



Village Hatch Inn

happy ending

Endangered plants, inclement weather, and a dropped cake couldn't stop Courtney Dreslin and Jeff Sinelli from marrying on the beach in the Hamptons.

BY JENNIFER CHININIS PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHEN KARLISCH

YOU HAVE TO HAND IT TO WHICH WICH FOUNDER Jeff Sinelli. He and his bride, *D Magazine* contributor Courtney Dreslin, had been living together for a year and dating for three and a half. Still, Jeff managed to pull off a surprise proposal, during their October 2005 trip to Italy. And the circumstances could not have been more romantic: they were lunching cliffside at the Palazzo Sasso hotel in Ravello, watching a new bride toss her bouquet. A single yellow rose fell out of the bride's bouquet and landed at Jeff's feet. He couldn't resist: he got on one knee, handed her the rose, and asked Courtney to marry him. That yellow rose would later be an integral part of their September 23, 2006 ceremony.

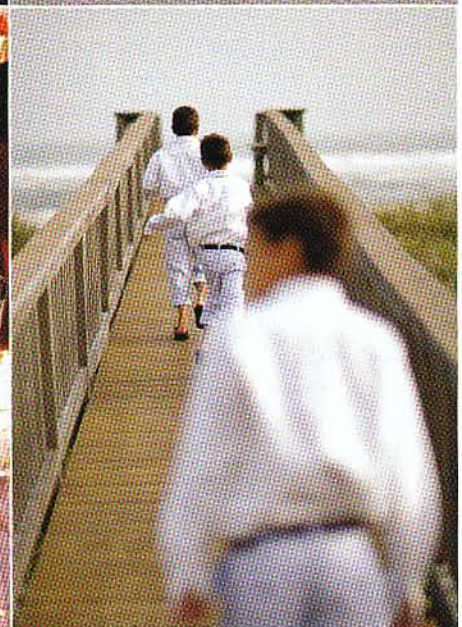
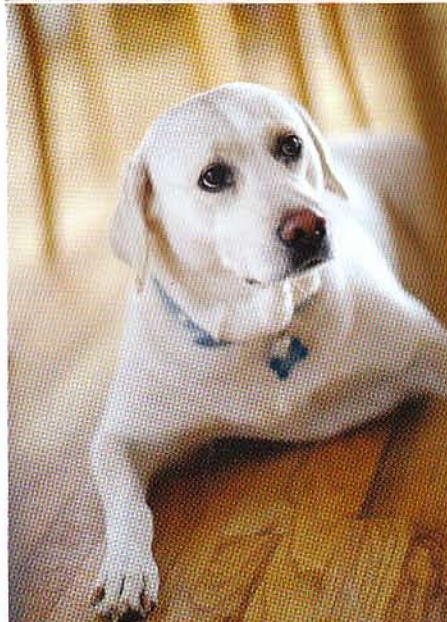
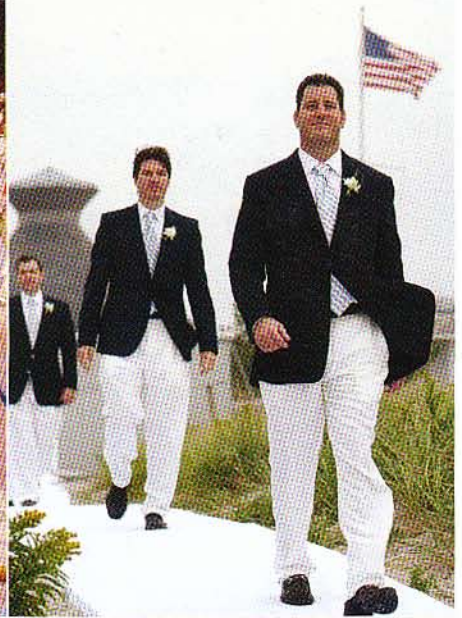
The location was a no-brainer. Courtney's parents have had a house in Westhampton, New York, since the week she was born, so it was only fitting that she and Jeff tie the knot on her parent's property. It was a place that had become as special for him as it was for her. The plans began to take shape: Alyssa Reeves at Paradise Design Co. designed stunning invitations inspired by the logo from one of the hotels Jeff and Courtney stayed at while in Italy, and Courtney found the perfect gown from Carolina Herrera's spring collection during a trip to New York City. Friends and family from 26 states, plus one from England, were planning their trips to Long Island to celebrate with the couple.

Then, one week before the nuptials were to take place, the plans began to unravel. When it came time to build the tent on the beach, endangered plants had sprung up, so the federal government had roped off the beach in front of many houses, including the Dreslins'.



After three days of working with the environmentalists on a solution, the couple had to find a new location. Several failed attempts later, they finally got permission to build on another spot—and then that area flooded overnight. You'd think the third time would be a charm, but even though the tent went up at site No. 3, it was underwater by 7 a.m. on Friday, the day before the wedding.

Thankfully, florist Claire Bean, who became an impromptu wedding planner those last few days, knew just whom to



call. She found the manager of La Ronde Beach Club—she literally went to her house because the club was closed for renovations—and got permission to do the ceremony on the beach and build the tent overlooking the bay in the parking lot across the street.

It rained the day of the ceremony, so the couple planned on exchanging vows under the tent overlooking the bay. But just two hours before Jeff and Courtney would say “I do,” the weather cleared. Claire feared it would take too long to move everything from the bay side to the beach. So Jeff stepped in, and the groomsmen helped carry benches across the street so Courtney could have her beachside ceremony. Groomsman Brady Wood later told Courtney, “If the bride wants a wedding on the beach, the bride is getting a wedding on the beach!” Once the wedding party was assembled in the sand—the groom in his Hugo Boss linen suit, groomsmen clad in Ralph Lauren linen pants and Robert Talbott ties, ring bearers in Ralph Lauren seersucker pants, and bridesmaids decked out in dresses by Nicolas Villalba, each a slightly different shade of light blue—they looked like something out of a J.Crew ad, right down to the couple’s two white Labs, Genghis and Hampton.

At the reception, Courtney could finally relax and enjoy the party she worked so tirelessly to throw. Sapphire Music and local crooner Hunter Sullivan, who’s a good friend of the couple, provided the sounds, while caterer Brent Newsom, a dear friend of the Food Network’s Barefoot Contessa, Ina Garten, prepared the delectable meal. The groom’s cake—which was baked during dinner because the first one was dropped in the sand—sporting a whimsical Toyota FJ topper, a replica of the Which Wich-mobile that Jeff drives, created with help by Which Wich graphics designer Paul Kellerhals. But the bride’s one big request was a cupcake bar, so guests could decorate their own with bride-and-groom picks, toy engagement rings, and personalized “Mr. and Mrs. Sinelli” M&M’s. The cupcakes were a big hit: a cupcake “fight” broke out, and there was blue icing everywhere. But nothing could spoil what turned out to be Courtney and Jeff’s dream wedding. **D**

