
The Mi Way
THE MATERNITY ISSUE
with
Briony Brohm • Rachel Vanoven • Brigette Schaffarzick
Chelsey Hill • Dana Pugh • Kelly Brown • Eden Bao
Julia Kelleher • Shelley Ferguson • and MORE!
RACHEL BARNES • THROUGH PAINTED EYES PHOTOGRAPHY



ALICIA RODRIGUEZ • ALICIA RODRIGUEZ PHOTOGRAPHY

welcome



LISA *DIGESO*

I AM SO THRILLED TO SHARE THE 2017 *MATERNITY ISSUE* OF *THE MILKY WAY MAGAZINE*.

I FIRST FELL IN LOVE with maternity photography when I was pregnant with my son. You see, we spent years and years trying to conceive, and finally, after a round of IVF, I successfully got pregnant. I didn't want to miss a second of documenting it. When I became a photographer, I carried this inside me; what a precious miracle pregnancy really is.

It's a funny thing. Pregnancy can feel like is last for ever but also be so fleeting. As photographers, we have the honour and opportunity to document these beautiful moments for our clients, to preserve memories that can become family legacies.

In this issue, we'll explore the history of maternity photography (and how the genre has evolved over the years). If you didn't experience love at first shoot with maternity sessions, you definitely do not want to miss the piece by Rachel Vanoven, where she candidly shares her experience on how she came around to love her maternity sessions. You'll also discover tips, insight and wisdom on increasing maternity bookings, letting go of the fear of shooting outdoors and diving underwater!

All in all this issue is a labour of love! ☆

Until the next issue...

Love,

lisa

JOIN THE CONVERSATION!
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EDEN *BAO*


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A Master Portrait Photographer with the Master Photographers International, Eden specializes and excels in photographing beautiful maternity and newborn portraiture. She is recognized as one of the best maternity photographers in the world by TopTeny Magazine and locally by Expertise. Eden holds a Bachelor of Business Administration, Advanced Communicator Bronze recognition at Toastmaster International and has taught in private mentoring and workshops in Canada, United States and Brazil. Her background in photography, education and public speaking makes her a sought-after mentor and teacher. WEBSITE ☆ FACEBOOK ☆ INSTAGRAM

BRIONY *BOHM*


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Briony Bohm is an award winning professional photographer based out of Denver, Colorado. She is a sentimental daydreamer who loves celebrating motherhood with mamas and their loves. Briony has been recognized for her maternity artwork, and teaches other photographers at the Beautiful Bellies Photography Workshop. Briony is recognized for her attention to detail, her unique maternity posing, and her ability to capture the beauty growing life.

WEBSITE ☆ FACEBOOK ☆ INSTAGRAM

KELLY *BROWN*


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Canon Master Kelly Brown is a Portrait Photographer and Educator from Brisbane, Australia. She is the founder of Little Pieces Photography, The Baby Summit and Spine Street Studios. Kelly has won numerous awards, nationally and internationally. She travels the world presenting at photography conferences, judging print competitions and teaching workshops. WEBSITE ☆ FACEBOOK ☆ INSTAGRAM



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TIFFANY *BURKE*

Tiffany Burke is a natural light portrait photographer who specializes in maternity and boudoir. She also teaches Social Media Marketing to small businesses owners. Tiffany lives in Tacoma, Washington with her husband Sean with whom she runs a movie production company. They have two sons, and a new baby girl, and are also about to do foster to adopt. Tiffany loves empowering all women, all shapes and sizes and loves teaching other photographers how to do the same.

WEBSITE ☆ FACEBOOK ☆ INSTAGRAM



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JENNY *CRUGER*

Jenny Cruger established the simple. pure. organic. brand of motherhood photography, creating the idea of organic portraits for maternity, newborn, baby, and family sessions beginning in 2010, and went on to train top photographers across the country, including those in Texas, California, Atlanta and beyond, in creating a complete experience for clients from the beginning, with planning sessions, studio wardrobes, and intimate moments between moms, dads, and their tiniest loves, to ending with luxury heirloom artwork in their homes.

WEBSITE ☆ FACEBOOK ☆ INSTAGRAM



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SHELLY *FERGUSON*

Shelly Ferguson is a Toronto area based artist that turned her earlier love of drawing and painting portraits into a passion for creating simple, artistic photography now using her camera and Photoshop in lieu of her paint brushes. She currently specializes in newborn and maternity portraits for clients as well as teaching other photographers from around the world her methods of creating her art.

WEBSITE ☆ FACEBOOK ☆ INSTAGRAM

CHELSEY *HILL*



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Chelsey Hill is a newborn and family photographer based in Akron, Ohio. She yearns to capture authentic & organic moments that enhance life's natural beauty. When she is not running Chelsey Hill Photography, she can be found spending time with the loves of her life: her husband and two little girls.

WEBSITE ☆ FACEBOOK ☆ INSTAGRAM

JULIA *KELLEHER*



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Join us at www.jewel-tv.com for free weekly education on all topics business for maternity, newborn and family photographers.

Julia Kelleher, MPhotog., M.Artist., Cr., CPP
Diamond Photographer Of The Year & Canon Par Excellence Winner
Newborn & Family Portrait Artist, Marketing & Business Systems Expert

WEBSITE ☆ FACEBOOK ☆ INSTAGRAM

REINA *PROCEE*



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Reina Procee is a portrait photographer based out of Montreal, Quebec, Canada. She specializes in capturing newborns and women's fine art portraiture. You can also find her as a guest teacher with The Milky Way course "5 Days to Photoshop", and the creator of The Delicate Workflow, which she created exclusively for The Milky Way. Reina has worked all across Canada and has plans to venture into the States as well as Europe this year! WEBSITE ☆ FACEBOOK ☆ INSTAGRAM



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DANA *PUGH*

Dana Pugh is an internationally renowned family and children's photographer based in Okotoks, AB, Canada. She picked up a camera 12 years ago to document her own kids which lead to her starting a business called Short and Sweet Photography in 2007. A few years ago, she decided to just go by her own name as she was tired of being called Short and Sweet—no matter how true it was ;) She has won numerous awards, been a judge for a number of different international image competitions, but—most importantly, she photographs amazing families everywhere. It is her desire to show families the beauty in their connection with each other—tangible proof of the love that they feel for each other. WEBSITE ☆ FACEBOOK ☆ INSTAGRAM



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STEPHANIE *ROBIN*

Stephanie Robin of Stephanie Robin Photography is noted for emotive family imagery. Named NAPCP Photographer of the Year 2011, she holds placings in international competitions and accreditations in Newborn, Child, and Maternity through PPOC. She co-heads APNPI and works professionally with Canon Canada while speaking and teaching internationally on the art of safe newborn posing.
WEBSITE ☆ FACEBOOK ☆ INSTAGRAM



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BRIGETTE *SCHAFFARZICK*

Brigette is a Maternity, Newborn, and Family photographer living in the heart of Seattle, WA. She shares her little 100-year-old craftsman bungalow with her husband, two young children, Bengal kitties plus whatever worms, spiders or other critters their kids bring home. A former photojournalist, Brigette has always been more interested in capturing authentic moments above anything else. Family comes first, her business a close second...and laughter, well laughter is constant. WEBSITE ☆ FACEBOOK ☆ TWITTER

RACHEL *VANOVEN*



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Rachel Vanoven is an international speaker and educator who tries not to take herself too seriously, but is 100% passionate about helping others achieve their photography goals. She has been in business for ten years and is the creator of the original Newborn eWorkshop and the subsequent Family eWorkshop. Rachel lives in Indianapolis, Indiana with her husband and three kids.

WEBSITE ☆ FACEBOOK ☆ INSTAGRAM



SUBTLE PHOTOGRAPHY BY MONICA


"A GRAND ADVENTURE IS ABOUT TO BEGIN."
WINNIE THE POOH
ALAINA ROSS • BELLIES N BABIES PHOTOGRAPHY

MATERNITY PORTRAITURE
PAST AND PRESENT



PORTRAIT OF AN UNKNOWN LADY • MARCUS GHEERAERTS THE YOUNGER C. 1595
LICENSE IS IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

EDEN BAO

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY © EDEN BAO UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

In today's world, the Internet and social media enable discussion about pregnancy.

MATERNITY IMAGES APPEAR IN magazines, television, movies and the web. Information, expressions and experiences are shared openly and celebrated.

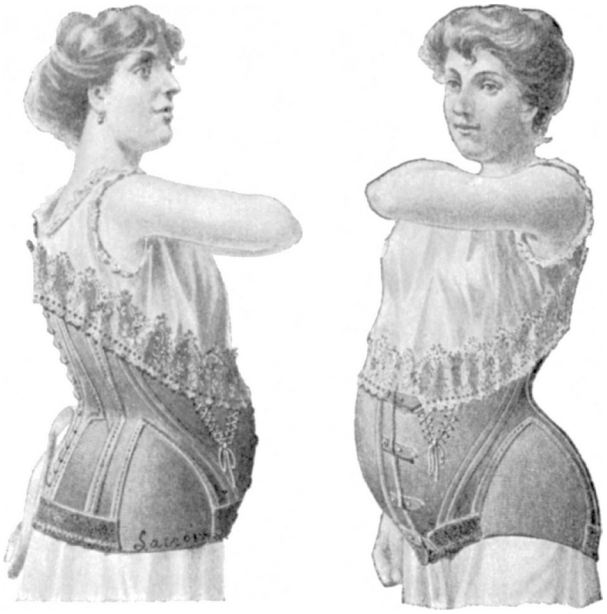
It hasn't always been this way. In the middle ages, pregnancy and childbirth was a very private affair. Common women did not write down nor record their lives. Women of noble class would close themselves off to the world during their pregnancy and childbirth. There were very few accounts and images of the pregnancy experience. News of pregnancy and childbirth only came if it was a matter of public knowledge, such as the birth of the King's heir.

As rare as they were, maternity portraits did exist but they belong to the realm of wealthy women. One of the earliest maternity portraits came from the Baroque period (1500 - 1600s) by English Portrait Painter Marcus Gheeraerts (you can see it on the previous page). The expectant mother of noble class is wearing a maternity gown called the "Adrienne" which featured a high waist and a skirt with ample pleats that expand as her belly grows.

Below is the maternity portrait of Anna Margareta von Haugwitz, a German noblewoman by Matthaeus Merian the Younger, Swiss Portrait Painter in the 1600s.



ANNA MARGARETA VON HAUGWITZ • MATTHAEUS MERIAN THE YOUNGER C. 1648
LICENSE IS IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN



VICTORIAN MATERNITY CORSET • SOURCE UNKNOWN

During the prudish Victorian era (1800s to 1900s), pregnancy was a condition to be hidden for women of all classes. The maternity wardrobe evolved to hide the growing belly. Women even wore maternity corsets to restrict and minimize the baby bump! Not surprisingly, maternity portraits were non-existent.

Then in 1952, high profile American actress and comedienne Lucille Ball was one of the first women to show off her bump on TV, albeit conservatively dressed. In the I love Lucy "Lucy is Enceinte" episode, an over-the-moon pregnant wife tries to tell her husband that they are having a baby. It was risky, scandalous and controversial during its time but it was a hit. While this was a step forward for pregnant women, images of pregnant women were still private and hidden away in family albums. Any public images are exclusive to public figures like the First Lady Jackie Kennedy and Princess Diana of Wales.

TODAY, SHOWING OFF THE BUMP IS THE NORM.

As a genre, maternity photography is relatively young and has only been around within the last decade or so. Many trends and styles have emerged and can be categorized in the following styles:

CLASSIC MATERNTIY

Annie Leibowitz's maternity style shoot with Demi Moore is what's commonly known as classic maternity portrait style in the public's eye. Simple backdrop, with the focus on the expectant mother's pregnant body. This style may also fall under boudoir maternity and is normally photographed in the studio.

CLASSIC MATERNITY PHOTOGRAPHY



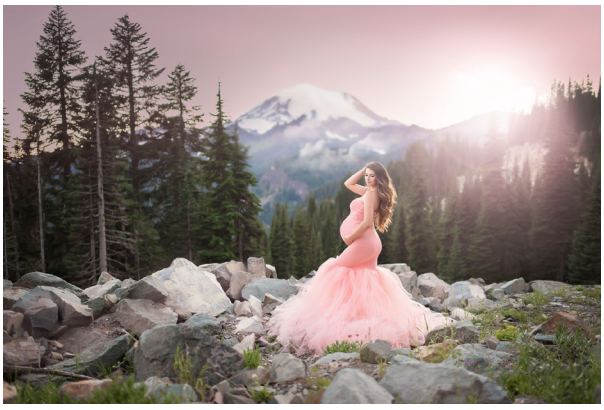


BEAUTY (GLAMOUR) MATERNITY

Essentially a beauty photo shoot but the subject is the pregnant woman. Glamour maternity photography is for those who want to capture their beauty and feminine form but not have to bare their bodies.

GLMAOUR MATERNITY PHOTOGRAPHY







Glamour maternity can take place in the studio, on-location or the great outdoors.

LIFESTYLE (DOCUMENTARY) MATERNITY

Documentary photos to record the expecting mama's pregnancy in the art of every day. The primary goal of lifestyle maternity is to tell stories of real-life and show relationships and

interaction as it happens.

LIFESTYLE MATERNITY PHOTOGRAPHY
© MYRTLE AND MOSS PHOTOGFAPHY





CREATIVE MATERNITY (MILKBATH, MILK DRESS, RAINBOW)

For expectant mamas who want their maternity portraits to be creative and unique. Creative maternity includes milk baths, florals, milk dress, body paint, rainbow smoke bombs and dry ice to name a few. There is no end to how women want to express themselves and their bumps!

For Millennials, the most-photographed generation, recording milestones like their pregnancies are here to stay. ☆

CREATIVE MATERNITY PHOTOGRAPHY







WATER MAMAS



ANASTASIA BLATT • JUNEBUG PHOTOGRAPHY



BRITNEY BARLOW



CHERYL POLK



CHRIS JAMOROFF • KASTARRA IMAGES

"I USUALLY CLAIM THAT PREGNANT WOMEN SHOULD NOT READ BOOKS ABOUT PREGNANCY AND BIRTH. THEIR TIME IS TOO PRECIOUS. THEY SHOULD, RATHER, WATCH THE MOON AND SING TO THEIR BABY IN THE WOMB." *MICHEL ODENT*

HOW I FELL IN LOVE *WITH MATERNITY SESSIONS*



RACHEL VANOVEN

ALL IMAGES IN THIS ARTICLE © RACHEL VANOVEN

My knee-jerk reaction when I was first asked to teach maternity photography for the upcoming Maternity Retreat by the Milky Way was a big, fat NO.

ANYONE WHO KNOWS ME, knows that I'm vocal that it's not my thing. I've never taught it before because I had a chip on my shoulder about it. My stance on maternity photography was all based on my two favorite types of sessions: newborns and family. Newborns, I call all the shots, I style them, I pose them, I control the light and best of all, newborns can't judge my quirkiness! Family sessions, I love for their fast-paced, high energy, dancing with kids and soaking up the golden hour light. I love the predictable unpredictability of family sessions. I'm good with kids because I freaking love everything about them...I feel like a big kid myself half the time!

SO WHY DO MATERNITY SHOOTS SCARE ME? Scare isn't the right word...I think that it's more like there is this perception of what maternity shoots should be, and what they shouldn't be (dare I bring up Beyoncé?) and I don't really think they can be as cookie cutter as the industry thinks.

Right now, we're trying to stick every pregnant mama in a milk bath, or a field with a flower crown...and I don't know, it just doesn't sit right with me, personally. Back to newborns...they are all blank slates, so doing the same thing with every baby doesn't go against my personal artistic tastes. And when it comes to family photography, I don't style my clients, I just want them to dress normal.

SO. BACK TO MATERNITY PHOTOGRAPHY. I guess I feel like when a mom dresses "normal" as in jeans and a tank top, it's like...how many different ways can she touch her belly? And that feels weird to me, not to mention as I said earlier...kids are my jam, I love 'em. Adults, they're the tough ones. Give me a colicky 15 day old with acid reflux any day over a maternity client who is desperately trying to mold herself into something she's not. Whether it's requesting a fully nude session "that she saw on Pinterest" much to her husband's mortification, or donning a maternity gown and elaborate crown and frolicking through a field at sunset when she doesn't even OWN a dress in real life...those clients are tough for me.

HERE COMES A BUT...A BIG BUT (snickers like the 10 year old I am)...when clients let me call the shots, or they aren't trying to make themselves something they aren't, I LOVE maternity sessions. When they don't try to make a two hour let's-see-how-many-different-ways-I-can-touch-my-belly-in-five-different-outfits-and-locations, they shoot up my list of favorite things to photograph.

Let's face it, pregnant women are not only doing something that seems miraculous



(they're growing a freaking HUMAN!) but the whole "glowing" thing is totally legit. There's this inward aura they have - I often find myself making portraits of them without their belly even IN the shot, because their faces are just that dang perfectly radiant. So that realization was step one in Rachel deciding that, yes, I do love maternity sessions, and maybe I've been harsh in my dismissing them as "not my thing".

THE NEXT STEP WAS TO RELIEVE PRESSURE FROM BOTH ME AND THE MOM-TO-BE. My maternity sessions are "cheap" - $300 - and are always mini sessions (under an hour) and don't include children or spouses AND can only be booked with the purchase of a full newborn session ($1200). If someone wants a full maternity session with kids and spouses and outfit changes, first they are going to have to twist my arm and bribe me, and if they come across as laid back, I'll book a maternity session for them, but it will be full price and will be treated like a family session, just with a bump added in!

THE LAST STEP IN REALIZING THAT I TRULY *DO* LOVE MATERNITY SESSIONS WAS GOING INTO EACH ONE WITH ALL SORTS OF CREATIVE IDEAS. Look through my maternity images, I'll be darned if you find two that look identical. I think I'd go crazy if I had to shoot every maternity session the same, trying to fit every mom to be in the same







mold. Not that I don't appreciate photographers who shoot maternity sessions in a consistent manner, I do the same thing with newborns! But when it comes to maternity sessions, I love the thrill I get before doing each one differently than any before it. It almost captures that magic feeling I had ten years ago when I was starting my photography business, and EVERY session was a new experience and I had to think on my feet, figuring out angles and lighting and props and locations.

SO I AGREED TO DO THE MATERNITY RETREAT, and chose the topic "Studio Maternity", which sounded boring but safe, since ya know, I'm just coming to accept my love of this genre of photography. But if you're paying attention to what I've already written, or follow me on Facebook/Instagram, I hope you've come to the conclusion that I don't really love anything "boring"...and I found myself the morning of my "boring" studio maternity session frantically buying my local Kroger out of all of their flowers and ferns, then running all over Indianapolis gathering MORE foliage from various florists...because remember? Every maternity session is a chance for me to break out of my posing-sleeping-babies-families-in-a-field-at-sunset routine!!

So $200 in greenery and flora later, without even realizing what I was going to do with it, I start rearranging it on the concrete floor in my studio. I didn't even glance at Pinterest or consider googling "Maternity session with a crap load of flowers"; I pretty much just willed it to look pretty.

My model, Autumn, was a champ. Getting her pregnant butt supine on the concrete on top of ferns and me, completely winging it! But you know what? It was absolute magic, and exhilarating, and it made me feel something. Actually, it made me feel like I created something. And yeah, I know that technically I create every photo session, but this felt different and I loved it.

Just like I loved last year when I dragged my sister-in-law into a natural spring in Florida and shot while I was thigh deep in the water, with a lens I rarely use (70-200 2.8). Or when one of my clients brought her giant Great Dane to her maternity session and we fought our way through bug infested brambles to







thee perfect spot I had been eyeballing but knew I could never take a family to or a new mom. Or how I felt when I did an all-white in home session, complete with a white baby's breath floral crown. Even the few maternity-gown-floral-crown-sunset sessions all felt different and were in different locations.

I used to be on the fence about the whole floral crown thing...probably just sour grapes since my maternity sessions for my three consisted of 1) a shot I took of myself in the mirror wearing my pajamas when I was 19 and pregnant with Brynn 2) my favorite maternity pictures that my sister took back in 2006 with a point and shoot camera in her kitchen and 3) an impromptu maternity session shot by a friend in which I wore blue jeans and a white tank top...because 2009 was the year of white tops with denim bottoms. So you know what? I love floral crowns on pregnant mamas...y'all are mother loving GODDESSES doing all sorts of magic in your wombs. And if my client doesn't own a dress, but wants to be photographed in a flowy gown, who am I to say that's not who they are?

SO THERE YOU HAVE IT, THE STORY OF HOW RACHEL VANOVEN REALIZED SHE WAS IN LOVE WITH MATERNITY PHOTOGRAPHY. I hope that I'm not the only one who used to have a frigid relationship with maternity sessions, and I hope that anyone reading this who does feel that way can approach maternity portraits with fresh eyes and see it as a chance to change up their photography routine! ☆

THE ELEGANT SILHOUETTE



CYNTHIA AMELSBEEK • ROCYKA FOTOGRAFIE



JAMIE BAKER



CLAUDIA BLADUS



JENNIFER VEITCH

"TO BE PREGNANT IS TO BE VITALLY ALIVE, THOROUGHLY WOMAN, AND UNDOUBTEDLY INHABITED."

ANNE BUCHANAN & DEBRA KLINGSPORN

HOW TO CONVINCE CLIENTS *TO DO MATERNITY SESSIONS*



REINA PROCEE

ALL IMAGES IN THIS ARTICLE © REINA PROCEE

My greatest love has always been photographing women, but getting them in front of the camera has also been my greatest challenge.

WOMEN ALWAYS SEEM TO need an occasion to be photographed. Engagement, Marriage, Newborn, or Family Sessions to name a few. But when you tell her that she will have no one in the frame with her, and that the session is all about her, most women balk at the idea. They brush it off as unimportant, or feel it is a needless added expense, or think it will make them look vain.

For women, Maternity sessions bridge that divide between the idea that photos of themselves are unimportant and the idea that the pending birth also counts as an occasion. So in essence, if they are in the frame by themselves, the session is still not technically about them, it's about the growing belly. It somehow takes the fears and insecurities away and gives them that excuse. I totally get this mentality, but do not like to encourage it. This is why I do not make the maternity session all about the baby or the belly but instead about the mama - but I will teach you more about that in the up and coming Maternity retreat. For now, the first thing we need to do: get that mama-to-be into your studio or in front of your camera!

1. MAKE IT IRRESISTIBLE.

My maternity clients has their newborn session fee waived and are able to combine their galleries from both the Maternity and Newborn session into one digital package, if they purchase one of my two top packages. This is what personally works for me, others have made it an upgrade to their newborn session, or chose the option to do the maternity like a mini-session. If a client is inquiring about a newborn session, and it isn't last minute, I will still tell them about the maternity & newborn session deal. I often have people choose to do the maternity session even though they were originally just going to do newborn, so make the deal irresistible!

2. JUST WHO ARE THESE PHOTOS FOR?

Remind them that these photos aren't just for them, but in fact for the sweet little baby growing inside! I have read that children have higher self-esteem when they see pictures of themselves and have less confusion or fear of the reproductive system when parents are more open about how their mother brought them into the world. I have had clients tell me that their little one now asks to look at the photo album of their maternity and newborn images as a bedtime story. Children love seeing themselves in photographs, and how awesome that they are seeing how much they were loved before their parents even met them!



3. THE IMPORTANCE OF HAIR & MAKEUP.

Have a great relationship with a salon. I work with a salon here in Montreal that I love, they have a great vibe and they love my work! Getting hair and makeup done is optional for my clients, so it is an added cost for them, and some people prefer to do their own. However, when mamas do decide to use it they get a reduced price from the salon. As well, when my client comes in after her salon appointment, she's not only confident in my abilities (because the ladies at the salon gush about my work), they also feel calm, pampered and absolutely beautiful.

4. HAVE A STUDIO WARDROBE.

I feel it is super important to have a studio wardrobe full of beautiful pieces to dress my clients in. Often women do not spend much money on maternity clothes and when they do it's on practical, everyday wear. The majority of my clients say that they have no idea what to bring because nothing fits them right. So, I not only have traditional maternity dresses bought from vendors, but also beautiful flowing dresses that I buy from pretty much anywhere: H&M, Shein.com, Old Navy, etc. If the dress is large, flowing, and flattering I will buy it for my studio. The importance is to buy large sizes or stretchy fabric to make sure you are able to dress the majority of your clients; you can always pin the dress if they are a smaller client. Most of my clients only come to their session with a couple of colored sets

of bras and undies and a nude colored set of bra and undies for under my dresses. I do encourage them to bring dresses or accessories that they love, but often clients are happy to wear my dresses.

5. HAVE A PORTFOLIO SHOWING YOUR STYLE.

It may help to have model calls to start off your portfolio. This is what really worked for me to convince mamas to come in. If they were already doing newborn sessions, I would offer them a free maternity session and a 8x10 print of their images, and if they wanted to purchase more images there would be a discount or credit. This will help you to POST your maternity images on your social media and onto your website (if you don't post it, people won't see it, so they won't know you are doing maternity sessions). Just always make sure you have a model release signed before the session. If your style has changed, make sure your work looks consistent on your website, so clients know what to expect.

6. EMBRACE THE CURVES.

Understand the best ways to photograph a pregnant body (you will learn how I do this in the maternity retreat). Things to remember: accentuate their curves, look for shapes in their body when you pose them, help them to show the roundness of their belly, and don't forget to pose their arms, legs, and chin as well. When your portfolio shows how beautiful all of your clients are, your potential client will know you will be able to make them feel the same! So definitely educate yourself on how to pose pregnant women.

7. MATCH THEIR STYLE.

Make sure you match their style. I like to present my clients with categories, from which they can choose any, and all that apply:

- Hipster - you are looking for cute images, white tank tops and jeans, bursts of color with accessories, you are most comfortable in your own clothes and would like to plan out your own outfits.
- Fine Art - tasteful nudes, black & whites, high contrast and emotional images are what you are drawn to from my portfolio.
- Glamour - you want sparkle and tulle, you want to feel beautiful and glamorous. Your images hark to old Hollywood and timeless beauty.
- Earth Mama - you want to be one with nature, you want outdoor images with beautiful golden sun, weather permitting we will venture out into a nature park and capture you in the warmth and wild of mother nature.

Allowing them to choose their style, ensures you will give them images that they will love, but it will also help them to properly describe to you in a way that can be easily understood what they are envisioning for their session.



8. INCLUDE THE REST OF THE FAMILY.

Whether they have other children or not, the second you put their partner or the rest of the children in the mix, you will see your mamas just start to glow. I always do this at the very end of the session, because by that time mama has confidence in me, and she can just settle into her hubby's strong arms, or into the beautiful chaos of her children who are all so excited to meet the new baby. I often ask that dads come at the end of the session (whether they have older kids or not). It just seems to help mama relax when it is just her and I in the studio, so when hubby comes in he will see her calm, beautiful, and happy. It always seems to completely enchant him.

GOOD LUCK WITH BOOKING YOUR MATERNITY CLIENTS.

I know these tips will help! Happy Shooting! ☆

ALL ABOUT THE BELLY



CRYSTAL LAWBURGH



BRITNEY BARLOW



ALICIA DONOVAN • MOMENTS ENSHRINED PHOTOGRAPHY



CALI DECARO • RAMBLING PHOTOGARPHY

"MAKING THE DECISION TO HAVE A BABY IS MOMENTOUS.
IT IS TO DECIDE FOREVER TO HAVE YOUR HEART
GO WALKING AROUND OUTSIDE YOUR BODY."
ELIZABETH STONE

WHY THE CORRECT POSING *MATTERS*



BRIONY BOHM

ALL IMAGES IN THIS ARTICLE © BRIONY BOHM

To some mamas, the idea of maternity photography is as exciting as the idea of having the baby itself.

THEY ARE CAPTIVATED BY the glow and radiance that pregnancy has given them. To others, the idea is terrifying, as their body has transformed into something they hardly recognize. In my experience, maternity clients tend to fall into the latter category. They walk into the studio with frightened eyes and hesitation written all over their face. It doesn't take magic and fairy dust to create images that showcase the beauty of a pregnant mama in the most stunning way. Professional, and exceptional, maternity photography comes with an understanding that certain poses will photograph better than others, and with a bit of guidance in angles and body placement, clients will view their final images with happy tears in their eyes.

TWO THINGS ALL MAMAS WANT:

1. To be thinner.
2. To be beautiful.

When I am posing maternity clients, I play these two points constantly in my head. How can I slim her, and how can I bring out the beauty she possesses? We all want our clients to say, "I had no idea I could look like that!" My friends, it's possible to photograph any maternity client and have them fall in love with their images. The key is taking what every mama wants, and turning a "good" image into a "great" image.

When posing maternity clients, a simple shift in angle can mean the difference between a good image and a great image. Shifting angles will instantly slim your client, produce curves where you want them, and reduce curves where you don't. My rule of thumb is to always shoot at or above eye level, bringing the viewer's eye to the upper portion of the body. Having a stool on hand is a great way to change your camera angle and give variety to your images. If you ever find





yourself in any shooting position that isn't a standing one, stop and stand up!

A few maternity clients will photograph beautifully straight on, but many will not. Changing your client's angle is also a key ingredient for a great photograph. Knowing which angles work best for certain body shapes is incredibly important. When photographing curvy mamas, I prefer to pose them between forty-five and ninety degrees to my camera. The hips and the shoulders are the widest parts of the body, therefore turning the body away from my camera will create the illusion of a slimmer frame.

One of the most important aspects of maternity posing is body placement. There are so many ways to change posing to create the best possible image, but many photographers get stuck in a posing rut. We have all seen the classic maternity pose, ninety degrees, one arm on top, and one arm on the bottom. There are dozens of ways to create beautifully unique images, simply by changing leg positions, arms, and even using the floor or ground. Again, going back to what every mama wants, my goal is to choose body placements that showcase her beauty and slim her figure. When posing legs I always have a bend in the knee and a pop of the toe. This creates a slimmer leg, and enhances the booty. When placing arms, I keep in mind that arms are one of the most disliked body parts for a mama. My goal is to create long lean looking arms that enhance the image, not distract from it.

Clients may walk into my studio with frightened eyes and hesitation, but they always leave feeling beautiful and confident. Pregnancy is a magical time in a mama's life. It is our job as professional photographers to give beautiful images that make her feel beautiful. ☆

WASTING TIME *IN PHOTOSHOP?*

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BEAUTIFUL BLACK & WHITE



JENNIFER VEITCH



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KALEY SHROPSHIRE



"LIFE IS A FLAME THAT IS ALWAYS BURNING ITSELF OUT, BUT IT CATCHES FIRE AGAIN EVERY TIME A CHILD IS BORN."

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

DIFFERENT STYLES
SAME VISION



DANA PUGH

ALL IMAGES IN THIS ARTICLE © DANA PUGH

Being pregnant changes a woman.

SO MANY TIMES, WHEN I get a woman in front of my camera, the first thing they tell me is all about how they aren't photogenic or the part of themselves that they like the least. Photography has taught me that, no matter how drop dead gorgeous a woman is, she always has insecurities.

But, that changes when they are pregnant. Women own their bodies in a way that makes them literally glow. They realize how miraculous their bodies are, and embrace being photographed as they know that this change is limited.

You can actually see the time tick by as your body changes. Add to this the inevitable feeling of joy...of celebration...about adding a person to your family, well...maternity photographs become, at least for me, a precious celebration.

AS A PHOTOGRAPHER, I AM KNOWN FOR MY LIFESTYLE WORK. I have, for years, created work on location documenting natural expressions and connections in locations that have meaning or importance to the family. This approach has allowed me to create images with both personal meaning to my clients and a photographic aesthetic that I adore.

It is my very strong belief that the time when one is expecting a baby is an incredibly special time in the history of a family and should be documented in a way that illustrates that significance, but also the aesthetic beauty of the mother's ever-changing body. That has led me to explore a more directed portrait approach specifically celebrating the beauty of an expectant mother.



AS AN UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHER, IT SEEMED TO ME THE PERFECT AVENUE TO EXPLORE THAT BEAUTY. Being a photographer from the foothills of the Canadian Rockies, my opportunities to explore underwater imagery are limited. When I have an opportunity to photograph in the water, I truly want to explore and try to create something unique. I've never been interested in trying to mimic what others have done, but rather in trying





to find my own way through experimentation.

Every underwater maternity portrait that I create for a subject is truly unique in its own right. That's why I find it so difficult to specifically talk about my own process outside of preparation and technicalities.

I'm not the kind of photographer who plans a specific shot — more a specific situation or experience where I know that beautiful photographs can be naturally created. It comes from my experience as a documentary photographer — trusting that real moments will unfold in beautiful situations. That sometimes my best work comes out of letting go of control instead of reaching for it.

For me, I feel like that has been a huge part of my training...learning when to step in and control the experience versus when to let go.





I BRING THAT APPROACH TO THE STUDIO AS WELL. Although, obviously, in a studio we have certain limitations. But it's easy enough to create opportunities for natural connection in beautiful light if you are used to using a more 'situational' approach over a more posed approach. It just takes being willing to try new things and taking some calculated risks.

I try to bring a bit of that spontaneity that I love from lifestyle work into a more controlled portrait experience so that I can create portraits that are more organic and natural while still showing the aesthetic beauty of the expectant mother.

Whether that is in studio or in the water. I love how this approach lets me move from lifestyle to studio to water with some ease while still maintaining my own unique look. ☆

LIT FROM WITHIN



CONNIE NEWHOOK • CONNIE LESLIE PHOTOGRAPHY



HEATHER DOUGHERTY • DOUGHERTY PHOTO DESIGNS



ALICIA BIELSKI


"BEFORE YOU WERE BORN I CARRIED YOU UNDER
MY HEART. FROM THE MOMENT YOU ARRIVED
IN THIS WORLD UNTIL THE MOMENT I LEAVE IT,
I WILL ALWAYS CARRY YOU IN MY HEART."
MANDY HARRISON
AMY SINE

TOP TIPS FOR *STUNNING MATERNITY IMAGES*



KELLY BROWN

ALL IMAGES IN THIS ARTICLE © KELLY BROWN

Pregnancy is a thing of beauty that should be captured.

AND IT IS OUR JOB as skilled photographers to draw out the beauty, love and femininity of our clients.

Below are my top tips for creating stunning photographs that expectant mums will cherish forever.

BEFORE YOUR SESSION, THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR CLIENTS ABOUT HOW THEY ARE FEELING AND HOW THEY WOULD LIKE TO BE PHOTOGRAPHED. We have to remember that for some women, even though they look radiant they may be feeling nauseous, tired, sore and larger than they would like to. So, understanding this will help make them as comfortable as possible during their shoot. Also, asking if they will be bringing their partner and children will help you to prepare beforehand as well. I do love it when family members are involved and encourage it, as this is a wonderful opportunity to capture the anticipation, joy and excitement during this special time in their lives.

Asking how they would like to be photographed allows you to plan for your session. I like to ask if there is anything specific that they had in mind or a particular location that is special to them - asking as many questions as possible will help you to create stunning images that they will adore.

THE FIRST THING YOUR POTENTIAL CLIENTS NEED TO KNOW IS WHEN TO BOOK THEIR SESSION - I tell them the best time is between 28 and 36 weeks. This is when their baby bump is showing beautifully but they're not too close to their due date.

NEXT, YOU WANT TO PREPARE THEM FOR WHAT'S INVOLVED AND WHAT THEY CAN EXPECT DURING THEIR SESSION. This will make them feel more confident and comfortable in front of the camera. Things they will need to know:

- What to wear/bring
- Where the session will be held
- The time of the session and how long it will go for
- What you supply for their shoot
- And what comes next, in terms of timeline for them to view their final images and products they can order

DURING THE SESSION, YOUR CLIENTS WILL BE DEPENDENT ON YOU TO GUIDE THEM, directing them with how the session will flow, when to change outfits and how to pose. This will not only give them faith in you but in themselves knowing what to expect and what to do.

Before you start posing your client, think about how you are going to light each setup; this





will have a big impact on the overall outcome of your photographs. Light is what creates mood and shapes the body. So, whether you are using natural or artificial light, knowing how to direct it is important. My go-to style of lighting for maternity portraits is “Short Lighting”; this is when the face and body are turned towards the light source on a 45-degree angle. This puts the side of the body and face closest to the camera in the shadows, which is great for low key or darker images. It is also more sculpting and flattering, especially for mums-to-be.

NOW ON TO POSING YOUR CLIENTS WITH CONFIDENCE. You don’t want your client to feel awkward in front of the camera, so giving them clear instructions and guidance is a must. It comes down to a few small things that will either make or break your images. Start off slow and then move into more intimate images. When positioning I like to start at the feet and work my way up sculpting the body.

Following are my Dos & Don’ts for maternity posing...

DO:

- Show your clients what to do; this gives them a visual so they can mimic you
- Bring the ankles together
- Lift the heel closest to the camera off the ground
- Place hands on or near the body to give more shape and outline to the baby bump
- Angle the body away from the camera to see the profile
- Have them stand up tall with shoulders back to prevent slouching
- Shift their weight to the back leg
- Place a hand on the lower back to create an "S" shape to the body
- Get creative with your camera angles, shooting from above is very flattering, and don't forget to move around to get different frames; both pullbacks and close-ups
- Talk to them: give lots of positive feedback and reassure your client that they look amazing

DON'T:

- Expect your client to know what to do
- Have them stand flat-footed
- Photograph them straight-on, this can make a woman look masculine and take emphasis off the baby bump
- Crop through the belly
- Shoot from below
- Make them move too much: getting up and down can be very tiring and uncomfortable
- Photograph your client's head tilted back
- Position hands inappropriately

And remember, posing and holding different positions for any length of time is taxing and hard work when you're pregnant, so allow for small breaks and offer water.

THE GOAL IS TO CAPTURE TIMELESS IMAGES THAT TELL *THEIR* STORY, so remember to remove all distracting elements and focus on them.

This is such a momentous time for expectant parents and an honor for us to document so we need to remember that it's not just about the bump, this is their time to celebrate family, the life that they have created and the next stage of their lives. ☆

ALL IN THE FAMILY



ASHLEY RENS



AMANDA WHITEGIVER • WILD ORCHARD STUDIOS



KATIE MAYE PHOTOGRAPHY



KAYLA CHASE • KAYLA J PHOTOGRAPHY



"PREGNANCY IS A PROCESS THAT INVITES YOU TO SURRENDER TO THE UNSEEN FORCE BEHIND ALL LIFE."

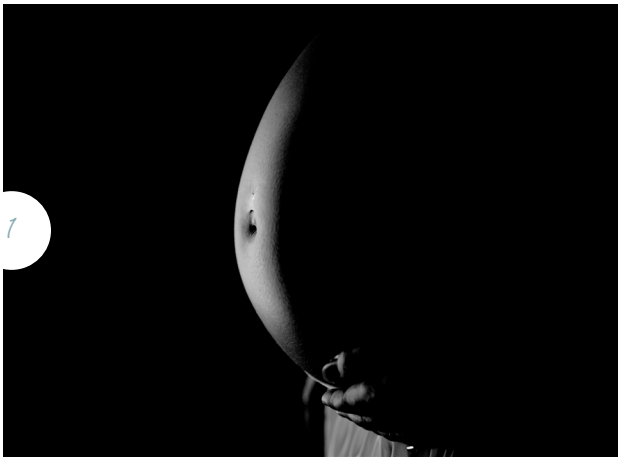
JUDY FORD

LEARN WITH THE MILKY WAY

STUDIO *VS. NATURAL LIGHT*

Can you tell which is which? Take your best guess, then take a peek at the answers below. (No cheating!)

1



2



3



4



studio light: 1, 2, 3 natural light: 4

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HOW TO FALL IN LOVE WITH *FAMILY MATERNITY SESSIONS*



BRIGETTE SCHAFFARZICK

ALL IMAGES IN THIS ARTICLE © BRIGETTE SCHAFFARZICK

If I had a nickel for every time I've heard a fellow photographer tell me how much they loathe maternity sessions I'd be able to retire!

WELL, MAYBE NOT RETIRE, but enjoy a pretty nice steak dinner! Kidding aside, I have heard a lot of photogs complain about how awkward they think maternity sessions are. And, if I'm going to be 100% honest with you, there was a time that I didn't LOVE maternity sessions either. Add in requests for their children to be part of the session and I wanted to run for the hills. Clients bombarded me with Pinterest boards of their visions, and sadly those visions just weren't me!

Maternity sessions tend to come with the territory when you specialize in Newborn photography, so I was committed to finding a way to enjoy them rather than constantly refer them out (and then loosing those clients). There had to be a way that I could approach Maternity and still stay true to the photographer I wanted to be!

Fast forward several years, and with a lot of persistence, trial and error, and just doing A LOT of maternity + family sessions, and I can honestly say they have become some of my favorite sessions to shoot!

With my background in Photojournalism, I've always been captivated (and pretty much obsessed) with capturing REAL and AUTHENTIC moments. Why did maternity sessions have to be different? I realized that Maternity sessions, especially those for mothers who already had young children, were perhaps the MOST important kind of session to document! It would be the LAST time she could 100% devote her attention to her first born. Being a mother of two myself I began to realize how precious and fleeting those moments are!

> *It became my mission to capture those priceless moments for every single mother I photographed, the moments that I would want to cherish, the moments that are gone far too quickly!*

This is not to say that I don't also enjoy capturing a beautiful mother-to-be in a fabulous gown alone on a mountain top, or surrounded by a gorgeous field during Golden Hour. But I've dedicated this article to help you with the addition of family and children during maternity sessions. Below are my top tips for a successful and actually FUN Maternity/Family session.

THE SESSION "PREPARATION PACKET" If you take anything away from my rambling.... PLEASE help yourself AND your clients and design a Preparation Packet. Before I sent Prep Packets to my families, I encountered just about every issue you can imagine! From moms showing up in neon maxi dresses and stilettos (not made for the kind of landscape I typically



shoot in), to kids beginning our session by sucking on BLUE lollipops! I quickly learned that people simply need direction. Every photographer's Prep Packet will be different, and catered to your style, but preparing your clients will make a world of difference

COMPLIMENTING MOM WILL GO A LONG WAY! Let's face it, being pregnant is HARD... and being pregnant with another small child in tow, exhausting! It may seem like a silly think to put this down in writing, but I always make sure I have gone out of my way to compliment the mom! Nothing makes someone more beautiful than having confidence, so here's a simple way to start the session out right! A little "wow, you really look amazing" or "that dress looks perfect on you" goes a long way!!!

IT'S REALLY JUST AN OUTDOOR "PLAY-DATE." Now this tip is subjective and depends on your personality and style, but my sessions are VERY laid back. I'm all about capturing real, joyful and tender moments between family members. I lay this all out there in my Preparation Packet, making it crystal clear that we are basically going to be on an outdoor playdate and to be prepared to PLAY with their kids!

The only way to capture REAL moments is to do REAL things! I get dads down on their backs and play "airplane" with their kids. I have them dance and race with one another! Whatever it takes to evoke REAL emotion, I'll do it. I always have an arsenal of games and



activities for families to do if they happen to run out of ideas. Just be careful to never force anything that feels unnatural. Every now and then a client will slip in that isn't quite as playful as I am...I will always respect that and tone my energy down if I need to.

USE THE NATURE AROUND YOU I have ALWAYS been a lover of the great outdoors! There's simply something therapeutic about nature! The same holds true during your sessions. If you are having trouble breaking through and building a rapport with your family, find a log for the kids to climb on. Mom can hold their hands as they scamper along. Blowing on dandelions, making daisy headbands, just playing with sticks can bring out amazing moments just waiting to be captured. I had a tween one time that was a tough nut to crack...well, it may have been divine intervention, but we happened to look down in the grass and lo and behold a tiny, green tree frog hopped up at us! She giggled about that for the rest of our session!

BRING THEIR FAVORITE STUFFY, BLANKET OR EVEN BOOK This is especially important with younger children and toddlers. I outline this in the Preparation Packet to make sure that parents "secretly" bring the child's item so it can come out when it's most needed! 90% of the time that's at the very end of our session and makes for beautiful cuddles with mama and her belly.

DON'T FORGET ABOUT THE PETS Don't

overlook the furry children of "first time parents". I've had MANY a Family/Maternity session that didn't include human children, but animal ones! Four legged family members can hold a special place in their family, and images of them with their future brother or sister can be priceless! It can help to add a question in your pre-session questionnaire asking about pets, and if they plan on including them. Being surprised by a pet in a location that isn't ideal could ruin the shoot.



EMBRACE THE TIRED OR SAD CUDDLES With all of the outdoor adventures and playtime with mom and dad, a scraped knee or minor "boo boo" can happen... I delicately approach these moments as an opportunity to capture the tenderness of mom and dad nurturing their littles. Life isn't always perfect. Life is messy sometimes which can be just as beautiful, sometimes even more so! Some of my most precious memories with my own children involve difficult situations. Don't overlook those moments!

HAVE A LOOSE PLAN BUT DON'T BE AFRAID TO GO WITH THE FLOW. Last but not least, be flexible. Sometimes you set your heart on that ONE perfect shot, but small children aren't always predictable and your plans may be dashed. Don't fight it, go with the flow and you may be surprised at the moments that unveil themselves with the change in plans. ☆

THE MAMAS & THE PAPAS



INES MARTIN



AUDREY SPEAR



ALICIA DONOVAN



CLAIRE MAYO



ANNLIZ BONIN

"A BABY FILLS A PLACE IN YOUR HEART
THAT YOU NEVER KNEW WAS EMPTY."
AUTHOR UNKNOWN

CREATING NATURALLY GORGEOUS *MATERNITY SESSIONS*



JENNY CRUGER

ALL IMAGES IN THIS ARTICLE © JENNY CRUGER

I love maternity sessions that look effortless and natural without a lot of fuss, yet still make my clients look beautiful.

THE PERFECT MIX OF natural and simple, but still feminine and gorgeous. The trick is to keep it simple with camera-ready professional hair and makeup that still looks natural combined with a natural light studio that lends itself to more of a lifestyle look versus overly posed and glam.

HAIR AND MAKEUP I recommend that all my clients get hair and makeup done with the professional artists I work with, but it's even more important for maternity sessions because the focus is solely on them.

Even though my clients are beautiful without make up, having it professionally done always translates into more confidence in front of my camera and I want them to always feel as beautiful as I think they look.

WARDROBE Once hair and makeup is complete I go over clothing choices with them. Some of my clients bring their own clothing (or just one special dress, etc.) but most take advantage of my always growing and carefully curated studio wardrobe for mamas.

I do this for a variety of reasons. First, clients generally don't fully understand what to wear, what looks best on them, what looks best on camera, and what looks best in my particular style of photography. Something that looks great in front of another photographer's lens, may look horrible with me.

It also allows them to keep more of their budget for these photographs. I am constantly buying dresses from places like Free People and Anthropologie and if every single client of mine came in with 3-4 new things from there, they would have spent hundreds. I would much rather have it there for them so I know it will look great and then I know they can spend more with me.

It always depends on the client, but I like to shoot a variety of outfits: something more full



coverage, a dress, a slip, robe, bra/underwear set, etc. Not only does this allow me to see what really looks most flattering, but it gives them a small range of options without having completely different looks going on that contrast each other. If the client were to compile all their images into an album with me (a lot of my maternity clients choose albums) they will still look cohesive with different choices as a lot of my wardrobe has the same feel (neutral, cream, lace, feminine florals, blush, etc).

We choose a few things and change every few minutes as we are shooting. I have a very small studio and utilize one gorgeous window for side lit shots against my gray walls, backlit against the window, laying down on the bed, and every angle in between. Between a few outfit changes, various angles, and changing up the lighting situations I am able to create a variety with great cohesiveness.

THE BIGGEST SECRET TO SIMPLE MATERNITY SESSIONS IN STUDIO is keeping the client calm and confident, dressed well, utilizing every flattering angle, and utilizing beautiful light on moms. ☆



OUTDOOR ADVENTURE



JULIE COLLINS



KAREN MORNEAU



JESSICA SALAZAR • JESSICA LS PHOTOGRAPHY


"A MOTHER'S JOY BEGINS WHEN NEW LIFE IS STIRRING INSIDE... WHEN A TINY HEARTBEAT IS HEARD FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME, AND A PLAYFUL KICK REMINDS HER THAT SHE IS NEVER ALONE."
AUTHOR UNKNOWN
BETHANY MCGHEHEY • BETHANY BLAIR PHOTOGRAPHY

ADDING VARIETY TO *OUTDOOR MATERNITY SESSIONS*



CHELSEY HILL

ALL IMAGES IN THIS ARTICLE © CHELSEY HILL

Maternity sessions are some of my favorites to capture because I am tasked with the job of documenting a beautiful journey to parenthood.

THIS IS SUCH A sacred time in a couple's life, and filled with many different emotions. In addition to momma's baby bump, I focus on documenting those emotions from an artistic viewpoint that they will forever cherish. A maternity gallery can feel dull if all the photos are of mom holding her baby bump. To help increase the variety in my maternity galleries, there are a few key steps I incorporate into every session flow.

TIP #1: INCORPORATE SUN FLARE I always shoot my outdoor sessions at the golden hour (right before sunset), which provides the opportunity to incorporate sun flare into your images. To achieve this, you'll want to have the sun directly behind your subject so you are shooting into the sun. A narrow aperture (f/15) will provide you with a more defined sunburst, while a wider aperture will add more haze to your image.

TIP #2: SHOOT THROUGH NATURE Shooting through natural elements of your environment can help create the sense of true, authentic observance. This can be naturally achieved by using your surroundings as they currently exist. For example, shoot through tree branches, a blooming flower bush, or tall grasses. If these elements don't exist from the perspective you are seeking to achieve, then force it to happen by breaking off a branch, or plucking a tall piece of grass and holding it out in front of your camera.

TIP #3: LEAVE YOUR SUBJECTS OUT OF FOCUS Shooting wide open (aperture f/1.8) and placing parents-to-be in the background as your secondary subject can create beauti-







ful portraits that draw the viewer's eye to two different spots in the photograph. To achieve this, I typically incorporate an element of my surroundings (blade of grass, a flower, a dandelion, etc.) and have my focus point on that element while the parents are in the background of the frame. I use the rule of thirds fpr composition and have the element composed at one intersection while the parents are in the opposite intersection.

TIP #4: USE UNIQUE ANGLES I always bring my stepstool with me to maternity sessions to ensure I can incorporate interesting angles. I prefer to use park benches or picnic tables that are already on location, but if there aren't any, I'll bring out my stool. One of my go-to shots is to stand above mom and shoot down at her belly. Her spouse can also be added into this shot for a different perspective. I also have the couple lay down on a blanket and embrace each other while I shoot from above. I will then walk around the couple and photograph them from various angles.

TIP #5: USE A TIGHT FRAME TO CAPTURE EMOTION In addition to taking wide shots of the environment, which help set the tone of the story, I also like to take close-up shots of the couple to capture that authentic emotion. I'll start by taking a wide angle shot and then move in closer to them. I might have them reposition their hands or embrace each other more tightly to include those key gestures into the frame. I find it's helpful to use a stool for this technique so I can include not only the emotion on the subjects' faces, but also mama's baby bump.

Incorporating these simple steps helps ensure I have an amazing gallery - a gallery filled with beautiful shots of the couple, of the amazing journey they are on together, and of the beautiful soul stirring within. ☆

NEUTRALLY NATURAL



KARISSA HUGH • PEARLS AND LOLLIPOPS PORTRAIT STUDIO



HEIDI LEEKLEY



LINDSEY WELCH

"THERE IS SUCH A SPECIAL SWEETNESS IN BEING ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN CREATION."

PAMELA S. NADAV



TRICIA SCHUMACHER • WIGGLEBUG PHOTOGRAPHY

MAKING YOUR BOUDOIR *MATERNITY CLIENTS COMFORTABLE*



TIFFANY BURKE

ALL IMAGES IN THIS ARTICLE © TIFFANY BURKE

Maternity boudoir is a really intimate way to capture and remember a mother's time being pregnant.

IT CAN BE CLASSY, sensual, sexual and maternal. It can be one of those things, or all of those things. When a mother carries a child, what the body does to make that happen is incredibly beautiful and maternity boudoir is a wonderful way to capture this phase of a mother's journey.

I WANT TO SHARE SOME TIPS TODAY ON COMFORT LEVELS. I have photographed hundreds of women in a boudoir setting, maternity and not, for the last seven years. One thing that everyone has in common when showing up to my home studio: nerves. Each woman is a little or a lot nervous to undress and have it documented, no matter how excited they might be. Here are a few tips to ease that.



WHEN MY CLIENT FIRST ARRIVES, I GREET THEM WITH A SMILE AND WELCOME THEM TO MY SPACE. I offer to carry any items and start creating conversation. I show them where we will be shooting and then we sit down on the bed together and I ask them to show me their outfits.

This is the biggest ice breaker. It helps both of us in many ways. First of all, it gives my client something to talk about that they really are excited about (and have spent time preparing and working on). Second of all, this provides me with so much insight into what they like about their outfits and their bodies. It's also a really fun way to do girl talk, share and open up. My clients' nerves are already calming.

I finish helping with outfit planning and then let them change in private.

WE MEET BACK IN THE SHOOTING ROOM AND GET STARTED. I have a beautiful station from Pandora playing (that I trained really well) to play beautiful, feminine songs. This helps break the silence. I give them an

easy pose to do first that is comfortable and flattering, usually a standing one. I take a few test shots and once I have nailed my lighting, I show my client the pictures on the back of the camera. This is the next key thing to make the session go amazing.

When my client sees these gorgeous, untouched images they always say, "That's me?!"

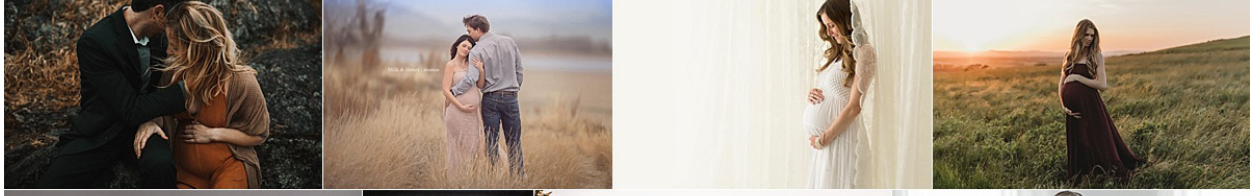
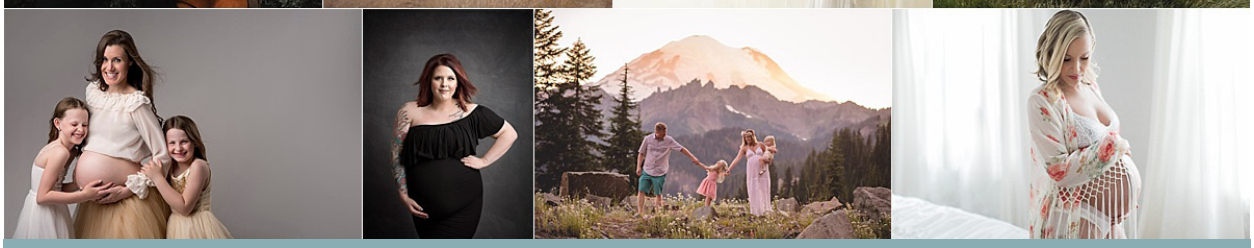
Some of them cry, sometimes I cry, and the ice is broken and they shine with more confidence and excitement now that they know the image in their head, is not what is being recorded on the camera.

THERE IS SO MUCH more for comfort levels when it comes to intimate photography, but these few tips are enough to change the entire session to make your client feel comfortable and confident to get photos that really shine. Boudoir can be scary, even for the most confident of women. Understanding this, creating a great environment and following these tips will help.

I look forward to sharing more during the online Maternity Retreat and hope to see you there! Pants optional...

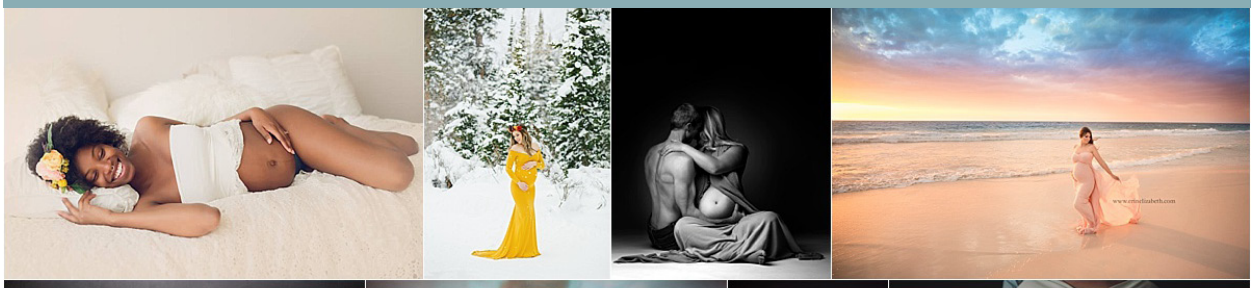


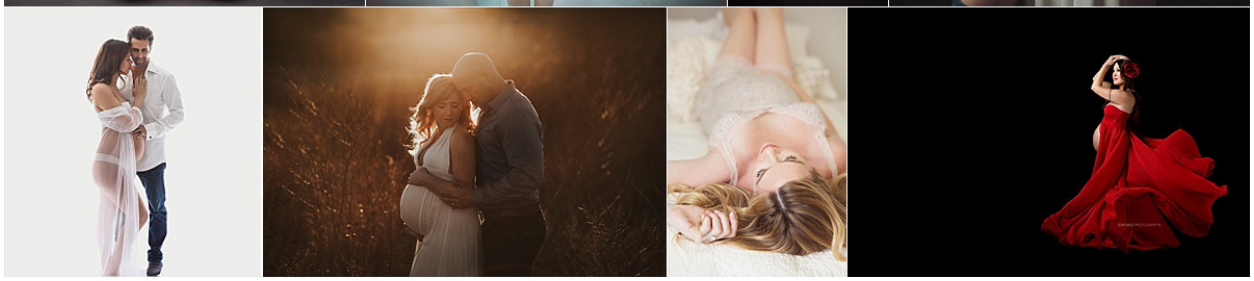


ONLINE
MATERNITY RETREAT

HOSTED BY THE MILKY WAY





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LEARN FROM HOME
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LIFETIME ACCESS
TO VIDEOS

READY TO ELEVATE YOUR MATERNITY PHOTOGRAPHY?

THEMILKYWAY.CA/MATERNITY-RETREAT

OH SO ETHEREAL



CHANNON WILLIAMSON



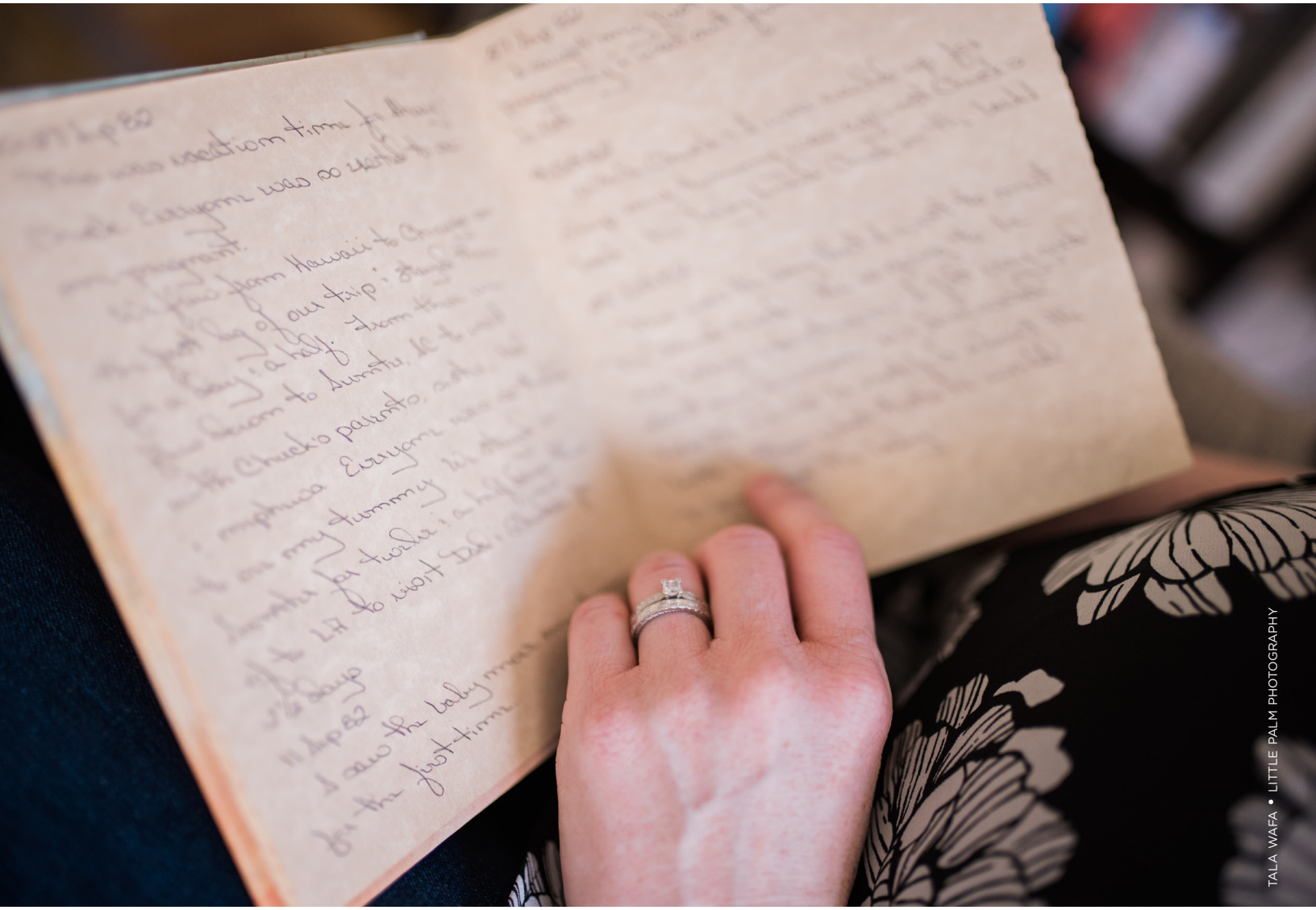
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"IF I HAD MY LIFE TO LIVE OVER, INSTEAD OF WISHING AWAY NINE MONTHS OF PREGNANCY, I'D HAVE CHERISHED EVER MOMENT AND REALIZED THAT THE WONDERMENT GROWING INSIDE ME WAS THE ONLY CHANCE IN LIFE TO ASSIST GOD IN A MIRACLE." *ERMA BOMBECK*

FINE ART
NUDE MATERNITY PHOTOGRAPHY



SHELLY FERGUSON

ALL IMAGES IN THIS ARTICLE © SHELLY FERGUSON

Artists have been studying the human form for centuries, from life drawings to paintings to sculptures.

THE LINES, THE SHAPES, the way the light falls on the human body all lend very well to a work of art. It just seemed logical to me that this age-old creation of human art could be applied to my maternity sessions.

More and more women are looking to celebrate their beautiful pregnant bodies. There are surprisingly few photographers that offer these types of images yet there are more and more women interested in it. Offering fine art nude maternity images is a great way to differentiate you from the many photographers out there. Not only can you create beautiful art but the nature of working this intimately with a client builds a wonderful and trusting client/photographer relationship which will likely keep them coming back to you for future sessions as their family grows.

That being said fine art nude maternity photography is not for every client or every photographer. You both have to be comfortable with the idea. As a photographer you want to be confident in what you are doing to make your client feel completely at ease because chances are even if they would like to try something like this, they will still be quite nervous.

I have been creating fine art nude maternity images for quite some time now and have a few tips to help guide you should you choose to offer this to your clients.

FIRSTLY, PEOPLE OFTEN ASK ME HOW I GET WOMAN TO POSE NUDE. This seems to be one of the biggest hurdles. It is actually quite simple. I ask them. That's it. I don't make it weird. I don't act like it's a taboo question. I simple ask once in my pre-session questionnaire and then again in person when they arrive. The key to this working is that I have samples on my site/portfolio for them to see. It is important that they have something to visualize so that they understand that it is a tasteful piece of art, that even though they are 'nude', body parts are still concealed. (I always keep the crotch area concealed and typically the nipples concealed unless they prefer otherwise, with strategic posing/lighting)

If you are starting out, the hardest part will be getting a few images in your portfolio to demonstrate your vision to future clients. You can ask friends, put out a model call or take a workshop that allows you to use the images in your portfolio to get started.

AT THE START OF THEIR SESSION I ALWAYS ASK MY CLIENTS WHERE THEIR COMFORT LEVEL LIES BETWEEN BEING FULLY CLOTHED AND FULLY NUDE. If they say no to nudes we move on. If they are unsure I let them know we can see how the session goes and she can think about whether she would like to create a nude image. Most women in this unsure category decide to try it by the end of the session.

I also make sure my clients know that I can create equally beautiful, similar lighting images with them wrapped or draped in fabric as well if that is what makes them feel more comfortable. Some woman would prefer to keep their underwear on but are ok with being topless.

There are multiple variations of this genre of photography that you can explore. I would never, ever make my client feel like she had to pose nude. That is super important. It is a very personal decision that only she can make.

Something to note though is that women will come to you specifically for this style of photography if that is what you put out there. No one ever calls to book me for an outdoor maternity session in a field somewhere because I do not display that kind of work on my site. I display the style of art I wish to recreate with each new client.

This means that all the clients that come in for a session are fully aware of my photography genre, which makes our conversations about the styling of their session so much easier.



ONCE YOU HAVE DECIDED THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO GIVE FINE ART MATERNITY PHOTOGRAPHY A TRY, THERE ARE A FEW THINGS YOU CAN DO TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR YOUR CLIENT. First, if your client likes the idea of a nude image, it is 100% possible to create this while she still keeps her underwear on, as well as her nipples covered. Just have your client wear a nude coloured g-string style thong or underwear that has very thin sides and those nipple sticky covers you can easily buy in any lingerie store. Then you can just edit out the underwear line in Photoshop. Many photographers prefer to do it this way to keep everyone comfortable.

If this is what my client prefers I would do this in a heartbeat, but I do find most of my clients are actually fine posing fully nude. It is typically just me and their significant other in the studio and most don't seem to have issues with it. I educate them before their session on what items to bring with them should they wish to remain semi covered.

When working on any nude poses I try to work quickly so that my client doesn't have to stand there for too long with no clothes on. I do have a robe available for them to use so that they can wear it out of the change area then slip it off, take the photos then easily slip it back on to keep

her comfortably covered.

Something to consider while posing is to perhaps work through a bit of flow posing while she is wrapped initially so that you know exactly what pose will work best for her. This way your client doesn't have to stand there any longer than necessary while nude.



I also try to be conscious of the heat in the room, especially in my case, as my studio is typically quite cool. I keep a space heater close by if my client is feeling chilly and I do make sure to regularly check in with her regarding how she is feeling about the temperature since many pregnant moms will feel temperature differently than the rest of us.

IT IS POSSIBLE TO CREATE STUNNING IMAGES IN VERY SMALL SPACES, WITH ONE LIGHT. In fact a one light setup is my favourite. It allows me to create some interesting light and shadow that is flattering on virtually any shape or size woman. I work in a 10'x12' space and use one Einstein light with an 86" umbrella. You do not need a large space at all to create these images. I block, reflect, and modify that one light as needed depending on the colour of background I use and the look I am going for. Similar images could also be created with the use of window light if you do not have studio light.

POSING IS A BIT MORE LIMITED with fine art nude maternity because the hands/arms usually have to cover private areas which is why I love playing up the light and shadow to create as visually interesting images as possible. Even with limited hand placement you can still get creative with body positioning. My favourites are standing profile, lying on back and sometimes sitting poses.

When done thoughtfully and tastefully it is possible to create a stunning fine art nude maternity image for your client that she will cherish for a lifetime! ☆

SLEEPING BEAUTIES



KRISTAL BEACHY



ALLISON DUPRE • ALLISON ANDRIA PHOTOGRAPHY



MUDPIES N BUTTERFLIES



JACQUI TURNER • RUNNING UNDER THE SPRINKLER

VALUE ADDED SERVICES *FOR MATERNITY CLIENTS*



STEPHANIE ROBIN

ALL IMAGES IN THIS ARTICLE © STEPHANIE ROBIN

Maternity sessions can be a great time to connect with your clients as a first point of contact.

THIS IS THE STAGE at which you will build their trust, allow them to experience the culture of your studio and hopefully lay the path for loyalty through future session bookings.

> *Remember that maternity sessions can be stressful for mamas and it's the perfect opportunity for you to ease your mom's anxiety and treat her to a luxury experience.*

By offering services such as hair and makeup and a versatile studio wardrobe, you take the burden of preparation off the client and provide a convenient and simple solution to the issue of "what to wear". Not only will you be providing value added services to your client, you will simultaneously strengthen your studio brand as you now have some control over aspects of the final image.

YOU MIGHT BE WONDERING HOW YOU CAN OFFER THESE SERVICES WITHOUT BREAKING THE BANK. Maternity sessions are not historically the best-selling sessions with the highest ROI, so budgeting for hair and makeup or wardrobe might seem a little daunting at first.

One way we have recently combatted this issue at Stephanie Robin Photography is to offer specific maternity dates in our studio in which we complete 3-4 sessions in a single day. This allows the hiring of hair and makeup artists on a day rate requiring less travel and setup time, thereby reducing the fees your studio may incur. Now clients can be scheduled in tandem for hair and makeup while others are in studio for their portraits.

Of course, you'll want to brainstorm a studio setup that fosters privacy in your shooting area. I can't imagine many maternity clients comfortable walking around in sheer dresses or changing wardrobe whilst another's husband trolls through the studio.

We are lucky to have a separate entrance and built-in room for hair and makeup separate from our shooting space. Perhaps your solution may entail privacy screens or spacing out sessions to ensure only one client is in studio at a time.

IN TERMS OF A VERSATILE WARDROBE, THERE ARE MANY CREATIVE APPROACHES YOU CAN USE TO CREATE A WARDROBE THAT WILL SUIT MANY BODY TYPES WITHOUT BREAKING THE BANK. Focus on stocking the basics and building your wardrobe from there. A nice ruffled skirt with a flexible waist line along with a few bandeau bras are a staple in our studio. Adding a flowing maxi dress, beautiful oversized knit sweater and a Henley or two for dad will round out the beginnings of a comprehensive wardrobe.



Of course, you will also want to ask your client to bring along a few key items of their own such as neutral undergarments, a pair of pre-pregnancy jeans or even a piece of lingerie and you will soon have a diverse gallery full of beautiful options for your client.

If you're interested in learning more about the specifics of styling a versatile maternity wardrobe for varying body types on a budget, you'll want to join me for the upcoming Milky Way Maternity Retreat in which I will be teaching just that!

AFTER WOWING YOUR CLIENT WITH YOUR STUDIO SERVICE AND SOME GORGEOUS IMAGERY TO BOOT, they're sure to want to work with you again!

A woman's maternity changes her body and sometimes her perception of herself as well. We have the opportunity to empower these women through self-image and show them just how beautiful they are at this magical stage in their lives. ☆



PERFECTLY PASTEL



PAULINA KUBIK • EVERLASTING EMOTIONS PHOTOGRAPHY



PHRENÉ HOEKSEMA • STUDIO PHRENÉ



MELANIE ZEGIEL • SMILE PRETTY PHOTOBOOTHS & PHOTOGRAPHY



MADDY LENS PHOTOGRAPHY

"THE LIFE OF A MOTHER IS THE LIFE OF A CHILD: YOU ARE TWO BLOSSOMS ON A SINGLE BRANCH."

KAREN MAEZEN MILLER

DEVELOPING A MATERNITY *PRODUCT LINE THAT SELLS*



JULIA KELLEHER

ALL IMAGES IN THIS ARTICLE © JULIA KELLEHER

Maternity sessions sometimes seem like a necessary evil.

MOMS WANT TO CREATE a memory of their pregnancy, but they don't want a huge screaming portrait of themselves on the wall. They'll save that for the newborn session, thank you very much! Oh boy, what to do as a photographer who needs to average a certain dollar amount with every session? Sell the disk, forgo my needed sales average, call it a day, and just rely on the newborn session to bring in the bucks?

No way, José! While doing a maternity session is sometimes what it takes to get the newborn in the door, it's still possible to sell products to expectant moms for their pregnancy session. The key is thinking it through and carefully planning a product line that works for your ideal client's goals.

THE FIRST THING TO THINK ABOUT IS YOUR TARGET CLIENT. Who is your ideal? What does she love and how does she want to mark the memory of her pregnancy? How do you go about targeting your absolute ideal mom, the one who you want to fall in love with your business



and will do more to bring her in than anything else?

Ask yourself what does she love? What products would make her heart sing? Dig inside her head to understand who she is, what her objections are and what she truly wants to get out of a session with you.

For my studio, that's a mom who doesn't want a 30x40, or for that matter even a 24x20 of her pregnant self hanging on her wall for all the world to see. She's got objections. Objections about how she thinks she'll look right now in front of a camera. The mom we target doesn't necessarily love the way she looks at 34 weeks. She feels heavy, tired and her body is working full-time to make that little bundle of joy! So I need to come up with a product line that helps her look back on this time with joy, but doesn't scream "look at me, I'm fat and pregnant!", and she winds up with horrid 'beached-whale' memories every time she walks into that room. Defining that product line is a pretty tall order, but rest assured, it can be done.

My goal with every client who comes through my door is to sell them files AND an art piece. I want them to have the negatives (and by all means, they want them too), but I also want them to have tangible art in their home. What's the point of hiring me if you are just going to let the images hide on a USB drive somewhere? We are a "hybrid" studio. We sell both digital files and art. And our ideal client is someone who wants both. The best of BOTH worlds. So my biggest challenge is to come up with products for maternity sessions that make up the tangible art part of hybrid. That means albums and wall art.



ALBUMS ARE SOME OF THE BEST WAYS TO MARK THE MEMORY OF A PREGNANCY WITHOUT MAKING MOM UNCOMFORTABLE. Keepsake books and small 20-page albums are perfect for this. We offer two albums that fit the bill, both from Millers. One is the Millers Signature Book in the 8 x 8 size. The other is a Millers Signature Album and is 10 x 8 with thick pages. Both are hot sellers for maternity sessions. Consider also combining maternity images into a newborn book. Right there you can up sell to a gorgeous newborn album before the newborn session is even shot!

WHAT ABOUT WALL ART? What kind of wall art products can you sell that don't make a new mom feel self-conscious, but also help you meet your average sales goals?

It's time to think about "small" as being the new "big." Smaller wall series and beautifully designed, wall ready pieces can feel luxurious, command a high price, and also satisfy a new mom's desire for a keepsake.

We offer a 3-set of framed and matted 8 x 10 prints from Design Aglow. It's a hot seller and more often than not sells at the maternity session. Clients can split up the set around private areas of their home, or hang the three set together.

Since it's wall ready, presented beautifully and looks high-end, we command almost $400 for that one product. Add the digitals, and mom is spending our desired $1k sale with no hesitation. Using a Create Your Own Collection model, clients purchase both art products and files, getting our average to where we need it every time we sell. More on that later.

Other wall products that are show stoppers for us include our new shadow box framed,



MUSEUM MOUNT

A deep set, shadow box-style frame where the image is "float" mounted off the surface. A 3-dimensional look with your choice of finish, custom mat, frame and glass.



float mounted prints. We "float" mount a small 8 x 8 canvas print inside a 1.5-inch deep, 12 x 12 shadow box frame. We always leave lots of matted breathing room, making a small print look like it belongs in a museum. With a COG at less than $50 for these framed prints, we sell them for $400 a piece.

IT'S ONE THING TO HAVE A SOLID PRODUCT LINE FOR NEW MOMS, BUT IT'S ANOTHER TO HAVE A PRICING STRUCTURE THAT SELLS ITSELF. Packages vs. A La Carte, it's been an ongoing industry discussion for years. But ultimately you have to choose a method that works for you, your client and your market. Most importantly, it needs to get you to the average sale you need with every customer. If it doesn't, you can't predict your revenue and you can't plan for your business.

We have one package. It's called Create Your Own Collection. Clients complete two steps to make this custom collection.

Step 1: Choose an Art Product.
Set 2: Choose Your Digital Files.

STEP ONE INCLUDES PRINTED ART. Clients can choose one piece or fifty, it's up to them. It can be an album or wall art, or both! It's up to the client and offers awesome flexibility for the client to purchase only what they truly want.

STEP TWO INCLUDES ONLY TWO CHOICES; all files low resolution or all files high resolution. The high resolution files include a complimentary proof box with all proofs and crystal USB drive, plus their choice of 3-mini accordion books or birth announcements. These freebies we include as incentive to purchase





the large files go a long way. 95% of our clients wind up purchasing the large files to get the freebie incentive gifts. At $725 for the large files, plus a $400 art product, my maternity clients are consistently spending $1100 or more on their pregnancy session, and that's just what I need them to do.

SO THE KEY TO DEVELOPING A LONG-TERM, COVETED MATERNITY PRODUCT LINE IS TO TRULY THINK ABOUT AND DIG INSIDE THE HEAD OF YOUR IDEAL MATERNITY CLIENT. What does she truly want? What are her objections? What's stopping her from purchasing art and how can you combat that with products she can't refuse? How can you shoot her session to make her more comfortable with displaying art for all the world to see?

Product line development is essentially a marketing tactic. By creating, showing off and offering unique products that make her heart sing, she will naturally be drawn to your studio. When you handle objections, lure with lovely products and solidify the relationship with incredible customer service, all of a sudden price becomes a secondary factor and you earn a client for life who adores you and sings your praises to all her pregnant friends.

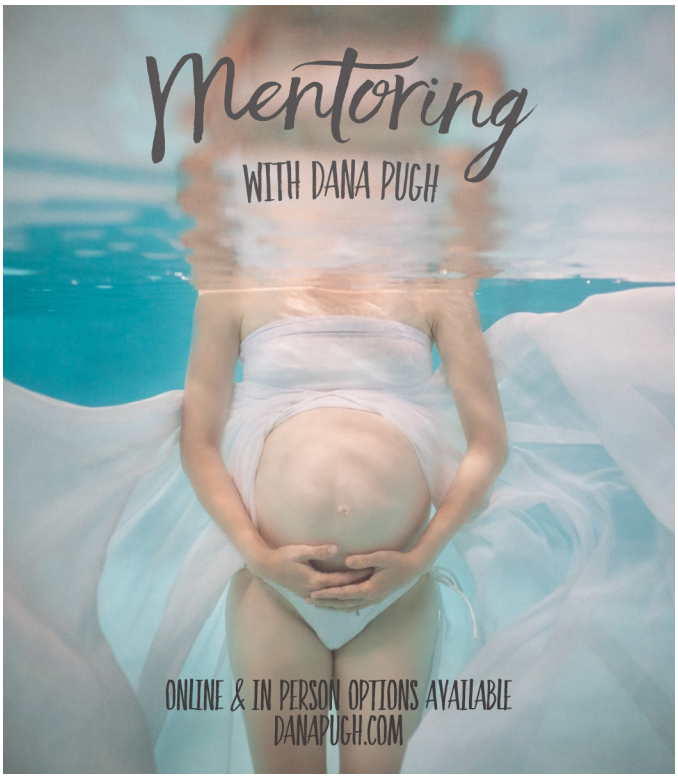
Want to see the outline of Julia's pricing model? Go to Jewel-Education.com and opt-in to get the scoop. ☆



LAURIE EHRMANTRAUT • LCE PHOTOGRAPHY

"BIRTH IS NOT ONLY ABOUT MAKING BABIES. BIRTH IS ABOUT MAKING MOTHERS... STRONG, COMPETENT, CAPABLE MOTHERS WHO TRUST THEMSELVES AND KNOW THEIR INNER STRENGTH."

BARBARA KATZ ROTHMAN



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ASHLEY RENS



COME LEARN WITH THE MILKY WAY

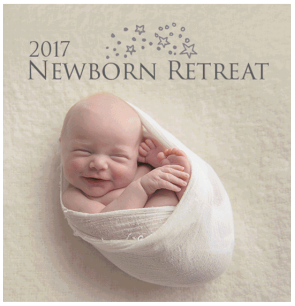
Are you as inspired as we are by this maternity issue of The Milky Way magazine?

READY TO TRY SOME of the tips, tricks and techniques for yourself? If you find yourself stuck on some areas...seek out help! There are tons of great resources out there! If you need a little help with your lighting, posing or editing, be sure to take a peek at our online classes and retreats.

We have an incredible group of alumni who help one another grow in a kind, supportive (drama-free) community!

ONLINE RETREATS

Our online retreats offer inspiration and instruction from a wide range of talented instructors.









ONLINE INSTRUCTION

Our beginner-friendly classes come with lifetime access and a money-back guarantee.











BRANDY KELEHER

The Milky Way

A PHOTOGRAPHER'S RESOURCE