

[brides party people]



THE INNOVATOR "UNEXPECTED THINGS CAN BE REALLY SPECIAL," SAYS SUSIE COELHO, WHO FOUND HER DREAM WEDDING DRESS AT AN ANTIQUES STORE FOR \$50.

YOU MIGHT THINK it takes a year to plan a wedding, but lifestyle expert Susie Coelho swears that sometimes the best events are the most spontaneous ones. (She pulled together her own nuptials in Aspen in just two weeks.) "The same philosophy applies to weddings as to any other party," says Susie, whose new book, *Style Your Dream Wedding* (Thomas Nelson Publishers), hits store shelves in February. "Brides should look at it as simply the best party they've ever thrown." In Susie Land, this concept doesn't necessarily require big bucks: She once created an elegant altar using an old table set on apple crates, draped in fabric, and topped with Casablanca lilies, candles, and lemon leaves. "Every choice should convey a sense of who you are." —Hillary Quinn



PUNCH IT UP FIND A DELICIOUS SPECIALTY INGREDIENT—LIKE WATERMELON PUREE—THAT CAN BE INCORPORATED IN BOTH ALCOHOLIC AND NON-ALCOHOLIC DRINKS.



TAKE THE CAKE A UNIQUE TOPPER—LIKE THIS VINTAGE PEZ-DISPENSER COUPLE—IS A PLAYFUL ALTERNATIVE TO FRESH FLOWERS OR TRADITIONAL FIGURINES.

FAN CLUB BEAT THE HEAT AT OUTDOOR NUPTIALS WITH A PAPER FAN THAT DOUBLES AS A PROGRAM. FAN, LARRY B. NEWMAN PRINTING COMPANY.

SUSIE'S TAKEAWAY TIPS

"At the most fun parties, everyone interacts and gets involved: Pass a guest book like a chain letter; initiate a quiz where tables compete against one another; mix up the cliques."

"If you want to save money on food, skip the classic wedding caterer and hire someone who's made his name doing one type of food—like a great barbecuer or a Mexican chef."

Turn to Shopping Guide

(Continued on page 172) >>>

COUNTRY CHIC PERCHING A NAME TAG ON A PIPPIN APPLE IS A TWIST ON THE CLASSIC PLACE CARD. CALLIGRAPHY, MARCY ROBINSON.



SUSIE COELHO

Susie Coelho Enterprises | La Canada, CA



HEADS UP FOR BRIDES-MAIDS, SUSIE PREFERS EUROPEAN-STYLE HEAD WREATHS TO CLASSIC BOUQUETS. GERBERA DAISIES HEAD WREATH, BILL'S FLOWER MARKET, NYC.





COMING FULL CIRCLE "I GET VERY CLOSE TO MY FAMILIES," SAYS KATE. "I'VE HELPED PEOPLE PLAN A BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR THEIR DAUGHTER, HER PROM, AND, EVENTUALLY, HER WEDDING."

THEY SAY EVERY GREAT WEDDING planner is a jack-of-all-trades. Party pro Kate Edmonds figured out her career destiny while working in her native England...as a nurse. "I found myself organizing tea parties for my elderly patients," she says. "Next thing you know, I was arranging hospital toga parties, fund-raisers, and staff celebrations." Eventually, Kate left medicine and the U.K. and moved to the U.S. to launch a career in special events—which now includes planning some of New York's swankiest weddings. But no matter how large the budget or guest list, Kate's goal is to create an intimate affair: "I try to put together an event that represents the couple as a family for the very first time. That gives me enormous satisfaction." —Hillary Quinn



PUNCH IT UP A SIMPLE PARTY BECOMES A FASHION-FORWARD STATEMENT WHEN YOU BREAK OUT A BOLD PALETTE FOR THE TABLE LINENS AND FLOWERS.



WILD ORCHID AN EXOTIC FLOWER TURNS A COOL COCKTAIL—LIKE THIS MIX OF PEAR VODKA, WHITE GRAPE JUICE, AND LIME—INTO SOMETHING HOT. GLASS, KIM SEYBERT.

KATE'S TAKEAWAY TIPS

"If you're having favors, choose something that won't just gather dust. It can be as simple as a decorated cookie or as extravagant as an embroidered pashmina shawl."

"Make a basic cake seem more elaborate by serving each piece on an oversize plate, accompanied by sliced fruits and crème fraîche. It makes for a grander presentation."



VERY INVITING A LUXE INVITATION SETS THE TONE FOR A GRAND PARTY. HERE, SUE COE DESIGNS' BOOKLET-STYLE INVITE EMBRACES AN ASIAN LOOK.

KATE EDMONDS

Kate Edmonds Events | NYC

UNDER COVER SEARCHING FOR A VERSATILE VENUE? KATE LIKES A TENT: "YOU'RE NOT LOCKED INTO THE LOOK OF ONE ROOM AND YOU CAN CUSTOMIZE IT ANY WAY YOU LIKE."



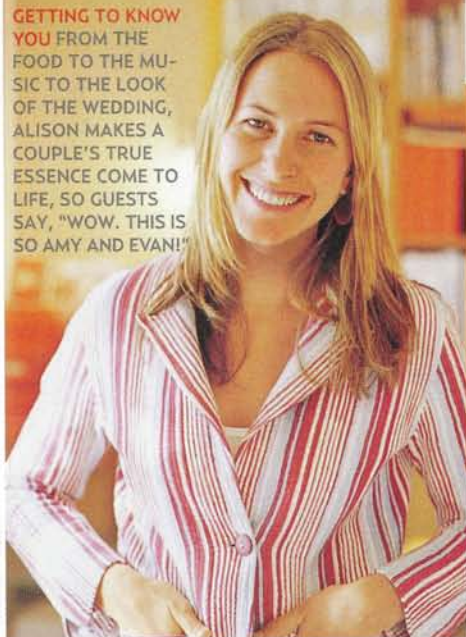
FOOT NOTE HER FAVE FOR GROOMS: VELVET DRESS SLIPPERS. "THEY ARE COMFORTABLE EVEN AFTER A FULL NIGHT OF DANCING." SLIPPERS, STUBBS AND WOOTTON.



Turn to Shopping Guide

[brides party people]

GETTING TO KNOW YOU FROM THE FOOD TO THE MUSIC TO THE LOOK OF THE WEDDING, ALISON MAKES A COUPLE'S TRUE ESSENCE COME TO LIFE, SO GUESTS SAY, "WOW. THIS IS SO AMY AND EVAN!"



ALISON HOTCHKISS

Alison Events | San Francisco

BIRDS OF A FEATHER FRESH FLOWERS ARE FINE AND DANDY, BUT ALISON LOVES THE UNEXPECTED FLOURISH OF ADDING PEACOCK FEATHERS TO A BRIDAL BOUQUET. "THEY'RE COLORFUL, WHIMSICAL, AND FUN!"

FEELING HOT, HOT, HOT

COORDINATING A SPECIAL COCKTAIL WITH THE SEASON IS ONE OF ALISON'S FAVORITE MOVES: IN WINTER, SHE'S ALL ABOUT THE HOT TODDY—A WARMING BREW OF RUM, HONEY, AND LEMON.



DESTINATION WEDDINGS MAY BE the hottest thing, but for Alison Hotchkiss, who's planned nuptials as far away as Costa Rica and Scotland, exotic locales are all in a day's work. "I'm an adventurer at heart," says this surfer/hiker/world traveler. "I like to guide my clients to expand what they can imagine is possible for their weddings." She's also adept at rolling with the punches: When custom-made linens didn't arrive in time for a Hawaiian wedding, Alison redesigned the look of the entire event the day before—centerpieces, flowers, the works—and watched the tropical love-fest unfold with perfect precision.—Hillary Quinn



WRITE ON! TO KEEP YOUNG GUESTS BUSY, SHE STOCKS THE KIDDIE TABLES WITH CRAYONS AND USES DRAWING PAPER IN LIEU OF LINENS.

TAKE NOTE A BIG FAN OF RECYCLED MATERIALS, ALISON OFTEN TURNS TO THE SAN FRANCISCO GRAPHICS HOUSE PAN-CAKE AND FRANKS FOR THEIR GREEN-MINDED INVITATIONS AND ARTFUL CARD DESIGNS. "THEY EVEN USE ORGANIC INK!"



NUMBER-ONE TRICK FOR THIS CHARMING REHEARSAL DINNER, ALISON SHOWCASED THE BRIDE'S FLEA-MARKET FIND OF ANTIQUE METAL NUMBERS BY NESTLING THEM IN LAUREL WREATHS AT A CORNER OF EACH TABLE.

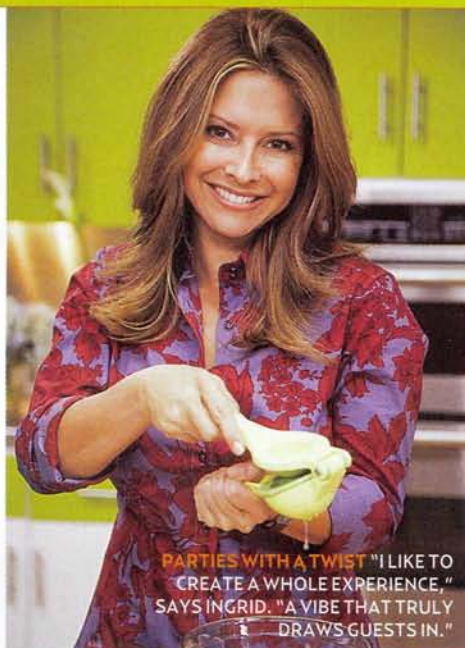
ALISON'S TAKEAWAY TIPS

"Shake up the escort-card table—it sets the tone for the event: Hang name cards from a trellis, tuck them into shallow bowls of M & M's in your color scheme, or toothpick them to apples."

"Lighting is the one area not to skimp on—even if you're on a budget. Lots of brides think it's frivolous, but spotlighting dark corners and using dimmers adds instant ambience to a party."

Turn to Shopping Guide

[brides party people]



PARTIES WITH A TWIST "I LIKE TO CREATE A WHOLE EXPERIENCE," SAYS INGRID. "A VIBE THAT TRULY DRAWS GUESTS IN."

AT THE AGE OF FIVE, she was standing on a kitchen stool stirring pots with her mother. These days, Food Network star Ingrid Hoffmann is still stirring things up with an unusual approach to entertaining—first developing a visual theme, then constructing the menu. "I think up the colors and then work in the food," explains Ingrid, whose Latin-flavored cookbook *Simply Delicioso* (Clarkson Potter) hit store shelves in February. Case in point: She recently encouraged a friend to throw an Indian-style wedding, with traditional music, exotic food—even a "Bombay chic" dress code. "When you set a theme for entertaining, it makes all your choices easier and helps you create a fantasy that will get everyone into the spirit of the day." —Hillary Quinn



GOOD TO GO THE SWEETEST, MOST MEMORABLE FAVORS CAN BE HOME-BAKED TREATS LIKE THESE ALFAJORES, DULCE DE LECHE AND SHORTBREAD SANDWICHES.



OFF WHITE TRADE TRADITIONAL WEDDING BLOOMS FOR MORE VIBRANT PICKS—LIKE BRILLIANT ORANGE CALLA LILIES. "I LOVE AN INFUSION OF COLOR," SAYS INGRID.

INGRID HOFFMANN

Celebrity chef and author | Miami, FL

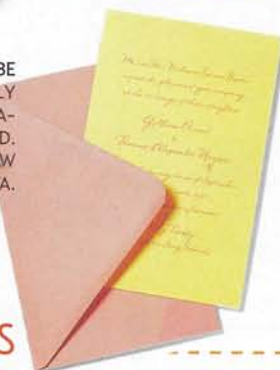


SHAKE IT UP A FRUITY GUANABANA MOJITO (MINT, LIME, RUM, SODA, AND GUANABANA NECTAR) OFFERS A TASTY UPDATE ON THE COSMO. GLASS, TARGET.

HUMBLE PIE SIMPLE YET ELEGANT MEAT-FILLED EMPANADAS, A LATIN FAVORITE, PUT A SAVORY SOUTH AMERICAN SPIN ON COCKTAIL NIBBLES.



NEON NOTES "DON'T BE AFRAID TO ADD LIVELY COLORS TO YOUR INVITATION," URGES INGRID. CORAL AND YELLOW INVITATION, MIA CARTA.



INGRID'S TAKEAWAY TIPS

"For dessert, set up a station of churros—crispy doughnut-like pastries—with a variety of sauces, such as chocolate and butterscotch. Interactive experiences get people talking."

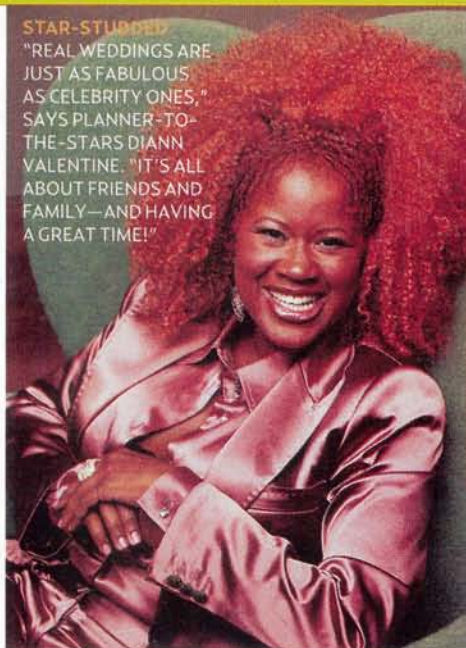
"Serve inexpensive comfort food, like arroz con pollo [Spanish chicken and rice], in cool little ramekins with mini spoons, and everyone will think they're eating a special hors d'oeuvre!"

Turn to Shopping Guide

[brides party people]

STAR-STUBBED

"REAL WEDDINGS ARE JUST AS FABULOUS AS CELEBRITY ONES," SAYS PLANNER-TO-THE-STARS DIANN VALENTINE. "IT'S ALL ABOUT FRIENDS AND FAMILY—AND HAVING A GREAT TIME!"



DIANN VALENTINE

DR Valentine & Associates | Los Angeles

DIANN VALENTINE'S PASSION for planning started early—when she was high-school senior-class president, to be exact. "I was the one who would always say, 'Let's not do a regular banner—let's do it extra-large and paint it a wild color!'" she recalls. So when a cousin asked if Diann would pitch in as her wedding planner, the ambitious student jumped in, juggling florist and caterer meetings with homework assignments. "Eventually, my name grew, and I was able to pay my way through college," says Diann, who's now a favorite among sports stars and Hollywood celebrities (she planned Usher's wedding last fall). But whether the budget is lean or lavish, the goal is always the same: "to create a beautiful celebration that honors love." Now, that's passion. —Hillary Quinn

BRILLIANT! SUSPEND TEA LIGHTS FROM BRANCHES WITH SATINY RIBBON. THE ROMANTIC FLICKER FROM THESE MINI LUMINARIES IS SUBTLER THAN TRADITIONAL PILLAR CANDLES. TEA LIGHTS, 100CANDLES.COM.



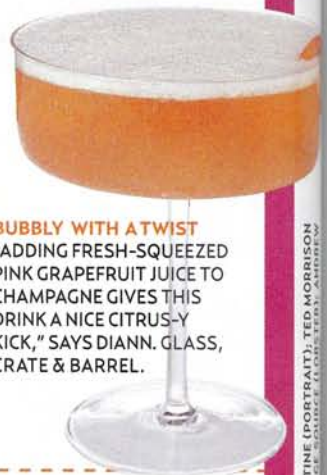
SOFT TOUCH DECORATIVE PILLOWS (LIKE THESE, FROM JONATHAN ADLER) TURN A LOUNGE-STYLE RECEPTION INTO A COZY AND INVITING VENUE. "IT'S A SIMPLE WAY TO ADD A POP OF COLOR WITHOUT AN EXPENSIVE INVESTMENT."



FISH FRY DIANN PUTS A TWIST ON LOBSTER BY DEEP-FRYING THE TAIL MEAT, WHICH LOCKS IN THE SWEETNESS AND FLAVOR OF THIS DINNER INDULGENCE.



BUBBLY WITH A TWIST "ADDING FRESH-SQUEEZED PINK GRAPEFRUIT JUICE TO CHAMPAGNE GIVES THIS DRINK A NICE CITRUS-Y KICK," SAYS DIANN. GLASS, CRATE & BARREL.



SWEET! SCATTER TEMPTING TREATS (LIKE BLACK-AND-WHITE COOKIES) ON COCKTAIL TABLES; GUESTS CAN NIBBLE AT WHIM WITHOUT WAITING FOR THE BUFFET LINE.



DIANN'S TAKEAWAY TIPS

"Keep things interactive throughout your party to engage guests from start to finish: Try an appetizer buffet, a photo booth, an ice-cream sundae bar, or a cartoon artist."

"Make over your dance floor by creating an 'ocean' using white flooring, and rotating blue and green LED lights in flame patterns—the projected image looks like seaweed!"

Turn to Shopping Guide

[brides party people]



"Each little element of a wedding lets your guests know that 'this evening is going to be different.'"

CARLA RUBEN

>> CREATIVE EDGE PARTIES | NYC

WHEN OPERA-SINGER-turned-wedding-planner Carla Ruben talks about how she's going to orchestrate an event, it's music to a bride's ears. That's because this pro treats every wedding as a performance. "It's like you're opening and closing a show in one night," says Carla. Take her approach to entertainment: She might start with four classical guitarists during pre-ceremony cocktails, segue to a cappella singers for the vows, then introduce a steel-drum band that ramps up as the party gets going. "You don't want to give guests everything at once. It's more fun to keep wowing them." —Hillary Quinn

SO INVITING A modern color scheme like fuchsia and gray puts a novel spin on table stationery. Number card and place card, Mountaincow.



IT'S A DRAW The kiddie table becomes Creativity Central when you offer art supplies like colorful chalk and miniature chalkboards.



GUEST BOOK REDUX Display notes penned by guests with words that define both of you. Board, Storage Sense by Axis Imex.



BASKET CASE Serve appetizers in a festive way—like hand-rolled dim sum in mini bamboo steamers with a trio of Asian dipping sauces.



CARLA'S PRESENTATION TIPS

WITH A CLEVER DELIVERY, inexpensive food can become a memorable appetizer, such as boneless chicken wings skewered on celery and accompanied by Gorgonzola sauce.

USE COLOR to pump up the appeal of a buffet: Even white rice becomes beautiful when presented in a royal blue bowl.

TO IDENTIFY HORS D'OEUVRES, set them on small black chalkboards with the name of the item written beside them.

Turn to Shopping Guide

[brides party people]



ART SMART "ORCHESTRATING A FULL-BLOWN PARTY FEELS SO MUCH MORE SATISFYING THAN BEING ALONE IN A STUDIO AND CREATING A WALL PIECE," SAYS FORMER PAINTER DAVID STARK.

DAVID STARK'S original plan was to become a painter. But when this starving artist needed to pay the bills, he took a job working with flowers; before long, he added food and design to the mix, finally starting his own event-planning firm. This creative planner once built an entire Moroccan village—from scratch—for a fantasy wedding weekend on an East Hampton, New York, estate. The property was big but isolated, and hotel rooms were nonexistent. "We erected a grand tent within a village of fully furnished sleeping tents, a town square, and even bathing facilities so guests could stay on the property all weekend." The bridal couple's response? Sold!—*Hillary Quinn*



GRAND CENTRAL A LAVISH BAR IN THE CENTER OF THE ROOM PROVIDES A DRAMATIC FOCAL POINT—AND EASY COCKTAIL ACCESS FROM ALL SIDES.

CAKE TALK IT'S ALL IN THE DETAILS: DAVID GIVES A HIGH FIVE TO DECORATING CUP-CAKES WITH SUGARED SEASHELLS FOR A BEACH MOTIF. CUP-CAKES AND SHELLS, CONFETTI CAKES.



DAVID STARK

David Stark Design and Production | Brooklyn

GOOD FORTUNE "A NAPKIN FOLD MAKES A SPLASH WITH MINIMAL INVESTMENT. BUT NEVER STUFF IT INTO THE WINEGLASS—IT SHOULD BE A NICE DETAIL, NOT THE CENTERPIECE!"



MIDDLE MANAGEMENT A STILL LIFE INCORPORATING VASES, CANDLES, AND COLLECTIBLES (LIKE THESE FROM TWO'S COMPANY) CREATES A PERSONAL, ECLECTIC ARRANGEMENT.



SOUND OF MUSIC DAVID'S TRICK TO GET GUESTS INVOLVED IN THE CEREMONY? HAND EVERYONE BELLS TO RING IN UNISON AS THE BRIDAL PARTY MARCHES DOWN THE AISLE.

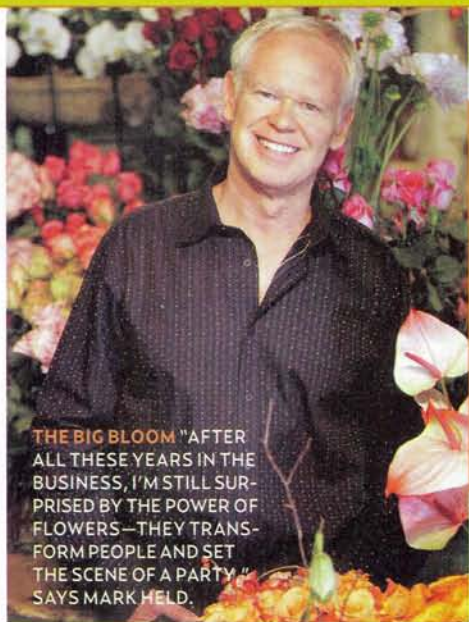


DAVID'S TAKEAWAY TIPS

"Your parents, or whoever the hosts are, play a very big role in a successful wedding. They should introduce guests to each other and make a point to go from table to table."

"Hand out personalized favors with a card telling the story of your first meeting—e.g., coffee beans if you met in a coffee shop. Guests love to be 'brought in' in such an intimate way."

Turn to Shopping Guide



THE BIG BLOOM "AFTER ALL THESE YEARS IN THE BUSINESS, I'M STILL SURPRISED BY THE POWER OF FLOWERS—THEY TRANSFORM PEOPLE AND SET THE SCENE OF A PARTY," SAYS MARK HELD.

FLORIST-TO-THE-STARS Mark Held (most recently of the DeGeneres/de Rossi wedding) claims he fell into the business "by accident": At the age of eight, Mark created centerpieces for his summer camp's mess hall by gathering "interesting" leaves splashed with streaks of red. "The camp director took one look and told me I'd used poison ivy," he recalls with a chuckle. "What can I say? They were pretty!" These days, when brides get the itch for extraordinary flowers, Mark, co-author of *Fabulous Parties* (Ryland, Peters & Small), is who they call. Whether he's trucking 150,000 roses to an out-of-state wedding, or securing magnolia leaves to an alfresco tablecloth, his mission is simple: "Surround people with beautiful flowers and they will be happy." —Hillary Quinn



ALL FOR FALL RUSTIC ARRANGEMENTS OF ROSES, RANUNCULUS, AND YELLOW-TIPPED TULIPS NESTLE ALONGSIDE PLATTERS OF GOLDEN KUMQUATS AT AN AUTUMN WEDDING FEAST.

MARK HELD

Mark's Garden | Los Angeles

A LAVISH LAPEL AN UPDATE ON THE WHITE-ROSE BOUTONNIERE: SEVERAL VIBRANT BLOOMS NEATLY BUNDLED IN GREENERY, WHICH TAKES THE PLACE OF FLORIST'S TAPE.



HANG IN THERE FOR OUTDOOR AMBIENCE, LUSH HYDRANGEAS IN GLASS LANTERNS FLOAT DREAMILY FROM TREE LIMBS.



IN THE DRINK PINK LEMONADE STEEPED WITH HIBISCUS AND SPRIGS OF LAVENDER GETS A GRAND GARNISH OF THE FRAGRANT HERB. GLASS, JULISKA.COM.



CURVY CUTIES SCULPTURAL CALLA LILY PETALS HUG GLASS VOTIVES (FROM JAMALI GARDEN.COM), SERVING AS BOTH FLORAL ARRANGEMENT AND LIGHTING.



MARK'S TAKEAWAY TIPS

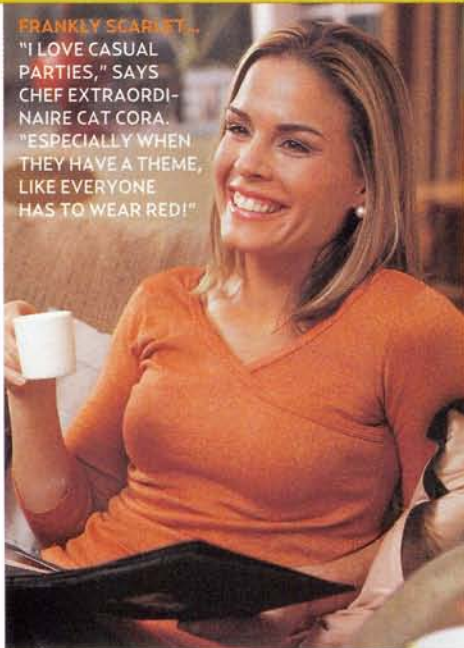
"Flowers can actually define your event: White roses in crystal are elegant; sunflowers in bright pots are fun and casual; one calla lily in a black container is edgy and clubby."

"If you're on a budget, avoid cheaper versions of traditionally expensive arrangements. Instead, make a wonderful centerpiece out of crisp philodendron leaves and candles."

Turn to Shopping Guide

[brides party people]

FRANKLY SCARLET...
"I LOVE CASUAL PARTIES," SAYS CHEF EXTRAORDINAIRE CAT CORA. "ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY HAVE A THEME, LIKE EVERYONE HAS TO WEAR RED!"



CAT CORA

Celebrity chef | Santa Barbara, CA

A COOL IDEA TO HIGHLIGHT THE LAID-BACK SPIRIT OF A BEACH WEDDING, CAT LOVES SETTING OUT GALVANIZED BUCKETS STOCKED WITH ICE-COLD BOTTLES OF BREW. "PEOPLE ALWAYS REMEMBER THE LITTLE TOUCHES," SHE SAYS.



Bryan Piper

FOR SHORE WIRE-ART IN SEASHELL SHAPES (FROM BEACHCOMBERBRIDE.COM) MULTITASKS AS TABLE DECOR AND PLACE-CARD HOLDERS—A PERFECT MARRIAGE OF FORM AND FUNCTION.

SAY THE WORDS "IRON CHEF" and you may think of Ginsu-wielding guys in satin pajamas. But Cat Cora, the first female Iron Chef in Food Network history, possesses not a Ginsu nor satin pjs but a serious interest in exceptional food. These days, Cat is drawn to the festive but casual fare she showcases in her new book, *Cooking From the Hip*—inventive dishes that are perfect for a playful yet romantic reception on the beach, her favorite wedding venue. From sand pit-baked lobsters dripping with wasabi butter to mojitos topped with sugarcane stirrers, this formidable challenger—who blends French, California, and Greek cuisine—is all about wowing her guests. A win-win proposition. —Hillary Quinn



FAVORS WITH FLAIR TRADE TIRED GIVEAWAYS FOR SPORTY MONOGRAMMED TOTES (TRY L.L. BEAN); THEY'RE SURE TO MAKE WAVES WITH YOUR WEDDING GUESTS.



TAKE IT FROM THE KING A FAN OF CLASSIC BALLADS, CAT OFFERS UP ELVIS'S "LOVE ME TENDER" AS HER GO-TO CHOICE FOR THE FIRST DANCE.

CAT'S TAKEAWAY TIPS

"Shake things up by putting a new spin on party favorites, like trading traditional sushi for chicken-and-mango-filled rolls, or serving gazpacho made with watermelon."

"Go for detail: Superior plating and garnishes—like a beautiful platter, a sprig of chervil, or a colorful slice of citrus—can turn the simplest dishes into yowza!"

Turn to Shopping Guide

[brides party people]



"FANTASY LAND WEDDINGS ARE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PARTIES YOU CAN THROW," SAYS JILL GORDON.

AS A CHILD, JILL GORDON SPENT summer weekends in the exclusive New York beach community of East Hampton. "Mom was a fabulous entertainer. We'd go to five different farm stands just to put together one salad," says Jill, who, after an eight-year stint at a catering company, launched an event-planning business. Her reputation as an all-around navigator in the planning process was in evidence recently when she masterminded a Gatsby-style wedding weekend for 450 guests. The event included a clambake, a tennis match, and a Tuscan brunch. "Most of the time, you just throw a party to have fun," says Jill, "but a wedding is the one time when people want to express who they are. It's my job to help make that happen." —Hillary Quinn



INSIDE OUT DON'T HAVE TREES? IMPROVISE! LOFTY TENT POLES WRAPPED WITH TWISTED BARK AND LUSH LEAVES BRING A FORESTY FEEL TO A RECEPTION TENT.

JILL GORDON

Jill Gordon Celebrate | East Hampton, NY

MAKES SCENTS A LAVENDER BOUQUET (FROM SPLENDID PALATE) WITH A CUSTOM TAG IS A SPIFFY ESCORT CARD. RIBBON, MIDORI. CALLIGRAPHY, NAN DELUCA.



PRETTY PETALS INSTEAD OF A TRADITIONAL VEIL OR TIARA, A SINGLE BLOSSOM ADDS A FRESH, UNEXPECTED TOUCH AT A GARDEN CEREMONY.



PICTURE THIS JILL'S FAVORITE INVITATIONS FEATURE A PERSONAL IMAGE. HERE, A PHOTO OF GRASS TAKEN BY THE BRIDE WAS THE INSPIRATION FOR A LETTERPRESS CARD BY MODERN PRESS.



BRIGHT IDEA AFTER DARK, JILL CREATES FAIRYLIKE LIGHTING BY HANGING RUSTIC KIVBELE COPPER LANTERNS FROM TREES, AND LINING THEM UP TO DEFINE PATHWAYS. CANDLE, COLONIAL CANDLE.

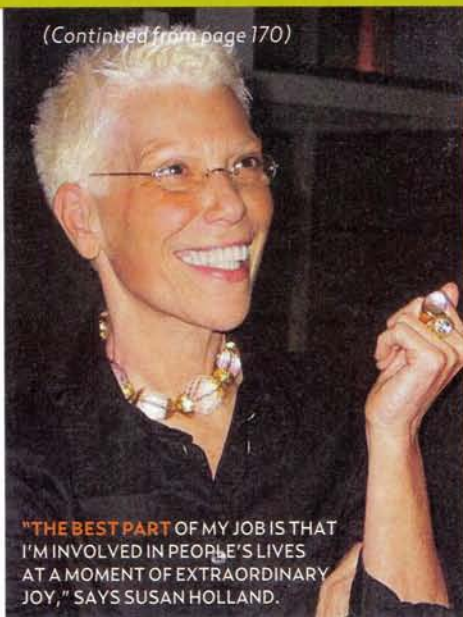
JILL'S TAKEAWAY TIPS

"If you're wearing an heirloom veil or gown, create a display of wedding photographs at the reception to show guests the family history of your vintage piece through the years."

"For an inexpensive wedding canopy, cover an arch completely with baby's breath. It creates a wonderful puff of dreamy romance and defines the space without pricey flowers."

Turn to Shopping Guide

(Continued from page 170)

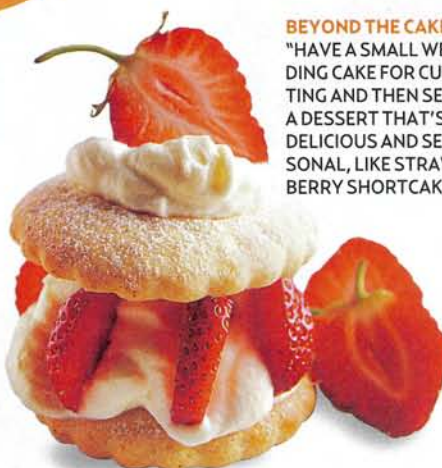


"THE BEST PART OF MY JOB IS THAT I'M INVOLVED IN PEOPLE'S LIVES AT A MOMENT OF EXTRAORDINARY JOY," SAYS SUSAN HOLLAND.

WHEN YOU'VE PLANNED more than 500 weddings over the course of your career, you might worry about keeping things fresh. Not Susan Holland, who prides herself on pulling a rabbit out of a hat for each and every bride. "It's just like a teacher who has been teaching the same subject for many years—if you really find the soul of your subject, you can create something new," says this former artist. These days, Susan enjoys producing festive, interactive "experiences," like fondue dinners for several hundred, or having Pied Piper-like street performers lead wedding guests to a tucked-away ceremony site. "I take enormous pleasure when a bride says, 'Now that I've hired you, I can start looking forward to my wedding.'" Let the fun begin! —Hillary Quinn

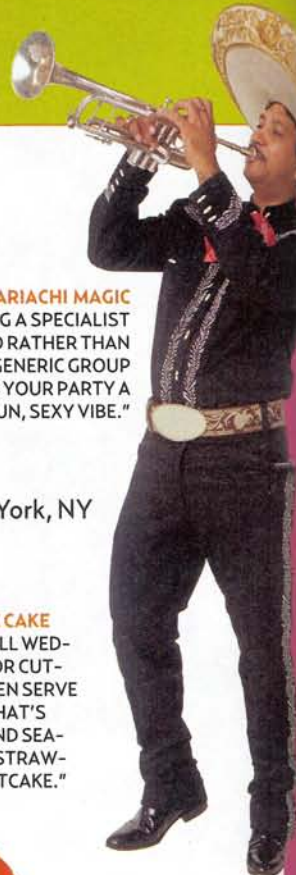


FLYING HIGH SUSPEND A FLOCK OF DELICATE FAUX BUTTERFLIES OVER-HEAD TO CREATE A ROMANTIC CEREMONY CANOPY.



BEYOND THE CAKE "HAVE A SMALL WEDDING CAKE FOR CUTTING AND THEN SERVE A DESSERT THAT'S DELICIOUS AND SEASONAL, LIKE STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE."

KNOT! DESIGNATE RESERVED PEWS WITH SIMPLE SILK CORDING TIED INTO CELTIC LOVE KNOTS. "THEY'RE CLEAN AND BEAUTIFUL."



MARIACHI MAGIC HIRING A SPECIALIST BAND RATHER THAN A GENERIC GROUP GIVES YOUR PARTY A "FUN, SEXY VIBE."

SUSAN HOLLAND

Susan Holland & Company | New York, NY

HOW HANDY LONG VELVET OR SATIN GLOVES LEND ELEGANCE TO A MAID'S ENSEMBLE. GLOVES, CAROLINA AMATO.



SUSAN'S TAKEAWAY TIPS

One way to trim the budget is to skip the sit-down dinner and do a series of unexpected, delicious food bars, like dim sum, tempura, antipasto, or even Belgian French fries.

"Decorating with a single element, like a color, can override a drab room—try hundreds of white candles, white peonies, white linens, and snowy ribbons suspended from the ceiling."

Turn to Shopping Guide

[brides party people]

(Continued from page 144)

HONOR ROLL "IT'S A PRIVILEGE TO WORK CLOSELY WITH CLIENTS ON A DAY THAT HAS SUCH TREMENDOUS MEANING TO THEM. MY STANDARD IS TO SURPASS EVERYONE'S EXPECTATIONS," SAYS JUNG.

SIT DOWN FOR A CONSULTATION with Jung Lee and you might be surprised at her questions: This clever New Yorker will ask you about your favorite hotels, shops, clothing brands, restaurants, even your fantasy home. "I tend to almost deconstruct people to build their perfect wedding," she explains. The technique worked for one unhappy bride who was being forced to have a New York City ceremony for 300, but who really wanted an intimate wedding in the Italian countryside. By bringing in antique rugs, red votives, and an angelic boys' choir, Jung gave the church an old European feel; at the reception, she had all 300 guests sit at one long banquet table, a Puccini opera playing in the background. The bride's reaction? *Bellissimo!* —Hillary Quinn



BRANCHING OUT GRAND BOUQUETS OF CRIMSON WARM UP THIS CAVERNOUS LOFT WEDDING. "THEY REACHED UP ALMOST TO THE CEILING," RECALLS JUNG, WHO CREATED THE MAGICAL WINTER SCENE.

IT'S A WRAP JUNG IS PASSIONATE ABOUT BOUQUETS GATHERED IN "GREAT RIBBON TREATMENTS" THAT PICK UP THE TEXTURE OF THE BRIDE'S GOWN. "CONSIDER IT ONE OF YOUR ACCESSORIES."



JUNG LEE

Fête | New York City

GRACE NOTE

INVITATIONS ARE THE FIRST GLIMPSE INTO YOUR WEDDING, SO ZERO IN ON DISTINCTIVE DETAILS, LIKE VINTAGE-STYLE STAMPS AND ELEGANT PAPER.



WITH THIS RING

"A BOY SHOULD LOOK LIKE A BOY—NOT LIKE A MAN!" SAYS JUNG, WHO STEERS CLEAR OF TUXES ON TYKES IN FAVOR OF SHORTS WITH KNEE SOCKS.



A BIT OF BUBBLY FORGET MOJITOS: A TRADITIONAL COCKTAIL, LIKE THE KIR ROYALE—A SPARKLING COMBO OF CHAMPAGNE AND CREME DE CASSIS—IS THE TOP CHOICE FOR SUMMER WEDDINGS.



JUNG'S TAKEAWAY TIPS

"The 'wow' factor of amazing decor fades after thirty minutes. But if you keep injecting little surprises throughout your reception, guests will be enthralled until the very end."

"You can turn the getting-ready hour into a beautiful time for the bride and her bridesmaids by playing great background music, serving tea sandwiches, and lighting scented candles."

Turn to Shopping Guide

(Continued from page 162)



FEEDBACK ON THE FLY
"I LOVE WHEN THE BRIDE CALLS US FROM THE AIRPORT THE NEXT DAY AND SAYS, 'YOU TOTALLY CAPTURED WHAT WAS IN MY HEAD!'"

IT STARTED INNOCENTLY ENOUGH. Niki Delacueva (who loved to decorate) and her husband, Rene (who loved to cook), escaped from their day jobs by throwing weekend dinners with great food and clever tablescapes. Eventually, guests began to ask for help in planning their own parties, and a business was born. Theirs is a break-all-the-rules style: When two artists were looking for "a gritty, edgy wedding location," Niki found a shoe warehouse in an ungentrified L.A. area. "It was floor-to-ceiling cardboard boxes and packing materials. But we carved a path to the freight elevator with rose petals and hurricane lamps," she says. "When guests got to the rooftop ceremony, they were treated to an insane panoramic view!" Edgy—and romantic.—*Hillary Quinn*



TRAY CHIC EVOKE AN ELEGANT, OLD-HOLLYWOOD SPIRIT BY OFFERING AFTER-DINNER SCOTCH AND CIGARS FROM A VINTAGE BAR CART.

NIKI DELACUEVA

R. Jack Balthazar Events | South Pasadena, CA



PERSONAL PETALS "WE LOVE TO PLACE PETITE FLOWER ARRANGEMENTS AT EACH PLACE SETTING," SAYS NIKI. (TRY BRIGHT BUD VASES.) "THE LOOK IS DRAMATIC, AND GUESTS CAN TAKE THEM HOME AS A FAVOR."

MEN'S CLUB

PERSONALIZE THE BOU-TONNIERES WITH A MEANINGFUL FLOWER OR A SPECIAL FABRIC THAT REFLECTS YOU AND YOUR FAMILY—HERE, NIKI ADDED A TINY ASIAN FAN.



ECLECTIC CHAIRS

IN LIEU OF STANDARD SEATING, FLANK THE AISLE WITH COMFY LOUNGES, CHAISES, OR BENCHES FOR A MORE RELAXED CEREMONY STYLE.



PLAYING DRESS-UP

SET UP A "PLAY" TENT FOR ANTSY YOUNG GUESTS WITH TRUNKS OF MASKS, COSTUMES, AND PROPS—PLUS A FULL-LENGTH MIRROR.



NIKI'S TAKEAWAY TIPS

"If your space has aesthetic issues, keep the room dark and highlight the best things—columns, molding, flowers—with lighting and candles. Let the rest fall into the shadows."

"Display seat assignments on an oversize chalkboard positioned near the entrance, rather than on escort cards. It's charming, like a bistro menu."

Turn to Shopping Guide

[brides party people]

(Continued from page 158)



WORKER BEE EVENT PLANNER JENNIFER BRISMAN AIMS TO PLEASE, WORKING "ALL DAY, ALL WEEK, ALL SEASON, ALL YEAR LONG" TO MAKE HER CLIENTS HAPPY.

YOU MAY THINK designing a wedding would be small potatoes to a woman who, as a corporate event planner, helped coordinate shows like a traveling exhibit of Princess Diana's gowns. But when Jennifer Brisman was asked by a client to orchestrate his daughter's nuptials, she loved the gig so much, she never looked back. This organizational wiz welcomes a challenge—like the elaborate weekend wedding for 350 guests at a bucolic New York sleepaway camp. With scoutmaster precision, Jennifer outfitted bunks with luxury linens, organized color war-inspired sports, and turned a rustic mess hall into a romantic reception site. "I know this is a business," she says, "but I also know that I have an extraordinary commitment to a family—and just one shot to get it right!" —Hillary Quinn



HOT SHOTS HIRING A SECOND PHOTOGRAPHER TO FOCUS ON THE WEDDING PARTY, FAMILY, AND FRIENDS GUARANTEES YOU'LL CAPTURE INTIMATE AND SPONTANEOUS REACTIONS.

JAVA JIVE AFTER A NIGHT OF DANCING, PERK UP GUESTS WITH A BARISTAMANNED COFFEE BAR; HAND OUT MONOGRAMMED BAGS OF GRINDS-TO-GO FOR A CUSTOM FAVOR. PAPER BAG, MR. TAKEOUT BAGS. LABELS, MY WEDDING LABELS.



JENNIFER BRISMAN

Jennifer Brisman Weddings | New York

TAKE NOTE MR. BODDINGTON'S STUDIO IS A FAVORITE INVITATION SOURCE. "THEY TAKE THEIR COLOR, PATTERN, AND TEXTURE CUES DIRECTLY FROM THE WORLD OF INTERIOR DESIGN."



PETAL POWER JENNIFER'S FAVORITE CENTERPIECE TREND? TEXTURAL WHITE FLOWERS SET AGAINST SMOKY, DARK VASES. VASE, JAMALI GARDEN.

BOTTOMS UP! GET YOUR "SOMETHING BLUE" WITH AZURE-SOLED SHOES, LIKE THESE FROM MYGLASSSLIPPER.COM; CUSTOMIZE THEM WITH YOUR NAMES AND WEDDING DATE.



JENNIFER'S TAKEAWAY TIPS

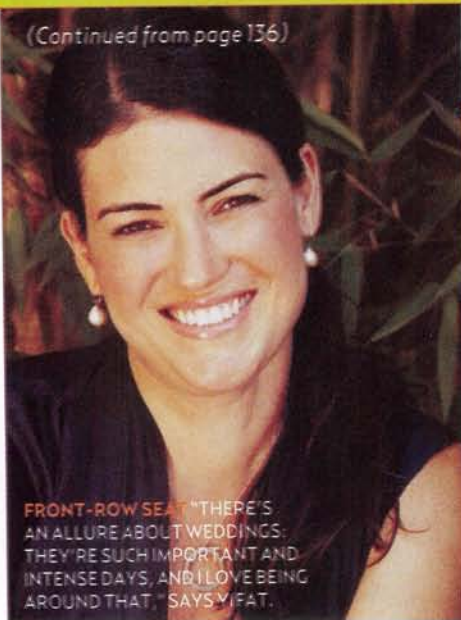
"At outdoor venues, you might save money by using the same tenting or lighting as a couple marrying there the day before or after you. Ask your caterer to put you in touch with them."

"If you're trying to decide whether to splurge on table accents or room decor, always go with the table. Your guests will be looking at what's in front of them for three to four hours."

Turn to Shopping Guide

[brides party people]

(Continued from page 136)



FRONT-ROW SEAT "THERE'S AN ALLURE ABOUT WEDDINGS: THEY'RE SUCH IMPORTANT AND INTENSE DAYS, AND I LOVE BEING AROUND THAT," SAYS YIFAT.

THE REHEARSAL DINNER was just moments away in the middle of the Utah desert, with 120 guests sitting on chartered buses. Then the heavens opened up and the bride flipped out. Instead of rushing to Plan B (a nearby hotel), event planner Yifat Oren peered at the sky, gauged the speed of the storm, and convinced her client that the downpour would be over shortly—which it was. Yifat's rock-steady demeanor is one reason that clients, including celebrities like Kevin Costner, flock to her. Another is knowing that she'll inject playful details into their weddings, such as antique-style living room furniture at an outdoor cocktail party, or an all-girl mariachi band. "I try to keep things both tasteful and sublime." And totally unexpected. —Hillary Quinn



IN BLOOM A TRAIL OF VINTAGE RIBBONS STREWN WITH MINI GARDENIAS TURNS A TRADITIONAL BRIDAL BOUQUET INTO SOMETHING SPECTACULAR.

YIFAT OREN

Yifat Oren & Associates | Sherman Oaks, CA



SOLID GOLD KEEP THE KIDS HAPPY BY PERCHING A MINI FISHBOWL AT EACH PLACE SETTING; POST-PARTY, THEY BECOME COOL FAVORS.

TAKE NOTE YIFAT LOVES CREATING AN ELEGANT BOOKLET, LIKE THIS ONE FROM TINY PINE PRESS, THAT'S PACKED WITH ALL THE DETAILS FOR A WEEKEND WEDDING.



RING TOSS A MOSS-COVERED RING BEARER'S PILLOW LENDS A NATURAL NOTE TO A WEDDING THAT CELEBRATES THE GREAT OUTDOORS.

YIFAT'S TAKEAWAY TIPS

Rather than cluttering the table with favors, treat guests to an end-of-the-night surprise by having the valet hang a sweet treat, with a note, from the rearview mirrors of their cars.

For a dramatic yet affordable centerpiece, buy inexpensive succulents like echeveria or donkey's tale from a nursery, place in terra-cotta pots, then highlight with pin-spot lighting.

Turn to Shopping Guide

(Continued from page 176)



MASTER PLANNER BEING INCREDIBLY ORGANIZED AND KEEPING TRACK OF EVERY LITTLE DETAIL (THROUGH MINUTE-BY-MINUTE TIME LINES!) IS ONE OF POLLY ONET'S TRADEMARKS.

AT THE AGE OF SEVEN, Polly Onet went through her mother's address book and invited more than 100 people to a surprise birthday party. "I called everyone Mom knew—the butcher, the dry cleaner, the sewing lady," laughs this event planner, who was nicknamed "Polly-Plan-a-Party" by the time she was a teenager. Granted, Mom was the one who had to scramble and buy drinks and canapes to feed the crowd, but Polly's passion for planning was clearly in the works. These days, Polly prides herself on being "a detail fanatic" who specializes in challenging nuptials, like organizing a fleet of private planes to fly 200 guests to a weekend wedding in Virginia horse country. "I don't believe in saying no," she says. "If a bride wants something, I'll find a way to do it!"—*Hillary Quinn*

A SWEET GESTURE SEND GUESTS HOME WITH INDIVIDUAL MINI CAKES TOPPED WITH GLORIOUS FLOWERS (LIKE THESE FROM SYLVIA WEINSTOCK).



HOLY HIGHBALL

"MARTINI GLASSES SPILL AND DON'T KEEP COCKTAILS CHILLED," SAYS POLLY, WHO PREFERS A TALL, SLENDER GLASS TO SHOWCASE DRINKS LIKE THE SOUTH SIDE—VODKA, TRIPLE SEC, LIME JUICE, AND MINT.



POLLY ONET

Ober, Onet & Associates | NYC and Palm Beach, FL



AN EXCITING EXIT

POLLY LIKES A STATEMENT VEHICLE FOR THE GETAWAY, LIKE A VINTAGE MOTORBIKE, GOLF CART, OR HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGE—A FINAL FANFARE THAT GUESTS LOVE.



FIRST-DANCE MOVES

"A TANGO IS SEXY AND SHOWCASE-Y," SAYS POLLY, WHO ENCOURAGES HER BRIDES TO TRY SOMETHING UNEXPECTEDLY EDGY.

POLLY'S TAKEAWAY TIPS

"Simpler is better when it comes to ceremony decor: A few attractive ribbons tied on every other pew is more appealing than going overboard and decorating every row."

"Don't let a wedding planner tell you what to do. Whether it's serving French fries or choosing a certain flower, your wedding should reflect your own personality and tastes."

Turn to Shopping Guide

[brides party people]

(Continued from page 162)



DOWN TO EARTH "I MADE IT MY PERSONAL MISSION TO TEACH AND INSPIRE PEOPLE ABOUT GOING GREEN," SAYS DANNY SEO.

THE FACT THAT HE WAS born on Earth Day, April 22, inspired Danny Seo to embark on a career as a green-minded lifestyle pro. At age 12, this wunderkind founded Earth 2000, an organization that later became the largest teenage activist environmental charity in the U.S. These days, as a consultant for J.C. Penney, the author of *Simply Green Parties* (Collins, 2006), and a regular contributor to "The Early Show" on CBS, he's proving that elegance and eco-consciousness aren't mutually exclusive. Choosing food for a wedding? Keep it local and organic. Picking a getaway car? Rent a hybrid. "When you're planning your wedding," says Danny, "if you do it right, you don't have to sacrifice style or beauty for the sake of going green." —Hillary Quinn



MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE SERVE ORGANIC-FRUIT SANGRIA IN RECYCLED-GLASS DECANTERS (HERE, FROM J.C. PENNEY); LATER, USE THE PITCHERS AS VASES AT HOME.

DANNY SEO

Environmental Lifestyle Expert



WITH THIS RING TO CONSERVE STEMWARE, CREATE WINEGLASS CHARMS WITH PAINT-CHIP CIRCLES IN YOUR WEDDING COLORS AND RING BINDER ATTACHMENTS. GLASS, LENOX.



OUT OF THE BOX CREATE ECO CENTERPIECES (HERE, FROM MARIAN KELLY FINE FLOWERS) WITH LOCALLY GROWN FLOWERS AND IN-SEASON ORGANIC PRODUCE.



ON A LIMB A MINIATURE LIVE TREE IS THE FAVOR THAT KEEPS ON GIVING.

ADD A NOTE: "AS OUR LOVE GROWS, SO WILL THIS TREE." (JAPANESE BLACK PINE TREE, THE MAGNOLIA COMPANY)



TOASTY WITH DRIBBLES OF KAHLÚA ON EACH MARSHMALLOW, ORGANIC CHOCOLATE S'MORES (ROASTED OVER FIRE-PROOF BOWLS) BECOME A GROWNUP GOODIE.



DANNY'S TAKEAWAY TIPS

"Sometimes old ideas are really the best ideas—like renting vintage chairs, tables, and decorative accessories from prop houses so you're reusing things from the past."

"Seek out candles made from pure stearin wax (available at Ikea). They're unscented, dripless, and derived from a vegetable source, rather than petroleum."

Turn to Shopping Guide