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# Bridal Guide

This special section is a supplement to the




Wednesday, February 16, 2022

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# Ausha & Juan

Tess Nelson  
The Red Oak Express

It wasn't necessarily love at first sight for Red Oak couple Ausha Gay and Juan Ramos, who met playing volleyball in Emerson in 2018. In fact, Gay said Ramos' 'bubbly and outgoing' personality was annoying. Ramos' sweet, sunny disposition soon won her over and the couple will wed Aug. 11, 2022 in Colorado, with a reception to follow in Shenandoah.



Following the initial encounter at volleyball, the couple attended a Creighton volleyball game with dinner at Spaghetti Works. "Later that night, I was to set up my DJ equipment for a class reunion the next evening. I managed to convince her to stay and help me setup my equipment into the early morning hours," Ramos recalled. "I didn't know what to make of it, but we ended up dancing under a street light and that is when I knew that we were meant to be together." The first thing Ramos said he noticed about Gay was her radiant eyes and contagious smile. Gay said it was Ramos' sweet, fun-loving personality she noticed first. Things progressed with the duo, leading up to the moment of officially becoming a couple in early October 2018 following a trip to Ida Grove. "We ate at a Pizza Hut surrounded by a pond, where we also got to feed fish, ducks, and turtles after we had eaten dinner," Gay said. "This is when Juan decided to throw me 'the pitch' meaning he had a softball in the trunk of his car with some important dates and officially asked me

to be his girlfriend." On May 29, 2020, Ramos proposed after signing papers and closing on their home. Gay said Ramos set up a scavenger hunt with signs around the house leading her to believe they were getting a dog. "Little did I know he was waiting out back with the ring waiting to propose," said Gay. She added she was clueless a proposal was coming. In fact, her mom, Patti, had talked her into going to Shenandoah to purchase cleaning supplies for the new home. He set up the scavenger hunt while she was gone. "Little did he know I don't follow all the directions and I jump through hoops to solve things faster; plus I was looking and listening for a dog," she laughed. Ramos, who is a substitute teacher and coach in Red Oak, is originally from Mexico. He also does masonry for Smith Construction. Gay, from Essex, works at Carrick & Associates. The couple enjoys playing volleyball, concerts and traveling.

"I really like that she is hard working, reliable, and despite all the hardships handed to her in 2021, she maintains composure with a good heart," said Ramos.

"A few things I really like about Juan are his loving heart for his family, his positive can do attitude, and the fact that he will wash dishes so I don't have to," added Gay.



## Your wedding timeline guide

Wedding planning involves many movable pieces that ultimately need to come together on the big day. Planning is typically a months-long process, and adhering to certain monthly benchmarks can help couples stay the course. Brides magazine offers that the perfect engagement period is 12 to 14 months, which affords ample time to get organized and work with vendors. With that in mind, here's a 12-month timeline for couples getting ready to say "I do."

### 12 months out

At the start of the planning process, establish your budget, hire a wedding planner (optional), choose the wedding party, pick a date, and start to assemble a cursory guest

list. This also is a great time to begin touring venues to get a feel for potential ceremony and reception locales.

### 11 months out

Now is the time to get a firm handle on the theme and scope of the wedding. Start picking wedding colors and overall design. Also, interview and hire vendors, such as photographers, bands and videographers. These vendors tend to book up quickly as wedding season draws near, so it's never too early to book them.

### 10 months out

This is a good time to start shopping for a wedding gown because it

might take some trial and error to find the perfect dress. You also can start shopping for wedding party attire at this time. Check with formal-wear vendors to see how long it will take for the gowns to arrive in the shop for alterations. If you haven't already done so, be sure to book the wedding venue.

### 8 months out

Reception halls may have their own schedules, but you should think about setting your menu at this time, including deciding if you will host a seated dinner, a buffet or something else. Eight months out also is a good time to finalize the guest list and send save-the-date cards. This also is a good time to visit stores to create registry gift lists.

### 6 months out

Meet with potential florists and

other vendors, like transportation companies and hotels, to secure these arrangements. Your place of worship also may require certain classes or preparatory meetings, so be sure to inquire about these. Meet with a makeup and hair stylist and book a trial. Choose attire for groomsmen and give them a deadline for fittings and orders. If you will not be getting married in a place of worship, hire an officiant at this time.

### 4 months out

Grooms traditionally arrange the honeymoon, so this is a fine time to get those travel plans in order. If you need passports, you should secure them as early as possible, and no later than four months prior to the wedding to ensure processing times. Book cake tastings and order the cake if it is not part of the venue



## TIMELINE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

food and beverage package. If you haven't already done so, the bride should have an initial gown fitting, and wedding invitations should be ordered at this time.

### 2 months out

Secure your wedding license and buy wedding party gifts. Address and mail the wedding invitations. Undergo a second gown fitting and work with the seamstress for the final fitting date just before the wedding. Finalize any song selections with the DJ or band.

The final details will occur in the last weeks before the wedding. Buy all the small accessories and items, undergo final fittings and check in with all vendors for final payments and to ensure they are on schedule. Notify the reception hall of the final guest count.

Once the wedding day arrives, couples who have done their best to stay on schedule can relax and have a great time with family and friends.

## A modern touch

No two weddings are the same. Some couples go to great lengths to personalize their weddings, while others make a few minor tweaks to traditional components to make ceremonies and receptions more reflective of their style and the sentiments they hope to convey.

Embracing modern trends is one way couples have looked to set their weddings apart from traditional ceremonies. There are no rules governing weddings, and that affords couples certain freedoms as they seek to incorporate a modern sensibility into the festivities. For example, couples can modernize certain components of their weddings while remaining loyal to more traditional elements, or they can fully embrace a modern aesthetic. That choice of how modern to make a wedding is up to the couple tying the knot, but the following are some ways to give weddings a modern touch.

- Leave a small carbon footprint. Eco-conscious couples can embrace an environmentalist ethos when planning their weddings by doing every-

thing they can to eliminate waste and promote conservation. Send electronic invitations and save-the-date cards in lieu of paper alternatives and choose a reception venue that serves only locally-sourced food and beverages. In lieu of wedding favors, which tend to be individually wrapped, make a donation in guests' names to a local environmental group and share that information with loved ones. When picking a hotel for guests, find lodging that incorporates sustainability into its day-to-day operations.

- Retire certain traditions. Couples need not feel pressured to incorporate traditions that no longer reflect modern sensibilities. It's up to couples to determine which traditions to retire, but customs like the garter toss and bouquet toss may no longer resonate with modern couples or their guests. In addition, brides who want to be walked down the aisle by both of their parents, as opposed to just their father, should not hesitate to do so.

- Look for a modern venue. One of the most awe-inspiring ways to give a wedding a modern touch is to choose a venue that reflects a modern aesthetic. Vaulted ceilings, white walls and floor-to-ceiling windows can create a clean,

modern feel. Outdoor ceremonies also can create a modern ambiance.

- Adjust your attire. Black tuxedos and white wedding dresses are among the first things to come to mind when imagining traditional weddings. Couples can stay formal but embrace a more modern look by choosing more colorful tuxes for grooms and groomsmen and picking a wedding gown with a touch of color. Brides also can allow bridesmaids to pick their own bridesmaid dresses to expand the modern look even further.

There's no shortage of ways for couples to give their weddings a modern touch.

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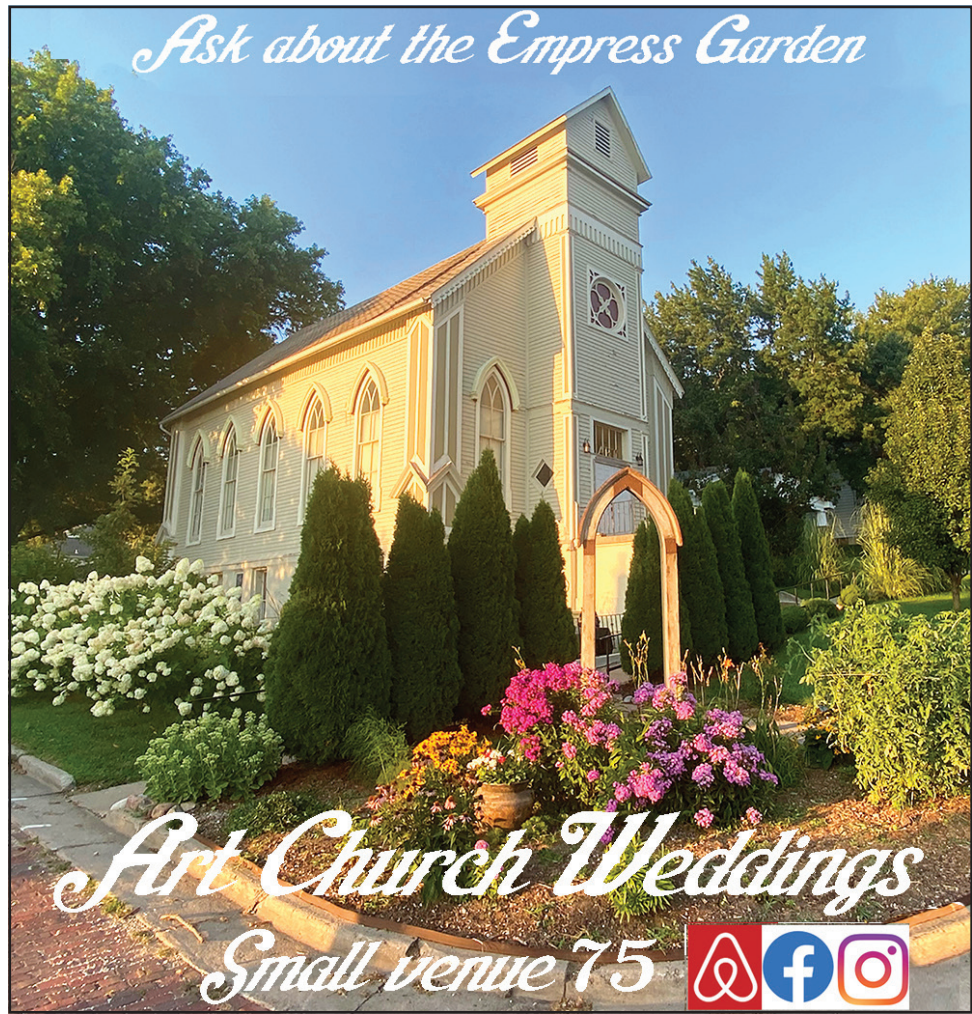


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