

Robyn Ashley Weddings

NYC WEDDING OFFICIANT

THE OFFICIANT'S CUT

The Wine Ceremony.

Both versions, the setup that keeps it off the floor, the taste test most couples skip, and the words the officiant says while the wine is poured.

AS SEEN IN

Tamron Hall · Brides · The Knot

FROM ROBYN'S DESK

The pour is easy. *The taste isn't.*

A couple once handed me their two wines an hour before the ceremony and admitted they had never tasted them together. We poured a splash backstage. It was rough.

We fixed it in five minutes by keeping the ceremony pour tiny and saving the real glass for the reception. No guest knew. That afternoon taught me the one thing nobody tells couples: the symbolism is gorgeous, the logistics are simple, and the taste is the part that quietly goes wrong.

So here is the whole ritual the way I run it. The setup, both versions of the script, the words the officiant carries while the couple pours, and the swaps for no alcohol or a family pour. The lines are set in large type so whoever is officiating can read them at arm's length without losing their place.

Read it once, out loud, in your own voice. Cut anything that does not sound like you. The wine is theirs. The words are yours.

Robyn

ROBYNASHLEY WEDDINGS · BROOKLYN ·
NYC



What you'll *need*.

-
- i* **Two pouring carafes, pre-filled.** One red, one white, with about three to four ounces in each. That is plenty for a clean stream and a shared sip. You do not need a full bottle apiece.
-
- ii* **One larger empty vessel.** Roughly a 750ml carafe or decanter, so the finished blend fills it most of the way. A big two-liter piece left a third full looks awkward on camera.
-
- iii* **One shared glass, or one each.** A single glass passed between them reads warmer on film.
-
- iv* **A tray or runner under the table.** Spills happen at the rim of narrow glasses, not into a roomy decanter, but a tray saves the linen either way.
-
- v* **Bottles already uncorked backstage.** The most common fumble I see is a partner fighting a cork in front of eighty people. Open them early and re-cork loosely, or pour the carafes ahead entirely.
-

ROBYN'S NOTE

Tell the photographer the pour is the shot, and ask them to be at the table *before* the couple steps up. The wine falls fast, and you only get it once.

Before the *first pour*.

— *[The couple steps to the wine table after the vows and rings. Address the guests while they get into place.]*

Before we close, **[PARTNER 1]** and **[PARTNER 2]** are going to do one last thing together, and it is the first thing they will do as a married couple.

Each of them brought a wine that means something. In a moment they will pour both into one, and what comes out cannot be poured back into what it was.

— *[Give the couple a small nod. Let them pick up their carafes.]*

ROBYN'S NOTE

This ritual adds about five minutes, and most of that is the walk and the framing. The pour and sip take under a minute, so do not rush the words to save time you are not actually spending.

The blend, *poured*.

[PARTNER 1] brings a red, the [NAME IT: the Cabernet from the restaurant where they met]. [PARTNER 2] brings a white, the [NAME IT: the wine from the vineyard they visited]. Each one came from its own place, its own story, complete on its own.

— *[The couple each pour their wine into the shared carafe. Pour slowly. Let the colors meet.]*

But today they are choosing something new. As these two become one, they can never be separated back into what they were.

ROBYN'S NOTE

Naming the actual wines is what turns a generic pour into *their* history. Get the names from the couple a week out and write them straight into the bracket.

The first thing *they share.*

That is the promise of a marriage. You do not give up who you are. You become part of something neither of you could be alone.

Wine carries the sweet and the bitter both, and so will the years ahead.

[PARTNER 1] and [PARTNER 2], may you take all of it together.

— *[One partner fills the glass, offers it, the other drinks, then returns the gesture. Keep the sip small, about an ounce, just enough to be real on camera.]*

Drink, and let this be the first thing you share as a married couple. What you have blended here, you carry forward, together and undivided.

ROBYN'S NOTE

If the taste worries you at all, a one-ounce ceremonial sip is your safety net. No guest can tell, and the real glass waits at the reception.

The sweet, then the *bitter*.

— *[Two small cups sit in front of each partner: one sweet wine, one bitter. Nothing gets blended here.]*

In front of [PARTNER 1] and [PARTNER 2] are two wines. One is sweet. One is bitter. Together they hold the truth of any shared life: there will be seasons of each, and you rarely get to choose the order they come in.

First, the sweet. Drink to the joy you already know and the joy still ahead.

— *[Both partners drink from the sweet cup.]*

Now, the bitter. Drink to the seasons that ask more of you, and choose to face them side by side.

— *[Both partners drink from the bitter cup, then join hands.]*

You have tasted both today on purpose. Take the sweet seasons and the bitter ones together, as they come, for the rest of your lives.

Keep it from *tasting awful*.

Test two or three combinations at home, weeks ahead. The first try is rarely the keeper, so do not taste once and commit.

Borrow from a commercial blend. If a winery already sells a red-white blend the couple likes, those grapes are proven to play together.

For a rosé color, pour more white than red. Red pigment is strong. An even split gives a muddy light red. Start around two parts white to one part red, and reach for a lighter red like Pinot Noir or Gamay over an inky Cabernet or Malbec.

ROBYN'S NOTE

Pick wines that mean something over wines that win awards. The red from a first date will say more at the altar than anything a sommelier hands you.

Without the *alcohol*.

Swap in grape juice, sparkling cider, non-alcoholic wine, or even ginger beer. The symbolism lives in the pouring and the sharing, and the script does not change a word.

Taste-test the swap the same way. Some non-alcoholic reds run sweet and clash with a dry one, so try the combo at home first.

Do not pour two fizzy options together. Two sparkling pours into one vessel can foam right over the rim mid-ritual.

Watch the color. Dark grape juice can read as one solid block on camera and hide the blend. A lighter juice lets the colors actually mix in view.

The family *pour*.

— *[A representative from each side stands ready with their own wine. Use this only after the couple's own pour, so theirs stays the centerpiece.]*

This wine carries more than two people. It carries two families, and today those families are joined too.

— *[Invite one representative from each side to pour their wine into the blend.]*

From **[FAMILY 1]** and from **[FAMILY 2]**, you each add your own.

What was poured by these two, you make fuller still.

— *[The parents or representatives may take a small sip from the blend to mark the joining, then step back.]*

ROBYN'S NOTE

This one is a gift for blended and multicultural weddings. Keep it to one representative per side, or the line at the table grows and the moment loses its shape.

If it slips, *keep moving.*

If a pour splashes or runs over. Say, "Wine on the table is good luck where I come from," smile, and carry on. The room follows your tone, so keep it light.

If the blend looks muddy on camera. Say nothing about the color. Move straight to the share and the words. Only you and the couple ever knew what shade it was supposed to be.

If a partner forgets which carafe is theirs. Step in quietly and hand it to them. Nobody in the seats has the order, and a calm handoff reads as part of the ritual.

ROBYN'S NOTE

The difference between a first-timer and a pro is not that the pro never fumbles. It is that the pro has a warm line ready, says it, and keeps the moment moving.

Three things *before you read it aloud.*

This is one ritual, marked the way I would mark my own. Treat it as a working draft and it starts sounding like the room it is read in.

i

Read it out loud, all the way through, once.

Whoever is officiating reads it start to finish in their own voice, alone in a room. Mark every line that does not sound like them, then rewrite it or cut it.

ii

Fill every bracket a week out, not on the day.

Get the wine names and the couple's details in pencil first, then type the final and print two copies on cardstock. The day-of script has no [BRACKET] left in it.

iii

Highlight the cues in a second color.

Every italic note here, the slow pour, the small sip, the camera angle, is the part officiants forget under pressure. Mark them so the eye catches them at a glance.

"We did the wine blend and it was the moment everyone talked about after. Having the words written out, with the little stage cues, is the only reason it felt smooth instead of fussy."

MAYA & THEO · MARRIED IN THE HUDSON VALLEY, 2025

IF THIS RITUAL IS DOING ITS JOB

Every ritual, *not just the wine.*

This is one ritual, both versions, with the cues I use. The Couple's Ceremony Kit has the wine ceremony plus the family-pour variation and fifteen other rituals: candle, sand, handfasting, and the rest. Each one comes with the words to say, the delivery cues, and a setup checklist so nothing gets fumbled on the day.

\$79

Open the Ceremony Kit →

ONE-TIME PAYMENT · LIFETIME ACCESS · 48-HOUR MONEY-BACK

Where this *came from*.

PULLED FROM

The wine ceremony I have run at weddings across NYC and the Hudson Valley, marked with the cues I actually use. The setup is field-tested over *more than 300 ceremonies*.

WHAT IS IN THE KIT

Both wine versions, the family-pour variation, and fifteen other rituals, each with delivery cues and a setup checklist. All of it in *the Couple's Ceremony Kit*.

USE THIS FREELY

Print it, mark it up, read it at the rehearsal, hand a copy to whoever is standing up front.

IF YOU RUN ONE

Email me. I read every one.
hello@robynashleyweddings.com.

*Marked from a working ritual, with the cues I read from
at the wine table.*

*About this
ritual, and
where it has
been poured.*