Power Pair

Kim Kardashian and Kanye West said “I do” and kissed “in front of a spectacular wall of white flowers,” last weekend in Florence, Italy.

First Hand Account

Can You Copy the Look? ‘Kimye’s’ Wedding Wall

Kim Kardashian and Kanye West are no strangers to tabloids, but when the multi-hyphenate couple exchanged vows earlier this year in Florence, Italy, their extravagant floral choices also made headlines.

The bride and groom said “I do” and kissed “in front of a spectacular wall of white flowers,” a breathless, unnamed source told US Weekly. “The blooms include white gardenias, white peonies and white roses from Paris and Belgium.”

Other flower details revealed immediately after the nuptials: two workers were tasked with the job of erecting the wall and hanging flowers onto pre-prepared square tiles with a wet foam backing early in the morning of the ceremony. “It’s very hot at the moment so they’ll have to spray them with water until the wedding starts to stop them from wilting,” the source said.

Florists who want to promote a similar “Kimye” sensibility to celebrity-loving wedding clients (without that multi-hyphenate budget) could suggest “a living wall, in place of all floral,” said Mandy Majerik, AIFD, PFCI, of HotHouse Design Studio in Birmingham, Ala. “Perhaps the couple could say ‘I do’ in front of a variety of mosses and succulents and other textural plants. Another option would be a moss-covered wall with a few florals mixed in as a focal point.”

Like Majerik, Robbin Yelverton, AAF, AIFD, PFCI, of Blumz by... JRDesigns in Ferndale, Mich., said a “budget” version would be hard to pull off. (In Majerik’s exact words, “ha!”). “Scalable? Not so much,” Yelverton laughed. “Even cheap silk would be more than most want to spend; however, with all that said, a rug of rose petals, artistically designed like a Persian rug with a beautiful vase of roses in the center would be interesting to look at and not be as expensive.”
PLANNERS TO THE RESCUE

> Overwhelmed by wedding work? Want to get a better handle on that segment of your business? We asked planners and venue managers featured in this month’s cover story to share practical advice on how to manage workloads and better serve brides. Here are some of their tips.

**If you want to balance your workload ...**
Offer a discount on “off days.” At The Bridges Golf Club in San Ramon, Calif., Sandy Tijero routinely discounts Friday and Sunday weddings. “I’ve seen a lot more people choose those days, because they’re budget-friendly,” she said. Doing so allows Tijero to book more weddings and spread the love over three days, instead of one.

**If you want to improve consultations ...**
Ask brides and grooms to bring in pictures of weddings, trends and designs they loathe — not just the ones they love, suggests Beth Anderson of the Kismet Event Group in Minneapolis. Talking through the pics that make them cringe can sometimes give you even more insight into their tastes and expectations.

**If you want to capture clients for life ...**
Follow up post-event with your best possible thank you: flowers. Cindy Stonehouse of Stonehouse Events in Tampa, Fla., said many florists — even those who do immaculate work on the wedding — miss an opportunity to follow up with clients (and secure their loyalty for life) by not following up after the wedding, or even on the first anniversary with a note or even small bouquet. She suggests brainstorming. “Is there something you can do after the wedding?” she asked. “It doesn’t have to be crazy or elaborate.”

SOCIAL MEDIA

KNOW YOUR PLACE

> Gorgeous personal flowers, centerpiece, ceremony designs and reception showstoppers clearly belong on your shop’s blog (or wedding blog) — but don’t forget to promote the nitty-gritty details you prioritize, too. In Pittsburgh, Cheryl Bakin, AAF, of Parkway Florist, recently clued brides and grooms into her shop’s detail-oriented design-savvy with place cards.

The post reminded would-be clients that the shop has the expertise to turn each and every wedding detail — no matter how small — into a personalized, memorable statement. “We do all kinds of things for all kinds of brides, special events and parties,” Bakin said. “[With the blog post], we were just showing some of the more creative things that can be done.”

She places the same emphasis on these extra-touch services at consultations. “By the time we get to reception flowers, I am talking about every possible nook and cranny where flowers might play a role, from the place card table to the ladies’ bathrooms, and all points in between,” she said. “I always stress that [place cards] should be a ‘wow’ presentation because [they’re] generally the first thing that the guests see” at the reception.

VISUAL IMPACT

> A 2013 survey conducted by The Knot and Pinterest found that more than 90 percent of brides go online to search for wedding inspiration, and 36 percent spend five to 10 hours a week eyeballing those visuals. Make sure your wedding website or page is positioned to keep their attention by following the advice of some of the event planners featured in this month’s cover story: post updated photos regularly and edit out the duds; organize the photos in easy-to-navigate sections (ceremony, reception, cocktail or themes and color palettes); and take the time to capture and post photos of your best work in your area’s top venues — so that brides with locations locked in are one step closer to imagining your work at their wedding when they go to your site. Remember, too, that less can be more. A well-edited collection of photos (10-15 pictures per category) is often more than enough to show off your skills.

VIP SEATING Cheryl Bakin, AAF, promoted her shop’s place card services to appeal to couples searching for personal, often seasonal, touches in every wedding detail.