



BRETT MATTHEW AND  
STEVEN SCHWARTZ  
NOVEMBER 11, '07  
LAGUNA BEACH, CALIFORNIA

> **FEATURE WEDDING:** ...they wanted an intimate affair and “a destination wedding seemed like just the right thing...”



Going dateless to your sister's wedding is a brave thing for any woman to do, but as maid-of-honor, Brett Matthew's courage was well rewarded. At the bachelor party, Brett's dad had met the groom's best friend, Steve Schwartz, and remarked to her that he seemed to be a great guy. "Steve and I began to talk at the wedding," says Brett, "and I started to think that maybe my dad was right."

Although Steve asked for Brett's phone number, three days went by without a word, so Brett called him. They went out to a restaurant with friends. "Since that day, I don't



think we've ever left each other's side," says Brett. "Love came quickly. It was easy and wonderful and just flowed."

A year later, before a big family party, Steve offered Brett a massage at her favorite spa. She needed convincing because she was busy, but he talked her into it. During the massage, the masseuse spilled oil on the floor and left to get cleaning fluid. "When she came back she grabbed my hand. I thought she was doing reflexology, but it was Steve and he put a ring on my finger," says Brett, who became so overwhelmed she never completed the massage.

Their calendar was filled with dates they needed to avoid, which made finding a suitable day to wed a challenge. What they did know, however, was that they wanted an intimate affair and "a destination wedding seemed like just the right thing," says Brett. Having visited Laguna Beach often, Brett and her mother checked out the Montage resort. After seeing the gorgeous views of the ocean, they immediately knew that this was the place.

Brett, who loves accessorizing, thought the flowing layers of her strapless Monique Lhuillier gown reminded her of the sea. She added a beaded belt to it for the ceremony, and for the reception changed the belt, jewelry, shoes and added a fur shawl to create a new look without changing her dress.

The beachside ceremony was anchored by a Plexiglas chuppah to maximize the ocean backdrop. One of Steve's favorite



moments came as the newly wedded couple walked back down the aisle. "You couldn't contain the buoyant mood, and I grabbed Brett, dipped her back and kissed her while the trumpets were playing and everyone was standing and clapping," he recalls.

Brett's mother, an interior designer, headed up the reception décor and details. "Our guests were leaving the horrible Chicago weather and celebrating with us by the sea and we used that thought to set the environment," says Brett. Tables replicated shadowboxes with sea glass and seashells displayed just under the glass topper and orchids enhanced the tropical feel. Guests received chocolate lollipops with their pictures on them, and the men in the party enjoyed hand-rolled cigars made by an artisan throughout the evening.

After a "non-stop" honeymoon in Asia, where they rode elephants in the jungle and went sightseeing all day, the couple looks forward to what the future will bring. "Going through life as a team and sharing all the important landmarks together sounds good to me," says Steve.

> **Written by Francine Kaplan**

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Location and Caterer: **Montage** Laguna Beach, CA; Cake: **Linda Goldsheft, The Cake Studio** Fountain Valley, CA; Event Planner: **The Party People** Chicago, IL; Floral and Event Design: **Square Root** Irvine, CA; Tuxedo: **Hugo Boss**; Videography: **Elysium Productions** Irvine, CA; Wedding Gown: **Monique Lhuillier**; Photography: **Victor Sizemore, VCS Photography** Ladera Ranch, CA

