

HOW TO GET  
**FEATURED**

*For Photographers*





## HI FRIENDS!

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I'm Joanna Krueger and my husband, Michael, and I are a wedding photography team based in Houston, Tx! We've been in the business for five years and in the last year, we have been published in Weddings in Houston Magazine, Southern Bride Magazine, and have been featured online with Something Turquoise, Cake & Lace, and Zola! Of course we couldn't have done this without our amazing brides and their vendors! This is in no way a comprehensive guide on how to get featured or even the right way to get featured; it's just what I've come to learn! After submitting and being accepted (and rejected!), I've learned what does and doesn't work when it comes to getting featured. In our business, we use Two Bright Lights to submit to publications so a lot of what's in this guide has to do with my experience with them. I pay a monthly subscription to Two Bright Lights and so far, it's been worth my money! I hope you find this guide helpful! Thanks for reading! - Xoxo, Joanna

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# KNOW YOUR PUBLICATION

The first thing when it comes to getting featured is knowing who to submit to. It's important to know what kind of style each publication tends to cater to before submitting to them. As much as we love Style Me Pretty, deep down I know we'll probably never be featured with them because they tend to cater towards film photographers or digital photographers with a film-like editing style. Since that's not us, our chances of getting featured by them are smaller. Of course, that doesn't mean I shouldn't try (because I do!), but it's important to know who you're submitting to and if they will want to feature your wedding. Take time to look through their website for weddings they've already featured as well as their Instagram to see what kind of editing style they prefer. Some blogs really look for a specific style (i.e. bohemian, black tie, etc.) while others look for specific kinds of details (i.e. DIY, high-end, unique, etc.). If I were to submit a classic, black tie wedding to a blog that caters to a bohemian, free-spirited bride, they're probably not going to choose it for feature.



# LOTS AND LOTS (*and lots!*) OF DETAILS

When I'm compiling images for a submission, I include TONS of details. Blogs LOVE details. In a typical wedding submission, I submit around 100 photos with 40-50% of the album dedicated to details. This means bridal, ceremony and reception details. A lot of blogs *love* giving brides ideas to plan their own weddings so the more (and unique) details there are, the better. I start our wedding days with details and

I spend at least an hour with them. That's right- an hour. I know that if I want to get their wedding featured, I need to spend that time creating them. And since I know that amount of time doesn't always fit into our 8 hour contract, we make it a point to arrive at least 30 minutes early on wedding days to get the extra time for details. Call me crazy, but if you want to get featured, you need as many details as possible.

## MY SUBMISSIONS INCLUDE:

40% - DETAILS (*Bridal, ceremony, and reception*)

30% - PORTRAITS (*Bride & Groom only; no family formals*)

10% - BRIDAL PARTY (*Stationary & walking, bouquet details*)

7% - CEREMONY (*Best light, shows detail & venue*)

3% - RECEPTION (*cake cutting, first dance, open dancing, exit*)



## DETAILS *Cont...*

**PINTEREST WORTHY** Blogs really want to feature detail images that they can share on Pinterest or that a bride would Pin to their Pinterest. That, in turn, just generates more traffic to their website. Every detail image you submit should be “Pinterest Worthy”. If it’s not, keep it out.

**WHITE SPACE** Include detail images with “white space”. That means that the image isn’t busy; it’s clean, simple, and has white, or negative space (see the image of the brooch below). If all your detail images are busy, blogs are less likely to choose it for feature. Details with white space create “breathing room” in blog posts and is just more pleasing to the eye.



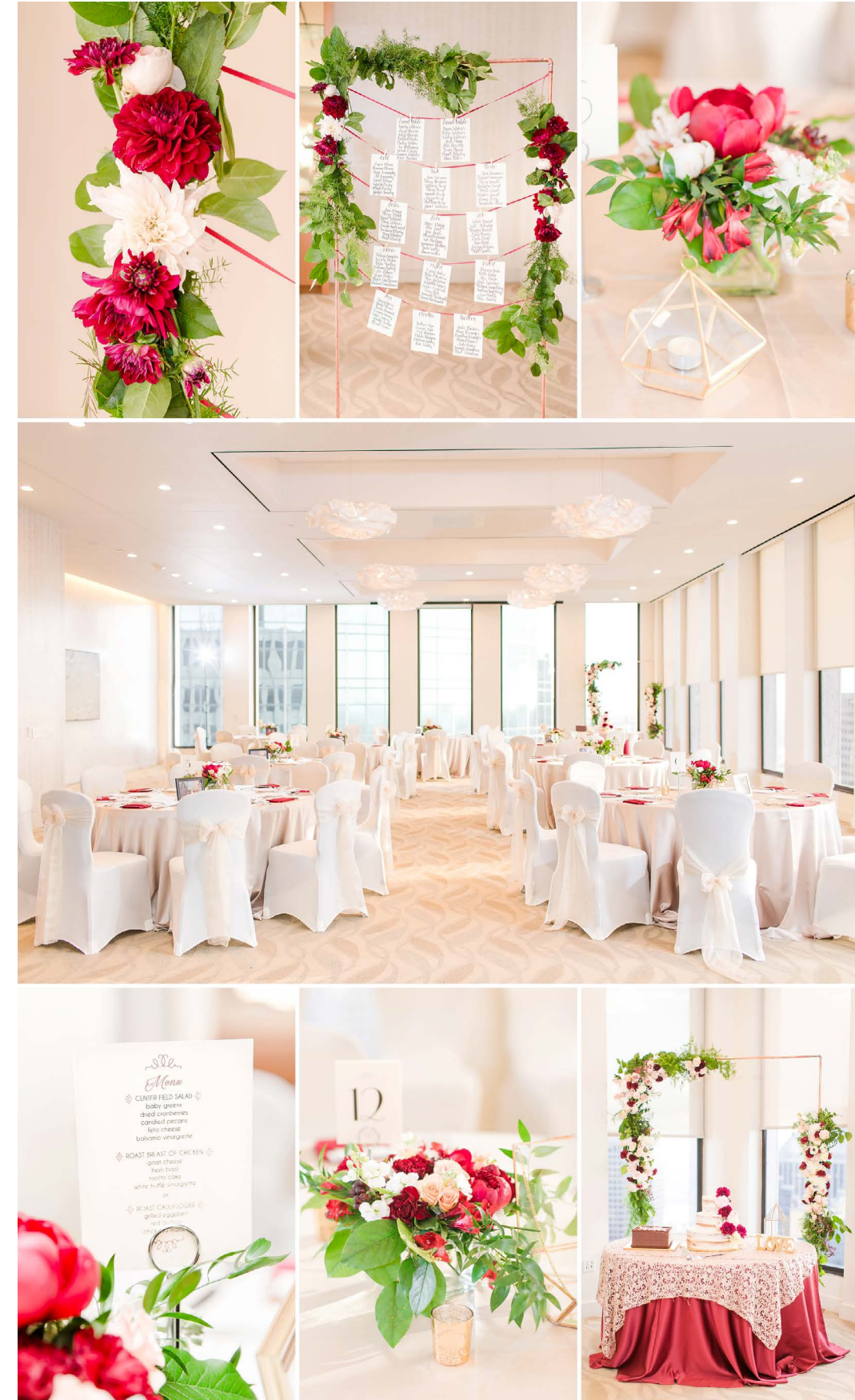
## SHOOT WITH THE BLOG IN MIND

I approach wedding days with our own blog and albums in mind. Think about what would pair well together on the blog or in an album spread. I like to pair clean images next to busy images or tight crops next to wide crops. When you keep this in mind while shooting, it’ll help increase your chances of getting chosen for feature as well as boost your details portfolio!



# INCLUDE LOTS OF VERTICALS

Blogs *love* verticals. They tend to pick up weddings with more verticals because they are more editorial. I've gotten to where I shoot vertically a lot more and it's paid off! I've heard (or read somewhere) that Style Me Pretty wants 75% verticals and 25% horizontal images in a submission. That's a lot of verticals! But when you scroll through wedding submissions on any given blog, they all tend to be full vertical images or two vertical images paired side by side. In one of the most recent weddings Style Me Pretty featured, out of 43 total images, only 7 of them were horizontal. We keep this in mind while shooting the wedding day. Of course we shoot horizontally, but we try to shoot everything vertical and horizontal so we, and our brides, have both. Then we submit all the verticals!



# TELL THE STORY

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Blogs LOVE stories! They love sharing the couples personal and/or wedding day story. When you create a submission with Two Bright Lights, there's a section to include the wedding day story. I generally just copy and paste what's applicable from their blog post and include that as their story. (That's another reason why it's SO important to WRITE for your blog posts!) Publications such as The Knot really caters towards weddings and engagement sessions with special and unique stories. They want to share weddings that give you all the warm and fuzzies (or try to make you cry!) You could submit a gorgeous wedding to them but, if it doesn't have a unique story, they will pass it over. But don't take it personally! The Knot gets *hundreds* of submissions a day so they are really looking for that one wedding that really stands out from all the others. And sometimes that means the story is better than the images.



## KEEP IT SIMPLE

Editors get *loads* of submissions everyday. If your email is long, they will automatically skip over it because *"ain't nobody got time for that!!"* I give a short overview of the entire wedding day (usually about 3 sentences) and a link to the full gallery if they want to see more than the 100 photos I submitted. If an editor loved a wedding and wanted to feature it but the photographer didn't include enough detail images, a lot of times they end up emailing the photographer asking for more details (see details page!!) or passing it over. (I seriously can't stress enough about including loads

of details!) So, to make things easier for editors (and to show that I want to make life easy for them), I always include a link to the full gallery of images should they want to look for anything else to include in the feature. In my email to the editor of Southern Bride Magazine, I gave her a brief description of the wedding (she would see the full story when she opened the submission) along with a snippet of their unique story to pique her interest. And of course, always use their name and thank them for their time and consideration!



Hi Scottie!

I hope you enjoy this wedding submission! Laith and Nedaa had a traditional Jordanian wedding in the heart of Downtown Houston. Their wedding was delayed a week by Hurricane Harvey but that didn't stop them from having a gorgeous wedding day. You can still see some residual flooding in their bride and groom portraits in front of the Houston skyline.

If you'd like to see more photos from their wedding, here's a link to their full gallery:  
<http://joannakrueger.pass.us/laithnedaawedding>

Thank you for your time and consideration!

Sincerely,

Joanna Krueger



# MIX IT UP

I mix up my submission gallery so it looks more editorial. In other words, I don't clump all the details together, then all the portraits together, etc. I mix up bridal details with portraits and bridal party so when editors open my submission, they get an editorial-style, birds eye view of the entire wedding day rather than 30 detail images and no people. I do this with my brides as well. When they receive their full gallery of wedding day images from me, the first category of images they see are the "Joanna's Favorites". They're what I consider to be the "best of the best" and are mixed up in an editorial style. These are also the images I use to submit to blogs and magazines!

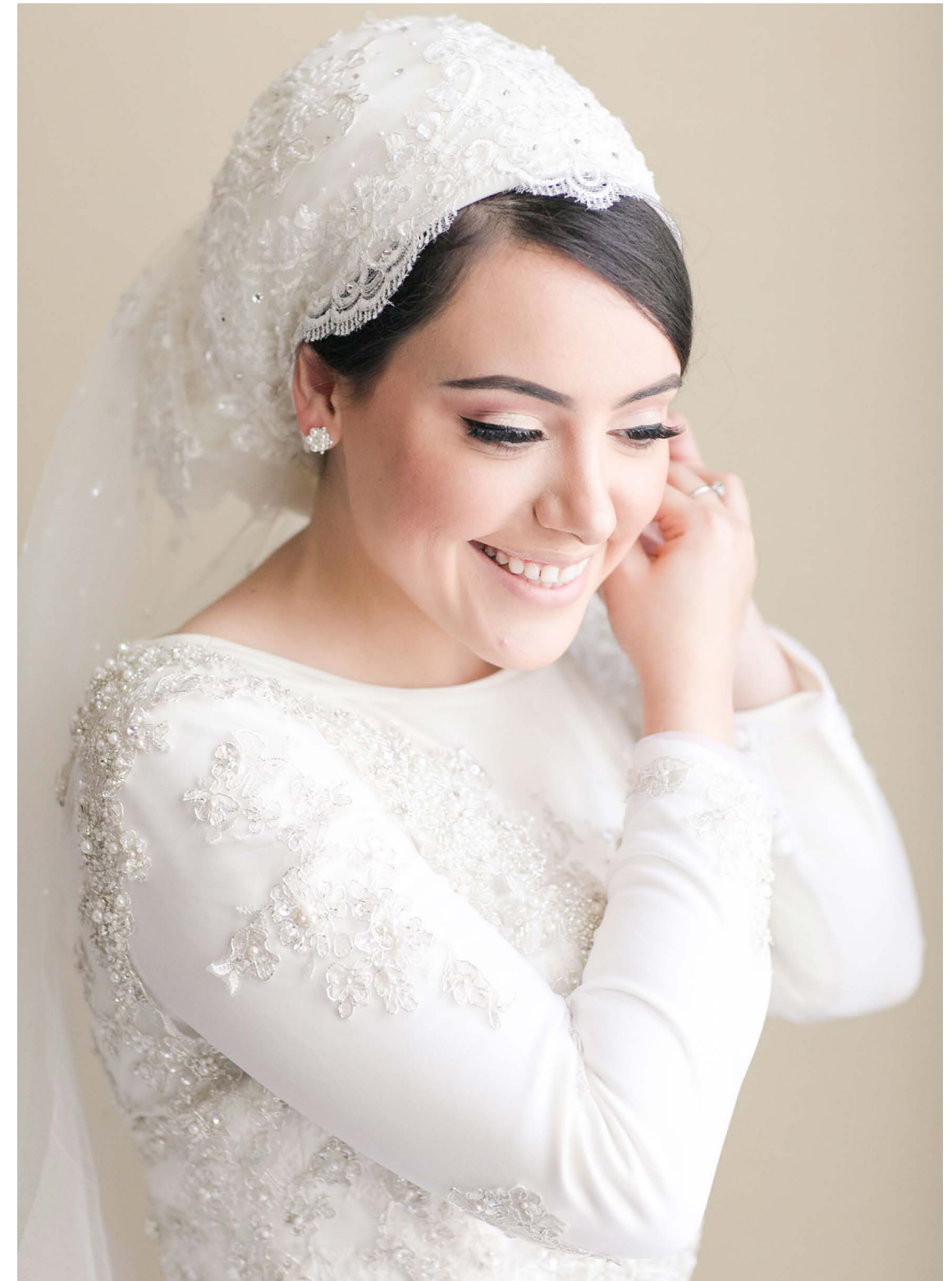




## CREDIT THE VENDORS

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Editors don't want to spend time looking up and tracking down all the vendor information so it's *crucial* that you include as many vendors as possible. Yes, it is time consuming, but let's face it- that's how you get featured! You *have* to include vendor names, websites, email addresses, and location. We send our brides and Google form questionnaire about 5 weeks before the wedding day that asks for all of that information. It helps make our vendor tagging faster and easier!



# SUBMISSION REQUESTS

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A lot of times, editors are looking for very specific things. One thing I love about Two Bright Lights is that they have an entire section of their website dedicated to submission requests from editors. I look at those on a very regular basis and if I have something that matches what they're looking for, I'll submit to them! When we got our Southern Bride Magazine feature, they had a submission request looking for weddings in the Houston area. I took a chance and submitted to them. They accepted our submission two days later! If a publication rejects your submission, don't take it personally; your submission just didn't match what they're looking for. Of course, it's always a great idea to submit to editors that don't have any requests at the moment. Half of our features have come from submitting that way! But submission requests is an excellent way to make sure you've got what they're looking for.

## WE WERE FEATURED WHEN:

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SOUTHERN BRIDE *had a submission request for weddings in the Houston area.*

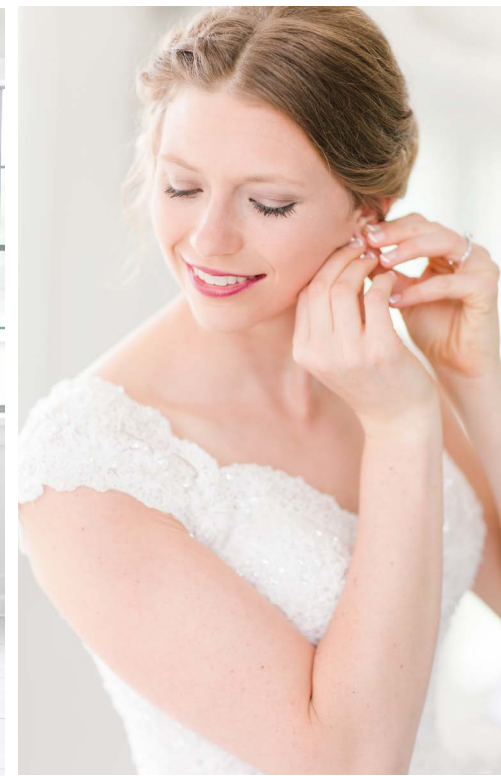
WEDDINGS IN HOUSTON *loved our wedding and wanted to feature it.*

SOMETHING TURQUOISE *had a submission request for DIY Christmas themed weddings.*

SOMETHING TURQUOISE *loved our wedding submission with lots of DIY details and wanted to feature it.*

ZOLA *had a submission request for a Spring time wedding.*

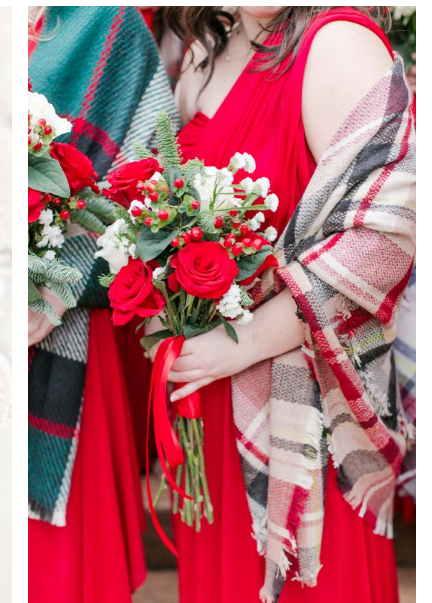
CAKE & LACE *loved the story and images from an engagement session submission and wanted to feature it.*



# ONE AT A TIME

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When you submit a wedding to a certain publication, only send them one thing at a time and wait for their response. If they reject your submission, you can submit something else to them and submit that wedding to a different publication. With Two Bright Lights, some publications are "exclusive" and some are "non-exclusive". With "Exclusive" publications, they are the only ones that can feature that submission. So, in other words, you can't submit one wedding to multiple exclusive publications at a time. You have to wait until that wedding is released back to you to submit elsewhere. With non-exclusive publications, you can submit one wedding to five different publications.





THANK YOU  
*for reading!*

*Xoxo, Joanna*

