

Quake ... there's a wedding to plan

Caitlin & David Jemison (nee Emmons)

Images: Anthony Turnham



It was a little over a year ago now when David and I first met at a beautiful French restaurant, called 'le Foret' in New Orleans. The stunning restaurants had hard wood polished floors, surrounded by balconies and crystal chandeliers. I was invited to a birthday/home coming party by my sisters and her work colleague George, David's brother. After an amazing night of drinks, dancing and jazz we were enamoured with each other and just a few weeks later we fell madly in love.

David was working overseas at that time and had to return to the Middle East, thus we continued our relationship the old fashioned way via letters and phone calls. To get us through our six months apart we began to plan for a trip to Australia together. David was able to return from his posting for Christmas and we reaffirmed our love for each other when he proposed and of course I said yes! We planned on a small wedding and to tag it onto our trip to Australia, and decided on Christchurch in New Zealand as there was only three days in the country required before we could be legally married, this making it easier than Australia.

We spent three weeks in beautiful Australia, eagerly anticipating an intimate ceremony with family upon our arrival in Christchurch. Our dreams were devastated when we heard of the February earthquakes which demolished Christchurch, putting it into crisis - our plans were smashed like so many others. All tourists and travellers were encouraged to evacuate the city and it was decided to move our small wedding party north to the Marlborough Sound's area.

Relocated, we arrived in Nelson and stayed in the Rutherford Hotel only one day before the ceremony was to take place - the wild planning began! David's mother, Julie recommended that we call "The Wedding Whisperer," a free service that provided invaluable recommendations concerning weddings. Angel the proprietor suggested a fantastic option of a wedding in the Abel Tasman and we were directed to Sea Limousines, for our big day. The charter company provided a custom designed exclusive boat

charter with full Department of Conservation concessions to hold our event in a National Park, so the next step was easy. The charter would take us to a private beach of our choosing for the ceremony to take place. With only 24 hours of planning time they arranged the drinks and a beautiful wedding lunch platter to be enjoyed picnic style; this seemed too easy at such short notice and it was!

The next day was one of the most incredible days of my life! The morning began with a luxurious indulgence of spa treatments, provided by my sweet fiancé, David. He pampered our entire wedding party with mani/pedis, massages and breakfast. After that my sister, my future mother-in-law and myself headed to the salon where we primped for the wedding. Once ready we all gathered together to head to Kaiteriteri Beach where we were whisked away on a beautiful boat decorated with flowers and ribbons to the exquisite Paradise Beach on Fisherman Island.

We were married under a perfect blue sky with whispers of cloud and soft sand under our toes and had the honour of David's father, Bill, marrying us with an eloquent ceremony that left us in tears of joy and uproarious laughter.

Anthony Turnham, the photographer we had meticulously selected from Christchurch, incredibly travelled to join us, even after his family had been affected by the earthquake. He encapsulated our day with millions of pictures of us frolicking, dancing, kissing, splashing on the beach and climbing rocks to get the perfect shot. We took a much needed break for a scrumptious picnic lunch of local fresh fish, meats and fruits, even chocolate-dipped strawberries in little love-heart dishes provided by Terri Everett of Sea Limousines. Relaxed in the moment, we chatted and soaked in the atmosphere, while watching the waves caress the shoreline from our red and white chequered blanket. After more pictures, sunshine and wine we left Paradise Beach behind to tour around the Abel Tasman while our knowledgeable hosts Jim and Terri provided us with fascinating facts about the surrounding history, beaches and wildlife.

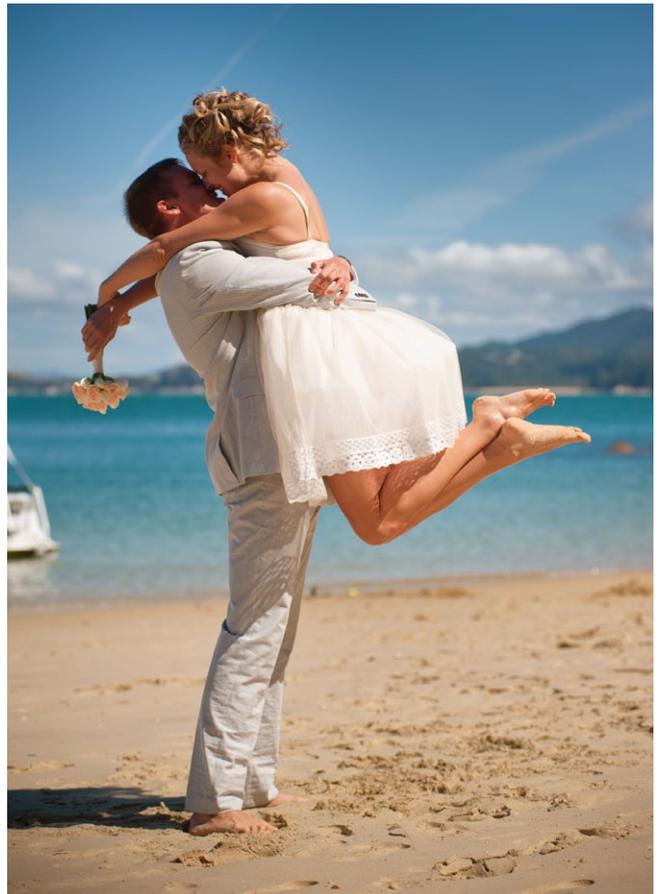
My wedding at Paradise Beach in Abel Tasman was a magical day, set in one of the most breathtaking places in the world. It surpassed our wildest expectations of what a "perfect wedding" could be. We are so grateful to Terri and Jim of Sea Limousines, Anthony, and the country of New Zealand for making it possible at such short notice ... and our spectacular family for being there to share in our special day. So lovely!!

ED: With Caitlin away on business, David kindly filled in a few other details for us.

Caitlin had picked a vintage dress from the 70s to wear to our wedding, but we happened to serendipitously come across the beautiful custom made dress in Melbourne that Caitlin wore on her wedding day. Anaessia Sydney is a high end women's fashion boutique located in the famous GPO Building in the heart of Melbourne. The dress is the only one of its kind as it was crafted from a dress the Grecian designers found in Paris. They took the French Ivory lace from the dress they designed themselves. Caitlin saw the dress in the window, and she was instantly mesmerised. Because that was our last day in Melbourne before heading to New Zealand, we would not have had time for alterations; however, the dress turned out to be a perfect fit. Almost as if the dress were made for Caitlin to wear.

Earthbloom in Nelson provided a pale pink baby rose bud bouquet and matching corsages.

The owner of the Enriching Wellness Day Spa was incredible. With just under 24 hours before our wedding, she organised spa treatments for Caitlin's sister, my mother, and Caitlin the morning of the wedding. She arranged for all of the girls to have their hair done at a salon in downtown Nelson, and she recommended a florist as well, I believe. This spa was incredible, and was instrumental in helping us to pull off our wedding given our last second change of venue. ♥



WHO WE USED:

Event planning: Terri @ Sea Limousines

Vessel: Sea Limousines, www.sealimousines.com

Photography: Anthony Turnham, www.snapphotography.co.nz

Stayed at: Rutherford Hotel, www.heritagehotels.co.nz/nelson

Advice: Angel at The Wedding Whisperer, www.theweddingwhisperer.co.nz

Food: Flaming Hot Catering, www.flaminghotcatering.co.nz

Dress: Anaessia Sydney, T: +61 3 9654 0760

Flowers: Earthbloom, www.earthbloom.co.nz

Spa: Enriching Wellness Day Spa, www.enriching.co.nz

Bride's Shoes: Dolce Vita, www.dolcevita.com

Groom's Suit: Seersucker 3-piece from Express, www.express.com

Groom's Shoes: Cole Haan (Gillespie), www.colehaan.com