



Nicole & Joseph

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It's not often that enduring romance blossoms out of a natural disaster. But bride Jean Nicole Cuevas (who goes by "Nicole") says that Hurricane Ike, which made landfall just days after she met Joseph Paul Passanante, actually brought the pair closer together. "We really learned a lot about each other when there was no power or running water," says Nicole, an attorney, about her "stormy" courtship with Joseph, an investment banker and St. Louis native. "There really wasn't a lot to do except tell stories and laugh throughout the night."

The couple's affection for one another was evident to the 300 guests who attended their traditional Catholic wedding ceremony. Loved ones watched as Nicole, wearing an elegant Amsale gown from Mia Bridal Couture, walked down a church aisle adorned with candle lanterns and flowers by Darryl & Co. The bride looked ravishing in makeup by The Perfect Face, and the groomsmen sported tuxedos from Al's Formal Wear. The bride's mother beamed in a Nordstrom dress.

Following the ceremony, the bride, groom, and their friends and family,

made their way to a reception at the Crystal Ballroom at The Rice, which Nicole describes as her fantasy venue. There, guests enjoyed a delicious spread prepared by Sambuca Catering, followed by a five-tier wedding cake and a St.-Louis-theme groom's cake, both from Edible Designs by Jessie.

Nicole, who spent more than a year planning her perfect wedding, marveled at the warm and inviting atmosphere—a collaboration between Elegant Beginnings and Darryl & Co. Elegant Beginnings draped the tables with specialty cloths featuring a sage-and-ivory scroll design, and provided mahogany chairs for seating. The design team from Darryl & Co. added its touch to the decor with mirror tables, ghost chairs, lounge seating, topiaries, a cake display, candles and large floral centerpieces. "We were absolutely blown away with the finished product," Nicole says.

Steve Lee Weddings documented the happy event in photos. After dancing the night away, the happy couple departed via limo service from Prestigious Event Rentals. Joseph and Nicole continue to treasure their registry gifts from Macy's and other fine retailers.

