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CHICAGO SOCIAL

Brides

Age of

ELEGANCE

BIG-DAY DESIRES: LUXE GOWNS, HOT ROCKS,
SUBLIME SWEETS AND MORE!

Lanvin's New Bridal Line Lands on Oak Street

WANDERLUST: HONEYMOON BLISS IN ST. BARTH
and 66 of Chicago's Hautest Weddings!

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Spotlight

Eat, Drink and Be Married

What would *you* do with a large loft space attached to a shared-use kitchen? Rent it out for parties, of course. Pastry Chef Alexis Leverenz, owner of **Kitchen Chicago**, did just that. Located in West Town's warehouse district, the open, raw space with hardwood floors, fabric chandeliers and a second-story mezzanine is now coveted by urban couples—and celeb chefs. In fact, *Top Chef* winner Stephanie Izard held one of her infamous *Girl* and the *Goat* wandering dinners here. And at only \$2,000 for Saturdays from 1PM to 1AM (includes kitchen), you won't break your budget. Ask about the new on-site Bridal Lounge. *Pricing for weekday rentals also available. 324 N. Leavitt St., 312.455.0863, kitchenchicago.com* —VC



Burning Question

We ask three Chicago planners: What's your most horrifying guest story? Someone ever show up in all white? Ever have an ex-girlfriend crash the wedding? Sloppy toast speech?

Marcia Hemphill,
An Urban Affair

"During cocktail hour at a very formal wedding, we identified crashers. The bride knew the people from school and confronted them before we could get them out! So much for ushering them out discreetly... Luckily, they were so humiliated they just slinked away—but not without trying to plead to the bride that they'd received an invite and that their reply card must have been lost in the mail. Yeah right!"

Derrick Taylor,
Taylor & Co. Events

"Due to an inebriated guest goofing around on a dock on Lake Springfield, the bride and I fell into the water. After we fished her out—and her gown that now weighed hundreds of pounds—we high-tailed it to the nearest bridal salon, bought her a new dress and, with some stitch witchery, altered it and got back to the hotel all in an hour and 20 minutes. Now I, on the other hand, had only one shoe and my tuxedo shirt was a fantastic shade of green."

Beth Bernstein, SQN Events

"The reception was being held at Opera restaurant and we clearly posted signs on the door that it was a private event. But that did not deter a bar-hopping couple from stopping in and saddling up to the bar. I greeted them and asked if they were friends of the bride or groom. "Groom," replied the guy. "What's his name again?" I asked. "Tom?" Wrong! I escorted them out, but they did not go quietly. The woman insisted that she was being wronged since she paid for their drinks which, of course, were being paid for by the hosts."

Trend

Life of the Party!

Chicago's Prairie Fire (prairiefirechicago.com) and Prairie Grass Café (prairiegrasscafe.com) have new sustainable wedding programs for rehearsal dinners and showers. But what about the wedding? We ask the restos' two-time James Beard Award-winning chef Sarah Stegner for her vendor suggestions for a low-impact reception.

PITCHFORK PRODUCTIONS "Portia Belloc Lowndes, owner of this special event company, partners with local farmers, wineries and eco-conscious caterers." 312.320.4145

LIMELIGHT CATERING "Limelight's culinary inspiration comes from sustainable Midwest farms and local artisans. Owner Rita Gutekanst is on Green City Market's board of directors so she's totally hooked into the local scene." limelightcatering.com

GARDEN OFFERINGS "This 30-acre farm located in Huntley, Ill., cultivates peonies, ornamental berries, old-fashioned rose bushes and flowering trees, which they use for custom-made bouquets and arrangements." 847.428.0381 —Lisa Shames



...AISLE FILE CONTINUED **AND THIS** Vanille Pâtisserie is no longer making wedding cakes, but they still do sweets—think dessert table-perfect mini pastries, *entremets* (mousse cakes), handmade chocolates and more. In addition to its bouquet paintings, Reenie Rose now offers canvas prints as well as stationery for bride and groom gifts. Beadniks has introduced its new Bridal Bootcamp, where bridal parties can gather to craft big-day baubles (Mon. and Wed. from 5-9PM; registration is required). **Mojuba** (left) has launched mini versions of its bride and groom emergency kits brimming with wedding-day essentials.