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Blushing in the Spotlight with Jolyn by Fida Chaaban



Blush sits down with Jolyn Saramaga of Nuance Occasions to talk weddings, Jon Bon Jovi, and how romantic jelly beans really are.

As Edmonton's premier wedding coordinator for the past 8 years, Jolyn has orchestrated countless weddings of every kind. Her impressive portfolio ranges from fusing the traditional Vietnamese tea ceremony with the classic storybook wedding, to the whimsical and the rare.

A bride of hers was moved to find a nod to her homeland, the national South African flower, adorning her wedding. Another bride found 24-karat gold leaf speckling her plates, a thoughtful, tailor-made element that Jolyn came up with. Jolyn prides herself on these individualized touches that speak to her deep emotional involvement. Still, a glance through her album inspires a bit of envy—she refuses to reuse signature elements from her past clientele's weddings. As we touch on a photo of a ballroom adorned with 8-ft images of an eclectic bride and groom's engagement

photos, she quickly mentions that she would not repeat that piece. It was uniquely suited to the couple themselves, and it should remain that way, despite the numerous requests she's had to do it again.

Looking at wedding planning as more of an interaction than a contract, Jolyn maintains that while prospective couples are certainly interviewing her, she too is "interviewing their receptiveness to creativity". Jolyn often refuses couples that she may not find a good fit, because she considers herself a conduit of sorts that "brings their inner vision to life".

Rather than a traditional guestbook, Jolyn encouraged one couple to use a map of their honeymoon locale. Unlike most guest registries, the map became a framed conversation piece that evokes memories of both the wedding and the honeymoon. Another bride's love for couture was emphasized when Jolyn prepared the rehearsal dinner tables with Pucci print. Jolyn's ingenuity at incorporating even the most unorthodox interests often impresses her clients. This, she tells me confidentially, is not about "being the most extravagant, it is about details that reflect the people."

"Sometimes it's as simple as a napkin fold that changes the décor," she says. And she's right. As photos of her table settings are presented, each one is more unique than the last. A subtle knot in the fabric here, a jewelled clasp there—these ensure that the themes are echoed from the grandest cake to the tiniest accessory. Even the unlikely Jon Bon Jovi finds his way in there somehow, when his picture appears on a couple's menu cards. Jolyn laughs delightedly and explains that she absolutely had to accommodate this bride's penchant for the rocker, as Jolyn is also a die-hard fan.

"I couldn't be married to someone who isn't part of this industry," she sighs, as her obsession with all things wedding consumes her. "Every guest should understand the details. If you drop another couple into that wedding, it shouldn't make sense". Is every wedding romantic? "My husband knows the way to my heart is jelly beans." Looking at her warm smile, it does seem romantic, for her at least. Jolyn personifies accessible exclusivity, an elusive trait that every bride should covet for her wedding.