A full-page photograph of a bride and groom in wedding attire. The groom, on the left, is wearing a dark suit and a light-colored striped tie. The bride, on the right, is wearing a white strapless wedding dress with a lace belt and a long veil. They are standing on a sandy beach with the ocean in the background. The groom is kissing the bride on the cheek. The bride is holding a bouquet of white and yellow flowers.

{ crystal coast wedding style }

# NATALIE & JOE

SEPTEMBER 30, 2012  
EMERALD ISLE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY  
RICHARD BARLOW  
PHOTOGRAPHY

## IN HER WORDS

We met in Carteret County Criminal District Court. At the time, I was a Special Agent with North Carolina's Alcohol Law Enforcement Division Special Agent and Joe was the Assistant District Attorney. From the moment we met in the courtroom, our case was closed.

After we had dated for a while, Joe took me to Atlantic Beach after dinner for a seashell hunt on the beach (a favorite pastime of mine). The sun was setting, and we weren't having much luck finding intact shells.

I was getting frustrated and about to abandon the search when Joe bent down to dig something out of the sand and said, "I got one." I moved in closer to see what he found. Instead of coming back up with a shell, he was down on one knee with a ring asking me to marry him. I was so shocked and excited that it took me a good minute to finally say "Yes!" Afterwards, we sat down and watched the sun set. The entire afternoon was beautiful. ▶





We knew we wanted a beach wedding in Carteret County. We both love the water and spend every summer weekend fishing or boating. We also knew we wanted a beach house reception, and after visiting several, we choose the oceanfront Dune View house in Emerald Isle. The house features a pool deck that is a wonderful reception area with a spectacular view of the ocean.

The week of our wedding, we watched the weather. Rain was forecast, and I was nervous. It poured the night before our wedding during our rehearsal dinner. Fortunately, when I woke up on wedding day the rain had stopped and there were a few breaks in the clouds. About twenty minutes before our beach ceremony began, the clouds parted and the sun came out. Maybe it was my father trying to tell me he was watching and making sure it went perfectly.


We chose a sand ceremony to signify two separate lives joining together as one. To remember my dad, Serge Mason, we had a bouquet of sunflowers (his favorite) placed on the ceremony table. I also added a short poem to the program in his memory. ▶





After we finished taking our photos, we were introduced pool side and our three catering stations opened. Ours was a longer reception, so we opted for a Late Night Menu of passed heavy hor d'oeuvres. It was a fun concept and ensured that the guests who wanted to stay well into the night didn't go hungry.

We loved our cake topper. Joe has a black lab, I have a miniature dachshund, and we wanted to incorporate our hounds into our cake design. Our cake designer found two miniature dog figurines and glued them into beach chairs with our names stencilled on them.

At the end of the evening, the maid of honor, bridesmaid, groomsmen, and Joe jumped into the pool. It was a lot of fun to watch, but I wasn't going to participate no matter how much they begged me. Unfortunately (or fortunately), it began to rain so we moved the dance floor inside, and I escaped a soaking in the pool. 

## THE TEAM

**COORDINATOR:**  
A Seaside Wedding & Events

**CEREMONY SITE:**  
Emerald Isle oceanfront

**RECEPTION SITE:**  
Dune View Beach Cottage, Emerald Isle Realty

**CATERING:**  
Carlton's at the Ocean Club

**PHOTOGRAPHY:**  
Richard Barlow Photography

**FLORAL DESIGN:**  
A Seaside Wedding & Events

**OFFICIANT:**  
Rev. Dr. Worth Green

**EVENT RENTALS:**  
Island Essentials Tent & Event Rentals

**CEREMONY MUSICIAN:**  
Maura Kropke, Violinist

**RECEPTION DISC JOCKEY:**  
DJ Professionals & Video

**CAKE:**  
Kathy Canby Cakes

**TRANSPORTATION:**  
Diamond Limousine