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# casi and jimmy 10.02.10

## keswick, va

Casi Conner and Jimmy Cottrell didn't meet in a cute coffee shop while reaching for the same newspaper and they haven't known each other since high school. Instead, they owe their story to a matchmaking mutual friend who thought they'd be great together. "Casi, you have to meet my friend Jimmy," she said. "He is the sweetest man I know, not to mention really good looking and he has the best smile!" Despite that glowing review, Casi was hesitant. Months later, she ran into Jimmy at a concert and they had drinks later that night with mutual friends. She agreed to go out with him and they quickly became inseparable.

Casi and Jimmy both live in Virginia Beach and Jimmy runs the family dredging business with his older brother in Chesapeake. They'd always wanted to go to Greece and planned a trip to the Mediterranean country together. They booked an amazing hotel on the picturesque island of Crete and on the next to last night of their stay, Casi was getting ready for dinner when Jimmy called her out onto the balcony where the full moon was rising over the sea. He told Casi how much he loved her and that he wanted to spend the rest of his life with her. He proposed on the veranda and gave her an exquisite antique princess-cut engagement ring. They spent their last day in Greece exploring nearby islands by catamaran and set their wedding date for fall of the following year.

Casi and Jimmy describe their style as somewhat "old world" and envisioned a setting for their nuptials that suited their tastes and reflected their love for the beautiful Virginia countryside. They wanted their guests to be treated like VIPs, but without the pretentious atmosphere of a stuffy hotel. Casi had always dreamed of an outdoor ceremony and Keswick Hall, just outside of Charlottesville, VA, was the ideal venue. Casi and Jimmy took over the entire estate for their wedding weekend, reserving all the guest rooms and giving their guests the run of the grounds.

"We wanted to find a palette and wedding style that fit the warm elegance of Keswick Hall," explains Casi. They settled on a spectrum of peachy-coral, pink and antique rose combined with refined platinum gray, ivory and white. They hired Easton Events to bring their ideas to life and pull the details together. The talented team made the entire process easy for Casi and Jimmy to enjoy. "They have an uncanny ability to connect with venue managers, chefs, guests, your in-laws or your own parents and of course, with the bride and groom," says Casi. "They understood our vision." Easton planned the event from start to finish, designing a sophisticated look that combined elegant tradition with vintage details and luxe florals. Legendary New York baker Sylvia Weinstock made Casi and Jimmy's three-tier cake with their custom event monogram and her signature explosion of sugar flowers cascading in a brilliant spiral of bright coral, peach and ivory.

Casi and Jimmy exchanged vows beneath a lush arch of antique hydrangea and garden roses set on the lawn at the back of Keswick Hall, overlooking rolling pastoral hills. Their two yellow labs attended as ring bearers in garland collars of

antique hydrangea and soft pink roses. Casi carried a bouquet of white hydrangea, garden roses, freesia and ranunculus and wore a lace A-line gown by Priscilla of Boston with a sweetheart neckline and satin sash. Her bridesmaids wore long silk chiffon gowns in gunmetal gray and carried bouquets of peach garden roses. Jimmy and his groomsmen wore tailored black suits with striped ties in shades of gray.

Cocktails were served by Keswick's dramatic infinity pool, where pillar candles in glass cylinders at the water's edge flickered in the fading twilight, creating an inviting glow. Guests moved to a tent on the stone patio for dinner, where tables were covered in voluminous dove gray tulle and set with silver beaded glass chargers, colorful antique Sèvres porcelain plates and platinum-rimmed crystal. The tent was draped from floor to ceiling with sheer fabric in a warm Champagne hue and each place setting featured a letterpress menu in embellished platinum gray calligraphy. The same gray calligraphy appeared in letterpress on all the event's paper goods, created by their calligrapher, along with Casi and Jimmy's custom monogram motif. "Our calligrapher, Jen Maton, created a custom motif that we used throughout the weekend on our invitations, welcome book, cocktail napkins, matchbooks and the ceremony program," explains Casi. "The paper itself was a soft and textural Italian-style, expressing old world charm and character." Glistening crystal chandeliers were hung from the tent ceiling and alternating tall and short centerpieces were made with garden roses, antique hydrangeas and orchids in antique silver candelabras and silver bowls. "We hand-picked everything," says Casi. "We tried to use the natural beauty of Keswick to our benefit."

The evening's menu was inspired by local fare where Casi and Jimmy live in Virginia Beach. "Living on the Chesapeake Bay, we are drawn to fresh fish and wild game, so we decided to share our love of these wonderful foods," says Casi. Dinner began with chilled Carter's Mountain apple soup in an ice bowl, garnished with a nasturtium bloom. Smoked king salmon was served with heirloom tomatoes, wild leeks and black truffles on a bed of micro-greens, followed by an entrée duet of rockfish and duck served with acorn squash, caramelized leeks and white bean ragout. A dessert bar of mini crème brûlées and pots de crème complemented the spectacular wedding cake, while chocolate-dipped spoons were served with coffee.

Guests made their way to an outdoor lounge on the patio after dinner for a surprise fireworks display to kick off the evening's celebration. A candlelit bar was tied with drapery and strung with suspended votives that seemed to float in the night air, while tables were covered in textured gray liners and set with gatherings of flowers in silver julep cups. The band started to play in the ballroom, kicking the party into high gear and Casi changed into a strapless mikloss for dancing. At the close of the evening, guests were sent home with locally-made Gearhart's chocolates and Casi and Jimmy made their exit through a lively crowd waving glittering sparklers.

Looking back, it's easy for Jimmy to pinpoint Cas's walk down the aisle as his favorite part of the day. "I couldn't see anything else," he says. "It was bliss." Cas says, "Having all the people that love you and care about you in the same room at one time is a once-in-a-lifetime thing. I wouldn't trade that moment for the world!" AMA

Wedding Consultants: Augusta Cole and Lynn Easton Andrews with Easton Events; Cinematographer: Beth Photos with Sprack Media; Ceremony Location, Reception Venue and Catering: Kerwick Hall; Florist: Floral Images; Baker: Sylvia Weinstock; Party Rentals: Festive Fans and NOage Designs; Lighting, Audio and Draping: Blue Ridge Light Forms; Tenting: Virginia Tent Rentals; Invitations, Stationery and Wedding Papers: Rock Paper Scissors; Calligraphy: Jen Moran with If So Inked Calligraphy; Ceremony Music: Tara Vacco; Reception Entertainment: Big Ray and the Kool Cats; Bridal Gown: Priscilla of Boston; Hair: Kamaria Solesmani; Makeup: Lindsay Montgomery; Bridesmaid Dresses: Alix and Kelly purchased at Bella Bridesmaid; Groom and Groomsmen Attire: Joseph Abboud; Transportation: Grooms Transportation; Ice Sculptures: USA Ice; Fireworks: Pyrotechnics Network.

**Photography: Patricia Lyons Photography,**  
[www.patricialyonsphotography.com](http://www.patricialyonsphotography.com).



