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NEVER MISS A MOMENT OF YOUR WEDDING.  WEDDING SNAP

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## Michelle & Adric's adventure in ancient ruins wedding

[REAL WEDDINGS: GLOBAL](#)By [OFFBEAT EDITORS](#) on JUNE 12, 2012

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Hey, I'm [Ariel](#), Seattle-based author of a book called *Offbeat Bride: Creative Alternatives for Independent Brides*. This blog is the ongoing celebration of couples who dare to walk off the beaten aisle.

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S P O N S O R



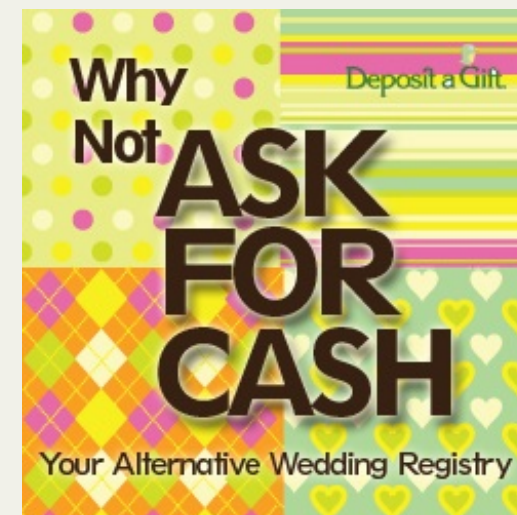
Photos by [Olivera Rusu](#)

**The offbeat bride:** [Michelle](#), Veterinary Technician

**Her offbeat partner:** Adric, Mechanical Engineer

**Date and location of wedding:** [Xunantunich Mayan Ruins](#) and [Ka'ana resort](#), San Ignacio, Belize — March 15, 2012

**Our offbeat wedding at a glance:** Our ceremony only had nine guests, but they spent the entire vacation with us zip-lining, cave tubing, and snorkeling. We had to take a ferry to get to the ceremony location.







**Tell us about the ceremony:** We had a handfasting and exchanged rings while we were still tied together. Adric actually made the [DIY cord](#) for the handfasting. Our wedding bands were made of the same piece of wood that was carved and embedded in metal, so we wrote the ring ceremony to fit with that.







“



Often people speak of wedding bands as a perfect circle with no beginning and no end, but rings do have a beginning. The material used to make these rings had a previous noble life before its transformation into a new purpose. The wood in the center of these rings reminds us of the single piece of raw lumber carefully whittled into a new existence as two pieces of a whole. The metal surrounding the rings was extracted from the earth, liquefied, molded, cooled, and painstakingly polished. Something beautiful was made from these raw elements of nature. Love is like that. It comes from humble beginnings, made by imperfect beings. It's the process of making something beautiful where there was once nothing at all.

”



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R E C E N T

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**My favorite moment:** We arrived at the ruins a little before the guests to set up and take some pictures. I was so excited running around and exploring, but with my corset and the heat of Belize, by the time everyone arrived, I started to feel faint. I had to sit down and get water.



As all of the guests and the minister were waiting, I was struggling to collect myself. Adric knew that I wanted to continue but wasn't quite able to stand yet so he improvised. Without a thought, he got down on one knee, while holding the parasol in one hand, nodded to the

👁 The "Tie the Knot Festival" wedding weekend

M O S T P

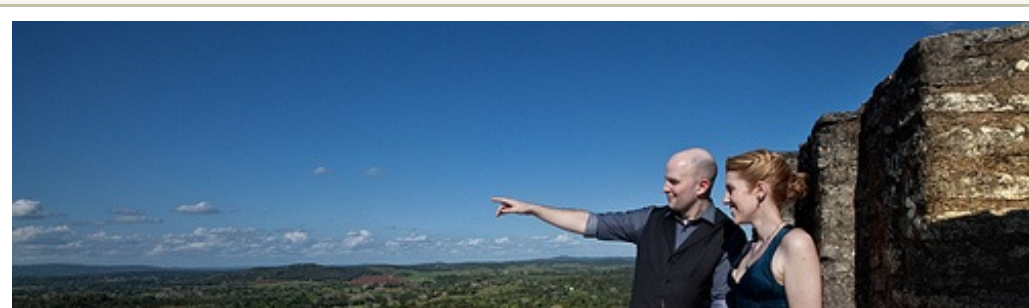
affiliates · birdcage veil · black dress · blue dress · brides in glasses · budget wedding · california · colorful wedding · converse · corset · couples of color · crafty wedding · cupcakes · discount · DIY · diy wedding · dog · eco wedding · europe · geeky wedding · gender-blind wedding party · goth wedding · halloween wedding · handfasting · invitations · lesbian · new york · non-floral bouquet · non-matching bridesmaids · outdoor · park · photo booth · plus size · red dress · retro wedding · rock 'n' roll wedding · seattle · short dress · short hair · simple wedding · small wedding · steal-this-idea · tattooed bride · tea length dress · top hat · tutorial · uk · vintage · washington · wedding photographer

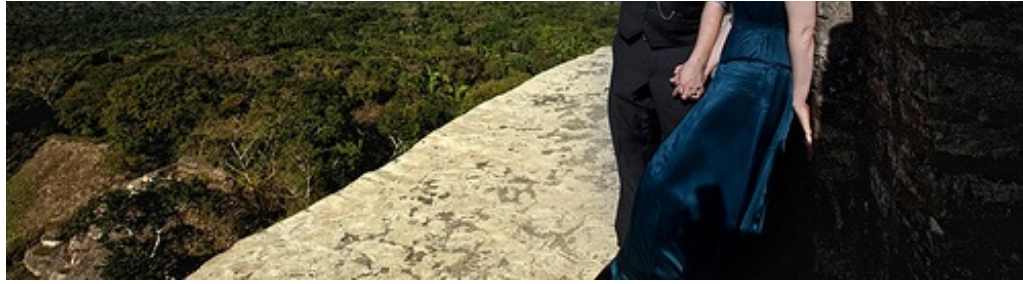


minister, and we proceeded with the ceremony like that.



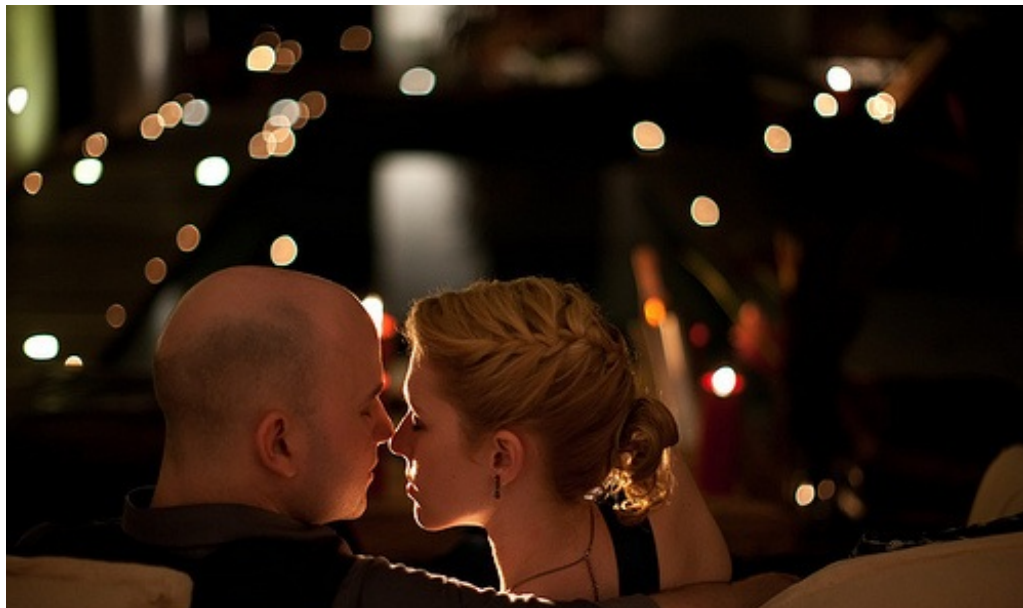
**My funniest moment:** My grandmother had read several travel books before the trip, so she was prepared with a lot of fun facts about Belize. During the reception when the drinks arrived, she leaned over to one of my friends gesturing to her drink and said "You know what that is don't you?" The girl replied that it was coconut rum and pineapple juice. My grandmother announced to the group very matter-of-factly that it is a "**Panty Ripper.**" That became the official Belizean drink for the group during the rest of the trip.

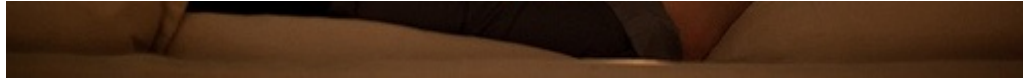




**Was there anything you were sure was going to be a total disaster that unexpectedly turned out great?** All of the planning for the wedding was done over email based on reviews and websites. I picked a fairly new resort sight unseen, relying on a few pictures and the word of people I had never met. Many of the details of the ceremony and trip activities were being handled by the resort, and I was definitely worried something would be forgotten.

Instead, I was blown away by the [Ka'ana resort](#). It was beautiful and they brought customer service to the next level. All of the staff were so attentive and friendly. They told us local stories, knew our names, and even what we liked to eat. If I needed anything, no matter who I asked, from the pool guy to the gardener, they would drop what they were doing and help.





The hotel staff even conspired with our photographer, so that after the wedding we came back to our room to find it filled with hundreds of candles. Thanks to Ka'ana, the whole trip went off with out a hitch. They were knowledgeable while they took us to and from all of the activities, and perfectly coordinated the bus to plane to car ride to the island hotel where we were spending the second half of our trip.



**My advice for Offbeat Brides:** List the things that are most important to you before you start. As the planning goes along, if/when something little goes wrong, the list puts it in perspective.







Care to share a few vendor/shopping links?

- Dress: [Dark Garden](#)
- Groom's Vest: [My Tailor Store](#)
- Photographer: [Olivera Rusu](#)
- Wedding resort: [Ka'ana](#)
- Rings: Etsy seller [USA Jewelry](#)

- Engagement ring: [Hunt Country Jewelers](#)
- Necklace: Etsy seller [Azure Treasures](#)


**Enough talk — show me the wedding porn!**



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Working tirelessly to bring you stimulating content day after day, our team of Offbeat Editors will not sleep until you've gotten your offbeat fix.

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Vanessa & Mando's rose that took 13 years to bloom wedding  
([Offbeat Bride](#))



The Perfect Hairstyle for Your Personality  
([Bangstyle](#))



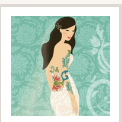
Screw "timeless" weddings, I WANT my wedding to look dated  
([Offbeat Bride](#))



A Sonic Screwdriver bouquet, a cave wedding, and one familiar couple  
([Offbeat Bride](#))

[7]

## R E S P O N S E S : 1 4 C o m m e n t s ,



On [June 12th, 2012 at 5:49 AM](#)

**Jamie said**

Oh my gawd, I love your rings and the reading that went along with the rings! I've got a green engagement ring as well, and we also got wood-inlaid bands. I wish I'd seen your ring reading a month ago; I might have



stolen it!

THIS!

 [Reply to this comment](#)



On [June 13th, 2012 at 1:44 AM](#)

**redfeather said**

It's from Ariel's book...At least that's where I saw it, I know because I'm pinching it too 😊

THIS!

 [Reply to this comment](#)



On [June 12th, 2012 at 5:50 AM](#)

**Verity said**

MY GOODNESS!! What a beautiful wedding! Everything looks so perfect – the couple, that dress!, her hair, the location, the rings....ahhhhhhh!

THIS! 2 agree

 [Reply to this comment](#)




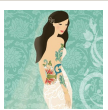
On [June 12th, 2012 at 5:53 AM](#)

**Verity said**

I don't want to leave the page, this wedding is THAT beautiful!

THIS! 5 agree

 [Reply to this comment](#)




On [June 12th, 2012 at 6:22 AM](#)

**Lindsay said**

I am SO glad this was posted – your wedding is so amazing! My fiance and I really want to plan an adventure-style wedding in Peru. How did you find your minister? Also, did your resort have a wedding planner or someone you corresponded with regularly to help you plan? Sorry for all the questions! I'm so psyched to find someone who has been through the experience 😊

THIS!

 [Reply to this comment](#)



On [June 13th, 2012 at 1:18 PM](#)

**Michelle said**

The best advice I can give is choose your hotel/resort carefully. I searched tripadvisor as well as many other sites before finally deciding on a place that wasn't as well known but was a small luxury resort looking to make a name for themselves. There are a lot of well known hotels that advertise wedding expertise and have it down to a science, but as a result they often move weddings through like an assembly line, and don't give you the individualized help and attention you want and deserve.

Even if a location doesn't advertise wedding experience, email and ask them. I communicated with several locations, before I decided on my hotel. Think up questions ahead of time and use your first communications as an interview. If they are very slow with responses or don't answer questions to your satisfaction you can assume that they will be just as difficult when you are trying to plan your wedding.


My resort was wonderful about working with me to plan and reserve the location, hairdresser, minister as well as tons of other details through their in house wedding planner. She knew the local laws, weather, food, and people, so it was wonderful having someone who knew all the ins and outs of the area. But don't forget to do your research as well, those assembly line hotels can sometimes be a good source for ideas or vendor information. Just because your site suggests one thing don't be afraid to ask about other options or vendors.

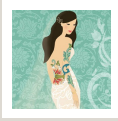
Also make sure you research wedding license requirements for your country. We were "officially" married in Virginia, because we didn't want to waste an entire day doing paperwork at the marriage bureau while in paradise. The Belize ceremony is our actual wedding, the other is just a piece of paper. It also give you more leeway if you want an unusual ceremony, or want to have a friend act as minister.

It is a lot of work, but it is definitely worth it. Let me know if you have any more questions.



THIS! 2 agree

 [Reply to this comment](#)




On [June 14th, 2012 at 9:45 AM](#)

**Lindsay said**

Great advice – thanks so much! I have definitely heard about doing the legal marriage in the states to avoid major headaches, and it really is a great idea. Treating email communications as interviews is something i will absolutely keep in mind when searching for a resort. It will be fun to find a place that is happy to help with the process. It seems like finding the places that communicate well and are eager to help is the place to start. Thanks again for all the tips, and i will most certainly contact you if more questions arise!! Congrats and may you and Adric have many many many blissful years together! <3

THIS!

 [Reply to this comment](#)




On [June 12th, 2012 at 6:50 AM](#)

**Megan2 said**

"You know what that is don't you?" ... "Panty Ripper." – Your Grandmother is Awesome

Congratulations! This is all so beautiful

THIS! 6 agree

 [Reply to this comment](#)



On [June 12th, 2012 at 8:18 AM](#)

**eureka said**

This is just so incredibly gorgeous...all of it!!! Also, do you think your grandmother would like to come to my wedding? She is obviously wonderful and hilarious!

THIS!

➡ [Reply to this comment](#)



On [June 12th, 2012 at 10:12 AM](#)

**Kirstin said**

LOVE the colors of the dress and rings! Gorgeous! 😊

THIS!

➡ [Reply to this comment](#)



On [June 13th, 2012 at 2:32 AM](#)

**Sunspirit said**

That is just the kind of wedding I dreamt of before we started planning. Somewhere historic and beautiful, with only us or our very closest of family. It looks amazing!

THIS!

➡ [Reply to this comment](#)



On [June 13th, 2012 at 5:44 AM](#)

**Charis said**

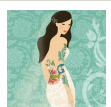
😊 Beautiful.

Xunantunich is quite possibly my favorite spot in the entire world...would love to do a vow renewal there in a few years.

And this makes me miss Belize just that much more than I always do when I'm not there.

THIS!

➡ [Reply to this comment](#)




On [June 15th, 2012 at 3:45 PM](#)

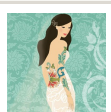
**AmyW said**



Wow! Beautiful dress, beautiful hair, beautiful rings, beautiful location — beautiful everything!

THIS!

 [Reply to this comment](#)




On [June 20th, 2012 at 9:25 PM](#)

**Carolyn said**

Hi Michelle (and Adric!), Congrats! We loved crafting your engagement ring, and are thrilled to see it be part of such a beautiful, romantic, and unique celebration. Best Wishes and Much Love, Carolyn Cutshall, Hunt Country Jewelers

THIS!

 [Reply to this comment](#)

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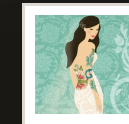
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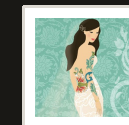
### Recent Comments



At 4:47 PM on [Vintage snack: A visually impaired bride's best friend](#),  
Narwhal said:

GORGEOUS. Can we also please talk about how fabulous that lady in the animal print coat is?

[Jump to comment](#)



At 4:20 PM on [The "Tie the Knot Festival" wedding weekend](#), Nadia said:

Hogwash, matching bee costumes, bridal party human pyramid, it all looks amazing!

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from I Do Engravables



Swedish fairy ceremony: a sneak peak from the cherry blossom brides!



Kate & Alex's sci-fi/fantasy nerd mash-up weddingCon



Easily edit your wedding songs to snip out the sad (or too long) bits



Non-floral wedding centerpieces



The best decision I made in my marriage? Keeping my name.



This is your last chance to run: why commitment comedy falls flat for me



At 4:00 PM on [Meg & Zach's simple Southern kid-friendly Christian wedding](#), [Meg](#) said:

I found the owls in the dollar section of Target and then just spruced them up a little bit with...



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