

Haystack Rock wedding

JENNA & KYLE SANDERS' WEDDING

Story by Andy Cameron • Photos by Julie Adams



Haystack Rock, the iconic monolith of Cannon Beach, has long held a special place in the hearts of Jenna and Kyle Sanders. In 2018, during their first vacation together, the Kansas City-based couple took a photo of the sea stack from a scenic vantage point that would later serve as their wedding venue. Eight years prior, Kyle's parents renewed their vows on that very patch of ground at the Stephanie Inn. Planning their ceremony, Jenna and Kyle knew that Cannon Beach would play a significant role. "Kyle's father passed away shortly after his parents renewed their vows," new bride Jenna said. "Getting married in the same spot allowed us to feel connected." The couple were married in August at the Stephanie Inn.

The Sanders wanted to take a nontraditional approach to their nuptials. This is a theme that has been woven throughout their relationship. "One day, Kyle randomly asked me to book a trip to New York City," Jenna said, "It was around the time in a relationship where proposals were a possibility, so I knew something was up." Unfortunately, the arrival of COVID forced the couple to cancel their trip. Remaining determined, Kyle, a portfolio manager, popped the question on his intended day. Though his planned venue of Rockefeller Center was no longer an option, Kyle made the best use of the couple's couch, and presented Jenna with a ring fashioned from an old bread tie. "It was perfect," said Jenna.

The couple's reception was held the night before the ceremony and featured a bonfire, with Jenna's brother providing the soundtrack with his guitar. Early on the morning of the ceremony, the couple continued to buck tradition by privately exchanging vows on the beach. This was followed by a handfasting ceremony representing both sides of the family, as well as the new partnership created through marriage. Paying homage to Kyle's love of fountain pens, the couple signed their documents with new additions to their now mutual collection. Cannon Beach Bakery and Cannon Beach Florist

provided the necessary ingredients for a well-appointed intimate wedding.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought unique conditions to the ceremony, but the Sanders took them in stride. "We had custom masks made; mine featured the same lace as my dress," said Jenna. The couple kept their guest list limited to immediate family, with the addition of Kyle's best friend, Dominic, who filled in for Kyle's father. Though small in numbers, the guests were seated at different tables during the post-ceremony dinner. This had little impact on the mood, however, as the couple found the Stephanie Inn's dining room to be exquisite. "I travel a lot for work, and Stephanie Inn was the nicest place I have ever stayed," Jenna said.

The iconic monolith holds a special place in the hearts of Jenna and Kyle.

The natural facets of the area also dazzled the couple. "During the entire stay, there were rabbits everywhere. They were so fun, and a few even made their way into the wedding photos," Jenna said. The rabbits may have been drawn to the scene by Dominic, who kept a bag of carrots in his pocket during the ceremony. "There was one particular bunny that kept hanging out, and we all believed it to be Kyle's dad," Jenna said.

The Oregon Coast has left a lasting impression on the couple, and they plan to return. The frequency of those visits, however, is up for debate. "I'd move there," said Jenna, "but we will certainly try and visit every year or two." In addition to their stay at the Stephanie Inn, the couple traveled to Astoria for a lunch of fish and chips. They followed the ceremony with a honeymoon down U.S. Highway 101, and a stay in Port Orford. Jenna grew up on the Atlantic, and was taken in by the contrast of mountains, trees and rocks. "The Oregon Coast is unlike anything I've seen back east," Jenna said.