

Planners We Love

Take inspiration from these creative forces as we continue our series spotlighting the best in the business. by Carol Straley



GOLD LEAF EVENT DESIGN & PRODUCTION, Owner, Kate Ryan

Majestic mountaintops with breathtaking views. Spectacular sun-drenched beaches from Hawaii to Miami and beyond. Lush botanical gardens. These are just a few of the gorgeous locations where **Gold**

Leaf Event Design & Production works its magic. Renowned for luxury destination events animated by innovative design, the company was born in 2013 in Aspen, CO. That's where the firm's Michigan-born and raised owner Kate Ryan landed after college, ready to take inspiration from her far-flung travels and love of event planning to find her destiny. After a successful stint as an event coordinator, Kate had the expertise and vision to launch Gold Leaf Event Design & Production, with full service wedding planning and coordination among its offerings. And as success begets success, when the bright lights and scenic streets of the Big Apple beckoned, Kate opened a second office in New York City in 2017. In addition to creating memorable stateside celebrations, Kate and her team also travel the globe, trekking from Australia to Mexico to stunning European destinations—always going the extra mile to create show-stopping, highly personalized experiences for couples who want to say, “I do” in idyllic—and Insta-worthy—surroundings.

Why We Love Weddings

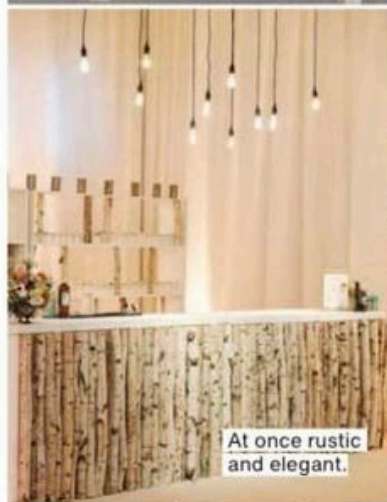
- “Weddings give us the opportunity to be consistently working on something new.”
- “Clients are all different, and we love learning about their relationship journey. They inspire us to create an event reflecting who they are as a couple, where they've been and where they're going.”

Meet Our Couples

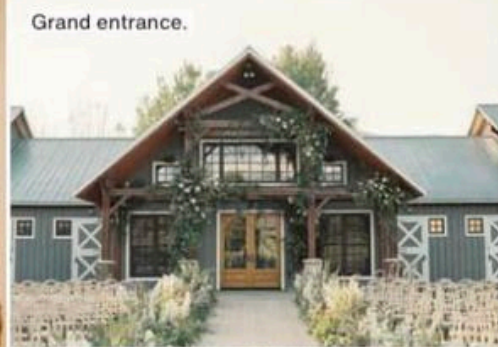
- “Our clients come to us to create a beautiful and unique experience that tells their story.”
- “We are praised by our clients for our ability to listen and put their priorities first. The initial steps of our planning process includes educating our team on each individual client's likes and dislikes, discovering what their style is as a couple and adjusting the process for working together to guarantee it best fits their needs.”



Sealed with a kiss.



At once rustic and elegant.



Grand entrance.



Lush greenery brings the outdoors in.



A comfy lounge setup.



Says Kate: "Our goal is always to utilize the outdoors."



An enchanting woodland tablescape.



A serene ceremony setting.



A wedding cake in bloom.

PHOTOGRAPHY: OPPOSITE PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY OF GOLD LEAF DESIGN & PRODUCTION, JACQUI COLE PHOTOGRAPHY, LES RACHÈL HAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY. (THIS PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) VALÉRIE D'ARLING DE RACHÈL HAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY (2), JACQUI COLE PHOTOGRAPHY (2)



In full flower.

One Secret of Success

- "Patience is key, as well as being solution-oriented and proactive in making adjustments to accomplish the task at hand."

Most Memorable Moments

- "When the couple is brought into the reception space prior to guest entry. Their emotion and gratitude can be overwhelming; it's such a special moment."

Words of Wisdom for Our Couples

- "We understand there is a learning curve when embarking on the planning process—it's why we're here! Being knowledgeable of the impact guest count has on the entirety of the event is helpful information for everyone to have from the beginning of the planning process."
- "We limit the number of weddings we take on per year to eight. This allows us to truly dedicate ourselves to each one."

What Makes the Perfect Wedding Weekend

- "Being that we cater primarily to destination weddings and events, we find the weekend feels the most complete when there is a welcome reception, followed by the wedding itself and a farewell of some sort."
- "There are different ways we can build out each event, but having all three makes the weekend feel well rounded."

Wedding Evolution

- "Post-pandemic we found couples were nervous to invite larger numbers in the event we were required to limit the count due to potential COVID restrictions being put back in place. But now we're seeing much longer guest lists. Our average guest count for destination weddings is 120-180. And weekend weddings are still going strong."
- "We've seen a return to destination weddings, with Mexico at the top of the list."

My Favorite Wedding Tradition

- "Writing your own vows. I love those special and unique moments."

I'm Most Excited About

- "Continuing to get to do what we do best, with people who trust us. We're so grateful to our clients, but also for the creative partners we work with." →