

# Eco Chick

because Mother Earth is a Woman

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## Housingworks Green Weddings Event with Leanne Marshall, Mary Cleaver, Danielle Venokur and Mireya Navarro

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Written by: Starre



Project Runway designer **Leanne Marshall** (Season 5) shows us the gorgeous ecofriendly wedding dress she whipped up for the event!

I had lots of fun at last week's **Green Weddings event put on by Housingworks** in Manhattan. A lively panel discussion was moderated by author **Mireya Navarro** (who wrote the gorgeous new book, **Green Wedding**). Mireya was joined by Mary Cleaver of **The Cleaver Company** organic catering, Project Runway designer **Leanne Marshall**, and Danielle Venokur, of **dvGreen sustainable events**.



Old friends and new! Brenna McLoughlin of *Elegant Bride* magazine, Gloria Dawson of *The Daily Green*, Jessica Mischener of *Portovert* and *Inhabitat* and Rene Ebersole of *Audubon Magazine*.

Attendees included magazine editors, bloggers, ecofashionistas, fashion and graphic designers, brides-to-be, green enthusiasts and random passers-by, as well as the generous Housing Works staff and volunteers. **Housing Works** provides medical care, housing and legal assistance to people with HIV/AIDS who need help.

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Local, seasonal food was also served by the **Housing Works Catering Company**, who provided yum hors doeuvres

Danielle Venokur of **dvGreen** agreed that for some parts of a wedding, going green means it will cost more, but there are ways to integrate sustainability for a lower price tag. "You might have to be a bit more creative, or do more legwork, but sometimes it will actually cost you less—photography for example. Going digital and only printing the images you really want will save money and paper waste. A wedding website will cut down on paper and shipping," said Danielle. Then you can use those savings towards more ecofriendly transportation options.

"For anything that's a part of your wedding, you should be asking 'Where did this come from? Where does it go when I'm done with it?' If I can't get to the bottom of these questions," Danielle said, "I don't want to get involved with it."

When it comes to the dress, Leanne suggested borrowing was an ecofriendly and economical way to go, in keeping with the 'something borrowed' theme of the old bridal advice quartet. "A lot of brides want new dresses though, and there are some great ecofabrics out there to design with," she said.

**The panelists came together to give a list of the three most important "To Do's" for greening a wedding:**

1. Food (local, seasonal, organic, veggie/vegan)
2. Flowers (local, seasonal)
3. Invites (recycled paper, websites, soy or nontoxic ink)



The panel, l to r: Mireya, Leanne, Mary and Danielle

Food was a hot topic for the panel, with **Mary Cleaver** telling the audience about how when she got her start, it was hard to find local food in NYC. "Food came from California, even in the summer. There's been a tremendous growth in growing locally in the last 3-5 years. It's not just the impact of shipping the food, it's the flavor that's so much better with local," she said. She recommended Alice Water's **"The Delicious Revolution"** to those who were new to the local/organic/seasonal food table. All the panelists agreed that local, seasonal food was the way to go for a wedding dinner.

In addition to the panel, there were a number of NYC-based vendors who showed their wedding-appropriate wares:



Maryanne Loverme of **Wabisabi Jewelry**



**Wabisabi Jewelry** up close- this necklace is made from upcycled pennies with recycled images adhered to them.



I loved **Lovely Day Designs'** soy candles that are poured in vintage teacups- they make perfect party favors and are upcycled to boot!



**Fubabee Stationery** owner and designer, Lisa Fu; this stationery looked and felt gorgeous and is printed on 30-70% post-consumer recycled paper and is printed with ecofriendly inks



*The Green Wedding book on display*