

Reminiscent of a French hillside near the ocean that the bride had visited, the festive ambience was enhanced by the ranch's horses and zebras.



## REAL-LIFE WEDDINGS

**A**lthough they lived just a few miles apart in Los Angeles, Ashley Tearston and Matt Moreno met in Paris—while studying abroad when they were 16. “We had a mutual crush, but no romance,” says Ashley. Back in the States, they went on a “couple of high school dates,” she laughs, “but I couldn’t get a good read on him. I figured we were just going to be friends.” They attended colleges on opposite coasts, but stayed connected through mutual acquaintances. After almost a decade of long-distance friendship, Ashley and Matt finally wound up in Southern California simultaneously. Ashley was considering another move—to Italy—when she reconnected with Matt and their courtship officially began.

When Matt proposed three years later, Ashley says it was a total surprise. “We were in the pool at my dad’s house and Matt was acting weird,” she recalls. “He kept getting in and out of the pool. I thought he was going to do something sneaky. Finally, he said, ‘I know we’ve talked about how we’re in transition with our careers, but will you marry me?’ I said, ‘Are you kidding me?’ He was holding the ring under the water and he let the box float to the surface. I still couldn’t believe it.”

Two weeks later, Ashley was hired as an event designer at the legendary R. Jack Balthazar, a gig that would be instrumental in creating the wedding of her dreams. Ashley fantasized about eloping in France, while Matt envisioned a big, traditional wedding. Their choice of venue merged the scenarios. “I had an image in my mind of a beautiful hillside in France near the ocean that I had visited when I was 16,” Ashley recalls. “As soon as I saw Saddlerock Ranch from the approach down this amazing tree-shaded lane, I knew it was the place.”

Nailing the perfect gown wasn’t so easy. Matt wanted her to wear white, but none of the conventional gowns felt right. “I couldn’t keep my eye off of this green dress with a cape on a mannequin. I tried it on and fell in love.” She had the cape transformed into a train. (Appropriately, Ashley discovered that in Provence, green symbolizes a bride’s independence from her family.) She bought a second dress—a breezy white slip number—for pre-wedding photos, to appease Matt, and to prevent premature glimpses of the actual gown.

From there, plans came together naturally with the bride’s distinct advantage of being surrounded by inventory and ideas. She found a vintage steamer trunk here, some delicate cut-crystal there, and eventually a vision emerged. “I wanted it to be formal but relaxed, and didn’t want anything that would compete with the surroundings,” she adds.

The multicultural couple planned a ceremony that respected their diverse backgrounds and the family members present. (Ashley’s mom is Buddhist; her dad is Jewish. Matt’s family is Catholic.) After pre-ceremony photos Ashley slipped into her chartreuse gown and walked down the aisle carrying a gold Japanese fan. The couple exchanged vows they’d written, highlighting Buddhist principles of partnership, honesty, and communication, under a vine-covered chuppah draped with paper cranes and orchids. Matt’s mom read from the Bible.

The reception offered bistro-style open seating, with tables decorated from simple to extravagant. Some featured hemstitched linens and pewter chargers topped with fine china, others had stacked dishes for family-style serving. An old potting table held water and wine so guests could help themselves, while steamer trunks stored extra plates and flatware. The result: an atmosphere unified by its feel yet unique at every turn.

After a decadent dinner, guests danced to indie rock tunes and classic dance hits. In a moment she calls “impromptu and hilarious,” while dancing the hora (the traditional Jewish wedding dance), Ashley was pulled to the ground by her train, which had snaked around her leg. “It was a wardrobe malfunction,” she laughs, “but it didn’t stop me!” Between songs guests relaxed on lounge beds and posed in a photo booth while kids enjoyed dressing up in exotic costumes spilling from antique trunks inside a global-style tent. “It was like a beautiful outdoor fair,” says Ashley.



### THE DETAILS

#### Venue

Saddlerock Ranch

#### Day-Of Coordinator

Lisa Vorce, Oh, How Charming!

#### Bridal Gown Designers

White: Les Habitues  
Chartreuse: Trash Couture  
(Future Vintage); purchased at  
Les Habitues

#### Bridesmaids' Dresses

Saja; purchased through  
Elisa B in Pasadena

#### Wedding Ring Jeweler

Jacques Mouw

#### Men's Formalwear

Friar Tux Shop

#### Florals and Decor

R. Jack Balthazar

#### Photography

Yvette Roman

#### Entertainment

Band: Tony Galla and Barbara  
Morrison, West Coast Music  
DJ: Ian Gotler, RedShoe

#### Catering

Duxbury

#### Cake, Candy Table, Dessert Buffet

Vanilla Bake Shop

#### Rentals

Classic Party Rentals

#### Invitations

Guinevere Ink

#### Tent

Raj Tents





**entirely eclectic** In the blend of Buddhist, Jewish, and Catholic influences, a chuppah was decorated with 1,001 symbolic origami cranes made by Ashley's Japanese mother (cranes mate for life) and partygoers danced the hora. Décor varied, too, from simple to extravagant on tables of every shape and size, featuring fruit, gardenias, gigantic roses, and one-of-a-kind candlesticks.

