

# Pop-Up Weddings Live Happily Ever After



By Josie Pickens on July 16, 2015



I've been receiving quite a few save-the-date pre-wedding invitations in the mail, and I couldn't be happier that my friends have found great partners to continue building their lives with. I am, after all, a sucker for love, and there are few things more beautiful and uplifting than watching two people say to one another—in this era of “nothing is permanent” and “everyone is replaceable”—I want to hold your hand for the rest of our lives. All this good lovin' going around even has me contemplating whether I'd try marriage again. With the right person and at the right time, I'd remarry. But one thing is certain, I will never, *ever* attempt to plan a wedding on my own again, and I refuse to break the bank for one.

Racquel Kristi, a native New Yorker now living in Washington DC, has created the perfect solution to the modern couple's wedding planning woes. Kristi owns and operates R. Kristi Modern Hospitality ([RKMH](#)), where she curates lavish, flawless weddings along with various other public and private events. Her greatest feat, however, may be her design of a pop-up wedding (Blissful Grandeur) where couples can indulge in an opulent, celebrity-style wedding celebration for a fraction of what it might cost.

**What exactly is a pop-up wedding?** In Kristi's vision, it's a [luxurious group wedding](#) that could be valued at around \$90,000 but costs under \$5,000. Couples, along with their guests, enjoy an engagement party and a group wedding with a reception that includes dinner and cocktails at a private and plush secret location. Couples are also provided an expert photo shoot from a professional

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Lucky for New York couples (and those willing to travel to New York) looking to marry and open to group nuptials, RKMH is creating a pop-up wedding this October 22.

I had an opportunity to chat with Racquel Kristi on her vision for making the most glamorous affordable, and on how she uses her #BlackGirlMagic to create such innovative and one of a kind wedding experiences.

**When asked how** she came up with the concept of a pop-up wedding event, Kristi said that as a millennial she felt her company should “embrace the comfort of traditions, but also push the envelop on accepting them without question.” She experimented with a pop-up wedding when a (soldier) client, asked her to plan a wedding for him within 24 hours—an event that his bride-to-be had no idea was happening. It turned out to be the most beautiful wedding she'd ever produced.

The savvy businesswoman knew she could create dream weddings at a price most couples could afford, without them having to give up all the extravagance they desire. Kristi jotted down her ideas waking from her sleep, and with a bit of fine-tuning, Blissful Grandeur was born.

**Racquel Kristi argues** that Blissful Grandeur offers the African-American bride “her moment to absorb all her beauty and feel totally selfless by choosing her own happiness.” She believes Black women often struggle with taking care of home, career and capping as superwomen from day to day. Add to that the economic stresses we often face and the cultural demands we feel we must uphold, and we rarely get to choose ourselves.

I had to inquire about the element of surprise incorporated into Blissful Grandeur (neither the guests nor the couple know ahead of the event where the wedding will take place) and how that kind of surprise enhances the wedding experience. She explained, “Since the couple *and* the guests are unaware of what will be happening that day, everyone is extremely nervous and excited. The pop-up experience expands past just the location and includes all that will happen within the event—the décor, the vendors, the activities, the entertainment, the gifts, everything. All night it is one surprise after another!”

**Another element of Blissful Grandeur** that I found inspiring was Kristi's inclusion of personal coaching for the marrying couples. “We chose to incorporate our Couples Detox sessions because of the forgotten fact that marriage last beyond the wedding,” said Kristi. “The Couples Detox is created to help couples connect on a deeper level, set personal and relationship goals for themselves and truly connect in ways they may have not before so that they can walk into marriage renewed, fresh and confident.”

RKMH, through Blissful Grandeur, provides weddings that are glamorous and all-inclusive. The couple is able to feel like royalty for relatively little to nothing, which allows them to invest financially in what's important—starting their lives together. The pop-up wedding will soon take New York City by storm, but the event travels, and Racquel Kristi is currently scouting locations as close as New Orleans and as far away as South Africa.

**RKMH is accepting [applications](#) for Blissful Grandeur New York now!**

**Josie Pickens is an educator, cultural critic and soldier of love. Follow her on twitter: @jonubian.**