

rocky hill LIFE

September 2014 TurleyCT.com
A product of TurleyCT
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Volume 1, Edition 12

She generates exciting events

Stephanie Carmody has worked
with celebrities
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Photos by Lisa Brisson



Stephanie Carmody is the owner and principal planner of Tres Chic Events.

The main event

Stephanie Carmody knows how to create an exciting experience

by Mara Dresner
Staff writer

Rocky Hill native Stephanie Carmody has planned celebrations for notable names and A-list red carpet events like the Daytime Emmy Awards, the People's Choice Awards and the Country Music Association Awards, Fortune 100 companies and celebrity guests for more than 15 years.

That allowed her to rub shoulders with such celebrities as Ellen DeGeneres, Martha Stewart, Rachael Ray, Donald Trump, Chandra Wilson, Tim Gunn, Faith Hill, Kristin Davis, Mario Batali, Giada De Laurentiis, Todd English, John Legend, Lisa Rinna and Olivia Newton-John.

Following a career in celebrity

entertainment and consumer public relations in New York, Boston and Los Angeles, Carmody decided to move back to Connecticut with her husband, Bryan, an attorney, to be closer to family.

She now runs her own company, Trés Chic Events, a full-service boutique wedding and event business based in Glastonbury. For further information visit www.tres-chiceventsct.com.

Q. How did you become involved with the industry?

A. My background is very high-end public relations. Within that, I did primarily entertainment and celebrity P.R. I did a lot of high-caliber

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events for clients.

I fell in love with P.R. in particular and majored in that. Right out of college, I got my first P.R. job. It was actually in finance. I didn't love that so much.

They promoted me in nine months; I was working on AOL ... I think that's where I fell in love with the entertainment part of public relations. That's evolved throughout the years. I realized I loved entertainment and all things celebrity.

Q. You worked with Donald Trump. How was that?

A. I worked with Donald Trump when he was launching "Trump World" magazine, which I don't think [is] in publication any more. There's a lot to know.

He doesn't like to shake hands, so you have to be very mindful so no one is shaking his hand. When his son got engaged, we did a party for him and his fiancée. There are a lot of moving parts. It doesn't feel like work; it's fun.

Q. What makes a great event?

A. I think what makes a great event is that everything is seamless. All the little touches connect: the color of the font [on the invitation] to the color of the bridesmaids' gowns to the color of the flowers. All those details add up ... and all those details and attention to those details matter.

Sometimes people say, 'It was such a great wedding,' but they can't pinpoint why. It's not just the food or the music or the flowers. It's all those details along the way that made it such a memorable event. That takes a lot of work, a lot of work.

Q. Who are some of your favorite celebrities that you've crossed paths with?

A. There are so, so many. One of my favorites is Chandra Wilson, who plays Dr. Bailey on "Grey's Anatomy." She's the spokesperson for a Downy campaign.

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These are some of the invitation and dining cards that Stephanie Carmody designed for a wedding. The Rocky Hill native launched her company in 2013.

sick kids in hospitals. She was just amazing to work with, very down-to-earth, lovely, just great.

I actually worked really closely with Mario Batali and Kristin Davis [who was in] "Sex and the City" for an integration with Barilla Pasta; Giada De Laurentiis as well. We created a celebrity cookbook all using Barilla Pasta.

They were great in different

ways. You have an actress who was so glamorous and lovely and down-to-earth ... and then I got to work with the chefs, which was such a different experience as well.

Lisa Rinna was also a hoot. We did an integration Dr. Scholl's for her. That's when I did the Daytime Emmys.

She wore the inserts on the red carpet. She had just finished doing

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"Dancing With the Stars" and her feet were tired. It was such a great connection for us to make with her.

Q. What are the biggest challenges of event planning?

A. I think the challenges are with any event – an A-list event or a corporate client or even a bride – are anticipating problems before they happen and having a plan in place.

With an A-list client, there's no room for error. You don't get that luxury ... a challenge really is anticipating anything that can go wrong and having a plan for when that happens.

Q. What would be an example of that?

A. I think most recently would be with a wedding in New York and the transportation not showing up on time. It was a New York wedding and it was chaotic.

You kind of adapt to what the situation is in a cool, calm, collected manner. You never show your anxiety to your client. It's always important to be in control, even if the situation is out of control.

Q. What's the biggest mistake that people make when planning an event?

A. I think the biggest mistake is they get overwhelmed right at the beginning and think they have to get everything done right away. I like to take it in steps.

I like to get the key elements in place and from there focus on what's most important in an orderly fashion so that way you're not so overwhelmed in the beginning.

Q. What's the last event you hosted at home?

Actually, I just [had a] CAbi [show]. I love fashion and it's a designer that sells directly through personal consultants.

It's like going to a Tupperware party but with fashion. ... I had a small gathering for 15 or 20 women, catered, with special wine, Italian

wine, antipasto. It was just a lot of fun. I made it an experience for my guests. For me, for any event, whether it's my own or for a client, it's about creating an experience.

Q. Have you found any trends with the celebrities you've met?

A. What's really funny being with celebrities ... [is] in my experience, you see interviews with the Julia Roberts of the world and the Sandra Bullocks of the world, and the nicer they are on camera, they actually end up being the nastiest celebrities and the most difficult ones to actually work with.

The ones that seem indifferent, not as A-level, are the nicest, really down-to-earth.

It's kind of crazy; it's the opposite. Like Ellen DeGeneres can be very difficult, but look at her. She can be super-nice on her show. ... It's something to be mindful of. If you see someone who is really nice [on TV], I wonder if they really are.

I will say of all the artists I worked with, the country artists are

by far the nicest, all the singers are really the nicest and super, super sweet, just very down-to-earth people.

Q. Tell us about Très Chic Events.

A. I founded Très Chic Events maybe a year and a half ago, officially in January 2013. ... Doing my company was a natural next evolution for me ... when events were over, I always want to do it again. They were drama ridden and I always want to do it again.

A year ago I officially formed it [and got] the website, social media in place. I was in business for three months, and within three months, I got three clients.

I'm enjoying every aspect of it; it doesn't feel like work. I'm very, very selective. I don't want to be a wedding factory.

I want to give attention to detail to clients without being pulled in so many different directions. For a new business, it's going really well. **RHL**

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