

Lorri's Tips for Better Photographs

LB Goodman Photography

Before a shoot....

Here are some points to consider that will contribute to photographs that you love. Any shoot will include a meeting, either in person or via telephone to discuss your personal considerations. I am flexible and eager to please as much as possible!

Portraits and Group Shots

First and foremost, remember that photos reflect how you feel! I cannot get a great shot if you are feeling bored or upset! Set your focus on positive self-talk, think of something wonderful and bring out your most confident self!

I prefer natural light but am happy to work indoors if that is your preference. We can go anywhere! Skinner Butte park has many settings from the river to forested paths, to stone walls. The 5th st Market, the train tracks, the Hult Center grounds, your home, campus, let your imagination be your guide.

Events

My approach is a unique blend of photojournalistic and portrait styles that will give you the best of both candid and posed photos. The name of this style is Portrait Journalism.

During the ceremony I will position myself to get the best pictures, as discretely as possible. If you are lighting Unity candles make sure they are placed to the side so that you can be behind them, facing your audience. This way everyone (including me!) can see you lighting them.

I will be following the action and looking for the most meaningful, exciting and unique moments. This is truly my area of expertise and in general it's best if you enjoy your occasion and ignore me unless you want to direct my attention somewhere or I ask something of you. In addition we will need to set up special times for group shots and portraits.

Here are some guidelines for you to follow. These hints are applicable for weddings, b'nai mitzvah and other celebrations. Simply use what fits for you:

Group Photos

If group photos are on your agenda, plan your groups for an outside location with enough shade to cover your largest grouping. Avoid places where there

are distracting backgrounds and make sure everyone is in the shade. If you can, make a list of who you want in each shot. The process goes more smoothly this way. Let a best friend or relative who is good with details be the one to gather the groups from the list. Choose someone who is able to stay grounded and focused during this part and knows your family and friends.

Weddings

For a wedding plan on spending at least 1/2 hour shooting couple portraits. 20 minutes is really the minimum for this segment, though more time is better. If your location offers a variety of backgrounds it will be desirable to walk around and shoot with different scenes and perspectives. I will be excited to walk with you in different settings like a forest, a meadow, down a staircase, by a barn or elegant building; the possibilities are endless. In general early morning and late evening light help create the best photos, if possible we want to avoid the glare of the hot sun. If we are taking our photos in the middle of a sunny day we will simply find shade and make it work!

The best time to photograph your groups and to do your wedding portraits is after the ceremony, either after greeting your guests and before the meal, or sometime during or after the meal. This will vary, depending on your wedding and we can discuss when these photos will least detract from the flow of events.

Pre-Nuptials Dressing Room – some of my favorite photos happen here; they contain the anticipation of what is to come. By decorating the dressing room and being aware of a few key points, your photos will come out much better.

Use a good sized room if you can and choose one with ample natural light. North facing is ideal so there isn't direct sunlight streaming through but if there is a lot of light, place see-through fabrics or light cloth over the windows so the light comes in softly. Strong light is better than none at all. Avoid drapery or shutters.

If you are in a windowless room, you can use candles or small holiday lights on or around things to give depth to the scene. Care needs to be given to the dressing room differently, but as much as any other part of the wedding. Simply cover with cloth or drapes any boxes or messes so that your eye is not drawn to them.

I thoroughly enjoy the hustle and bustle that occurs when your bridesmaids are helping you dress, tying your hair, putting on make-up and getting everything set. This is definitely one of the advantages of being a female photographer; I just blend in and no one need feel inhibited!

Mealtime. It is customary to include the photographer in the dinner or luncheon! Shooting works up a fierce hunger! I don't normally shoot during mealtime but I will almost always have the camera nearby in case I'm inspired to capture something. Do seat me within reasonable distance from you and your bridal party. If you would like to do some portraits while your guests are finishing dinner, let me know so I can eat at the same time as you. Generally I try and eat early if it's a buffet line, so that I'm done and available. It is good if I can synchronize with you and optimize this time when your guests are occupied.

Lighting at your reception – this segment of your wedding radiates fun and excitement. If outdoors, place your dance floor under a structure or tent so that you can hang lights, paper lanterns or candles along the structure. If there is no tent or structure, just string lights in the trees.

It's preferable not to have a dark background for dancing photos. Lights will give depth and perspective to your dancers. The best position for hanging lights is just above head high.

To optimize the quality of your photos do not allow strobe lights on the dancers, only in the background. If there are strong lights moving about, I will have to use a strong flash which will result in only a black background. That can be ok if it is unavoidable, but my preference is to get some background light and depth. Lights that are constant are fine as are darting lights on the walls, as long as they don't hit the dancers.

When it's time to throw flowers....take your time or it's over too fast! Look at your friends, take in the scene, make every moment count. Be sure too there are no low hanging lights that might get in the way of your toss.

Dancing. In general I like you to be into your dancing and ignore me. On occasion however, it works really well for you to face me and strut your stuff for the camera. This will facilitate great photos as opposed to a lot of backs. With the formal or first dances please ignore me completely.

I welcome discussion of any details, none are too small, so please don't filter your questions! It's your party and I'm there to record memories that will live on forever!

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