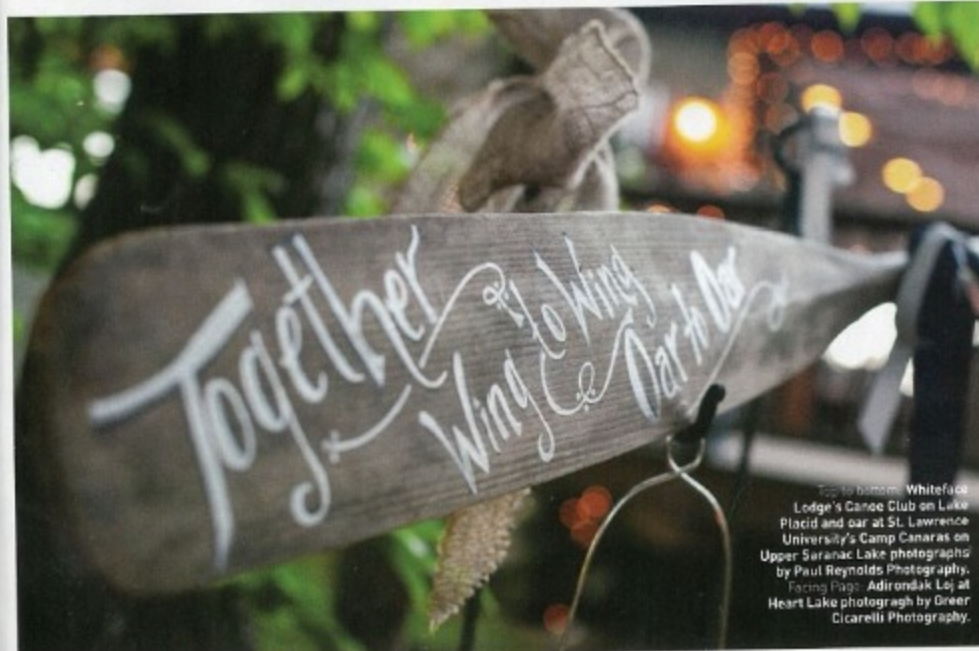
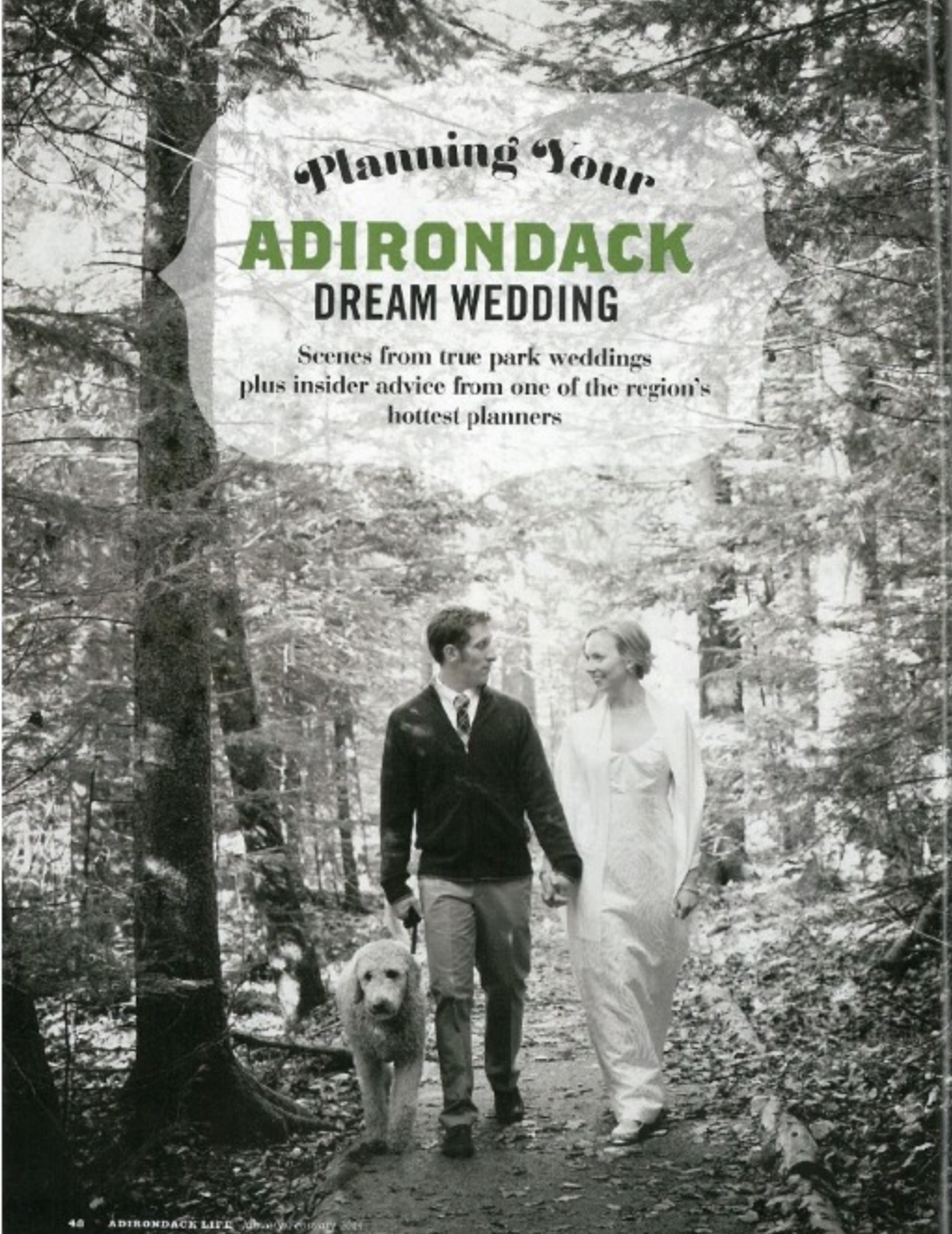


# Planning Your ADIRONDACK DREAM WEDDING

Scenes from true park weddings  
plus insider advice from one of the region's  
hottest planners



Top left: Whiteface Lodge's Canoe Club on Lake Placid and oar at St. Lawrence University's Camp Canarat on Upper Saranac Lake; photographs by Paul Reynolds Photography. Paddle: Adirondack Loj at Heart Lake; photograph by Greer Cicarelli Photography.

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Autumn boutonniere photograph by Greer Cicarelli Photography. Mirror Lake dog sled photograph by Lauren Stagnitti Photography. Facing page, clockwise from bottom: Wedding ceremony at Lapland Lake Nordic Vacation Center, in Northville; photograph by Gallery 9 North. Ruff's Orchard wedding favors and Adirondack-style bouquet photographs by Greer Cicarelli Photography.

**MIM FRANZ, OF JUNIPER EVENTS & DESIGN**, based in Lake Placid, knows Adirondack weddings. She's organized celebrations all over the park—in ballrooms, barns, beaches and places in between. Franz's own wedding more than a decade ago at a boat-access-only site on Lower Saranac Lake piqued her interest in her current line of work, particularly in her understanding of what makes—and what it takes to plan—an Adirondack dream wedding.

**Other than geography, how is an Adirondack wedding different from one anyplace else?**

Couples who choose to get married here are attracted to the Adirondack lifestyle. They usually have a love of nature and an easygoing way about them. Details are important—natural elements play a really big role in decor—but I think the emphasis for these people is sharing their love of the surroundings with their friends and family. And they feel compelled to offer their guests a vacation experience, like planning a group hike up a favorite mountain followed by roasting s'mores at a campfire.

**What's the best time of year to get married here?**

Winter weddings are increasingly popular and unique to this area. There are so many beautiful properties that give you that wonderland getaway feel. In winter you have more flexibility with vendors, where in, say, the second week of August, you're competing with other weddings and big local events. No matter what the season, there are always challenges with the weather. If you're having a wedding Columbus Day weekend it could be 85 degrees or the ground could be covered

with snow. Fall and spring seasons here have huge fluctuations of temperature, and there's that two-week spring peak of blackflies.

**Where do you recommend couples get married in the Adirondacks?**

Resorts simplify the process because they have a protocol for doing things—it's easy to calculate your associated costs and to visualize how things could be done. When you consider doing things on your own, maybe renting a property, there are bigger unknowns: you need to shop around for catering and rental items, like tents, which can vary in price. You have to consider Adirondack "challenges"—the power going out or downed trees in the road. Will the band or the cake or the

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guests be able to make it to the venue? Boat-access weddings are logistically more complicated, too, with transporting guests and vendors—delivering tables, chairs, even bartenders. You have to barge stuff in. But at the end of the day, anything can be done.

When I do initial consultations, many people start by saying they want a really simple, casual and inexpensive reception in a field or a meadow. I tell them they just set an oxymoron—those weddings are never casual or simple. For that natural feeling around you, if you're not working with a structure, you're investing in rentals: bathrooms, generators for lights or serving food or having water or music. There's no such thing as that simple wedding in the field unless you're bringing picnic baskets and it doesn't rain.

**Any specific places you recommend for ceremonies?**

More than half the wedding ceremonies I plan are church weddings. St. Agnes in Lake Placid is very popular and looks extraordinary in pictures. We're lucky to have such a grand church in a small town. Its ceilings are high, it has beautiful stained glass and there's plenty of parking. The Lake Placid Adirondack Community Church is also popular. It's right on Mirror Lake—after ceremonies people enjoy going outside there for pictures. Another charming church is the Congregational church in Keene Valley. The Methodist church in Keene, now an art gallery, is a cool space. One of my favorites is St. John's in the Wilderness, in Paul Smiths. And Chapel Island on Upper Saranac Lake is boat-access-only and intriguing to many couples, though it's limited in space. Kanu restaurant, at Whiteface Lodge, in Placid, is a three-story great room with grand windows, slate floors and fireplaces—it's like an Adirondack church. It's only available to those who have their wedding reception on the property.

**Any regional trends in colors, flowers and other decor?**

I've seen everything from hot pink and Kelly green to bright orange. The new

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trend is green as a neutral, which makes sense because any floral arrangement you pick, there's green around the flowers to offset them. The most popular greens are light olive, willow, guacamole. Bridesmaids dressed in these colors tend to better complement the natural landscape.

Many of my clients are interested in flower arrangements and decor that incorporate natural, native elements, such as twigs, rocks, river stones, leaves, berries, pinecones, apples. I recommend Amaranthus a lot because it grows in our region, comes in very saturated greens or purples and is very textural—it has elegant rustic charm. I often work with Mad Crazy Flowers, in Wadhams, which is appealing to couples who think sustainably, who don't want to import tulips. Clients can sit with the grower; she'll plant what you want to use in your bouquet.

Most receptions are in the evening hour so candlelight is also a great, romantic way to go. You can use glass, logs, pillars, papers or votives. Candles can be used alone or accented with flowers and greenery.

**What are your favorite examples of Adirondack wedding favors?**

I like to help clients multipurpose favors—something eco-minded and practical that won't be discarded, that guests will actually take home and use. Maybe it's a birch-log candleholder or balsam pillows or locally made treats like maple syrup, chocolates, or trail mix as a maple favor in a room after guests make that five-hour drive here or while they go on a hike. Some couples combine personal tastes with regional flavors. During a preliminary interview with a bride I found out that her favorite food was cotton candy. So for her March wedding we had cotton candy made with maple sugar from Rivermede Farm, in Keene Valley. —Annie Stoltie

Learn more about Juniper Events & Design and Mim Franz's Adirondack weddings at (518) 637-1482 or [www.juniperevents.org](http://www.juniperevents.org).



Kanu at Whiteface Lodge ceremony photograph by Lauren Stagnitti Photography.