



MATRIMONIAL MUST-HAVES

Make your wedding day unforgettable with innovations in everything nuptial, from invitations to music to favors
By Wendy Bryan

Creative Cupcakes

"You have to be really careful when giving cupcakes as favors, but it can definitely be done," says Leda's Bake Shop owner and baker Ledette Gambini, who glues each cupcake to the bottom of a small box with white chocolate to keep it in place. Surprise your guests with exotic cupcake flavors like coconut lime, pumpkin, and dulce de leche. Fondant initials, hearts, and anything you can imagine can be fixed atop these delicious treats. Call 818-386-9644 or go to www.ledasbakeshop.com.

Delicious Decorator Drinks

Bring some flavor to your wedding favors with specialty cocktail mixers—a gift that doubles as a signature cocktail for your reception. Stirrings, an all-natural drink mixer company, offers 17 flavors to choose from, including wild blueberry, watermelon, and chocolate peppermint. If you'd like your beverages to match your décor, visit the Stirrings website to view the drinks by color. Call 508-324-9800 or go to www.stirrings.com.



Myriad Musical Choices

If the thought of a cheesy wedding singer or corny MC panics your inner music aficionado, worry no more. DJ John Tripp, who spins at hipster outposts Bar Marmont and the Hollywood Standard, can ease your wedding music jitters with rare soul and funk classics. Tripp offers music sample CDs to prospective clients that include Sly & the Family Stone, Talking Heads, Sergio Mendes, Isley Brothers, and more selections from the late 1960s to the early 1980s. Tripp prefers spinning records, but his extensive MP3 collection helps round out any last-minute requests on the dance floor. Call 310-936-6044.



Organic Cocktails

With flavors like lavender lemon drop and pomegranate cosmopolitan, organic cocktail mixers by modmix bring earth-friendly fruit juices and herbs to your cocktails, sending a healthful message your guests can take home. Everything in modmix is certified organic, with no unpronounceable ingredients. Call 866-767-0747 or go to www.mod-mix.com.



Inventive Invitations

Themes of travel, love, and humor inspire the invitations made by Card Tricks Designs, where imagination rules. Instead of stuffy typefaces and heavy cream cardstock, the company uses wind-up bride-and-groom scuba divers, miniature hockey rinks, and location wedding invitations made to look like plane tickets to Hawaii. It may sound expensive, but for founder Anne Muller, creativity has a place in any budget, large or small. One couple saved money by hand-assembling their invitations, an explorer's journal filled with love letters, vintage maps, and a small compass. "I like working with people who have vision," Muller says. Call 626-403-3800 or go to www.cardtricksdesigns.com.

Charitable Favors

If you have all the household items you need, consider donating your gifts to your favorite charity. JustGive.org (866-JUST-GIVE, www.justgive.org) and the I Do Foundation (202-449-1066, www.idofoundation.org) let couples donate money in guests' honor, and guests give to charities in the name of the bride and groom.

Cookies Galore

Leaving a sweet taste in the mouths of your guests is easy with scrumptious wedding favors. Big, beautiful, and homemade, DeLuscious Cookies are irresistible. Lydia Shayne, the owner and baker, can create new recipes just for your wedding, or cut the treats into hearts or your initials. Cookies sealed in glassine bags are perfect to leave at each table setting or place in guests' cars as they leave. Call 323-460-2370 or go to www.delusciouscookies.com.



Get Your Guy Tuned In Like a radio show devoted entirely to weddings, Wedding Podcast Network (www.weddingpodcastnetwork.com) has separate channels for bridal trends, relationship advice, and wedding workouts. Reassuring voices help soothe the planning woes with tips on everything from wedding vows and emergency stain removal to tiara alternatives. Seven different channels are updated two to three times a week and can be downloaded to your computer with a subscription. The technology just might get your man interested in planning; about 40 percent of the programs' listeners are male.