

REAL-LIFE WEDDINGS

→ PHOTOGRAPHY BY LAURA
KLEINHENZ FOR DOCUVITAE



CARRIE BERLE
AND
CHIP ROBERTSON

COUPLED BY COFFEE

A JAVA HOUSE REUNITES TWO FORMER HIGH-SCHOOL CLASSMATES, STIMULATING A TWO-YEAR COURTSHIP AND AN EXCHANGE OF VOWS AMID A WONDROUS VISION OF SPARKLING WHITE.

THE DETAILS

Venue

Hotel Bel Air

Wedding Planner

Kristin Banta for
Kristin Banta Events

Bridal Gown Designer

Monique Lhuillier

Groom's Formalwear

Fallan and Harvey of London

Wedding Ring Jewelers

Engagement Ring, Wedding
Band, Earrings: Richters
Groom's Ring: Allan Adler

Flowers

Eric Buterbaugh Flower Design

Photographer

Laura Kleinhenz for Docuvitae

Ceremony Videographer

Docuvitae

Lighting

Jason Fox for
J Fox Event Lighting

Entertainment

Ceremony: String quartet from
West Coast Entertainment

Reception: Side Effect,
with soloist Steve Nelson, from
West Coast Entertainment

Cake

Sylvia Weinstock Cakes

Invitations

Elum, courtesy of Black Ink

Rentals

Gus Galanis for
Classic Party Rentals

Officiant

Cantor Chayim Frenkel

Carrie Berle never dreamed that landing the glamorous title of Peet's Coffee & Tea's Customer of the Week would change her life. "They picked my card out of a bowl and put my picture up in the store," she explains with a laugh. Chip Robertson, a guy she'd vaguely known back in high school, recognized her picture and became determined to get reacquainted. Chip later told Carrie he went in at 6 a.m. with the intention of sitting there until she showed up—which, luckily, she did. "We ended up talking for three hours," Carrie says. "When I finally left, I immediately called my mom and told her I'd met someone special."

They had been dating just shy of two years when they planned a trip to Hawaii. As soon as they took their seats on the plane, a breakfast tray arrived bearing an envelope with Carrie's name on it. "Inside was this four-page love letter from Chip," she explains. "I thought it was just a mushy, sweet, two-year anniversary thing. But the last line said, 'Carrie Berle, marry me.' I keep a copy of it in a safe-deposit box."

The ever-thorough groom actually had included a second letter, giving Carrie the availability dates for the Hotel Bel-Air, the legendary wedding venue Chip knew Carrie had her heart set on. (Carrie's parents had wed there decades before.) They agreed upon a December date just eight months away, and immediately enlisted the services of event coordinator Kristin Banta. "Chip and I had a really strong vision of how we wanted the day to be and feel, and Kristin really got that," says Carrie. "She's also funny and sweet, and our personalities really clicked."

Two weeks after Hawaii, Carrie brought her mom and best friend to a trunk show at Monique Lhuillier. She fell in love with the first dress she tried on, a shapely satin column with a wide sash belt and cross-front lace jacket. Carrie personalized it by having the jacket's long sleeves transformed into delicate cap sleeves and adding a custom-designed satin flower to the sash.

Carrie and Chip exchanged vows in a traditional Jewish ceremony the bride describes as "short and sweet." The bride carried a bouquet of pearl-studded gardenias with her grandmother's pearls wrapped around the stems. For programs, guests received cartoon books Chip had commissioned from an artist friend, featuring a comic strip version of the couple's love story.

Cocktails were served in the hotel's grand ballroom, then the party moved outside to a lush garden that had been transformed into a wonderland. The couple chose a clear tent so the brilliant, delicate lights festooning the grounds would cast a warm glow. A constellation of Chinese lanterns overhead created a dramatic indoor atmosphere, illuminating the urns of white roses, hydrangea, orchids, and gardenias that topped each table.

After dinner, guests enjoyed two cakes created by celebrated New York cake diva Sylvia Weinstock. Carrie says that the first—a traditional tiered beauty dripping in edible flowers—tasted even better than it looked. The groom's cake, aptly, was a giant Peet's coffee cup (family and friends were given bags of Peet's coffee as parting gifts as well).

The rest of the evening was a fantastic party; guests packed the dance floor all night. The highlight of the evening for the bride? "Walking down the aisle with my father and seeing Chip waiting for me at the end was so emotional," gushes Carrie. "I also loved getting ready with my girlfriends and my mom—and all of the dancing. And the food was unbelievable! I want to do it all over again!"

Carrie and Chip enjoyed a month-long honeymoon in South Africa and Mauritius. Carrie describes the tiny island in the Indian Ocean as "very difficult to get to, but incredibly beautiful, isolated, and romantic." Within six months, Carrie discovered she was pregnant. Louis Harvey Robertson was born healthy and happy in March of this year. ☺





ethereal glow For the reception, a lush garden was transformed into a sparkling wonderland of tiny lights, panoramically visible from within a clear weatherproof tent. Inside, the floating light quality was conveyed with large white Chinese lanterns dangling overhead. At the escort card table, branches strung with invisible gold wires suspended clear droplet-shaped reservoirs of water to sustain cymbidium orchid blossoms that appeared to hover. The classic all-white palette was set with crisp hemstitched linens and ivory roses, hydrangea, orchids, and gardenias atop each table. The cake was festooned with edible white flowers, and the groom's cake looked like a giant Peet's coffee cup.

