

Taylor Crossland, a senior designer and art director at Cheree Berry Paper, channeled an English garden party to create her own invitation suite. Turn the page to see her country wedding.

914 S. ROCK ROAD
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI
63113

*D^r & M^{rs} Lyle Cressland
request the pleasure of
your company at the marriage
of their daughter
Taylor Ansley
to
M^r Donald Robert
son of M^r & M^{rs} Donald Squires
at the Widener Farm
Augusta, Illinois
Saturday, May 25th, 2019
at half past 4 o'clock in the afternoon
followed by
Dinner and Dancing*

*R.S.V.P.
by April 25th*

*Please join us for a
FAREWELL BRUNCH
SUNDAY, MAY 26 · 9:00 AM-NOON
THE HOUSE AT THE POND
AUGUSTA, ILLINOIS*

Please visit our wedding website for more information:
www.colc.com/wedding/donandtaylor

*Please join us for a
REHEARSAL DINNER
FRIDAY, MAY 24 · 7:00 PM
THYME SQUARE
615 HAMPSHIRE ST · QUINCY*
Reply by April 25th to Taylor at tglover@mar.com

P.S.

Kindly reply

BY THE TWENTY-FIFTH OF APRIL
Please initial each guest's entrée choice
Beef _____ Pork _____ Fish _____ Vegetables _____

Stationery

Invite Loved Ones

TEXT BY ERICA SLOAN | PHOTOGRAPH BY ALEX KENDALL



SIGNED, SEALED, DELIVERED

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANN K. HUBBARD

DON SQUIRES WON Taylor Crossland's heart with actions more than words. "He doesn't really fill the empty spaces in conversation," she jokes, describing their first date in St. Louis's Tower Grove Park. But in time, as he repeatedly drove two hours from Illinois to see her between late-night shifts as a training-software designer at a hospital—and while raising his two kids, Charlotte and Finn—it became clear they were on the same page. Another clue: They quickly bonded over a love for pets (of which they now have four, including a basset hound that Taylor gave Don after his passed away). In 2018, when he proposed at the pavilion where they'd first met, her answer was instant.

So was her choice of venue: her grandparents' peaceful farm in Augusta, Illinois. "I used to say to my mom, 'It'd be a nice place to get married, but it'd be great if it had a body of water,'" says Taylor. Before she knew it, her grandfather was constructing a pond that would transform the setting. It was just the first of many lovingly custom-made details of the big day, from the Turkish towels Taylor sewed

FIELD DAY Don chose a J.Crew suit, and Taylor wore a Bonpoint eyelet dress. Their save-the-dates featured vintage stamps from Etsy and classic presidential stamps that Taylor curated for each recipient.



into table linens to the candles she and her mother poured in glass jars. "Don was sweet to let me go crazy making everything myself," says Taylor, a senior designer and art director at Cheree Berry Paper, in St. Louis, where she's created countless suites in the brand's chic, whimsical style. For her own, she leaned into her farm-fresh locale, layering the save-the-date with springtime floral and vintage-textile-inspired patterns. "I wanted it to feel fun and cheerful, like an event you could bring kids to," she says. The invite veered more formal, with letterpress script, since "we're casual, but didn't want anyone showing up in shorts!"

On May 25, 2019, the couple welcomed 125 guests to the farm for a ceremony officiated by Don's brother-in-law, an adorable petting zoo ("a very 'us' version of a cocktail hour," says Taylor), and a sunset fish fry and barbecue. "Charlotte and Finn stood with us for the vows, and it was so nice to be up there as a family," adds Don. "I also loved that I could spot a stray goat wandering behind Taylor the entire time." The cameo appearance fit these animal lovers to the letter.



The newlyweds posed with Charlotte and Finn, then 6 and 8, by the pond that Taylor's grandfather built with her future nuptials in mind.

PARTY PACKS

Kids received goodie bags stocked with play eyeglasses, mini puzzles, and crayons for Taylor's coloring booklets.



ANIMAL MAGIC

Right: Taylor illustrated coloring books to keep little hands busy; each page was filled with inspiration for the wedding. Far right:

A besotted young guest greeted a sweet "unicorn" at the petting zoo. Below: Banquet tables were decorated with vintage vases of flowers "that looked like we'd just gathered them," says Taylor, including yellow and pink butterfly ranunculus, white dahlias, Queen Anne's lace, and chamomile.



SOURCES

Event coordination Sara Elizabeth Weddings
Photography Ann K. Hubbard
Catering Thyme Square Bakery & Café; Boss Food Truck
Flowers Bloomin' Buckets
Stationery Cheree Berry Paper
Bride's gown Bonpoint
Bride's shoes No. 6
Bride's necklace Jessica Winzelberg
Groom's suit and shirt J.Crew
Groom's shoes Nisolo
Children's clothing Dôen (girl); J.Crew (boy)
Rentals Blue Peak Tents; Celebrations Party & Event Rental; VIP Restroom Trailers



BEYOND WORDS

The beauty of a printed piece—a weighty memento to have and to hold—is all the more resounding in this era of virtual everything. Whether it's a classic invitation or a well-crafted change-the-date, here's a primer on the paper elements to consider.



LEAF MOTIF

This suite's ivory-and-slate palette puts the lyrical custom illustrations by Maybelle Imasa-Stukuls front and center.

Announcements

Eloping couples often send these post-ceremony to share their news. If you're having a micro-wedding, do the same to inform your wider circle, says Heather Wiese Alexander, owner of Bell'Invito, in Dallas: "Design-wise, they're low-pressure. They don't have to match your suite, as people won't receive both."

TEXT POINTS A joyful statement, including when and where you wedded. To get ahead of gift requests, add your home address as well.

TIMELY TIP If you plan to throw a larger party in the future, say so, advises Mariam Naficy, CEO of Minted. For instance: "We're married! And we can't wait to celebrate with you in 2022."

Save-the-Dates

If you're hosting a larger gathering, this is your first official contact with guests—it's really *happening!*—and a chance

to introduce your palette and set the tone, whether it's black-tie bash or casual clambake. Traditionally, they can go out up to a year ahead, but these days it's smart to wait until the four-to-six-month mark, when you'll be more confident the details will stay firm.

TEXT POINTS The date and location, even if it's just the town and state, says Megan Lorenzo, founder of Tiny Bones Press, in Port Jefferson, New York: "This is all that's needed to plan travel."

TIMELY TIP A note thanking family and friends in advance for their flexibility should things change is a welcome addition, says Katrina Mendoza, founder of Goods Gang, in Brooklyn.

Invitations

The heart of your suite, the invites should complement your save-the-dates and channel your big day—featuring, say, a pattern from your dress or the intricate ceiling of your event space, says Alexander. (For help choosing the right printing style, see marthastewart.com/printingformats.) Send them two months ahead.

TEXT POINTS The place, time, and dress code of all gatherings, plus how you'd like guests to RSVP. (For specific wording guidance, go to marthastewart.com/weddinginvites.)

TIMELY TIP "Note your expectations for face coverings and distancing, too," says Lorenzo. "This will prepare guests and help put them at ease."

Day-of Items

From programs to escort cards to menus, printed pieces at your celebration are savvy communication tools and style enhancers. Stick to the same palette and font as on your invite, and for an extra touch, play up its motif, such as a monogram, suggests Alexander.

TIMELY TIP Leave the date off menus and maps, just in case.

PLAYBOOK FOR POSTPONING

Need to push things back? Not to worry. Just follow these steps to swiftly inform loved ones. They'll be thrilled to fête you when the right time comes.

1. START DIALING

Make an old-fashioned phone call to each guest, says Alexander (and if they don't pick up, leave a message), so they know to hit pause on booking travel or to modify current reservations.

2. GO DIGITAL

Create a wedding website (or update your existing one) to share new details and answer FAQs. Email the link to guests—or, if you've included it on previous mailings, notify them that you've made changes.

3. MAIL A REMINDER

If you sent a save-the-date, revise it with a "change-the-date" in a similar style, says Alexander. (Minted, Zola, and Paper Source now offer cards for precisely this purpose.)