

InStyle invites you to

get the PARTY started

at the best reception ever

Featuring:
refreshing cocktails,
extraordinary
centerpieces,
mouthwatering
morsels & cakes
you'll never
forget

NO NEED TO RSVP!

EL PEPINO

The refreshing, crisp taste of cucumber works in sweet or savory drinks. Gaston Martinez of William Grant & Sons in N.Y.C. mashes it with cilantro, adds triple sec and tequila, then strains it into a chilled glass.

THE ENERGY BOOSTER

A touch of guarana, a natural stimulant, will keep your guests going, says Charlotte Voisey of the Rose Bar at the Gramercy Hotel in N.Y.C. She mixes it with vodka and passion fruit juice for a late-night pick-me-up.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY CON POULOS
STYLED BY LYNSEY FRYERS
FOOD STYLING BY ALISON
ATTENBOROUGH

Mix Up a Signature Cocktail

Offer a drink that will establish the tone for the rest of the reception. Cheers!

LADY PENELOPE

Personalize your bubbly by adding flavored liquor or fruit (this will help stretch your champagne budget too). Here, Voisey uses vanilla vodka and raspberry syrup.

ELDERFLOWER SMASH

Mixologists have recently embraced elderflower liqueur, with its citrusy notes and sweet, succulent taste. Voisey combines it with gin and lemon juice.

THIRSTY FOR
MORE? GET THE
FULL RECIPES AT
INSTYLE
WEDDINGS.COM

THE FRUIT CUP

David Myers of West Hollywood's Comme Ça muddles garden-fresh berries and oranges with white rum to give this drink premium flavor and texture.



BAND VS. DJ VS. IPOD

Which is right for you?

1. BAND

Cost \$4,000 to \$25,000
When to book Three to six months in advance (once you've secured the venue)
Pros Built-in emcee, concert vibe, crowd participation
Cons Room may be too small, limited playlist, covers may not sound anything like the originals
Recommended for Large weddings (150+ guests), black-tie receptions

2. DJ

Cost \$500 to \$10,000
When to book Three to six months ahead of time
Pros Knows how to get the crowd moving, original mixes
Cons Song selections could be too niche, might alienate older guests
Recommended for Midsize weddings (75 to 150 guests), formal or semiformal

3. iPod

Cost Free to \$2,000
When to load About three weeks before. However, creating a playlist with the perfect flow and timing is harder than it sounds. You may want to turn the task over to a service like Audio Archeology (646-591-2124), which will craft a custom sequence in about two weeks.
Pros Complete control, minimal setup
Cons No musical whiz to guide the evening, lacks excitement
Recommended for Small, casual weddings (fewer than 100 guests)

Experts: Shandon Fowler, author of *The Groom's Instruction Manual*; David Stark, N.Y.C. event planner

Set a Stylish Table

Use the right details to design a place setting that echoes your wedding vibe



FUCHSIA + GOLD = HOT COLOR COMBO!

trendy

Gold-rimmed plates may seem sedate, but position them on a bright, bold-patterned tablecloth with knotted napkins and silver flatware, and you've got the perfect setting for a fashion-forward bride.



modern

Play with geometric shapes and patterns—a square charger and plate, round salad bowl, and hexagon-print runner look surprisingly chic. Keep the setting's color palette simple (e.g., shades of turquoise and silver) so it stays elegant.



glamorous

Black and white can be contemporary, sophisticated or, in this case, opulent. Gilded accents and a jeweled napkin ring come together to create a luxurious table scape reminiscent of Old Hollywood.

3 WAYS TO SERVE SMALL BITES

When you just can't face any more mini crab cakes or pigs in a blanket, add one of these innovative finger food ideas to your menu



KICKED-UP BAR SNACKS
 Offer elegant nibbles like Parmesan cheese straws, truffled rosemary popcorn, crispy artichoke chips with garlic aioli, and hand-rolled smoked paprika pretzels.



MIDNIGHT MUNCHIES
 As guests dance into the wee hours, pass around breakfast classics like stacks of baby pancakes drizzled with maple syrup.



COMPLEMENTARY PAIRINGS
 Pick up an appetizer along with a cocktail, like this lobster-and-corn beignet served with a diminutive Dark and Stormy.



think outside the vase

Just about anything can serve as a vessel for flowers. At left, stacking brightly colored enamel boxes (some open, some closed) produces dimension without obscuring your guests' views.



VINTAGE TEA CANISTER
Nestle an array of roses into a charming tin. You can score great ones on eBay for around \$10.



CHINESE TAKEOUT BOX
Colored versions of the ubiquitous box are easy to find online.




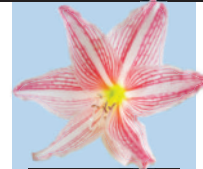




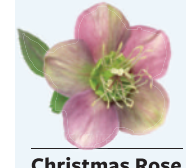





TREE TRUNK
Hollowed-out wood makes a pretty vessel—perfect for a rustic wedding!

Arrangements above by Grayson Handy, florist and co-owner of N.Y.C.'s Prudence Designs and co-author of Flowers for the Home (available in October).

Display a Unique Centerpiece

From creative containers to luscious edibles, these clever arrangements will give your guests something to talk about

| | WINTER | SPRING | SUMMER | FALL |
|----------|---|--|--|---|
| CLASSIC |  Camellia, Paperwhite Narcissus, Stephanotis |  Ranunculus, Lily of the Valley, Lilac |  Calla Lily, Oxeye Daisy, Sweet Pea |  Amaryllis, Snowberry, Pincushion (Scabiosa) Flower |
| ROMANTIC |  Freesia, Black Baccarat Rose, Winter Jasmine |  Cherry Blossom, Peony, Eucharis Lily |  Hydrangea, Garden Rose, Gardenia |  Tuberose, Antik Rose, Heather |
| EXOTIC |  Christmas Rose, Cymbidium Orchid, Snowdrop |  Oriental Poppy, Grape Hyacinth, Parrot Tulip |  Marigold, Phalaenopsis Orchid, Chocolate Cosmos |  Dendrobium Orchid, Iceland Poppy, Amaranthus |

WHAT'S IN SEASON?

Many types of roses, tulips and carnations are available year-round, but for even more variety, select seasonal blooms. They're earth-friendly and less expensive than imported flowers. Our cheat sheet will help you choose.

if you're not the flower type ...



... gather candles
Votives are beautiful, but mixing candlesticks of different shapes and sizes adds more visual interest.



... use food
Making fresh fruit or candy the focal point not only looks great, but it also gives guests something to nosh on.



... try mixed media
Place meaningful items or objects that reflect your wedding theme under a bell jar or glass cake stand.



RAISE YOUR GLASS!

Toast your guests and say thank you the right way

- 1. Be yourself.** Don't read a toast you downloaded from the Internet. If you're funny, be funny. If you're overcome with emotion, be heartfelt.
- 2. Reminisce.** Recall the first time you met your husband and when you knew he was the one.
- 3. Keep it clean.** Nerves make people say crazy things! If you're feeling shaky, stay brief—off-color remarks could wind up on YouTube.

Expert: Sharon Naylor, author of *The Bride's Survival Guide*



BUBBLY UNDER \$30

Champagne (sparkling wine made in Champagne, France) is delicious but pricey. Try these takes from other locales instead*

- 1. Segura Viudas Brut Reserva Heredad**, Penedès region of Spain; \$20
- 2. Roederer Estate Brut NV**, Anderson Valley, Calif.; \$22
- 3. Codorníu Clásico, D.O.**, Cava, Spain; \$14
- 4. Domaine Carneros Brut 2005**, Napa Valley and Sonoma Valley, Calif.; \$29
- 5. Gruet Methode Champenoise Blanc de Blancs**, Truth or Consequences, N.M.; \$25

Expert: Kevin Zraly, American wine educator and author of *Windows on the World Complete Wine Course*

*Prices may vary



ROMANTIC
Meet in the middle. Fondant flowers and pink icing are the right amount of girly; the boxy shape and art deco cutouts are groom-friendly.
Designed by Ron Ben-Israel



CASUAL
Handmade daisies and not-too-perfect icing in a sunny hue feel right at home at a backyard or garden soirée.
Designed by Sarah Magid



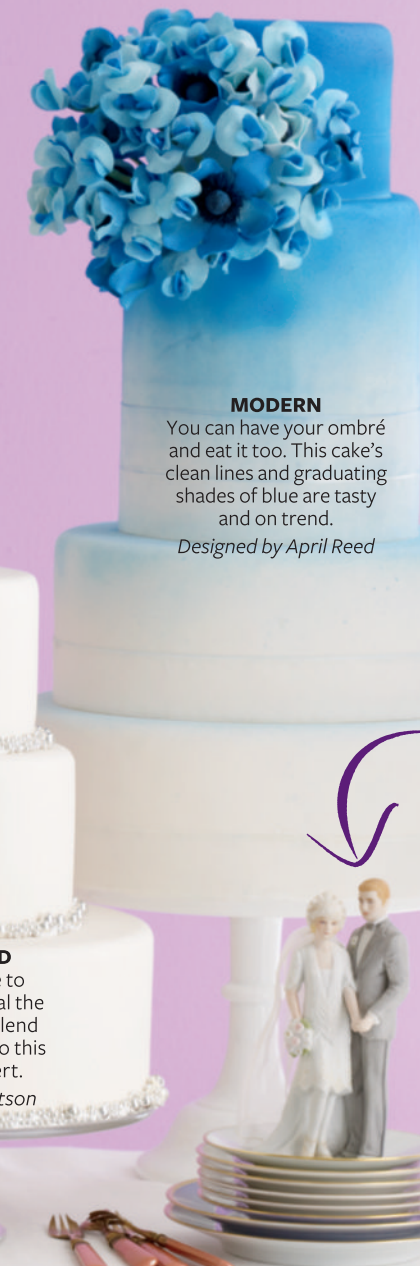
CLASSIC
Some things never go out of style. Case in point: a pristine ivory cake draped with a fondant ribbon.
Designed by Bijoux Doux



WHIMSICAL
This fanciful dessert is decorated to resemble an imaginary view of the inside of the cake.
Designed by Colette's Cakes



SOPHISTICATED
You want your cake to stand out but not steal the show. Silver dragées lend understated sparkle to this simple tiered dessert.
Designed by Gail Watson



MODERN
You can have your ombré and eat it too. This cake's clean lines and graduating shades of blue are tasty and on trend.
Designed by April Reed

Have Fun with Your Cake

Your wedding confection is more than just dessert—it's a photo op. The sweetest triumph is serving one that tastes as great as it looks



"Vanilla and plum are perfect for autumn—simple but unexpected."
—Betsy Thorleifson

taster's choice

Betsy Thorleifson, owner of Brooklyn's Nine Cakes bakery, dishes on fall's best flavor combos

Vanilla & Plum Vanilla bean cake layered with spiced plum buttercream.

Almond & Pear Almond cake layered with Poire William (pear liqueur) ganache and Poire William buttercream.

Chocolate & Caramel Dark chocolate cake with caramel buttercream, pine nuts, and fleur de sel.

TOP IT OFF!

Six ingenious ways to crown your cake



BIRDCAGE
Enamel aviary with Swarovski crystals, Debra Moreland for Paris, \$325; paristiaras.com.



MONOGRAMS
Silver-plated letters with crystals, Bel Aire Bridal, \$55 each; cake-jewelry.com.

Looking for "something old"? Cap your cake with a vintage topper!



MINI FRAME
Silver-plated brass frame, Two's Company, \$12; 800-896-7266.



CANDY DISH
Papabubble hard candy mix, Dylan's Candy Bar, \$16; dylanscandybar.com. Glass compote, Juliska, \$55; juliska.com.



CRAFTY COUPLE
Clay and acrylic paint cake topper, Red Light Studio, \$180; etsy.com.

Our experts: Preston Bailey, florist; Colin Cowie, event planner; Mary Giuliani, caterer; Tara Guérard, Soirée Creative Event Planning and Design; Jung Lee, Fête NY; Julie Pryor, Pryor Events; Michelle Rago, wedding designer; Mindy Weiss, wedding planner

Reporting by Stephanie Davila, Wendy Straker Hauser, Rachel Jacoby, and Laura Morgan