

# TOGETHER

## Matt Wethington — Heather Garnreiter



JNP Studios

When Heather Garnreiter and Matt Wethington met at a dinner party in 2008, they couldn't stop making each other laugh. Soon after, they discovered they both enjoyed watching the same scary TV shows, like "Ghost Hunters," "Storm Chasers" and — most frightening of all — "Jersey Shore."

But they soon developed a deeper connection. Garnreiter found she could talk easily about the open-heart surgeries she'd had as a child and the scars she usually kept hidden.

In 2010, Wethington made yellow "Amazing Race" clue envelopes with coded messages that led Garnreiter from GoKart racing to cupcakes at Sprinkles with Candace Nelson of "Cupcake Wars," a creepy movie, dinner de luxe and "Phantom of the Opera" at the Pantages. The final clue — "All I want is to love you forever" — led to a diamond ring and a proposal.

Garnreiter, 27, is a marketing manager at PCMall.com in Torrance, and Wethington, 41, is an associate director at Century Group, an executive search firm in El Segundo.

They wed on Oct. 15 at St. Edward the Confessor Catholic Church in Dana Point. When Garnreiter walked down the aisle, said Wethington, "My jaw just dropped.... She looked like an absolute princess."

For the 157-guest reception at the Talega Golf Club in San Clemente, Laurie Davies of Five Star Weddings & Events brought the couple's vision to life with lush floral arrangements and tables that seemed to glow with the light of hundreds of small candles. "It was breathtakingly romantic," said the bride.

—Maxine Nunes  
Custom Publishing Writer

## Chris Tellez — Lauren Taylor



Veronica Slavin, www.romisdelavita.com

Romance between employees was explicitly forbidden at the Washington Mutual Bank in Santa Clarita, where Lauren Taylor and Chris Tellez worked in 2006. He was crazy about her from the start, but for a year, she kept the heat dialed down to a cozy friendship.

Then one night, "It just clicked with me that he was the greatest guy ever," said Taylor. They were watching a movie and started to hold hands. Then he kissed her, and that was it.

Choosing between a bank and the love of his life was no contest for Tellez. He quit his job and now works as a teller at the Lockheed Federal Credit Union in Valencia. Things didn't work out as well for WaMu. It failed in 2008 and was taken over by Chase Bank, where Taylor is now a sales and service associate.

Last December, Taylor came home from work and was surprised to see Tellez standing there holding their cat, Oliver. She took a closer look and saw pink wedding bells around its neck and the words, "Will you marry my dad?"

On Oct. 9, that's just what she did. Sixty guests joined Taylor, 25, and Tellez, 23, for their wedding aboard the Scarlett Belle, a paddle-wheel riverboat in the Channel Islands Harbor.

"It was the best day of my life," said Tellez. And you can take that to the bank.

—Maxine Nunes  
Custom Publishing Writer



## Black is the New Black

*The color that goes with everything is a bold choice for newlyweds*

Chanel, Audrey and Jackie knew it before everyone else. Black is chic. It's classy, sexy and elegant all at once. And everyone looks good in it. So why not incorporate a little black magic into your wedding?

"Black is definitely a trend," said Tracy Koven, director of catering and conference services for the Beverly Hills Hotel, which turns 100 next year. "Because of the hotel's history, we get a lot of old Hollywood glamour weddings that incorporate black," she said. "I used to rarely see black at weddings, but now I see it all the time."

You don't have to paint your whole wedding black, but event planners from New York to L.A. have some unique ideas on how to use black to infuse it with elegance and style.

### LITTLE BLACK DRESS

Your best friend will love you for choosing a black bridesmaid dress that she can wear again. However, some brides are making a stir by wearing black themselves.

"White gowns will never go out of style," said Colin Cowie, celebrity event planner, author and founder of ColinCowieWeddings.com, "but black wedding dresses are the latest trend." On the heels of attending the usual blinding white wedding fashion shows, Cowie was thrilled in October with Vera Wang's collection, which included not one, but eight black wedding gowns. "Vera's black dresses

were seriously chic," Cowie said. "For a girl with confidence and style, these dresses are chic, elegant and incredibly sexy — not dark or witchy at all."

"Everyone loves a little black dress — so why not a little black wedding dress?" added Kristin Banta of Kristin Banta Events in Los Angeles, who has one client wearing a black Vera Wang dress in November and another who wore a white gown with chic black detailing in August. "I'm seeing brides taking risks and moving away from white," she said.

### THAT NOIR EFFECT

Black is also showing up in wedding décor, said Banta, who is becoming an expert at creating noir events. In August, she created a dark, romantic and sexy wedding for Fontine and Stephen Garcia of Los Angeles, using elements such as black urns, black candelabras and tables draped in black rosette linens. "Butlers holding black trays of Bellinis greeted guests as they entered through large black bird cages flanked by black candelabras dripping in red amaranthus," she said.

Though black is dramatic, Banta warns that it can be tricky at night. "You lose the impact if you're in a sea of black," she said. She suggested countering dark hues with various textures in linens and bringing in reflectives such as mercury glass and mirrors. "Lighting is crucial," she added, noting that every surface should be washed with light so that everything doesn't fade to black.

Cowie suggests using black as an accent color rather than the primary color of the wedding. "Think back to the Art Deco era," he said. Black dance floors, modern furniture in black, and materials such as mirrors and glitter paper can recreate the glamour of a bygone era.

For flowers, Banta prefers dark blooms that "read black," such as eggplant-colored calla lilies, black-red roses or floral anemones with black centers.

### SWEET AND DARK

Black foods such as squid ink pasta can be fun, but don't overdo it, Banta warned. "I back away from the food thing," she said, conceding that "we will be serving black water [BLK Water, a black mineral-enhanced water] at an upcoming wedding."

The wedding cake is a great place to incorporate the theme. "Black details on a white background are striking and elegant," said Leigh Grode of Cake Divas, who has created cakes adorned with black vintage damask, modern bands of black and Spanish lace.

"Black wedding cakes can be stunning," noted Jane Lockhart of Sweet Lady Jane, who has created her share of dark confections. "But you have to be careful with the black food coloring so that your guests don't wind up with purple lips and teeth."



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1. Black and red details from Fontine and Stephen Garcia's wedding by Kristin Banta Events. Photo: [www.mikiandsonja.com](http://www.mikiandsonja.com) 2. Garcia's Monique Lhuillier gown was accented by a black sash and bow. Photo: [www.mikiandsonja.com](http://www.mikiandsonja.com) 3. Adding color and reflectives such as mercury glass keeps the decor from fading to black. Photo: [www.mikiandsonja.com](http://www.mikiandsonja.com) 4. Black can also be an accessory, as is the case with these umbrellas. Photo: [www.elizabethmessina.com](http://www.elizabethmessina.com) 5. The wedding cake is a great place to incorporate black details. Photo: Leigh Grode

Rather than use a large amount of black food dye in basic butter cream, Lockhart starts with dark chocolate and adds a few drops to create the blackest black.

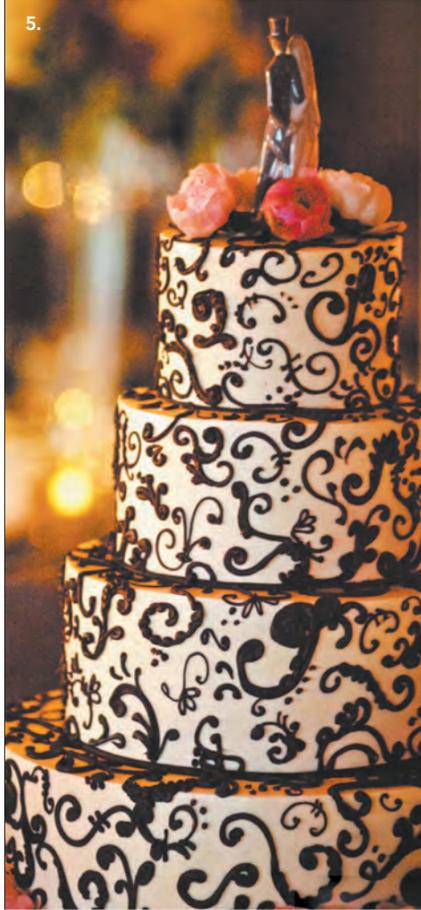
### BLACK DIAMONDS

While white diamonds may still be a girl's best friend, black diamonds may soon be a man's, according to Cowie. "A black diamond ring on a man is hot," he said, noting that he wears one himself, "on the other hand."

Black is best when it doesn't overpower, and it's in the details that you can infuse drama and elegance. Whether it's the dress, décor or an accessory such as a black umbrella on a rainy-day wedding, it's fun to explore the possibilities.

For bride Fontine Garcia, who wore a black birdcage veil with an ostrich feather and diamond headpiece with her Monique Lhuillier gown, having a white wedding was never an option. "I've always been drawn to the dark and dramatic," she said. "I couldn't have imagined my wedding any other way."

—Jennifer Evans Gardner, Custom Publishing Writer



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**Los Angeles Times**  
CUSTOM PUBLISHING

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