

Danika & Matt

Why Wait?

August 27, 2016

Danika and Matt met in elementary school at the age of 12. Their families, both from Kanata, were close: they would go camping together and often travel for Danika's and Matt's sisters' soccer tournaments. The couple dated on and off for 12 years, taking time apart during university. In 2014, when Danika's mother was diagnosed with Stage 4 brain cancer, Matt found out from his sister and reached out to Danika. They started talking again and he became the support system she needed during the difficult time.

Matt had an elaborate plan to propose at a Brantley Gilbert concert. "But he had the ring and he couldn't wait, so he actually proposed when he had the flu between running to the bathroom to throw up," laughs Danika. That was in February 2016.

The couple, having spent so much time apart, wanted to get married quickly. They were eager to have a baby and wanted to be married first. "Why wait a year, why not just go for it?" Danika remembers. They planned a wedding in six months, but ended up getting pregnant before the wedding. Danika was in her first trimester when she walked down the aisle.

Danika found her wedding dress at The Handmade Bride. "I have a petite body frame," she said. "I had tried on a few different dresses around Ottawa, but everything needed huge alterations." Instead she decided to go to The Handmade Bride where she found a Maureen Patricia champagne lace dress that was exactly the flowy, boho dress she wanted.

The couple chose to get married at Weddings on the Rideau. Danika's father owns a house across the street from Weddings on the Rideau. "We thought it would be funny to get married where we used to have sleepovers and parties in high school," she said. "We'd all go out for breakfast at Weddings on the Rideau before it was Weddings on the Rideau. It seemed like a fitting venue." In fact, the venue's décor didn't require much transformation as the venue already represented the boho type feel that Danika wanted, including sparkly lights and a chandelier in the dome where they exchanged vows.

The vision for the wedding was non-traditional, boho and laid-back. "We didn't want people to feel like the wedding ceremony was dragging on," she said. "We wanted it to be fun and light." Instead of a ceremony procession, the large bridal party of 16 bridesmaids and eight groomsmen was already at the altar before the guests came down. Danika's young son from a previous relationship played an



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important role in the whole wedding. “He was incorporated from beginning to end,” she said. “He was there during our vows, he was there during our first looks, he was there during our first dance.”

Danika described the couple’s first look as “pretty amazing.” “We chose to do first looks with our photographer instead of the first time him seeing me being walking down the aisle,” she said. “We wanted the very intimate and private moments to be intimate and private.”

Since the wedding ceremony took place at 8pm, they didn’t serve a wedding meal or a wedding cake. Instead, they had hors d’oeuvres, vanilla buttercream cupcakes and a late-night poutine bar. The reception turned into a veritable dance party, going way past the 1am closing time. “We left because I was exhausted,” said Danika, “but they were there until 3:30am. Our reception got a little wild. Our photographer got good shots of people dancing on tables and chairs.” W

