

WEDDINGS

by LAURA
BILLINGHAM

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ISSUE 01

FOREVER AND A DAY

WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHY FOR A LIFETIME

Dear Newlywed-to-be—

My hope is that if you're reading this, it's because you took a look at my photos and felt drawn to the comfortable, unforced yet elegant quality of my work. Let me tell you a little bit about how I've developed my style over the past almost 20 years.

I started my career in the NYC art world, but it quickly became clear to me that museum life was not my calling. I had always loved photography, and even earned a scholarship to the Pennsylvania Governor's School for the Arts in high school, but somehow never considered a career in photography. Around the same time, I got engaged to my now-husband and we started looking for a wedding photographer.

During my search for a photographer, I met John Dolan and hired him. What I loved about John's style was the timelessness and authenticity. It was wedding photography like I had never seen before, in a style I didn't know was possible for wedding photos. At the time, deer-in-the-headlights flash and loads of posing was the norm.

After our wedding, I asked John if I could help him run his business, and a working relationship and mentorship developed. It was a fantastic opportunity for me to learn the ins and outs of running a thriving photography business while simultaneously learning via osmosis how to make great images. As our family began to grow, we made the move back to our home area near Frenchtown, NJ, and I made the leap to my own full-time business.

My goal is to photograph weddings in a way that means my couples love their photos as much 15 years from now as the first day they receive them. I hope this magazine gives you plenty of inspiration, answers lots of questions, and inspires you to "ignore the photographer" (see "Looking Your Best").

Cheers,

Laura

p.s. I want to hear from you! Photography question? Vendor concern? Article idea? I invite you to get in touch!

Cell (908) 303-8217 or email laura@laurabillingham.com



Laura on her wedding day, photographed by John Dolan. Can you guess the year?

LAURA
BILLINGHAM

letters from you



Caity F.

Laura is so talented and captured our wedding beautifully. She was a breeze to work with - very organized, professional, and prompt. Above all she cares about her clients and made us feel comfortable and special on our big day! We will definitely be utilizing her to capture our future life events!



JoAnne D.

Laura blends creativity with your specific style and objectives. She really listens to your vision of what you want your photos to capture. Laura will go to your venue and scope out best ways to set up photos. She also worked with us to design an album that we will treasure forever!



Laura P.

Laura captured the pure love and joy experienced at our wedding. My wife and I are fun loving, active folks. Not only did Laura capture the candid that we were most passionate about, but she encouraged us and guided us in the more traditional photo shoot.

Q. My fiancé and I really want to have a nighttime wedding, but I've heard that will spell disaster for our pictures. What do you think we should do?

A. Go for it! While photographers generally prefer natural light to artificial light for the photographs, you should always do what makes you happy. Laura Billingham Photography comes equipped to handle any lighting situation and has years of experience with many different venues and circumstances, including nighttime weddings. If you'd like to take advantage of sunset or daylight portraits, Laura can discuss whether a "modern first look" is right for you and create a timeline that allows for a few special daylight images in addition to a stunning night-time reception. See "A Wedding Day Photo Timeline" for tips on how to plan a timeline that makes the most of the day and keeps the stress to a minimum.

Q. What is a "modern first look"? What if we like tradition and want to see each other at the altar instead?

A. A "modern first look" is a chance to see each other in all your finery before you leave for the church. Many couples are opting for this approach because it gives them a chance to enjoy the moment alone, take a deep breath and be in the moment when they do get to the altar. If you are worried that you'll be too emotional at the altar, a first look will give you a chance to shed the happy tears alone with your partner instead of in front of the audience at your ceremony. Another big benefit of a first look is that it opens up your wedding day timeline to get family group portraits out of the way before the cocktail hour. Since many couples are very invested in planning their weddings, they really look forward to celebrating the cocktail hour with friends and family instead of using it to take the family portraits. The choice is entirely up to you! Check out the "Wedding Day Photo Timeline" article for more info on first looks.

Q. We'd love to set aside some time for an engagement shoot. Is this something you do?

A. Yes! Engagement shoots are a special opportunity for a photographer and clients to get to know each other and for couples to get the feel of being in front of the camera. It can really relieve the stress for couples that are worried about being photographed. Most of us have not had a photographer follow us all day before! After the shoot, you'll have photos to use for your wedding website, save the date cards and special keepsakes at the wedding like a guest book or framed prints. Being engaged is a special time for couples to enjoy and celebrate their relationship before the Big Day. Take a look at "Considering an Engagement Session?" for more engagement inspiration!

Have a question? We'd love to hear from you and answer your question in a future issue of our studio magazine. Please send your question to laura@laurabillingham.com.

DANIELLE & JAMES



Laura Billingham Photography recently had the privilege of photographing college sweethearts, Danielle and James' summer wedding. A sun-soaked day and maximum daylight hours during the month of June ensured we had plenty of photo opportunities!

How did the couple prepare for their Big Day?

Here, James and Danielle share:

THEIR BEST ADVICE

"Take your time! Our longer engagement meant that we had time to think about things and change our mind about vendors if we needed to. It also meant that we could really enjoy being engaged!"

WHAT WAS THE COLOR, THEME OR FEEL YOU HAD IN MIND WHEN PLANNING

Danielle says, "We had no strict ideas about color or theme, but we knew we wanted a palette that was formal and elegant like our venue. We knew right away that we'd get married at Canoe Brook Country Club because our family has a long history there and it has a special place in our hearts. We stuck to blue, white, gold and gray colors that would complement the decor there."

THEIR FAVORITE PHOTO MOMENT

"There are so many images that are important to us, but one of the most adorable photos is of our two year old son. He slept peacefully in the church pew with his head on his ring bearer's pillow throughout our vows!"

WHAT THEY LOVED MOST ABOUT WORKING WITH LAURA BILLINGHAM

Danielle says, "From the very beginning, during our engagement shoot, she made us feel relaxed and natural. She was very clear in all of our correspondence and provided us with valuable advice throughout the entire wedding planning process. We felt that Laura really made an effort to get to know us and ensured that the photos from our wedding reflected our personalities as a couple. She is professional, efficient, friendly and, most importantly, took the most fabulous photographs of our wedding! We could not be more thankful to have had her on such an important day."

WHICH ONE MOMENT WILL LAST FOR THEM FOREVER

James and Danielle say they will most remember their vows and ceremony but also, "our first dance! We practiced a lot for that!"





GETTING MARRIED WITHOUT BEING HARRIED

- *Be sure to have a hair and makeup trial at least a month before your wedding. This will give you peace of mind to know exactly how you will look and give you the opportunity to change things in advance if necessary. Make sure to bring all jewelry to the trial to see how makeup shades work with the pieces*
- *Allow 50% more time for hair and makeup than you originally anticipate. This will alleviate the number one reason wedding schedules run late. This will assure you have plenty of time for all the portraits you want to take before the wedding.*
- *Have your florist deliver your flowers to where you are getting ready, not the ceremony venue. Since you never know when the mood will strike for a great photo, you'll want your flowers there and ready to go.*
- *Find out what the rules for photographs are at the ceremony location. All venues are different, some restricting the location of photographs and even the times in which they are permitted.*
- *If possible, arrange to have your formal photographs taken before the ceremony. Getting this step out of the way early in the day frees up the rest of your time to spend with your guests. You will be able to go straight to cocktail hour and catch up with loved ones without stress. It's a new age, so it's no longer considered bad luck for the groom to see the bride before the wedding. (See "A Wedding Day Photo Timeline")*
- *Have food delivered to your getting ready location. It may be hectic but take the time to have a bite before the wedding since it will be a while before you have the opportunity to nourish yourself during the reception.*
- *Prepare an emergency bridal kit with clear nail polish, mints, a sewing kit, stain treater, Visine, safety pins, bobby pins, pain reliever and mini deodorant.*
- *Make sure you discuss a "rain plan" with your venue just in case Mother Nature doesn't see sunshine in the cards.*



A WEDDING DAY PHOTO TIMELINE

A wedding is a whirlwind of events, gone in the blink of an eye. A well-defined timeline should help alleviate the stress involved with organizing your day and ensure the best opportunities for photos. It will also build in a cushion to help with the inevitable twists and turns. Let this information guide you to the best possible schedule—whether you choose a modern first look or a traditional first look at the altar.

MODERN FIRST LOOK

Are you hoping to spend the maximum amount of time with your new spouse? Looking forward to the cocktail hour you've been planning for months? Then a modern first look might be for you.

A modern first look will give you a more personal and intimate opportunity to see each other for the first time. It's a chance to be in the moment and express your emotions together in private. Best of all, this gives you a solid chunk of time to complete family and bridal party portraits in advance so that you don't miss much — or any — of your cocktail hour and reception!

Additionally, if you are planning a late fall or winter wedding, you may be able to take advantage of the early sunset for some stunning portraits.

Allow 2.5 hours between the first look and the ceremony for portraits of couple, bridal party, and couple with immediate families. This leaves room in your timeline for you to relax, refresh and hide from arriving guests.

SAMPLE TIME LINE: MODERN FIRST LOOK

12:00 Photographers arrive
 12:45 Attendants dressed & ready; bride steps into dress
 1:30 First look, followed by couples' portraits, bridal party, & immediate family portraits
 3:30 Portraits are finished, couple hides from guests
 4:00 Ceremony
 5:00 Depart ceremony location and arrive at reception [tip: allow extra 45 mins to 1 hr if you plan a receiving line]
 6:00 Cocktail hour; additional time for portraits as needed, or, enjoy your party!
 7:00 Dinner, first dances, toasts & cake cutting
 8:00pm Photographers' end time

ALTAR FIRST LOOK

Maybe you've always dreamed of "the first time s/he sees me walking down the aisle." A time-honored tradition of the first look at the altar is a wonderful thing if that's what you have your heart set on. However, know that it also means less time for portraits of the couple, family portraits and details. These tips can help you maximize the time that you have with your photographer to capture as many portraits and details as possible.

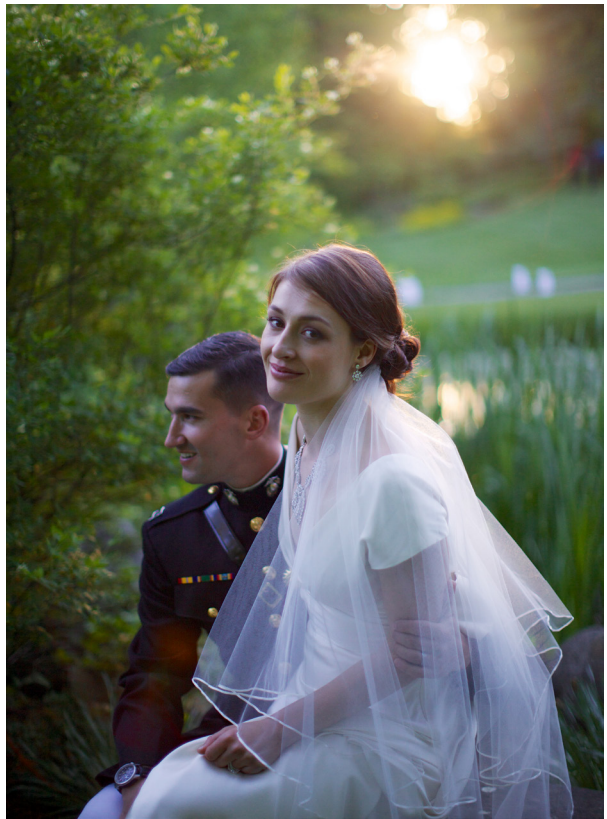
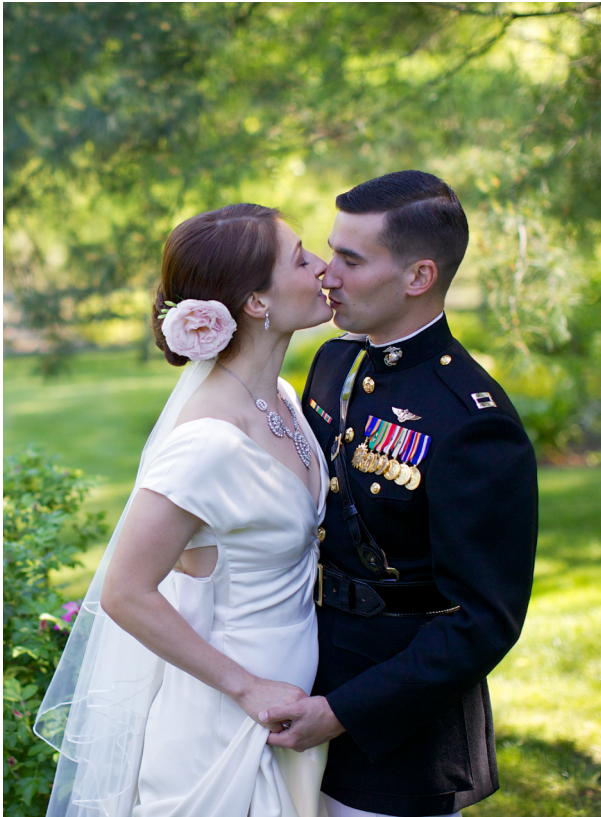
One way to gain time is to leave a big break in between the ceremony and the cocktail hour. If you do not decide to create that time cushion, it means less time for couples' portraits and details.

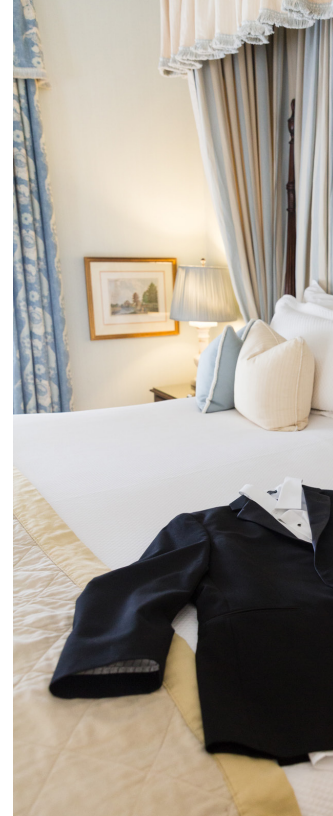
Realistically, only immediate family members (including parents, step parents, siblings, siblings' spouses, kids and grandparents) can be accommodated in the limited window of time after the ceremony. Photos of aunts, uncles, cousins, etc. can be captured during the reception. [Tip: Ask your DJ to help by announcing the family's name during the reception when you're ready for the group photo.]

Another way to maximize the photography time is to make sure that the photographers are fed at the same time as the couple. This way, they won't miss a minute while your event coordinator hunts them down during their break for a bite.

SAMPLE TIMELINE: ALTAR FIRST LOOK

2:00 Photographers arrive
 2:45 Attendants dressed & ready; bride steps into dress
 4:00 Ceremony [Tip: allow extra 45 mins to 1 hr if you plan a receiving line]
 — 2 hour break between ceremony & reception—
 7:00 Cocktail hour
 8:00 Dinner, first dances, toasts & guests' dance set
 9:00 Cake cutting
 10:00 Photographers' end time





ALL THE SMALL THINGS

LITTLE DETAILS MAKE A BIG IMPACT

While they may seem small, little details can tell a big part of your story. Did you give your husband-to-be his wedding day cufflinks? Are you carrying an heirloom "something borrowed" from your grandmother? Maybe you spent hours crafting your own centerpieces? With careful attention to your photography timeline, Laura Billingham Photography will capture the moments and details that make your day uniquely yours.





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4



5

1. HAIR: LEGENDS SALON, HILLSBOROUGH, NJ
2. SHOES: CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN. BOUQUET: VIBURNUM, PRINCETON, NJ
3. TUXEDO & MICKEY MOUSE CUFFLINKS GIFT FROM THE BRIDE. PHOTO AT BERNARDS INN, NJ
4. DRINKS AWAITING GUESTS AT COCKTAIL HOUR, RYLAND INN, WHITEHOUSE STATION, NJ
5. FLORAL DESIGN: VIBURNUM, PRINCETON, NJ
6. FLORAL DESIGN: FROGGY'S GARDEN, KINTNERSVILLE, PA
7. "SOMETHING BLUE" LACE HEART, DESIGNED AND STITCHED BY BRIDE
8. FLORAL DESIGN: VIBURNUM, PRINCETON, NJ
9. CATERING BY DESIGN, PHILADELPHIA, PA & FROGGY'S GARDEN, KINTNERSVILLE, PA
10. ESCORT CARD DISPLAY AT RYLAND INN, WHITEHOUSE STATION, NJ



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FROM SHOOT TO ALBUM

The weeks prior to and just after your wedding planning are guaranteed to be busy! This suggested timeline will help you get a handle on the steps needed to take images to albums.

Four weeks before your wedding: After chatting on the phone a little bit about the day and discussing any last-minute specifications, Laura sends a Wedding Timeline Questionnaire via Google doc to fill out all the most important details. Having a full understanding of your priorities helps Laura and her second photographer prepare for and capture the best images possible. Your final payment is due at this time, so keep an eye out for an online invoice to arrive via email.

A week before your wedding: Expect an e-mail confirming all the timeline details from the Wedding Timeline Questionnaire you completed. If you have any last details to share, this is the time to do it! Are there any surprise toasts, dances or planned moments? Don't forget to tell Laura so that she can be in the right place at the right time.

The day of your wedding: Photographers arrive at the scheduled time and quickly run through the course of the day. They coordinate with your family and friends regarding start times for formal portraits and what to expect.

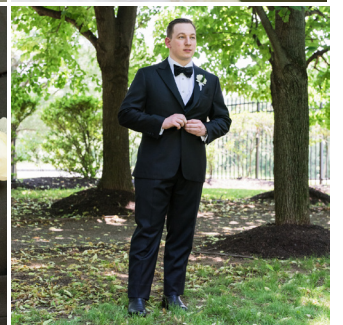
A week after your wedding: All the wedding images are downloaded, then edited, lightly retouched, archived and prepared for your online gallery.

Four weeks after your wedding: We deliver your online wedding gallery link to view your images and to share with family and friends. First, choose an image from your gallery for Laura to upload to Minted.com for Thank You card ordering. Next, choose your absolute favorite image for framing. Finally, choose your remaining favorites for your album. When you share your favorites with Laura, she will begin your album design.

Six to twelve weeks after your wedding: You have selected your album images and Laura has created an album layout design for your approval. A link is sent to your email alerting you that your album first draft is ready to review.

Twelve to fourteen weeks after your wedding: Your album layout is finalized and it's time to pick out your favorite cover materials and design elements. This is also a great opportunity to order any other heirloom keepsakes like framing, wedding party gifts, and parent albums.

Fourteen to sixteen weeks after your wedding: Your album and artwork are ready to enjoy!



VENDOR SPOTLIGHT



Custom stationery suite for an elegant holiday wedding.

Laura Billingham Photography with Engraved Images.

ENGRAVED IMAGES

Laura Billingham Photography has had the pleasure of working with Heidi Pfluger Gammon of Engraved Images on many weddings and custom projects. Heidi loves planning and collaborating with her clients to bring their vision and ideas to life. She gets to know them and styles invitations and papers that are reflective of their personalities, relationship, event design, and aesthetic.

Heidi has earned a reputation for the superior, individual service she gives each client. Her success is due in part to the customer referrals she receives. Each of her customers are treated like a member of the family.

To learn more about how Engraved Images can set the tone for your special day, call her at 908-234-0323. More information can be found online at engravedimages.net.

ABOUT ENGRAVED IMAGES

Engraved Images is a luxury stationery and gift boutique in Far Hills, NJ that has been helping clients celebrate milestone events since 1986. Founded by Heidi Pfluger Gammon, Engraved Images has become the first choice for all things weddings and events in the Somerset Hills area of New Jersey.

Heidi's belief in maintaining time honored traditions and dedication to personal service enables Engraved Images to stand out from online competitors. Her invitations are elegant and timeless with a nod to today's design trends. Heidi and her staff are connoisseurs of grace and etiquette, two things that never go out of style!

TO TAKE BETTER PHOTOS, “IGNORE THE PHOTOGRAPHER”

Seriously, “Ignore the photographer” is great wedding day advice. Sounds counterintuitive, doesn't it?

Often the best images are the ones in which the couples are focused on each other, not the photographer. When you're concentrating on your partner, the connection is real and natural, and very much “you.” About 99.9% of the time, those images are couples' favorites.

This advice also holds for the ceremony and reception. If you are focused on your friends and family and “in the moment” so that you forget your photographer is there, you will be looking happy and relaxed and at your best. So, if you see them coming out of the corner of your eye, don't worry. An experienced professional photographer doesn't expect you to stop, freeze, and smile. Just keep enjoying your moment and ignore the photographer!

While Laura Billingham Photography shoots the majority of the day's images using this candid approach, it's also very important to capture traditional formal portraits as well. And this is the only time we will need everyone's attention.

Group shots are best scheduled when everyone is ready and fresh, just before the ceremony. If you're planning a traditional altar first look, your family portraits will be scheduled during the cocktail hour. Since the most important goal is letting you enjoy your wedding events, it's a good rule of thumb to allow 5 minutes for each desired grouping to ensure maximum results in the minimum time. (Make sure all flowers and boutonnieres are delivered on time and affixed to family members and to the wedding party in advance.)



ALL ABOUT ALBUMS

Wedding albums are a culmination of all the wonderful memories of the day presented in an heirloom book that tells your story to keep and treasure. The album design process can be a little challenging for busy couples, so let Laura Billingham Photography help you keep it as painless as possible.

We provide end-to-end assistance from image selection and layout design, to cover selection. You choose from the line of gorgeous, hand-bound books constructed from the highest quality materials. Next select a luxury fabric in linen or silk; or upgrade to buttery soft leather and add an imprint to your cover for a truly custom finish. All albums are archival, meaning they will last a lifetime.

PARENT ALBUMS

Albums aren't just for couples. Parent albums are the perfect gifts to present to moms and dads after the wedding or add them to a wedding package. Each parent album can be a clone of the bride and groom's book or custom-designed to your liking. All cover and design options offered for bride and groom books are also available for parent albums.

DESIGN SERVICES

Never worry about design; Laura Billingham Photography includes full design services for each album purchased. We will meet one-on-one with you after the wedding to discuss your favorite images and plan your special album. Out of the area? No problem. We can discuss all the details via FaceTime or email if you prefer.

ALBUM OPTIONS

Books start with 20 pages in a traditional lay-flat album or 100 pages in a modern fine art album, and are available as 6x6, 8x8, or 11x11 sizes. For an extra finishing touch, add a matching box to compliment and protect your album investment.

COVER OPTIONS

Our albums come in a wide variety of colors and fabric options to perfectly match your wedding's theme or complement display in your home. At right, from top to bottom: 8x8 natural linen flush mount album in oyster with matching clam shell box; 11x11 robin's egg silk presentation box and 6x6 robin's egg parent albums in leather; 11x11 taupe modern fine art album and matching presentation box in silk.





considering an
ENGAGEMENT SESSION?

Is an engagement shoot really necessary? After all, the wedding pictures are enough, right? Read on to learn about some of the benefits of engagement sessions you might not have thought of.

Shooting an engagement is important for several reasons. First, this time allows you to get comfortable in front of the camera with your photographer, figuring out how you work best together before the wedding. This will also give you the opportunity to look at photos of yourselves and enjoy seeing how amazing you look together! It can really take the stress out of the wedding day to know that yes, in fact, you and your partner are as photogenic as your photographer told you! Some brides-to-be use the

engagement session day as an opportunity to do a hair and makeup trial so that not only do they get comfortable with their style for the wedding, but they are looking and feeling their best for their engagement photos.

E-Sessions also give you the chance to showcase your personalities in a more casual setting, while creating some fun captures for wall portraits, your wedding sign-in book, Save the Date cards and your wedding website.

Best of all, it's just fun to spend the time together celebrating your almost-newlyweds status!



GREAT ENGAGEMENT SHOOT IDEAS:

At the proposal location:

After all, what better way to capture an engagement than the place it all started!

At your favorite restaurant:

Meaningful memories happen with food, ambiance and your special song playing in the background.

Doing your favorite activity:

What better way to capture your personality than doing something that you both love. Is it cooking? Snuggling up with a good book? Dancing?

Where you first met each other:

Whether your first meeting was a discussion at the library or fumbling for the door at the local coffee shop, going back to your beginnings is a marvelous memory.

Images with your pet:

What better way to capture your new family than by including a beloved pet in your session?

Your favorite skyline:

Your city is beautiful at any time of the year, and the skyline shares where you live now, a beautiful location that might change with time.

A downtown urban session:

Fun and funky, pictures in alleyways or in otherwise undiscovered locations of your area make for a more intimate view of the city.

A romantic beach:

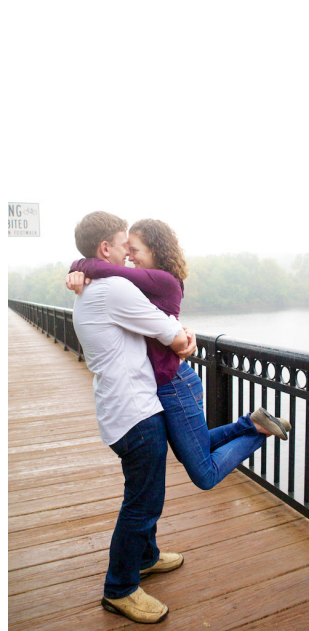
In the morning or evening, the sea meets the sky for a feeling of forever.

At your favorite coffee shop:

Quirky and cozy, local mom and pop shops are a great way to take a quick break to refuel and to catch some local, architectural shots with you in the process.

Seasonal:

Catch the nuances of the seasons, including everything from a winter wonderland, to leaves of fall, to flowers in spring, to the lush, green summers in nearby beautiful fields and forests.





“WE JUST GOT OUR PHOTOS, AND WE WERE BLOWN AWAY BY LAURA’S WORK! THEY WERE GORGEOUS! I FELT LIKE SHE CAPTURED EVERY LITTLE SPECIAL MOMENT, WITHOUT US EVEN REALIZING SHE WAS DOING IT. SHE REALLY GOT “US”, AND IT SHOWS IN EVERY PICTURE.”

- Corinne H.

LAURA BILLINGHAM

Frenchtown, NJ	Professional Photography
	20+ years experience
	www.LauraBillingham.com

COMPLIMENTARY ENGAGEMENT SESSION

When you book Collection One or Two, A \$600 value
Please present this coupon at time of booking.

EXPIRES 12/2019
LAURA BILLINGHAM PHOTOGRAPHY

