



JENNIFER CSENGODY  
AND ZACHARY NOVETSKY  
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ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

> **FEATURE WEDDING:** “Everyone was in the mindset of being there for us. Their energy made the wedding.”

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Ah, modern love. Girl “friends” boy on Facebook. Boy messages: “Hey, do I know you?” A mutual friend had spent the entire summer telling each about the other. Once they were digitally connected, Zachary Novetsky began inviting Jennifer Csengody to the epic parties he and NYU roommates hosted at their SoHo loft. She always had cooler things to do.

Fast-forward one year. He greets her cordially when she finally accepts an invitation, but then: “He walked away; it made me furious,” Jennifer remembers.

“It worked like a charm,” Zachary says. The friend who’d envisioned them together insisted he meet them out in the city that night to make amends. “I’d never had a girlfriend,” Zachary says, but from that night forward, “We’ve literally never separated.”

Finishing school was priority one: She earned a BFA from Parsons and now works in the fashion office at Bergdorf Goodman; he completed law school and proposed the day before his first job began. To catch Jennifer off guard, Zachary waited until they







returned from an indulgent wine-tasting weekend on the North Fork. Years before, he'd given Jennifer a poorly constructed box layered with gifts, from a stuffed animal to a necklace. Now, she found a lovely box waiting: a book depicting their relationship's history on top, a ring tucked beneath. Friends were lined up outside to storm their apartment, cheering.

Both sets of parents had flown in from the Midwest, and that night at dinner, the couple's thoughts of a destination or NYC wedding were redirected. Jennifer's mother was emphatic her eldest daughter's Orthodox Jewish wedding would be in St. Louis. Embracing tradition had unanticipated benefits.

Event planner Simcha Lourie assembled vendors eager to embrace Jennifer's Manhattan sensibilities and flair for unique details. "I really pushed them to execute the décor like they've never done before in St. Louis," Jennifer says. But the biggest plus was, unlike at weddings in New York where guests are sometimes distracted and stressed, "Everyone was in the mindset of being there for us," she says. From Friday's Shabbat dinner for 70 until the last of 300 guests left the DJ-revved after party at 4 a.m. Sunday, "Their energy made the wedding." Some "went straight to the airport, glow sticks and all" to catch 6 a.m. flights.

For Zachary, the pinnacle moment was the procession to the Bedeken, when a groom beholds his wife, seated on a throne, for the first time. "My friends, because they're awesome and crazy, threw me on their shoulders," he relates. "There was so much intensity and so much love." Jennifer, who could hear the commotion as they approached, had one thought as the men burst

into the room: "Please don't hit his head on the chandelier."

They'll continue celebrating on a Hawaiian honeymoon during their second month of marriage.

"We're both very passionate people, and we both work very hard. We always want to be successful in what we do and give 100 percent, and we've always given 100 percent to each other, as well," Jennifer shares.

"Our relationship," says Zachary, "is about what makes us better." Their devotion to each other is the old-school glue that sustains their relationship status.

> **Written by Kim Knox Beckius**  
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Location, Caterer and Cake: **The Ritz-Carlton, St. Louis** St. Louis, MO; Planner: **Simcha's Events** St. Louis, MO; Event Design and Lighting: **Exclusive Events, Inc.** St. Louis, MO; Floral Design: **Festive Couture Floral** St. Louis, MO; Linen: **BBJ** St. Louis, MO; Rentals: **Sitting Pretty** Maplewood, MO; Wedding Dress and Veil: **Ines Di Santo**; Photography: **Stephen Seebeck Photography** St. Louis, MO

