



KEY TO MY HEART

LAUREN GODDU & MAX LOWENBAUM

September 13, 2014 Lake Bluff, Illinois | Photographed by Carasco Photography

The first day at a new job is always memorable. For Max Lowenbaum, his first day of work at Groupon was not only notable, but also life changing: It was the first time he laid eyes on Lauren Goddu. “As soon as I walked into the lofted space I noticed Lauren and, believe it or not, I knew she was The One,” Max says. He immediately asked a colleague to tell him everything she knew about Lauren. Unfortunately, her answer wasn’t encouraging. “She said, ‘You have no chance,’” Max remembers.

RESOURCES

Beauty
Alma Bosco and Vaida Indriliunas for M Salon - hair; Krista Muir for KM Beauty - makeup

Bridal Gown
Ines Di Santo

Bridal Salon
Dimitra's Bridal Couture

Bridesmaid Gowns
J.Crew

Cake
Sweet Mandy B's

Calligraphy
Calligraphy by Marcia Aronow

Consulting
SQN Events

Entertainment
Larry King Orchestra

Floral Design
Richard Remiard Design

Formalwear
Hugo Boss

Invitations
Paper Source

Jewelry
Gregg Helfer Ltd.
Huffords Jewelry

Lighting Design
Dance All Night! Inc.
Richard Remiard Design

Linens
BBJ - Table Fashions

Mothers' Gowns
Carmen Marc Valvo
Georges Chakra

Photography
Carasco Photography

Registries
Bloomingdale's; Crate and Barrel
Williams-Sonoma; Zola

Rentals
Covered Affairs, Inc.; Hall's Rental
Partytime-HDO Productions
ShutterBooth

Veil
Jennifer Leigh

Venue/Catering
Shoreacres Golf Club

Videography
Mirar Productions



Luckily, that coworker turned out to be wrong, and Lauren and Max evolved from work associates, to friends, to eventually girlfriend and boyfriend. Since the couple loves to travel, the "City of Love" proved to be the perfect inspiration for Max's proposal. While walking along Chicago's Michigan Avenue Bridge one evening, they came across four "love locks,"

imitating those secured by lovers on the Pont des Arts footbridge in Paris. Max had engraved each lock with a milestone in their relationship and the date, beginning with "The first time I saw you" and ending with "The day we got engaged." By the time Lauren read the final lock, "he was on one knee and I was overjoyed," she exclaims.





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Affectionately referring to themselves and Lauren’s mother – who was instrumental in the planning process – as “The Team,” the couple focused on designing an outdoor, tented celebration overlooking Lake Michigan. A lakeside golf club, where Lauren had attended several special occasions over the years, offered picturesque grounds on which an entirely personalized wedding could be built from the ground up.

To complement the green lawn and sparkling blue lake, décor was kept to a neutral palette of ivory, blush, and peach. Wooden chairs placed on and around a brick patio faced a glorious canopy, representing a chuppah, crafted of branches and flowers. Trails of white and pink rose petals led to urns filled with hydrangeas, roses, and amaranthus. Bridesmaids wearing coral dresses preceded Lauren down the aisle, who was accompanied by both of her parents

(in a unique twist, the groom was also escorted by his parents). The beautiful bride was radiant in a fit-and-flare lace gown and cathedral veil affixed to her low ponytail, gathered and braided at the nape of her neck.

Both a priest and rabbi presided over the service, representing Lauren’s Catholic and Max’s Jewish faiths. For Max, standing under the canopy, looking into Lauren’s eyes, and feeling the love from their family and friends made the ceremony unforgettable – as was “hearing the laughter from the crowd as it took me two tries to stomp the glass,” he says. Afterwards, the newlyweds savored Champagne and hors d’oeuvres in a private room. “It was a special time to be together as we had just said ‘I do.’ It was also an opportunity to enjoy some of the great food we were serving!” Lauren declares.



The new Mr. and Mrs. arrived at the reception to thunderous applause from their guests, signaling the start of a joyful party. Dinner was served at round tables covered with vanilla linens and topped with trumpet vases filled with roses and hydrangeas in shades of pale pink, ivory, and peach. Candles in low glass votives, as well as smaller flower arrangements in miniature silver and mercury-glass vases, encircled the tall centerpieces. Gobo lighting gave the ceiling a tree-like pattern, and lanterns suspended from the center of the tent provided an additional glow.

Max and Lauren worked with their bandleader to handpick 250 songs from popular decades for the evening. “The music was an absolute highlight and one of the most memorable parts of the best day of my life,” Max boasts. But the festivities weren’t over once the 16-person band finished their set. Pinpoint lights turned into neon lasers, fog filled the room, glow sticks, necklaces, bracelets, and rings were brought out, and a DJ took over to turn the party into a late-night rave – complete with comfort food such as fried chicken sliders and warm chocolate chip cookies with ice cream. “We had heard stories where brides and grooms weren’t together for [the end of the wedding],” Lauren explains, so the couple chose the last three songs in advance, to ensure that they could close out the night side by side on the dance floor.

Throughout the celebration, Max was surprised by how calm he and Lauren remained. “I expected to feel anxious hoping everything would go well, but the entire night I felt an incredible sense of happiness without any nerves or jitters,” he reveals. Indeed, the only disappointment of the day was that it didn’t last longer. “It goes by so quickly, and it is so special to have your closest friends and family there to witness your commitment and celebrate with you!” Lauren smiles.

ERIN MIGDOL

