

real
wedding

KAREN CHOU & RICHARD LEE

SEPTEMBER 5, 2010 • BEVERLY HILLS, CALIFORNIA

Modern Love

Despite attending the same elementary, middle and high schools—even living down the street from each other—Karen Chou and Richard Lee were practically strangers. However, the two shared mutual acquaintances and eventually became friends after college. Their relationship progressed to romance at the worst possible time: Richard was moving to New York City. “Thanks to technology, we were able to iChat on our Macs every night,” says Karen. Within three months, Richard was packing his bags and moving back to the West Coast.

In 2009, while on their way to a wedding in Nashville, Karen and Richard decided to stop in New Orleans, a city they had been eager to visit for the French-influenced food, music and culture. “I had suspicions that he [might] propose on the trip. So the entire first day we were there, I kept thinking it was going to happen,” she shares. The following morning, a bouquet of flowers and the million-dollar question, “Will you marry me?” spelled out in dimes on the bathroom countertop greeted Karen. “I have a strange love for dimes,” she explains of Richard’s attention to detail, admitting that at that point, “I had already decided that I was wrong, and it wasn’t happening on the trip. So I was completely shocked and speechless at first!”

With a romance made possible by the modern marvels of technology, it was fitting that the couple took the same smart approach to their wedding style. On selecting the sophisticated Montage Beverly Hills as their venue, the bride raves, “It was perfect for us because it fit into our ‘Modern Glamour’ theme, and the attention to detail and personalized service at Montage hotels is amazing.”

The iconic fashion house of Chanel inspired the couple’s signature colors of black and ivory. “Again, our love for all things French,” offers the bride. “We tried to keep things classic and timeless—like the style of Chanel—but still keep it fresh and young.” They introduced shades of purple to add just the right amount of pop to the classic color combination. Karen transformed her lace-and-tulle Vera Wang gown into different day and night looks using sashes. During the day, the dress featured an ivory sash that was knotted into an off-center bow at the waist, giving the gown an elegant air. For her evening look, the bride showcased an ornate rhinestone brooch that wrapped around the front of a black sash.

The September nuptials took place outdoors before an altar space that included an ivory and black canopy accented with purple floral arrangements. Consisting of a few readings on love, commitment and marriage, in addition to the couple’s exchange of personal vows, the ceremony was meant to be “short and sweet.” They walked down the aisle for the first time as husband and wife to the song “Married Life”

Photography IRA LIPPKE STUDIOS, SAMUEL LIPPKE & ADAM SJOBERG

from the Disney/Pixar movie, *Up*. “The song is special to us because we both love the movie, and it is one of the moments that made Richard want to immediately get married and start our life together as a family,” Karen says, referring to the film’s sentimental montage of a life-long marriage.

The day’s impressive decor focused on creative displays, beginning with a whimsical tree that featured glimmering strands of crystal orbs and dimes. As guests arrived, they were invited to write little notes for the couple and attach them to the display. While the “wish tree” was inspired by a similar fixture from a Chanel exhibit the couple had attended, the magnificent presentation of escort cards in framed mirrors was the work of the couple’s wedding coordinator and florist. “One of my favorite things at the wedding!” exclaims the bride. Equally eye-catching was the head table’s ivory-on-ivory backdrop of drapes that parted to reveal a dazzling profusion of oversized paper flowers.

Though she laments how quickly their big day went by, Karen recalls that the most special moments were the ones she privately shared with Richard: enjoying hors d’oeuvres and champagne for the first time as newlyweds during the cocktail hour and their visit to view the reception ballroom before their guests arrived. Karen describes the transformed space as looking “magical,” a description that will no doubt describe the life she and Richard will build together in the years to come.





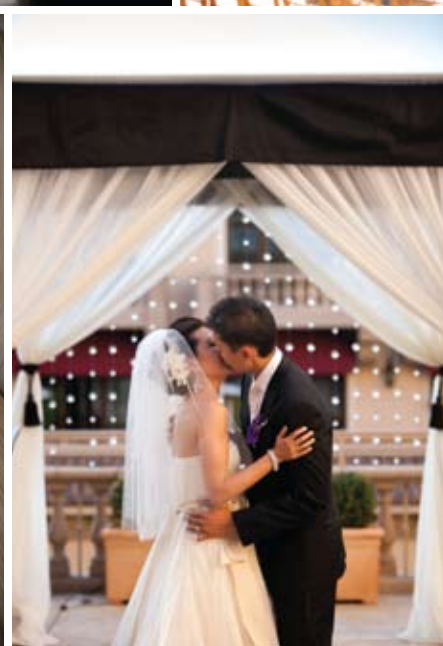
DREAM WEDDING!



Oversized framed mirrors guided guests to their seats.



Delicate black lace caps added extra glamour to the lush white floral centerpieces, sparkling crystal accents and glowing votives on each reception table.



WHAT WAS YOUR BIGGEST OBSTACLE AND HOW DID YOU OVERCOME IT?

"I think the hardest part of planning a wedding is staying on budget. There are so many different and beautiful things that can be incorporated into a wedding—it's hard not to want it all! Carolyn [Chen, of The Special Day] was really good about keeping us on budget and had a very detailed spreadsheet laid out from the start to keep us on track. Also, trying to stay true to what we wanted and felt was important [helped us stay on track], rather than [listening] to everyone's ideas and opinions and [trying] to please everyone. It's impossible!"



Style FILE



wedding COLOR PALETTE

WEDDING PLANNER

THE SPECIAL DAY

BRIDAL SALON

SAKS FIFTH AVENUE

BRIDAL GOWN & BRIDESMAID DRESSES

VERA WANG

BRIDAL SHOES

CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN

MAKEUP & HAIR

JOYCE LUCK STYLE, PEILIN BRELLER

VENUE, CATERING & CAKE

MONTAGE BEVERLY HILLS

BEVERLY HILLS, CA

INVITATIONS, MENU CARDS & PLACE CARDS

PAPER*GIRL

FAVORS

'LETTE MACARONS BEVERLY HILLS

OFFICIANT

REVEREND CLINT HUFFT

FLORIST

MILLE FIORI FLORAL DESIGN

CEREMONY MUSIC

STRINGS BY REIKO

RECEPTION MUSIC

DASH ENTERTAINMENT, DJ NAHCHEY

PHOTOGRAPHY

IRA LIPPKÉ STUDIOS, SAMUEL LIPPKÉ & ADAM SJOBERG

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WEDDING NIGHT ACCOMMODATIONS

MONTAGE BEVERLY HILLS

BEVERLY HILLS, CA