



La Vie IN PICTURES

Words by Stephen Petrick Photos LaVie in Pictures

Shawn LaVie, wedding photographer extraordinaire, uses images to tell stories – but he’s a storyteller, not a story maker. At each wedding he photographs, he lets moments unfold on their own and captures them with his camera, as opposed to setting up posed shots.



▲ Shawn LaVie

“My preference on the wedding day is to simply capture things as they unfold, not to pose or stage anything,” says LaVie, who owns LaVie In Pictures. “Making a connection with my clients is very important; I want them to feel like I am just an extension of their family for that day and know that I would treat their wedding like it was my own.”

LaVie, a native of Souris, P.E.I., runs his business with his wife, Jennifer, a wedding expert in her own right. She created her wedding planning business, Kiss The Bride, in 2007, and LaVie is an integral part of her business as well, as they have worked together as a team for the past six years. The couple know how much work and how much pride rests in every wedding “and that gives us a huge advantage when photographing a wedding,” LaVie said.

He says one of the keys to shooting a wedding successfully is getting to know the clients beforehand. That includes getting to know about their family and their wedding-day vision. “This helps me to be able to anticipate the moments of the day and to be on the look out for those key things that, unless you knew about them, otherwise may not be captured. It helps with my clients’

comfort level on the day of the wedding as well.”

While LaVie is a creative person, he doesn’t aspire to shoot “perfect” wedding photos. “People sometimes get intimidated by styled photos that are seen online, and worry that their wedding will never look that way. They are probably right. My ideal client is not concerned with wanting everything to look ‘perfect’; rather they understand that what makes their wedding perfect is the imperfection, the uniqueness that is only their relationship, their day,” he says. “I like to say that I see perfection in the imperfection and always try to approach each wedding with an editorial mind frame. There’s nothing like capturing true emotion in a photograph.”

And Prince Edward Island often provides him a great backdrop for capturing great moments. “P.E.I. is home and always has been,” he says. “Having worked along side of my wife for the last six years in the wedding industry here, I can honestly say, it is also one of the most amazing places to come to have a wedding. It’s a huge destination wedding location in Canada. So many people who have absolutely no ties at all to the Island are coming here and bringing hundreds of people with them for their weddings. Who can blame them? We get to live in a place where -- especially in the summer -- everywhere you look there is so much beauty.”



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