

Beauty in Simplicity  
By Mary E. Hart

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Timing is everything, and that was certainly the case when Dara first met Mark back in 1998. They were briefly introduced by her cousin then, but nothing came of it until 2003, when she started working at the same place Mark was working at that time. The couple's romance blossomed over the years and culminated in a lovely birthday proposal.

"I had bible study that day, and Mark said he would join me since it was my birthday, so I was very excited about that," says Dara. "However, it turned out that he had made plans to propose at bible study and even had our pastor come to the class and bless the ring before he slipped it on my finger in front of the whole class. It was a wonderful day."

Choosing the Cayman Islands was an easy decision, as Dara and Mark lived there during their 12-year courtship, and she has quite a few family members in the Cayman Islands.

After dating for more than a decade, the couple decided to forego a lengthy engagement and set a wedding date just 12 weeks after the proposal. Their motto during wedding planning was to keep it simple and focus on what was most important to them.

One way Dara simplified her planning was to let her bridesmaids each choose their dress style. They went with red as it is Mark's favorite color, and then the ladies decided on the fabric for the gowns and each bridesmaid got to select the style they preferred.

"Each one of my bridesmaids has a different personality, so I wanted them to be able to express that and feel comfortable, just as long as each dress was in the same color and fabric," says Dara. "They loved the idea and it all came together nicely."

Not even a little rain could dampen Dara and Mark's spirits. It did rain mid-morning as everyone was getting ready, but it was just a passing shower. The ceremony was held inside the church and the reception was also indoors, but they were still glad to see the blue skies.

Dara's favorite moment from her wedding was listening to the harpist, Eugenio, play as she walked down the aisle with both of her parents, while seeing all of her family and friends there to support them. Emotions heightened as she locked eyes with her husband-to-be, who was beaming from ear to ear, waiting for her at the altar.

After their ceremony at the John Gray Memorial Church, the wedding party and guests headed over to the couple's favorite restaurant, Ristorante Pappagallo, to celebrate their nuptials. Everyone enjoyed themselves from the moment they arrived at the reception to the last dance as the night came to a close.

"Vico and his team at Ristorante Pappagallo are awesome," says Dara. "They are so professional and friendly, and deliver such wonderful service and delicious food. We met with Vico and were able to set a menu that was perfect for our group. They arranged a tasting so we could sample everything from the passed hors d'oeuvres to each option on the menu, which was going to be a plated service. Everything was delicious and we knew it would be enjoyed by all, and it certainly was."

CEREMONY: John Gray Memorial Church  
RECEPTION: Ristorante Pappagallo  
PHOTOGRAPHY: Rebecca Davidson Photography  
VIDEOGRAPHY: Wintroy Randal  
FLOWERS: Shari Stutte, Lions Productions  
CAKE DECOR: Ann Ogden, Uniquely Annz  
MUSIC: DJ TNT, Ironshore Music Group  
HAIR: Dejon Beauty Salon  
MAKEUP: Letitia Eden, Makeup by Letitia