



location
"It reminded us of
our own house," Alex
says of the backyard
of the estate
where they wed.



BRIDGETTE & ALEX
AUGUST 6 • RANCHO SANTA FE, CA

Caribbean-Inspired Estate

PHOTOGRAPHY BY REBECCA YALE PHOTOGRAPHY
EVENT PLANNING & DESIGN BY SWEET EMILIA JANE

cake The lemon-lavender-flavored confection featured cascading gum-paste tropical leaves and wafer paper bougainvillea.



beauty "I wanted to make a bold statement with my hairstyle," Bridgette says of rocking baby's breath in her natural Afro along with her tulle and lace mermaid-style gown. **details** The wedding arch featured a mix of Monstera and palms, while rustic wood bowls and tropical fruit topped tables. **music** Before ramping up the atmosphere with Caribbean soca, Alex performed Elton John's "Your Song" on the piano in front of the guests. "I hadn't fully anticipated the nervousness of witnessing her reaction," he says. "It felt as if I was talking just to her."

THE COLOR PALETTE



Bridgette Wiley's (28 and a software engineer) Caribbean heritage inspired her nuptials to Alex Powell (35 and also a software engineer) at a private estate near San Diego. "I've always been proud of my Caribbean background: the culture, the beaches, the music, the food and the drinks," Bridgette says. "There's never a dull moment when you're around Caribbeans." Using palm leaves paired with hot-pink blooms, dishes served in hollowed-out coconuts and plenty of high-energy soca music, the couple threw a modern tropical affair. As a special personal touch, Alex even sang for Bridgette during the reception, while guests sipped four signature cocktails inspired by the pair's favorite places. —Stephanie Cain



REAL WEDDINGS



Ingredients

Ceremony & Reception Site Sanctuary Estate, Rancho Santa Fe, CA
Photography Rebecca Yale
Photography Videography Grimace
Films Event Planning & Design Emilia
McCool/Sweet Emilia Jane Floral Design
The Little Branch **Officiant** Jason Nathan/Ceremonies by Bethel
Gown Sareh Nouri, Saks Fifth Avenue
Shoes Oscar de la Renta **Engagement Ring** James Allen **Wedding Rings** Bride: James Allen; groom: Kay Jewelers **Hair** Mahogany Hair Revolution **Makeup** TEAM Hair & Makeup **Groomsmen** Dress Reformation **Formalwear** J.Crew
Stationery Rachel Marvin Creative; escort cards: Sweet Emilia Jane
Rentals VenueLust **Broom** Broomchick, Etsy.com **Catering** Root Cellar Catering Co. **Bar** Snake Oil Cocktail Company
Cake Hey There, Cupcake!
Music Ceremony & cocktail hour: Angela Mukul; reception: JCR/Red Shoe
Transportation Highline Charter
Accommodations The US Grant
Registry MyRegistry.com **Honeymoon** Vancouver, British Columbia **Guests** 110

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210



leaf motif Guests' names were calligraphed on small green leaves, and the bar menu was written on a giant palm.

The Cheat Sheet | Bridgette & Alex



Our Favorite Detail Jump the Broom

During the ceremony, Bridgette and Alex jumped the broom, an African wedding custom. "It symbolizes entering a new chapter in life, together as husband and wife, with fertility and prosperity," Bridgette says of honoring the tradition. The couple's planner Emilia McCool, of Sweet Emilia Jane in Los Angeles, decorated the broom with pink flowers and purple ribbon to complement the theme and colors of the day.

Emilia McCool's Planning Tips Tropical

- **Decorate with exotic fruit.** Incorporate papayas, mangoes and limes. It's even cost-effective.
- **Don't take the theme too literally.** Adding too many tropical elements can make the event look like a luau-themed party. Skip the fringe skirts.
- **Serve tiki cocktails.** Hand guests colorful drinks on arrival.
- **Play music.** Expand the theme to sounds too. Hire a ukulele player or a calypso band.
- **Book an appropriate venue.** Rustic barns don't work for tropical décor as well as a beach venue does.

“Food and cocktails were our number one priority to perfect the day. We wanted to share our taste in food with our guests.”
 —BRIDGETTE WILEY, BRIDE



1 Bowls, \$13 each, CoconutBowls.com
 2 Invitations, from \$563 for 100, RachelMarvinCreative.com
 3 Hairpins, from \$40 each, Twigs & Honey, BHL.DN.com
 4 Gown, \$1,695, AlfredAngelo.com
 5 Blazer, \$425, J.Crew.com
 6 Wood stand, \$30, WorldMarket.com

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