

# Out **IN** Jersey

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# Surrounded By Love

By Luis Gutierrez

Surrounded in love is a phrase that has been long used. On their wedding day, Ron Lucas and Brian Szura could not feel anything else as family and friends gathered together to celebrate their love for each other at their civil union in Newark. Both partners were literally surrounded by love when they heard the applause of all present when the minister, Brian's fraternal brother, pronounced them husbands. "A feeling which is exhilarating and unexplainable" as mentioned by a guest who has been with his own partner of eight years.

Enhanced by the floral designs of Lynn Jawitz of Floristan (New York City), the ceremony was beautiful and unique, all brought together by the crew of Savvy Planners. Mr. Marcinho Savant from Savvy Planners, when placed on the hot seat to see if he would spill any gossip or funny news about working with the couple, remained very professional, just stating that it's his job to listen to both individuals and try to bring their ideas together. The reception was glamorous and inti-

mate. Mr. Savant along with his crew all called it "marriage" which was impressive. A surprise Savvy Planners had in-store for the couple happened during the middle of the event. A spotlight came on and a man playing drums was lighted, then geishas came out and proceeded to bring out sushi.

When asked if gay couples were treated any differently, Mr. Savant responded by saying, "We do not discriminate on any basis." To him it was the same as working with any other couple planning a wedding.

The event was catered by Maria Lynn (Catering By Maria, LLC, of Aberdeen, New Jersey). The food was delicious and allowed for smooth walking and mingling, which was the mood the couple wanted. She said it was easy to work on catering with the couple. It was not too demanding, and there were not many challenges in catering the wedding at this site. There was no built-in kitchen so they had to build some stations in the back to keep the food fresh. She said her staff is there to cater and they respect anyone they work for. As a matter of fact, they viewed the event as any other wedding.

During their vows, Ron and Brian decided to do something traditional

from their respective countries. Brian being Polish, shared bread sprinkled with salt and vodka from Poland. Ron's Korean heritage brought two small ceramic ducks. They introduced it with a story; "Two Mandarins find a partner and mate for life. Each was given one duck, they will position them facing each other beak to beak, symbolizing happiness in their relationship but if the couple were fighting and not talking to each other they would be placed facing away." During their vows Ron and Brian exchanged the traditional wedding rings and were introduced as husbands.

The whole evening was built around the theme of the event being treated as a marriage. As one of the partners said, "One day soon it will be called marriage." Everyone at the reception including the wedding planners, caterers and guests agreed that even though it is now legally called a Civil Union, it's viewed as a normal wedding for them and the staff and soon everyone will agree, too.

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