



# KATIE *and* WESTIN

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Minnesotans are no strangers to the Brainerd Lakes Area, especially in the thick of tourist season. Our featured bride Katie Lee Gillespie, vacationed frequently up north with her extended family during the winter and summer months. A new lake memory would occur in July of 2013, however. Cragun's Resort marked the spot of the beginning of new family traditions for Katie and her new husband, Westin Thomas Trow. Katie and Westin met for the first time while Katie visited friends at the University of Wisconsin-Lacrosse. One of Katie's high school friends shared a room with Westin and "talked him up" quite frequently to Katie. Being that Katie was attending the University-North Dakota at the time, their time together amounted to occasional visits with mutual friends.

*photography by* JANELLE ELISE PHOTOGRAPHY  
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Once their time in college ended and Katie and Westin returned to the Twin Cities area. An evening together in Uptown with their closest friends would chronicle the rest of their forever in the story of Katie and Westin Trow.

Katie recalls their third date as one of their most memorable. Westin invited her to see the movie "Avatar." During the movie, while wearing their nerdy 3D glasses, Westin turned to Katie and asked her how she liked the movie. Katie remembers, "I had this sudden epiphany and an overwhelming feeling of how much I liked him. I knew from that night on that he was the guy for me." A rare two-dollar bill in Westin's possession became a symbol of commitment to Katie and Westin. He kept the bill in his wallet from the time they were dating; and throughout their three years together, Katie kept telling him how much she wanted that bill. Westin would usually reply he would only give it away to a girl that was "really special and who really deserved it." It became Katie's quest to possess that bill; but on multiple times when she asked for it, Westin would joke and tell her it wasn't time. Until one Sunday night, Westin pulled out his wallet to reveal the two-dollar bill. While he was slipping the bill out of his wallet, Westin spoke of his love for Katie. Katie's eyes brimmed with excitement; that two dollar bill would finally be hers!











Earlier that weekend, Katie and Westin attended a friend's wedding together and Katie slightly hinted at an engagement. "Will the two-dollar bill suffice for now?" Westin asked. "Of course," Katie replied. Enthralled with Westin's sweet words, Katie didn't notice Westin sneaking an engagement ring out of his wallet as well. He then handed Katie the ring and said, "Well then, what about this? Will this work?"

Because of their mutual love of the northern lakes, it seemed fitting to hold their wedding in the setting of beautiful and natural northern Minnesota. Cragun's Resort in Brainerd, MN, served as the venue for both Katie and Westin's ceremony and reception. The weather cooperated beautifully with a rare 70-degree, slightly overcast, July day. As Katie made her way to the beach for their first look, she radiated in her vintage ivory and lace dress glitzed with a stunning belt. As Katie touched Westin's shoulder on the morning of their wedding, he turned to see his lovely bride...and a few giggling bridesmaids peeking through the windows of the resort.

The natural beauty of the lake decorated the ceremony site, but a trellis built by Katie's uncle added a personal touch to the décor. The trellis stood beautifully on its own and the addition of yellow and white orchids and roses throughout the trellis added a pop of color and an element of surprise. Katie expected the trellis, but her cousin added the flowers as a gift to Katie and Westin. Katie's bridesmaids donned turquoise chiffon halter dresses and Westin's men complemented them in their charcoal tuxedos. "I Hope You Dance," sung by two long-time friends of Katie, provided another special touch to Katie and Westin's wedding day.

The 210 guests followed Katie and Westin from the beach to the reception site at Cragun's Resort. Sunflowers enhanced the rustic, yet elegant ambiance

in the room where guests seated themselves at tables named after different lakes holding special meaning to the couple. Guests dined on a dinner of salmon or pork loin. Westin's twin brother, Alex, delivered a compelling speech about his and Westin's "differences." Erin, Katie's younger sister, provided heartfelt stories and well wishes for the couple.

The bridal party consisted of Alex Trow (Best Man), Jaxon Trow (Groomsman), Mike Trudeau (Groomsman), Eric Mitchell (Groomsman) and Jon Berg (Groomsman). The bridesmaids were Erin Gillespie (Maid of Honor), Jennifer Ellefson (Bridesmaid), Sally Johnson (Bridesmaid) and Lindsay Cowan (Bridesmaid). The three ushers were Lee Broadbent, Evan Broadbent and Kyle Ellefson with two ring bearers; Ryan Simpson and Connor Simpson.

The party commenced in earnest when the DJ took the floor and lasted into the wee hours of the night after the guests demanded five encores from the entertainment. During the evening festivities Katie and Westin served their late night guests a delicious Macaroni and Cheese bar that included noodles, sauce and all sort of delicious toppings. Once the festivities of the night came to a close, Katie and Westin retreated to the Minnesota North Shore at the Bluefin Bay Resort for their honeymoon where they took in the beauty of Lake Superior. Just as Katie and Westin danced their first dance as husband and wife to "Heavenly Day" by Patti Griffin, the couple can now conclude their very own wedding to be truly their *heavenly day*.

Katie Lee Gillespie is the daughter of Lee and Ellen Gillespie of Mahtomedi, Minnesota. Katie is employed as a 2nd grade school teacher. Westin Thomas Trow is the son of William and Lynn Trow of Hopkins, Minnesota. Westin is an IT Engineer.





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*hues they used:*

