

THE

# FIRST LOOK EXPERIENCE

a guide for susannah lynn brides



#### YOUR FIRST LOOK

Your first look is an amazing part of your wedding day! If you aren't sure about this tradition, the next few pages will explain why it would be a romantic addition to your wedding day celebration that not only adds to the experience but also reduces stress. Please know that I would never want any of my couples to feel pressured to go with this option. However, I do want to make sure that I share all of the benefits of a first look, because there is a reason my couples who do this LOVE it!



### THE FIRST LOOK explained





I have confessed my deep love for "First Looks" numerous times on my blog, and I tend to point them out in every blog post. There is a reason for this. They're AWESOME! However, not everyone is aware of how awesome they are, because they get caught up in how "non-traditional" it is, and they immediately write it off. I can talk about those brides because I was almost one of them! I wanted a REACTION....I wanted Jeff to be so surprised and overcome with joy when I walked down the aisle that he bawled at the first sight of me! Isn't that EVERY girl's dream? Who doesn't want that reaction? Luckily, I was able to have the best of both worlds, because Jeff and I decided to share an intimate "First Look" moment on our wedding day, AND he still LOST IT when I came down the aisle. He was in tears and so was everyone who was watching him!! YESSS!! I felt like a million bucks. Walking down the aisle on my wedding day was a moment that I will treasure for a lifetime!!

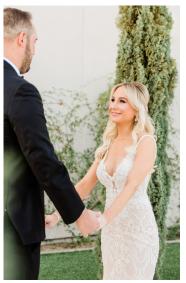
After experiencing my own wedding and shooting many others.... I've come to this conclusion. Some brides love "traditions".... but what a bride REALLY wants when it comes to her groom seeing her for the first time, is a REACTION. Those who are not interested in a First Look usually think that by seeing each other beforehand, they will lose part of that reaction. They also assume that it will not be as emotional or as intimate as it would be if they were coming down the aisle. What I have found (this is starting to sound like a research paper!) is so ironic! Everyone knows that wedding days are a bit stressful for the bride and groom.

The whole day is focused on them, they need to look their best, they need to be on time, the groom has no idea what side the boutonniere is supposed to go on and little by little... the tension

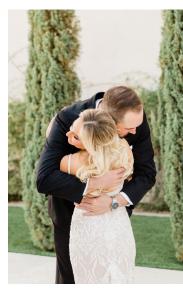
It's before the ceremony and the gravity of what is about to happen starts to sink in and the calm, collected groom who was playing golf just a few short hours ago is now starting to feel a little anxious. So what happens next? The groom waits in a little room somewhere for his que from the coordinator. It seems like it's taking FOREVER. Finally, the coordinator leans her head in and hurries the groom to get ready. With clammy hands, the groom enters the ceremony and what does he find? .... he finds anywhere from 80-300 people and they're all looking where? Right at his face... because everyone has expectations and anticipation about his first reaction. This is the farthest thing from a private, intimate moment. Sure, it's SO powerful and SO wonderful. ... I already said that walking down the aisle was one of the BEST PARTS of my WHOLE wedding day!! It's magical!! ..... But when I walked down the aisle... Jeff wasn't a nervous wreck...he had spent the morning with me and our best friends and the pressure was OFF. By the time our ceremony rolled around he was ready to ENJOY our beautiful day!

The nerves were gone and when the nerves are gone... true emotions are free to be expressed. And OH were they expressed! So if I were to condense what I just wrote... basically, Grooms normally become incredibly nervous on wedding days.... even if they seem cool and collected.









For most grooms, the nerves kick in before they see their bride because when they see her, everything becomes VERY real! So when the nerves start creeping up, instead of keeping the groom in a secluded space until his time to enter the ceremony, what if you took him to a private place... no people, no on-lookers, no distractions.... and you let his beautiful bride, the love of his life, quietly call his name and have him turn around to see her for the first time. He would turn around and finally get his first look at his stunning bride and not only would he get to see her... he could embrace her... cry with her... kiss her... and ENJOY that moment with her for as LONG as they wanted. As she shows him her dress, twirls a few times and then asks him what he thinks... his nerves start to diminish. After all, she's the one who can make him most comfortable anyway.

Because they aren't on a time crunch... they casually move into their romantic portraits. No one is around, the coordinator isn't announcing "15 minutes left", and there is no pressure. It's just the two of them and their photographer..... capturing the excitement and the joy of their wedding day. This is their time to be TOGETHER...and to be ALONE. When does that happen on a wedding day? Without a First Look.... it doesn't. After their romantic portraits are done, they meet up with their best friends. Their bridal party joins them and because they still have plenty of time to spare... the bride even touches up a little makeup. After a few minutes the bridal party portraits begin and they're FUN. They're FUN, because there is time to make them FUN.

There aren't any guests waiting impatiently at the cocktail hour and there isn't a DJ coming to find the photographer to get a time check. It's wonderful!

After portraits are done, the girls and guys separate and prepare for the ceremony. The guests begin to arrive and the ushers are in place. Pretty soon it's time for the processional music to begin and one by one, the bridesmaids make their way down to the front of the ceremony. As the groom clasps his hands... they aren't clasped out of nervousness but excitement. The music builds, the mother of the bride stands and all of the guests follow her lead. The groom looks up, and here comes the BRIDE!!! His best friend, his companion, his sweetheart....she's stunning.... ABSOLUTELY stunning. The closer she gets, the bigger he

Now let me put a disclaimer on here before we continue...my clients are not required to do a First Look by any means! I used to feel bad for sharing this option with couples who were against it, because I didn't want to push anything on them. However, I've seen the benefits of a first look over and over again, and so I only share this because I want the BEST for my couples!! It's totally ok if couples choose not to share a first look! It's just my preference to do one for many reasons.... Keep reading to find out more of the benefits of sharing your first look privately! For brides not interested in a First Look, lets start chatting soon about how we'll create a special timeline to fit everything in!









## FIRST LOOK | why it's worth it

You're investing a lot into your wedding photography. With a first look, you'll receive 40% MORE portraits of the two of you... and those are the images you will decorate your first home with! (Believe me, our house is PACKED full of our portraits!) With a first look, you make the most out of this large investment and get the most for your money.

You actually get to have intimate time on your wedding day with your man. Most brides don't realize that when you come down the aisle and totally SHOCK him with your gorgeous-ness... he can't even tell you how amazing you look. He can't touch you, embrace you or even SPEAK to you. You have to wait until 30 minutes later when the ceremony is over for him to react and tell you how amazing you look. And after 30 minutes of the ceremony, the reaction isn't the same as the initial first glance.

First Looks allow you to extend your wedding day. Normally the wedding day would start when you come down the aisle, then the ceremony would end, you would rush through portraits so that you're not late for the introductions and then it's reception time. With a first look, your wedding day is extended by almost 3 hours! Instead of being rushed for your bridal party portraits... you actually get to enjoy them and have fun hanging out with your BEST friends on your wedding day. The WHOLE first half of my client's wedding albums are filled with images just from this time together before the ceremony.

First Looks allow you to be TOGETHER and alone on your wedding day. When Jeff and I saw each other, not only was it intimate, it was our only time to be alone the whole day! We cried and laughed and cried some more... and then that put us in the PERFECT mood for our romantic portraits. Normally portraits are a little rushed after the family formals, and it can be hard to really get back into that "lovey dovey" mode.... especially with family around! When you have just shared your first look, you're READY to love on each other, and I always capture some super sweet images during those moments!

You get rid of your nerves! I'd say, literally 1/2 of my couples who have decided to do a first look, the grooms were not fans of it at first. However, because they have never experienced their wedding day before, they didn't know how nerve racking it can be. I have testimonials from so many grooms who initially weren't a fan of the first look... but afterwards admitted to being SO much more relaxed and ready for the ceremony!



#### FOR THE BRIDE

# FIRST LOOK EXPECTATIONS

Bride's, if you have never seen your man cry or get emotional, you can't expect him to be overly emotional on your wedding day. Some guys just embrace their brides and never cry.... and that's OK. Some guys show very little emotion when their bride is coming down the aisle and that's ok too. Just enjoy this amazing day, and try not to put any expectations on him. If you take this advice to heart, I could potentially be saving you a lot of disappointment on your day. One thing I have noticed after shooting for so long is that the stress and nerves that come with a wedding day can sometimes make it hard for some grooms to truly express their emotions. It's just a lot to take in all at once. This is a great reason to share a first look and also a great reason to give some grace to your guy! Sure, you deserve to feel beautiful, but my encouragement to you is to enjoy this time together, no matter what his reaction is like!



#### THANK YOU!

Last, but certainly not least, THANK YOU for trusting us with the planning process of your special day. Jeff and I are so honored to be the ones preserving your memories, and we cannot WAIT to celebrate alongside of you! Enjoy this season of planning but also remember that your MARRIAGE is more important than the wedding. The wedding will come and go in a matter of hours, but your marriage needs to stand the test of time. Continue to make time for one another, even with all that needs to get done. As you continue to plan, please feel free to contact me with ANY questions you may have along the way! I hope this guide has been helpful as you continue to plan and prepare for your wedding day! Love,

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