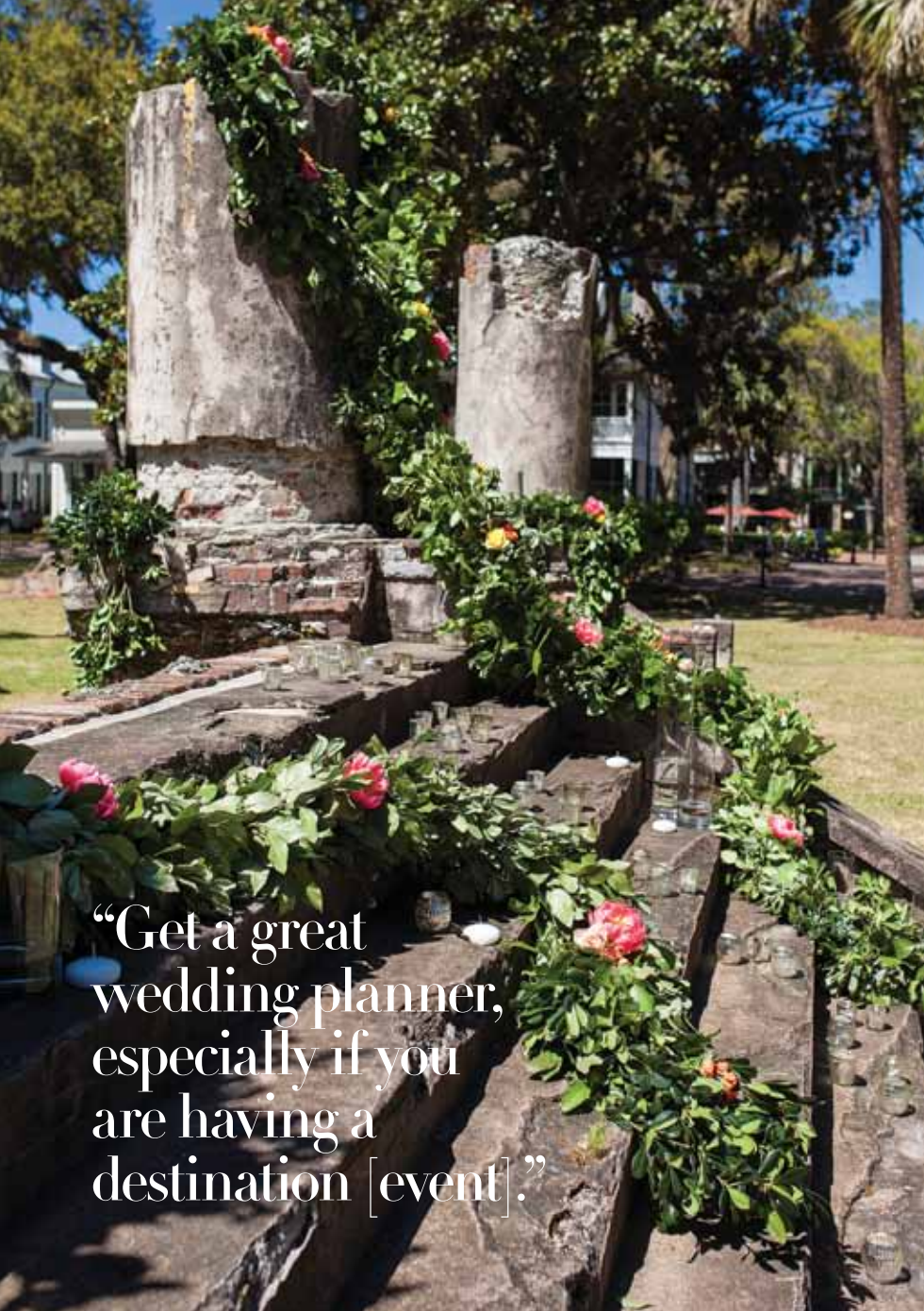
Transportation
Diamond Transportation
Old Savannah Tours

Venue/Catering
Montage Palmetto Bluff



The late afternoon sunlight flooded through the large glass windows of the chapel as guests found their seats. Clusters of leafy blooms in bold shades of yellow, pink, orange, and white hung from the sides of the pews along the aisle, as well as from the grand wooden cross at the altar and on either side of the window at the front of the room. The simple décor highlighted the natural beauty residing just outside the forest-green shuttered windows.

The groom, wearing a rose-colored necktie atop a pin-striped navy blue tuxedo and white ranunculus boutonniere, stood at the altar awaiting his beloved. He remembers watching as guests turned, expecting the bride to enter. Instead, the voices of a Gullah gospel choir rang through the venue. "This added so much energy to the room and really changed the atmosphere," John confirms of the memorable moment. The group's lively addition to the ceremony was reminiscent of their performance at the mother of the bride's wedding.



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At last, guests greeted the arrival of the belle of the evening. Donning an ivory V-neck gown, the lace texture of her dress slipped from feminine cap sleeves into a low-cut back. She clutched a bouquet of snowy anemones, complemented by the hues of off-white and blush ranunculus and jasmine blossoms, as well as fresh greenery of geranium and passion vines.

After witnessing the vow exchange officiated by a family friend and spiritual mentor of the Axley family, loved ones were ushered outside to the vintage-inspired reception. “It was sort of like the Mad Hatter tea party,” Page illustrates. Eccentric seating arrangements in bold tones and patterned tables were positioned under several tented structures. Mismatched tableware sets rested alongside bright floral centerpieces held in milk- or mercury-glass vessels. Festive florals bloomed amongst the leaves of massive garlands interwoven with the historic ruins of the reception site.

In lieu of a guestbook, guests scrawled their names and well-wishes on wooden pieces of a jigsaw puzzle in the shape of the wedding chapel, an echo of the proposal John had fashioned for Page.

Attendees were offered a buffet-style stone-ground grits bar with optional toppings complemented by a deliciously crafted chopped salad. The couple’s multi-tiered wedding cake was encased in blush-hued frosting, adorned with rose gold perennial detailing, and crowned with ivory florals. Happily, guests were not the only ones to enjoy the event’s delicious cuisine – the newlyweds had their fill of the fare as well. “I can’t believe I got to enjoy the food at my own wedding! It was divine,” declares the bride.





As the sun set, sparkling chandeliers suspended from canopied sitting areas and the warm glow of candles placed neatly on stone surfaces lit up the night's activities. Complimentary flip-flops and pashminas were offered to loved ones for comfort as they danced or roasted marshmallows into the late hours. As a thank you, the bride and groom gifted their guests a burlap sack stuffed with a Bloody Mary kit, cheese straws, water, Advil, and bacon chocolate bars.

Once the festivities came to a close, Page felt grateful for the support that helped make the day possible. "We really can't take credit for how spectacular our big day was because my mom and Kelli are the ones who made it happen," the bride expresses. She also offers couples the following advice: "Get a great wedding planner, especially if you are having a destination [event]." The newlyweds agree they wouldn't change anything about their nuptials. "Everything was just perfect," smiles the groom. **JEWELS MESA**

