



IN TODAY'S FAST PACED WORLD, THE PATHWAYS TO COURTSHIP AND marriage are evolving to meet the demands of life on-the-go. Living in bustling Los Angeles, Laura Ingram never would have guessed she would meet the love of her life online, but so it was. She met Jim Bellamy on the popular matchmaker website E-Harmony. They went on an ambitious first date to an all-day festival in wine country. Little did they know that the champagne they tasted together on that day would end up being the same champagne they would toast with at their wedding.

Having grown up in Florida, Laura remembered Amelia Island from a family vacation. She went online to search for wedding venues, and came across Amelia Island Plantation. Her parents lived in Florida and offered to visit the resort. They emailed the pictures, and, a dozen downloads later, Jim and Laura knew they had found their ideal wedding venue.

The couple wanted a fall wedding, and had less than ten months to plan their celebration—not a lot of time for a large destination wedding. So they turned to Lisa Presnell-Kirkus,

Laura & Jim

AMELIA ISLAND PLANTATION

By Nan Kavanaugh Photography by Holly Allain



Wedding and Social Events Catering Manager at Amelia Island Plantation, to guide them seamlessly through the planning process. Everything came together for an event that was not only a wedding, but also a restful weekend getaway for guests. “It was such a fun wedding, we actually received thank you notes! It was just so relaxing,” remembers Cathy Ingram, mother of the bride.

The weekend began with a trolley ride to a welcome dinner at The Beech Street Grill, a charming restaurant in historic downtown Fernandina Beach. The following day was filled with golfing, spa pampering, and, of course, beach fun, all right at the resort. “It was the day before the wedding and we were all body-surfing! There was no stress at all—it was fantastic!” exclaims Laura.

Inviting all 125 guests to the rehearsal dinner, the Ingrams decided to keep it casual and fun with a fabulous barbecue poolside at the Amelia Inn and Beach Club. Under a canopy of stars and palm trees they feasted on gourmet southern cuisine. “After dinner, we gathered on the beach around a bonfire. The kids loved making s’mores, and the adults reminisced. It was a really special evening,” recalls the mother of the bride.

The next day, the group gathered at the newly renovated Plantation Chapel for the ceremony. “The chapel was so beautiful that it didn’t require much decorating,” says Laura. The reception was held at Walker’s Landing, a venue surrounded by ancient oak trees and boasting a spectacular view of the saltwater marsh. Complete with hardwood floors, mahogany Chiavari chairs, and a fieldstone fireplace, the atmosphere was perfect for a fall wedding. The couple had a special champagne toast of Maurice Carrie raspberry champagne, straight from the vineyard where Jim and Laura had spent their first date. The party lasted

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into the night as guests danced under twinkling lights to a six-piece classic rock and jazz band.

The next morning, the bride and groom enjoyed a farewell breakfast with their guests overlooking the beach at the elegant Oceanview Room and Terrace at the Amelia Inn.

“Laura and Jim’s wedding showcases Amelia Island Plantation as the perfect setting for a destination wedding,” says Presnell-Kirkus. “Having been married here myself just last year, I don’t know why you would choose to go anywhere else. We have it all!” Laura and Jim agreed: it was the perfect island getaway wedding.
