

Outdoor Beauty



KATIE REIMER — MICHAEL NAHOUM

Willowood Arboretum, Chester

With a love of the outdoors, Katie Reimer and Michael Nahoum envisioned a romantic and elegant wedding filled with natural beauty in a unique setting. Katie, 27, and Michael, 28, ruled out more than a dozen spots before choosing the Willowood Arboretum in Chester, where they tied the knot on June 22, 2013, surrounded by acres of trees, flowers and gardens. "We wanted a beautiful, perfect, amazing, magical, whimsical day," Katie says. "I wanted our friends and family to experience the beauty of Willowood. Nobody ever believes that New Jersey has beautiful countryside. They were certainly able to get that from Willowood." The location, close to Katie's childhood home in Long Valley, was a bonus. "I wanted to get ready at home," she says. "That is something my dad has always dreamed of."

In a strapless gown and a veil, fashioned into a French-inspired wedding cap, Katie walked down a verdant aisle with her father before 158 guests in a 5 p.m. outdoor ceremony. Guests enjoyed custom drinks during the cocktail hour inside an old stone barn before dinner and dancing under an open-air tent that glowed with lights and candles as night fell. The tent's edges were decorated with hanging ivy and small glass vases that Katie said formed "a curtain of flowers" to welcome her guests, and lanterns were strung from the ceiling.

The ceremony and reception were infused with personalized, homemade touches that made the wedding one of a kind. The huppah was constructed over many weekends by the groom and Katie's dad out of black birch trees from the Reimer family property, with the couple's names and wedding date carved into the wood. Katie's grandmother adorned the bride's mantilla veil with beads and crystals. Katie's father handwrote place cards on tea-stained mailing labels that were displayed on antique shutters. Michael, from Cedarhurst, New York, wrote the menu on a large chalkboard. Even the favor was a do-it-yourself endeavor, with guests filling craft bags with cookies baked by members of Katie's family. "We could not have pulled off the wedding without the help of our family and friends," she says. "We wanted it to be a blend of something that was simple and romantic and beautiful and very natural. I wouldn't have changed a thing."

After a honeymoon to Dominica, the couple is at home in Manhattan.—*Lisa Flam*

