

PLACID PLANNING



GETTING READY FOR YOUR WEDDING NEED NOT BE STRESSFUL; FIND OUT HOW THE PROS STAY CALM AND ORGANIZED.

BY KAYTIE DOWLING • PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM GRAHAM

ON THE BEST DAYS, PLANNING YOUR WEDDING CAN BE INCREDIBLY REWARDING. BUT ON THE WORST DAYS, IT CAN BE CHAOTIC, TRYING—NIGHTMARISH, EVEN. IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THAT WAY. STAYING FOCUSED, ORGANIZED AND CALM CAN HELP SLAY YOUR INNER BRIDEZILLA. THESE LOCAL EVENT PLANNERS DEAL WITH STRESS AND MANAGE TO PUT TOGETHER BEAUTIFUL WEDDINGS EVERY DAY. STEAL THEIR SECRETS.

Borrow ideas from the best to preserve your sanity

- CREATE A DETAILED TIMELINE FOR YOUR WEDDING DAY
- ANTICIPATE ANY PROBLEMS AND HAVE BACKUP PLANS
- CREATE A CONTACT LIST OF ALL VENDORS AND IMPORTANT PEOPLE IN YOUR WEDDING
- KEEP ORGANIZED INFORMATION WITH YOU ALWAYS TO USE DOWN TIME WISELY
- PREPARE AN EMERGENCY BAG TO PREVENT ANY CRISIS
- DELEGATE A CONTACT PERSON FOR PANICKED GUESTS OR VENDORS

CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT: a time line. The duo calls their 20-page behemoth their Bible. It can require hours to put together, but it keeps everyone—including bridesmaids, vendors and family—on time. “It makes everything a lot smoother on the actual day,” Kieffer says. “It helps keep us on track.” Don’t be afraid to make your own. It should include everything from what time hair and makeup should start, to when you walk down the aisle, to when to cut the cake. And be sure to include a little bit of Just In Case time. It seems like no event goes according to schedule all the time, and if yours doesn’t, you’ll have room for error—just in case. After you organize everything, make sure your vendors have a copy. One of the most important people to give the time line to is your disc jockey or band leader. Since this person serves as a master of ceremonies, he or she needs to know when everything should happen.

STAYS CALM BY: having fun. The two, who have been friends since childhood, blow off steam every year with an annual New York city shopping trip. Be sure to make your own time to relax, or else you’ll wind up too anxious to have fun on your big day. Don’t feel bad about taking time to relax. Get a massage. Go out with your bridesmaids. Have a drink with your fiancé. Whatever you do, have fun.



**CASEY KIEFFER &
LEANNE SILICATO**
Make My Day Event Planning

Go Green

Throw a stunning wedding that won't make Al Gore shudder.

BY STACEY JENSEN



For the past few years, going green has become big business. Supermarkets offer organic and fair-trade food, chemical-free cleaning products—even recycled paper towels.

So incorporating some earth-friendly habits into your daily life is almost as easy as not.

But what many experts don't talk about is how to plan a party the green way. And we're not talking about a small housewarming shindig or a summer barbecue—we're talking about your wedding day.

Fortunately, Delaware has a wealth of options for the environmentally friendly bride—if you know where to look. We have ideas, resources, tips and suggestions that ensure your wedding will be a classic occasion that your guests, and the earth, will thank you for.

Seems simple right? Head to your office supply store and buy a bundle of tan, funky recycled paper. Luckily, says Pam Montague from A Sandy Soiree in Rehoboth Beach, recycled paper has come a long way.

"Most brides wouldn't recognize recycled paper," she says. "People think it's bland, but it's not."

Montague specializes in custom, beach-themed invitations using recycled, acid-free paper and natural embellishments, such as sand. However, the creative possibilities are endless. Brides can wow their guests with earth-friendly, recycled paper with metallic flecks, leaves or even sprigs of grass.

Using that nice paper doesn't do much good if you cover it in chemical-laden inks, so Montague can work with a local printer to use soy-based inks.

But the best idea yet might be to mail your guests an elegant piece of paper they can easily reuse themselves.

"I've seen recycled paper embedded [with] seed. You can plant the invitation and watch the seeds grow," she says. Not a bad way to remember the day.

Other ideas to cut paper use—and costs—include limiting the amount of paper in your invitation.

"Instead of a response card with envelope, consider a post card," Montague says. "Or direct guests to a wedding website instead of including a printed direction card."

Recycled papers may be slightly more expensive than traditional stationery. But you're making an environmentally friendly decision, and a stunning one at that.

FLOWERS

The question on many a green bride's mind is how to keep your wedding pretty, but waste less. Easy, explains bridal consultant Lynn Zimmerman.

"Think simple," she stresses.

Simple does not mean boring. Picture an arrangement of potted tulips, lilies, hydrangeas or irises for a spring wedding. An outdoor summer wedding easily can be decorated with gorgeous hanging baskets of petunias and geraniums.

“There’s nothing more beautiful than plants,” Zimmerman says. “After the wedding, take home your pots and plant them in your garden.”

As an added bonus, bulb plants—lilies, irises and tulips—will bloom each spring, an annual reminder of your special day.

If you still picture fresh-cut arrangements at your wedding, consider donating the flowers to a local hospital or church after the reception so more people can enjoy their beauty. Or, dry a few arrangements and bouquets to use as potpourri for your linen drawer.

Themed weddings are just as simple to decorate, Zimmerman says. A vineyard-themed reception can be dressed well with bowls of fresh fruit, grapes and vines that your guests can sample throughout the reception.

“Just use your imagination,” she says.

FAVORS AND GIFTS

A green wedding doesn’t mean wedding guest will be walking out the door with granola as a favor, says Gina Cimino, marketing manager for Newark Natural Foods Co-op, in Newark. Instead, guests can take home organic, fair-trade candies, chocolates and teas.

“You can easily, and beautifully, package the chocolates in a cotton bag, or the teas in a glass jar with a tea brewer simply tied to the gift.”

Consider buying organic chocolate bars and work with your printer to design personalized wrappers with your monogram and wedding date—on recycled paper, of course. They make a simple way to green up a classic wedding favor.

Food isn’t the favor of choice for every bride, so Cimino suggests an easy alternative: homemade body scrubs made with sea salt and organic essential oils. It’s a gift most brides can make with her attendants’ help. Organic soaps and beeswax candles with natural cotton wicks are other alternatives.

Customers can easily order all of the gifts in bulk by contacting the co-op. And the best part—members get a discount of about 15 percent.

An even more earth-friendly alternative is providing a donation on your guests’ behalf to an environmental foundation of your choice, says Casey Kie Idr, co-owner of Make My Day Event Planning in Lewes.

This can work both ways: Consider asking your guests to donate to the same foundation in lieu of another toaster.

But perhaps the simplest way you can help the environment is by creating an I Do Registry with the I Do Foundation. Every time a guest makes a gift purchase from your registry, a donation is made to your selected charity, at no cost to you or your guests. That way you can support an organization you believe in, without creating waste from wrapping paper, packaging or shipping.

THE RECEPTION

Your reception dinner may seem like the easiest way to incorporate green touches into your wedding, but in fact, it can pose some difficulties for even the most creative bride.

However, says James Walton, owner and chef of Windows Hill Catering, with a little planning and flexibility, an organic, local feast can be prepared for even the pickiest of eaters.

“For starters, think seasonally,” he says. There are limitations, but that doesn’t mean your menu will suffer. Pull inspiration from what is in season where you’re trying the knot. If that’s a spring wedding in Delaware, consider an asparagus and mozzarella salad with grilled rockfish. Or, for a July wedding, serve strawberry soup followed by tomato and cucumber salad with an entrée of locally raised chicken.

Your dessert doesn’t need to suffer either. In addition to local bakeries that can prepare organic wedding cakes, Walton can create other seasonal dishes such as a fresh lemon tart or orange crème brûlée.

When planning your reception, also consider the place settings and linens, Kie Idr says. Choose cloth over paper, and rent whenever you can instead of buying.

“Every little bit helps,” she says.

TRANSPORTATION

With the average bride and groom hosting more than 100 guests, the amount of carbon monoxide emitted from guests traveling to and from the church and reception is nothing to overlook when planning a green wedding.

An easy alternative is renting a trolley or shuttle for the day.

“Not only will it cut down on car use, but it will help if your reception is held in an area with limited parking, like the beach,” Kie Idr says.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Finally, one of the most important ways to remember your big day is through your wedding album. A photographer can easily take 200 to 1,000 photos at one wedding—and give more than 400 photos to the bride.

Instead, work with your photographer to create a digital album where you, your friends and family can go online to view your photos.

“Also, consider not printing a proof book,” Kie Idr adds.

Most important, be aware of your options. An environmentally friendly wedding shouldn’t be hard. With the proper resources, ideas and creativity, your special day can be as elegant—and green—as you desire.