

# (how-to) guide

SMART WAYS  
TO PLAN YOUR  
WEDDING

## Throw an Eco-Chic Wedding

Events with an environmentally friendly spin tend to get a bad rap in terms of style (too casual, skimpy on design, overly earthy). But with tons of fabulous fair-trade and organic elements on the market and new, innovative ideas from planning pros, there are lots of ways to plan an eco-conscious wedding that's lush, elegant and

truly beautiful. To show you how, we collaborated with 2008 MB Trendsetter and sustainable event designer Danielle Venokur, owner of dvGreen in NYC, to create this sunny, sophisticated reception. Read on for tips on going green at your own wedding so you can reduce your ecological footprint without sacrificing style.



### Au Naturel

An organic tablecloth, 100-percent-cotton paper products, beeswax candles and centerpieces of seasonal, locally grown flowers make this table design earth-friendly yet refined.

WRITER: BETSY GOLDBERG EDITORS: AMBER FURST AND JENNIFER MISKOWIEC



## Plan a Green Party

Play up any color palette with naturally dyed linens, vintage vessels and more

**Spruce up the settings.** Lemony colors and eco-friendly accessories give this table a fresh look. We enhanced the design (and decreased the amount of overhead lighting needed) with "Lotus" floating candles, \$8.50 for two, and Natural Beeswax Pillars, \$9.50–\$22, from Big Dipper Wax Works, bigdipperwaxworks.com, in vintage candle holders from Fishs Eddy, fishseddy.com. Organic fabric tablecloth by Harmony Art and printed by Adaptive Textiles, prints from \$150 per table, harmonyart.com. Organic cotton table number, \$415 for 25, and place card, \$420 for 100, both from Bella Figura, bellafigura.com. China, crystal, flatware, napkins, table and chairs, all from Party Rental Ltd., partyrentalltd.com.

**Streamline your menu.** Choose dishes made with seasonal, locally grown ingredients; you'll support sustainable agriculture and get the freshest food.

**Add a tasteful treat.** Welcome guests to their seats with a prettily packaged organic favor: Rosemary-Infused Sea Salt, \$25 for set of five tubes, from Pear and Peony, pearandpeony.com.

### An eco-friendly fete doesn't have to be light on florals.

Select free-form centerpieces of locally grown blooms; reuse some vases at your brunch the next day, and donate others to a hospital.

## Opt for Organics

Choose blooms that are seasonal and sustainably grown—and consider novel nonfloral alternatives

**Combine natural and vintage vessels.** To give our table (above) a fresh look, we used a mix of organic arrangements: hyacinths and ranunculus in "Mod" sustainable bamboo pots, \$10 each, from Ecosource, ecosourceonline.com; variegated tulips with mimosa in recycled-glass vases; and single ranunculus blossoms in glass dishes from Fishs Eddy vintage collection.

**Use "something old" to create "something new."** We used vintage yellow ribbon to accent the centerpieces and to wrap this organic, locally grown bridal bouquet of hyacinths, ranunculus, variegated tulips, sweet pea and mimosa (right), \$285, by Danielle Venokur for dvGreen, dvgreen.com.

**Lessen waste when it comes to corsages.** Skip the florals for this artful pin-on accent, and instead give handcrafted brooches made of vintage felt (see forestprints.com). They're a whimsical touch and last beyond the big day, as a keepsake.





## Choose Earth-Friendly Extras

These beautiful, better-for-the-environment elements can be cost-effective and easily implemented options for your big day

**Be selective about stationery.** Recycled papers and tree-free invitations are far more sophisticated than they used to be. This “Somersby” letterpressed invite and reply card set (above), \$2,000 for 100, is classically chic; it’s also printed with vegetable oil-based ink on 100-percent-cotton paper made from reclaimed fibers, and produced by wind-powered studio Bella Figura, [bellafigura.com](http://bellafigura.com). To save, use a postcard as your reply card; you will eliminate the need for envelopes and decrease postage costs.

**Try a nontraditional toss.** Colorful ecofetti, from [ecoparti.com](http://ecoparti.com), is a pretty, completely biodegradable alternative to flower petals. Another send-off suggestion: Have guests ring vintage bells, found on eBay; they are reusable and don’t harm the earth.

**Give favors that give back.** Seedlings or seed packets are a great gift for guests since plants benefit the ecosystem. We love the wildflower packets from Pear and Peony, which feature pretty recycled-paper labels, or small potted plants—from a local nursery, to avoid shipping. If you give donations in lieu of favors, convey this on one card at each table or in ceremony programs, rather than printing cards for every guest.



For more eco-chic wedding ideas, visit [Brides.com/green](http://Brides.com/green)

## More Eco-Chic Party Ideas

### 1. Make it a mixed bag

Welcome guests with locally made goodies presented in reusable totes instead of disposable packaging.

### 2. Show some drive

Use hybrid vehicles or trolleys to transport guests from the hotel to wedding sites. They add to the fun and reduce the need to drive non-fuel-efficient cars.

### 3. Use carbon offsets

Visit [TerraPass.com](http://TerraPass.com) to calculate your wedding’s footprint and balance emissions for flights, energy use and more.

### 4. Serve splashy drinks

Create citrus margaritas with an organic mix, \$11 per bottle, from Modmix, [modmixbeverages.com](http://modmixbeverages.com). Coasters, \$590 for 100, from Bella Figura, [bellafigura.com](http://bellafigura.com).

### 5. Plan a sweet finish

Offer chocolates infused with organic jasmine tea, \$1.60 each, by Nunu Chocolates, [nunuchocolates.com](http://nunuchocolates.com).

