



Caroline Reehl and William Boykin wed at the bucolic Old Edwards Inn in Highlands, North Carolina. OPPOSITE: The bride created over 200 ceramic pears for her guests.



The Perfect Pair

Incorporating personal flourishes with every turn of her pottery wheel and beyond, a ceramics artist marries her groom at a destination wedding in the mountains of Highlands, North Carolina

By **KATE ABNEY**
Photography by **BRYAN JOHNSON**

Floral designer Charles Vance crafted a welcome "tree" at the reception entrance with birch poles, curly willow, and Jackson vine, sprouting from a base of hydrangeas. Handblown glass orbs filled with tealights dangled from the branches.



In The four months leading up to her wedding,

Caroline Reehl spent as much time at her pottery wheel as she did planning the other details of her Highlands, North Carolina, nuptials. Working from her Raleigh home studio, the bride-to-be pursued a secret project: fashioning 207 ceramic pears by hand. "I will never forget that number," Caroline says of the gifts she bestowed upon wedding guests. "I hand-threw them all on my wheel, then hand-sculpted the tops and gave them a gold luster glaze. It was truly a labor of love."

The pears have since become a staple for the bride's business, Caroline Ceramics, launched in 2010 on the heels of her Ole Miss degree, and are now sold through her website as well as in boutiques. Caroline's work is distinguished by delicate, hand-applied floral details and hand-brushed glazes, and has more recently evolved to include acrylics-on-canvas.

It was a year into her professional practice that Caroline met William Boykin—a Hampden-Sydney College graduate who today serves as vice president of a landscape management firm in Raleigh—while they were both vacationing in Destin, Florida. William proposed about two years later

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Adorned with one of Caroline's ceramic crosses, her bridal bouquet included David Austin 'Patience' roses, 'Snowy Jewel' roses, 'Majolica' spray roses, ranunculus, freesia, dusty miller, and seeded eucalyptus. • William and his groomsmen looked undeniably dapper in classic tuxedos. • The bridal party prepared for the nuptials in a cottage adjacent to the reception site.



CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT: The reception was aglow beneath garlands strung through the barn rafters. Gold chairs gave the rustic setting a glamorous edge. • A salted caramel cake by Lush Cakery in Atlanta featured scalloped buttercream frosting to mimic the details of the bride's ceramics. • Guests puffed on cigars at the cigar bar outside the reception. • A 24-foot garland spilled down the sides of the fireplace, framing a handsome wreath with deer antlers and seeded eucalyptus.



LEFT: Filled with hydrangeas and 'Campanella Peach' roses, Caroline's vases anchored the escort card table.
BELOW: The happy newlyweds left in a vintage Riley coupe.



on a November morning following Thanksgiving at Caroline's family's hunting camp.

With family and friends divided between Alabama and Raleigh, the couple selected Old Edwards Inn and Spa in Highlands, North Carolina, as the wedding site. "I grew up going to camp in the area every summer, and Will's family has a farm in the Carolina mountains, too," explains Caroline, who was raised in the small, coastal town of Fairhope, Alabama.

It was through the team at Old Edwards that the pair met their wedding planner, Lindsay Pitt of Atlanta-based Toast Events. "Lindsay instantly understood the aesthetic I wanted," Caroline says. " 'Romantic' and 'traditional' were two of the words I brought to her."

Caroline herself put a personal spin on the details, as her custom handiwork didn't stop at the pears. Each of her nine bridesmaids also received one of her McClure jewelry dishes, and the bride's mother and grandmother took home the tall white vases—filled with hydrangeas and 'Campanella Peach' roses—displayed on the escort card table. The maid of honor, matron of honor, mother of the bride, and mother of the groom were given ceramic crosses that were woven into the wrappings of their bouquets.

The bride's bouquet, also adorned with one of her signature crosses, was a mix of David Austin 'Patience' roses, 'Snowy Jewel' roses, 'Majolica' spray roses, ivory ranunculus, ivory freesia, dusty miller, and seeded eucalyptus. All of the floral elements were created by Charles Vance, a designer with Atlanta's Jackson Durham Floral Event Design.

By the time evening descended on the estate, guests filtered in for the ceremony and took their seats beneath an elegant tent. Caroline's father walked her down the aisle, lined with seeded eucalyptus and lemon leaf, to a garland-strung arbor where she and her groom said their vows.

Cocktail hour and hors d'oeuvres were followed by speeches and a Champagne toast next to a glowing fire. A seated dinner in the barn pavilion came next, where skirted round tables were punctuated by centerpieces of 'Campanella Peach' roses, peach dahlias, 'Majolica' spray roses, white and green hydrangeas, and dusty miller. Atop the place settings, the ceramic pears Caroline spent many pre-wedding days creating were adorned with a tag that read, "Love, Caroline and William: The Perfect Pear." William, ever an ardent supporter of her craft, says that his bride's artwork in the décor was "enough to take one's breath away." Even the cake, decorated with scalloped buttercream frosting and roses, mimicked the delicate details of Caroline's ceramics.

Everything from the French lace wedding gown by Anna Maier Ulla-Maija to the coup-style glasses used for the Champagne toast offered a nod to tradition. The bucolic scenery of Old Edwards invoked an old-fashioned formality, something the future Mr. and Mrs. Boykin captured with every moment of their wedding day.

"We wanted lots of dancing and a big celebration," Caroline says. And celebrate, they did. After a rose petal and lavender send-off, the duo drove off in a 1950 British Riley convertible coupe, just as classic as the couple itself. 🍷

For more information, see Sources, page 94.