

**THE EMPIRE STATE BUILDING AND BRIDES.COM UNVEIL
VALENTINE'S DAY WEDDING EVENT WINNING COUPLES**

*13 Couples Will Exchange Vows Atop the World's Most Romantic Building on February 14
Same-Sex Commitment Ceremony to Be Held at the Iconic Building for the First Time*

New York City – February 2009 – This Valentine's Day, 13 lucky couples will take their love to new heights as they say "I do" atop the world-famous Empire State Building in an all-day event presented by the iconic landmark and Brides.com.

Selected from more than 400 entries in a nationwide contest on Brides.com, the 13 winning couples will exchange vows on February 14, the only day The Empire State Building opens its doors for weddings. This year, the brides and grooms will not only celebrate weddings and vow renewals, but for the very first time in The Empire State Building's history, one couple – two brides -- will take part in a same-sex commitment ceremony.

Brides.com editors will lend their expertise by working with famed event planner and designer Michelle Rago to transform the space at The Empire State Building into a wedding wonderland and providing consultations for one-on-one style and beauty to each couple. Beginning at 7 a.m. on Valentine's Day, the couples will exchange vows in individual private ceremonies surrounded by 20 of their closest friends and family members. Each sky-high ceremony will conclude with a champagne toast and a VIP trip to the 86th floor Observatory.

To commemorate their big day, couples will also receive an exclusive gift bag including items from Secrets Resorts & Spas, Noritake, Nautica, The Occasions Group, The Almond Board and Beach Bum Tanning, and David's Bridal, which will also be outfitting all the brides for a special lighting ceremony at the Empire State Building on February 13.

Featured in classic love stories like *An Affair to Remember* and *Sleepless in Seattle*, The Empire State Building receives daily calls from couples looking to get married at the building. Since 1994, more than 220 couples have been married at The Empire State Building in this Valentine's Day event. In addition, Brides.com reports a 286% increase in couples planning their wedding for Valentine's Day 2009 over last year's Valentine's in 2008, because the holiday falls on a Saturday, making this year's event even more exciting.

"Our Valentine's Day weddings event has been a popular tradition at the Empire State Building for more than 15 years," said Melanie Maasch, Director of Brand Development and Public Relations at the Empire State Building. "We're making dreams come true with Brides.com by creating unforgettable weddings of a lifetime for 14 couples each year at the most romantic building in the world."

"Brides.com is excited to host this iconic event for the third time with the Empire State Building," said Michelle Preli, Brides.com editor in chief. "This year's couples comprise a diverse mix of individuals with heartfelt, compelling love stories to celebrate. There's nothing better than helping them create their own unique ceremonies on their special day."

On February 14 from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., each of the 13 ceremonies will be live-streamed at www.brides.com/esb through webcasting partner Mogulus, a leading online video streaming company. Visitors to Brides.com on Valentine's Day can also enter to win the same exclusive gift bag given to the winning couples and a honeymoon package from Secrets Resorts & Spas.

The following 13 couples will exchange vows high atop New York City on February 14, 2009:

- Jessica Chesnutt and Natalie Sauro (Brooklyn, NY): Jessica proposed to Natalie on the Brooklyn Bridge during the Annual Wedding March for same-sex marriage rights. While the couple is from New York, Valentine's Day marks their first visit to the Empire State Building as they share their commitment ceremony with family and friends.

- Heidi Landry and Kevin Koski (Norfolk, VA & Odenton, MD): Both Heidi and Kevin are active-duty military members in the Coast Guard. The couple says they entered the contest on Brides.com because they couldn't imagine a better place to get married than The Empire State Building, overlooking an integral city of the country they both serve.
- Asherel Blount and Linnell Totten (Durham, NC): Asherel wanted to give Linnell, a native New Yorker, his dream wedding at The Empire State Building. Although the couple currently lives in North Carolina, Linnell has always felt a strong connection to New York and is fascinated with The Empire State Building – so much that he has a tattoo of the landmark on his left arm.
- Yanan Guan and Michael Zhang (Selden, NY) Both immigrants from China currently living in New York, Michael and Yanan realized upon meeting they were from the very same city in China. A few years later, Michael proposed to Yanan on a sunny afternoon in Central Park.
- Juanita Garcia and Christopher Kerber (Alexandria, VA): Both in the military and stationed in Washington, D.C., the couple is excited to be married in their favorite city and on the same day Juanita's parents were married. Both Juanita and Christopher have sons named Ethan, who will be ring bearers at their wedding.
- Kimberly Lyons and Mathias Turck (New York, NY): As natives of Texas and Paris, the couple views New York as a midpoint where they fell in love. The couple now lives in Harlem with a great view of The Empire State Building from their roof.
- Anni Burns and Delon Mollett (Birmingham, MI & Arlington, TX): The long distance couple has spent most of their relationship in the sky traveling to see one another, and they think it's only fitting to have their wedding high in the clouds at The Empire State Building. The couple met online, and Anni currently works in Michigan, while Delon is in Texas finishing his PhD.
- Dodi Beilmann and Timothy Nicholson (Stafford Springs, CT): Dodi and Timothy first met online. Although she will be marrying into a large Greek family, Dodi says she prefers an intimate ceremony as opposed to a "big fat Greek wedding." After they entered the contest last year on Brides.com and were not selected, they postponed their wedding to try again for the chance to be married at The Empire State Building.
- Cristina Maietta and Joseph Fasano (Mississauga, Canada & Yonkers, NY): A girls' shopping weekend in NYC was ruined when a friend's flight was cancelled, but fate stepped in as Christina was set up with Joseph as her tour guide. The couple can't wait to be married in New York City at The Empire State Building.
- Rose Lafontant and C. Michael Le Grand (Brooklyn, NY): The couple met on the street when Rose was shopping for a friend's wedding gift, and Michael was bold enough to say hello. They first said "I love you" to each other atop The Empire State Building.
- Hailey Hawkins and Barth Carson (South Williamsport, PA): When Hailey planned a surprise trip to New York City for Barth, he planned an even bigger surprise proposal for her. Barth proposed to Hailey atop The Empire State Building last year, and since then the Pennsylvania couple have dreamed of a wedding at the iconic building.
- Jessica Brown and Timothy Dunlap (Green Lane, PA): Jessica and Timothy first met in junior high and were later reunited by Jessica's sister. During a trip to New York City,

Timothy, a volunteer firefighter, proposed to Jessica atop The Empire State Building. The couple says that their wedding at the building will be a fairytale come true.

- Gena Fazzari and Bryan Boutin (Hoboken, NJ): The couple's first date was at The Empire State Building, and they have viewed the building as a romantic icon ever since. After moving in together, Gina and Bryan have made sure that each apartment they choose has a view of The Empire State Building.

About the Empire State Building

Soaring 1,454 feet above Midtown Manhattan, the Empire State Building is the "*World's Most Famous Office Building.*" With new investments in infrastructure, public areas and amenities, the Empire State Building has attracted first-rate tenants in a diverse array of industries from around the world. The skyscraper's robust broadcasting technology supports all major television and FM radio stations in the New York metropolitan market. The Empire State Building was named America's favorite building in a poll conducted by the American Institute of Architects. The Empire State Building Observatory is one of the world's most beloved attractions and is the region's #1 tourist destination. For more information on the Empire State Building, please visit www.esbnyc.com.

About Brides.com

Brides.com is a premier bridal destination site, with more than 1.5 million unique users every month and 30 percent year-over-year growth in traffic. Brides.com's dedicated editorial team creates original content, develops interactive tools, cultivates an engaged community and provides an array of beautiful imagery and video to empower the bride throughout her wedding-planning process. Brides.com commands a superior market position by aggregating content from three national magazines—Brides, Modern Bride, Elegant Bride—and 16 local bridal magazines.

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