

NATALIE & CHRIS, HAMILTON FARM,

Gladstone, New Jersey
Set in the rolling hills of Somerset County, Hamilton Farm has hosted some of New Jersey's most celebrated equestrian events for over a century.

Natalie and Chris were married on Memorial Day weekend, a date they chose deliberately, wanting their color palette to capture the transition from spring to summer while playing into what Natalie describes as the classic, timeless, and romantic feeling of Hamilton Farm. Their ceremony included a handfasting, a Celtic tradition in which the couple's hands are bound together as a symbol of their union. For the reception, they decorated the ballroom with tall arrangements on

long tables flanking the dance floor, smaller arrangements on the remaining tables, and flowers hanging from the chandeliers, evoking the lush garden atmosphere of the estate. Natalie carried a bouquet made entirely of pink orchids. Chris wore a white-and-black tuxedo, a choice that gave the wedding a subtly modern edge. A live jazz band played through the cocktail hour. Music, Natalie says, was one of the primary ways they made the day their own, having selected every piece played during the ceremony themselves.

Given that much of their relationship had unfolded during COVID lockdowns, the wedding felt less like an event and more like a long-awaited exhale, a chance to gather the people they loved and simply celebrate being together. **EQ** • VENDOR INFO | PAGE 113



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BEYOND THE DAY

Wedding trends come and go. These venues, horse fields, and sunsets were here long before any of these weddings, and they will be here long after, and couples seem to understand that instinctively. What draws couples to these places is an innate understanding and a desire to mark the beginning of a marriage with something that feels as though it will last. Years from now, when the details you agonized over have become fuzzy memories, you can know that your marriage has deep roots.

CAROLYN & RYAN, HAMILTON FARM,

Gladstone, New Jersey

Natalie and Chris were not the only couple to find their way to Hamilton Farm, or the only ones to trust Berit Bizjak to document it. Carolyn and Ryan's September wedding brought a different season and a distinctly different feeling to the same storied grounds. Where a summer wedding at Hamilton Farm leans into the lushness of the landscape, a late September celebration lets the property show another side entirely: the trees beginning to turn, the light lower and warmer.

The ceremony took place at the Church of Christ the King in New Vernon, a handsome brick colonial church framed

by manicured hedges and open lawn, before the wedding party returned to Hamilton Farm for a cocktail hour in the walled garden, where guests gathered around a stone fountain beneath an antique copper-roofed pavilion as a musician played.

The horses were very much a part of the celebration. Portraits of Carolyn and Ryan with a dapple grey on the open fairways, as well as photos taken in front of the historic stable entrance, capture something of what makes Hamilton Farm unlike almost any other wedding venue in the country: the horses aren't just a photo prop; they are the setting.

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