

march/april 2009

Love on the Beach



The reception area was set with a combination of family-style seating and rounds bordering a stage and dance floor. To make this area a focal point, a tent frame created a canopy. At night, lighting on the frame and the perimeter area created a dramatic look that once again combined casual outdoor entertaining with nighttime drama.

Dinner was served family style, another nod to the casual atmosphere the couple wanted to create. As well, centerpieces were simply a fun collection of wine bottles and sunflowers on chocolate brown linen. Chair covers in the same colors, only in satin, added another layer of texture to the look.

The bride and groom opted for a small two-tiered cheesecake instead of wedding cake, and a dessert buffet that offered cheesecake lollipops, individual tiramisu, mini parfaits, cannolis and more. But the most popular dessert of the night, and so in keeping with this beach-casual theme, was a make-your-own s'mores station at which guests could roast their own marshmallows over a hot grill tended to by a chef.



a beach wedding in October? Risky business in most parts of the country but in Southern California the month almost never fails to deliver picture perfect wedding weather. And deliver it did for this bride and groom who wanted a fun, laid-back beach ceremony followed by an al fresco reception. They turned to New York Food Company for a menu and event décor that was a blend of high-end and casual elements.

Held in an upscale beach enclave, a family home in the area gave the couple access to a private beach perfect for a relaxed ceremony at water's edge. Following the ceremony, a "formal" cocktail hour took place on the sand with a full buffet and tended bar. Antipasto stations set on the sand under beach umbrellas offered guests their choice of appetizers from quick-fried artichoke hearts to grilled shrimp, artisanal cheeses, fresh fruit and candied nuts.

From the ocean, it was just a short walk for the 320 guests to the reception area, the neighborhood's private park that had been acquired exclusively for the wedding reception. "As an extra touch," says NYFC's producer Linda Kay, "We created a seating area just inside the entrance of the reception area so people could brush the sand off their feet, dip them in a tub of warm water and put their shoes back on."

photos by Lauren Hillary



IN THE PARK FAMILY STYLE MEAL SERVICE

First Course

Traditional Caesar Salad

Fresh Romaine Lettuce, Homemade Croutons and Parmesan Petals
Tossed with a Traditional Citrus based Caesar Dressing
and

Tuscan Bread Salad

Served with Housemade Breadsticks
Poppy seed, Cheddar Cheese, Sesame Seed and Parmesan

Second Course

Beef Brisola

Flank Steak Stuffed with a mixture of Ricotta and Parmesan Cheeses,
Chopped Spinach, Fresh Herbs and Toasted Pine Nuts rolled and
roasted to perfection. Served with a Madeira Mushroom Gravy

Mixed Grilled Baby Vegetables

Baby Zucchini, Whole Carrots, Red Peppers, Cauliflower,
Yellow Squash and Sweet Onion

Corkscrew Pasta D'Angelo with Chicken and
Tortellini with Pesto Cream Sauce

Dessert

Mini Lemon Tarts, Individual Tiramisu Cups, Chocolate Brownie Bites,
Cream Puffs, Miniature Cannolis, Cheesecake Lollipops,
Biscotti and Chocolate Covered Strawberries
Two-Tiered New York Style Cheese Cake
Frosted with Whipped Cream Decorated with Fresh Berries of the Season
S'mores Station

ENSURING A SMOOTH SAIL

When New York Food Company first received the call for this wedding, it was only a request to supply a little food but mostly to support to the family's favorite restaurant which had never catered before. Typically the company prefers not to team up with other food vendors, but Linda Kay, one of NYFC's off-premise event producers, met with this client anyway. As she talked to the couple, the more they grew confident that what they needed for a beach wedding with smooth sailing was a catering professional. The restaurant would still part of the event, providing an action pasta station during dinner that served the couple's favorite items.

On site, NYFC set up a central kitchen the patio of the private park's recreation building outfitted with grills and ovens that made a more flexible, eclectic and gourmet menu possible. But although the patio was very close to the reception area – the cocktails would be at water's edge, quite a slog when carrying heavy items.

The answer? Mini all-terrain vehicles. All the tables, chairs, bar and décor were taken directly over sand with the help of these carts that featured flat beds, like a pick-up truck, only much smaller. In addition, all the food for the antipasto stations and drinks and mixers for the full bar were delivered in this manner.

Two teams had been assigned; one for cocktails on the beach, one for the dinner reception. The cocktail hour team took care of all set up and tear down on the beach including the chairs used for the ceremony. A separate set had been ordered so that there would be no need for staff to transport chairs from one area to another. When the cocktail hour team was done, it joined the dinner team, now in the middle of serving the family-style platters.



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