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Editor's Note **Dallin Cervo**

Let the *Rustic* surroundings
Enhance your wedding

PHOTO BY A BARRETT PHOTOGRAPHY

Golden British Columbia is home to some of the most breathtaking, rustic views throughout Canada. Surrounded by the beautiful Canadian Rockies, it is a perfect place to host a rustic, mountain wedding.

A wedding is an exciting time in a couple's life. Everything they've been working at since the moment they met has been leading to that very day, to the very moment they each say, "I do."

A wedding doesn't come easy though, there is a lot of hard work and planning that goes into it. You need the right vendors, the right dress, the right photographer and above all else, you need the right location.

If rustic is what you are looking for, then look no further. Delve inside and discover the rustic weddings within and why Golden is quickly becoming one of the most sought after wedding destinations.

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Lolo & Noa Photography



October 7, 2017

Jones - Fehr

A dream rustic wedding

STORY BY DALLIN CERVO
PHOTOS BY JENA LEE PHOTOGRAPHS

Nothing says rustic wedding more than a beautiful farm wedding, and for Debbi and Luke Fehr, they couldn't have picked a better spot than Columbia Wetlands Outpost.

"We wanted a rustic wedding," Debbi said. "The views there are really amazing."

The Columbia Wetlands Outpost Red Barn's unique location amidst the beautiful backdrop of the Rocky and Purcell mountains was the perfect location for Debbi and Luke to bring their families to.

The six-bedroom lodge, timber tents and tepee tents are all included in the Red Barn wedding destination package and they filled it all up.

Having been born and raised in Golden, Debbi knows how beautiful Golden is and not wanting to make her family travel to a far destination, she took advantage of the rustic views and chose a local wedding.

"It's a really beautiful place to get married," she said. "There's a lot to offer here as well so if you wanted to do other things during the week there is that option too."

Leading up to the day of the wedding it was raining all week, but when the day finally arrived, the rain had stopped and it was a beautiful sunny day with the surrounding mountains covered in snow. The vendors were all great and helpful and photographer Jena Lee provided the pictures.

"She's amazing, she does amazing work," Debbi said. "She did our engagement photo shoot too and it was really good."

Prior to being married, Luke and Debbi had been together for four and a half years and had two children together; Hannah age two and Ryker 10 months old at the time of the wedding. Both kids were a part of the wedding with Ryker being pulled down the aisle by his young cousins and Hannah being a flower girl. For Hannah, it was an exciting day and she still tells anyone who will listen about her big day.

As for Debbi, the wedding could not have gone better and her dream, rustic wedding was everything she wanted.

"I wouldn't do anything different," she said. "It was perfect."

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March 25, 2017

Stephenson - Liebreich

A mountaintop love story

STORY BY GLYNN BROTHEN
PHOTOS BY ZAYA LYNCH



Kicking Horse Mountain Resort is one of the go-to places for a Golden wedding, but for Chantal Stephenson, 32, and Jared Liebreich, 36, it served as the setting for the first time they met, their engagement, and their vows last March.

"Since the first time I went to Kicking Horse, I knew that's where I wanted to get married. I hadn't even met Jared yet," Stephenson said. "If it wasn't Kicking Horse then it would have been somewhere in the mountains."

While the location was already set, there were some unplanned events. The wedding day started sunny and turned into a snowy ceremony at the Eagle's Eye Restaurant patio.

"Everyone told me it's good luck, so we went with that," Stephenson said, adding that despite the cold weather, she enjoyed the gondola ride and photos on the peak. To curb chills, the bridesmaids wore shrugs

and long johns under their dresses. The groomsmen, in just their dress clothes, grinned and bore the cold for photos.

"Basically the entire ceremony was a blizzard," Liebreich said. "It was pretty crazy. It was nice and bluebird in the morning and once we got up there a nice little storm rolled in. It was unique. It was good."

Back in town, the 54 guests had drinks at Whitetooth Mountain Bistro followed by dinner at the Island Restaurant.



"It was everything I ever wanted. It was small enough that I got to talk to everybody," Stephenson said.

Following their evening party, the group enjoyed brunch the next morning at the Big Bend Cafe. For a pre-honeymoon escape, Stephenson and Liebreich visited Emerald Lake that evening.

Stephenson said part of what made their day special was the accommodation of local wedding vendors who helped her and her now-husband personalize

their celebration. Everything except the bride's wedding dress was sourced locally.

"They were happy to help us out. Easy to plan, easy to contact," Stephenson said. "I think that it helped that we weren't in the middle of wedding season."

The couple opted for a unique guestbook to commemorate their times at Kicking Horse. Guests were encouraged to sign a trail map of the mountain. The location of where they met 10 years ago was marked with a heart.

For their loved ones, Kicking Horse was a destination wedding as both the bride and groom hail from Vancouver and Prince Albert, Saskatchewan respectively. Beyond having Golden as a backdrop, it's where they both hope to permanently call home someday.

"I never really thought that I would want to live in a small town growing up in Vancouver. All our free time is spent in the mountains," Stephenson said. Liebreich added it was a treat to see his prairie friends see the Rocky Mountains, some for the first time.

Until then, the newlyweds are settling for regular ski trips to their favourite mountain and memory place.



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Add a Thrill to your Wedding

STORY BY DALLIN CERVO
PHOTOS BY MYLES DELORME

Looking to add a little adventure to your wedding? Well Extreme Yeti may very well be the place for you.

Opening in 2011, Extreme Yeti provides the ultimate skydiving experience in Golden. It offers the best views in the Rocky Mountains and with no major airport nearby, allows you to have as much room as you want.

Owner Myles Delorme says skydiving can be a great activity to do as a couple because it lets you see another side of your partner.

"As a couple going through it together it's always interesting to see how they'll react to being thrown out of an airplane," Delorme said.

Throughout the six years of being open, Delorme says they have seen a number of engagements with about one or two happening each year. Typically the groom will contact them prior to the jump to make the arrangements. Then they time the landings so the groom can land first, get the ring and any other items ready so that when she lands everything can happen at once.

But it's not just engagements, skydiving can be a perfect activity

for a bachelor or bachelorette party. Because many people are typically coming from out of town for the wedding, Delorme says skydiving is a big draw especially when it comes to bachelor parties.

"As a group activity it's always fun," Delorme said.

Usually when a bachelor party comes through, the group will make the groom jump in a ridiculous costume. Delorme said he recalled one group putting the groom in a Superman onesie and making him jump out like that. Another group made the groom embrace his Scottish roots and jump out in a kilt.

For couples, skydiving at Yeti Extreme can be that perfect bow to end what should be a wonderful and romantic event.

"Golden is a great couples retreat," Delorme said. "We are just one of the activities you can add to everything else, but to finish it off with a skydive over top of Golden is the true highlight because you just spent the whole day in town and you can see everything from up top. It's a great way to round up the trip."

Extreme Yeti is open seasonally from May (weather dependent) until the end of September. If you want to add that adventure to your wedding, look no further and make your reservation.





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Photo by A Barrett Photography

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Photo by Claire Dibble

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Whatever the season, Golden has the perfect venue for you to celebrate the start of your life together.

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5 Tips to make your wedding day *Extra Special*

PHOTO BY A BARRETT PHOTOGRAPHY

A wedding isn't a very easy thing to prepare for. There is a lot to do and sometimes, not enough time to do it. With all the craziness that comes from a wedding, it's easy to get lost. Here are five simple tips that can make your day extra special.

* Do what you and your spouse want for the wedding

Remember it's your day and not anyone else's. Not that it's wrong to listen to suggestions from other people, but remember that this is a day that you will remember for the rest of your life. If you let other people dictate every decision, you're not going to be very happy. The happiest day of your life may just turn into the unhappiest day of your life. Just remember your wedding day is all about you.

* Take it one step at a time

Put together a wedding planning schedule and do things one by one and in order so you don't take on too much, too fast and end up scrambling getting things together last minute. Don't hire any vendors before you've confirmed your date, don't design your cake before you've envisioned your flowers, and don't book a band before you've settled on a space.

* Don't get caught up in perfection

Often people think their wedding has to be absolutely perfect. The decorations have to be set up in a certain way, the bridal party has to enter at just the right moment, the food has to be ready by 6:00 pm and the guests have to eat at their assigned tables. If one thing

goes wrong, the entire day is ruined. Right? Wrong. Stop worrying about perfection. Not everything will go entirely as planned, and that is okay. Embrace the unexpected and don't let an unattainable ideal sour the big picture.

* Don't skimp on the photographer

Eventually the party will end, the booze will wear off, the dress will go into storage or sold online, the cake will be eaten and all you're left with are the photos. Make sure you'll love them for the rest of your life and that you've chosen a photographer that will do their best to provide the best photos possible.

* Remember to have fun

This may be the most obvious thing to remember, but with all the planning, all the decorating, all the inviting and all the calling around, getting a wedding planned can be stressful. The day of the wedding can be even more stressful with making sure plans are followed, hair and makeup is intact and the venue is decorated just the way you want it. It's important to take time and enjoy the day so you can look back with fondness, and not animosity. Let loose a little bit and have some fun.

So there you have it, five simple tips to make your day extra special. Of course there are many other tips to ensure your day is memorable, but by following these five tips, you will be on your way to having the wedding you've always dreamed about.



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August 12, 2017

Long - Hole

A mountain wedding
with a touch of smoke

STORY BY DALLIN CERVO
PHOTOS BY LOLO & NOA



The rustic mountains. During the summertime, it is a perfect location for a Golden wedding. The beautiful backdrop would add to any wedding photo shoot, and for newlyweds Rob and Ashleigh Hole it was the perfect location for a mountain wedding. Oh and don't forget the wildfires!

Living in Bonnyville, Alberta, both were originally from Mission B.C. and decided they wanted to marry in the mountains so it would feel like home. They travelled to Edmonton and saw a few vendors from Golden there. After looking through many different options, the decision was made to make Heather Mountain Lodge the magical place.

One of the many things Heather Mountain Lodge offers is, if you are able to fill up the 22 rooms and 11 cabins, the entire venue is yours. With both sides of the family coming from out of town, Rob and Ashleigh had no problem. They filled all the rooms and had the entire lodge to themselves.

"We felt like royalty the entire time," Ashleigh said.

While a wedding day is already a stress filled day, the day only got more stressful when they learned that the entire area was under

evacuation alert due to the August 2017 BC wildfires.

"We were nervous the entire time," Ashleigh said. "We were almost evacuated."

The night before the wedding, they sat outside watching the fires burn behind them and wondered if they would get to have their special day.

The day of the wedding came and everyone was doing everything they could to ensure the wedding continued. Foresters were working hard and helicopters were flying overhead battling the fires behind them. The staff also ensured that everything ran smoothly. With the battle raging behind them, the wedding continued and Rob and Ashleigh enjoyed a once in a lifetime experience.

"The staff at Heather Mountain Lodge did a wonderful job and were very helpful the entire time," Rob said.

For some, a wildfire and being surrounded by smoke would have been a negative, but Ashleigh and Rob both felt it added to the experience and created a unique addition to their photos.

"I don't think there is anyone else



in the world that has a forest fire in the background,” Rob said. “It turned the wedding into something special; from fear of being evacuated to realizing no one has experienced this before.”

The Heather Mountain Lodge was the perfect choice for Rob and Ashleigh. The staff was helpful and always were on hand, the accommodations and rooms were enjoyed by the entire family, and the food was amazing. It gave them the mountain wedding they

were looking for and an experience and a wedding like no other.

“It had everything to do with the location,” Rob said. “We couldn’t have picked a better venue. If it was in a hall it wouldn’t have been the same.”

“We are super thankful to all the vendors that helped us and the staff at the lodge is amazing.” Ashleigh said.



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September 17, 2017

Bakos - Watmough

A Golden wedding destination

STORY BY GLYNN BROTHEN
PHOTOS BY A BARRETT PHOTOGRAPHY

When Carrie Bakos packed all her belongings in a car and drove it from rural Delhi, Ontario to Golden 12 years ago, her first order of business was to find an affordable place to live for the ski season.

Bakos, now 35, was establishing a temporary home for herself and now-husband Ryan Watmough, 40, who would join her for a short-term ski-bum season. But as life in the mountains goes for many who stop in for a brief adventure, it soon became home. For Bakos and Watmough, it also became the backdrop to their remote wedding ceremony on September 17, 2017.

"We kept telling our parents it was only for a season," Bakos said. "It was so laid back. I remember seeing a sign on one of the shops that said 'We've gone snowboarding'... It's hard to leave once you're here."

The laid-back lifestyle made an impact; the pair managed to plan a wedding within a tight six-month time period – a hard feat in a popular wedding destination.

"You can totally do it [in six months]. Dress off the rack, invitations all digital," Bakos said.

Golden wasn't their first option, but Mother Nature had other ideas. Hurricanes made a beach wedding a risk, and a secondary plan to host the ceremony at Waterton Lakes literally "all went up in flames" during the summer wildfire season.

Eventually, both determined Golden felt right and made their home a destination celebration for Ontario relatives. And while they planned for simplicity, the duo sprang for a novelty: An alpine helicopter flight for all 34 guests to Holt Lakes, a turquoise oasis sheltered beneath the Dogtooth mountain range.

"Golden made sense as it was the only opportunity to share with some of our friends and family why we were there, why we had moved, how we lived, and what we did for fun," Watmough said. "While that experience is a vacation for some, it's how we choose to live our lives. It was our natural, authentic location."

The weather, again threatening inclemency, gave them an intimate blue sky ceremony and photography session with Amy Barrett.

"Amy could photograph you in a brown paper bag and you would look fabulous," Bakos said.

Beyond showing family members the location where the pair built their life together, Bakos and Watmough added more of their favourite things to the party: A cocktail toast at the top of the mountain with Mexican martini's and lemon drops inspired from a trip to Italy, to photos of each guest placed at seating



locations, with small messages written on the back. The event culminated with a special turkey dinner menu designed by the team at Corks Restaurant.

The couple booked hotel rooms and a house on Kicking Horse Mountain, where everyone could cook, relax and sleep off the party.

"We really wanted the whole weekend to be similar to a big family event. Kick your shoes off, everyone was kind of scattered around everywhere. Someone's always in the kitchen making some kind of food, kids are running around wild," Bakos said. "The kind of Easters and Christmases we both had when we were growing up."

Watmough echoed their intentions for the day.

"Carrie took care of the personal touches. I just wanted to make sure that people were relaxed and could enjoy themselves. Formality was kept to a minimum," he said.

The atmosphere left a lasting impression on the guests, which Bakos said was the best wedding gift she and Watmough received.

"They got home and we got emails and phone calls that said 'We get it now. We can understand why you're not coming back' and questions about when they can visit again."



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Marriage on the Greens

STORY BY DALLIN CERVO
PHOTO BY DAVE BEST

The Golden Golf Club is not only a great place to hit a couple of golf balls around, it can also be the setting of your dream wedding.

Over the years the Golden Golf Club has hosted a few weddings, mostly for staff, and director of operations Graeme Kreiner says they are now looking towards the future and dipping their toes into the wedding market by looking to host smaller, intimate weddings.

With weddings being a new venture and not something they've done a lot of, Kreiner says they are very flexible with what they can do.

"We're willing to work with people in trying to create something that's unique for them," Kreiner said.

So why would someone want to get married on a Golf course of all places? For one thing, avid golfers looking to incorporate their favourite hobby into their wedding will find a golf course is the best choice to add a personal flavour to the day. For those looking for a more scenic wedding, the overall setting and colours of the course will serve as the ideal backdrop. The Golden Golf Club is conveniently located just outside of town so you are not only guaranteed a quiet wedding, but it is easily accessible as well.

even more people to consider a golf course wedding.

"We have a spare hole here, so if you want to get married on an actual golf hole and we're not using the spare hole, we could actually have it there and do some fun unique things."

An RV park is located right beside the course and Kreiner says what they've envisioned is those coming from out of town can stay right onsite for the duration of the wedding.

With Golden quickly becoming the premier wedding destination, there are many mid-high level options available. Kreiner says that they want to fill the niche of the lower to mid-level options that won't break the bank, but will still offer a beautiful location when it comes to planning a wedding.

While not a lodge, Kreiner says they still have much to offer when it comes to the big day.

"We have onsite food and beverage, accommodations if they have RVs, dedicated staff members onsite that can assist with questions."

So what are you waiting for? If you're an avid golfer, or just want a beautiful backdrop for your wedding, The Golden Golf Club may very well be the perfect venue for you.

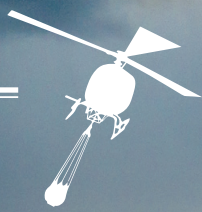
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Wedding vendors can *Take the Heat*

STORY BY ELORA BRADEN
PHOTO BY MAUR MUZZA MERE

If you were getting married in British Columbia this last summer, chances are your plans were impacted by forest fires. What was declared as "Officially The Worst Ever Wildfire Season" was not the most encouraging for couples or their guests to tie the knot in a fiery backdrop.

Here in Golden we saw many days blanketed by dense smoke and we listened with apprehension at the reports of impending fires in the area. Our usual activities like biking, running, climbing (basically anything involving lungs) was off the table. The mountains we usually wake up to disappeared behind a wall of brownish smoke.

Looking back, it sounds like a grim setting for a wedding... but that was not the case. Turns out our local pool of talented vendors from photographers to caterers came together and pulled of an incredible wedding season.

Hillside Lodge's Stephanie Chomiak knows this level of teamwork is what helps pull off a successful wedding season. "Our local vendors always pull together to make any situation workable, if not amazing! We've got such a great crew of vendors here in town who will go above and beyond to make everything perfect."

To make sure the weddings would be successful, Stephanie knew that communication would be key. "We spent a lot of time prepping our couples as well - sending out emails to make sure everyone knew what to expect which I think is half the battle. This way, there are no surprises and things can be adjusted accordingly ahead of time, reducing stress and anxiety."

Further down the highway at Heather Mountain Lodge, General Manager John Holton also recalled having communication with the wedding parties being "the most important tool in our tool-box." With close proximity to several high profile fires in Glacier National Park, John and his team worked tirelessly throughout the summer to deliver wedding services. "We found the biggest challenge to be 'day-of' execution. We were at the mercy of the winds, the day may dawn sunny, bright with a nice westerly wind, or it would be "pea-soup" with ash falling from the sky and 3 feet of visibility."

It was on one of the smokier days that local photo duo Lolo & Noa Photography used it to their advantage at Heather Mountain Lodge. Lois Soper (Lolo) describes the scene they faced that day: "You could

see the plumes of smoke and it created a silhouetted layer effect with the mountains. We definitely worked with it and actually loved the effect it gave. Almost like foggy heavily clouded mountains, but from smoke. Moody is our style so we embraced it!". Even though some days this summer needed to be adjusted slightly from the smoke, it wasn't a deal breaker by any means. "The smoky backdrops were a bonus for us because being such a hot summer we could have had all bright full sound days which we actually find more challenging with harsh light and shadows." They were still challenged when couples hoped for mountain backdrops, but in the end, "we were able to create romantic soft and sometimes pinkish hued moody photos because of the incredible sunsets behind the smoke."

For Amy Barrett, another local wedding photographer, the changing environment was less of a hinderance than it was an opportunity to weave another layer into the couples story that day. "You need to focus on what you can capture that helps tell the story of the couples day, but not excluding the haze because that is part of their story as well." As a chaser of light, Amy made sure she could capitalize on the chance to get a special shot, "I let all my couples know that I will keep an eye on the lighting and they are more than willing to run out of the party to capture the moment the fog lifts or the sun sets". The results were some amazing moments captured, and a huge variety throughout the wedding season, for one wedding Amy captured, "The smoke did add a reprieve from the glaring sun at the top of Kicking Horse Mountain Resort for a 1pm ceremony. For another it added a nice glow and a beautiful depth to the mountains."

In the end, a wedding season that could have gone up in smoke stayed the course and provided amazing memories to anyone involved with, or visiting for a wedding. For Stephanie at Hillside, "Golden is such a stunning location for weddings and our team of vendors here is absolutely unbeatable. We are truly blessed to get to work with great people like this, and so are the couples choosing to get married in Golden." Heather Mountain's John Holton echoes that with why he thinks Golden is special, "spectacular views, a number of unique venues that can accommodate all sizes of weddings or elopements, and great vendors, it really is the number one area in BC."

So no matter what comes our way for summers to come, rest assured that Golden's wedding vendors are ready to step up to make the day the most special day of any couples' lives.

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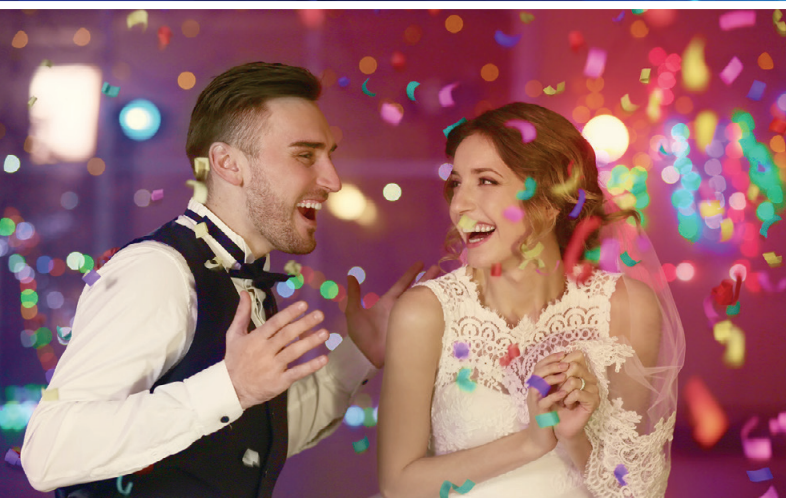
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