

The Green Bride Guide: How to Create an Earth-Friendly Wedding on Any Budget

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As part of the wedding ceremony in many traditions, the soon-to-be couple drinks from the same cup. On her wedding day in 2007, the author created a new family tradition: she and her husband “were lucky to be able to use the same cup my parents used at their wedding in 1976.”

Not only was the bride able to check off the “borrowed” item from her “something old, something new” list, but she also did it the green way. An engraver simply added their names and the date. Harrison, who works in environmental law and policy, practices what she preaches.

When she and her environmental historian fiancé became engaged two years ago and began planning their own “green” wedding, they found that information was difficult to come by. They persevered, and Harrison shares what she discovered: “A green wedding is about making sustainable choices where possible and practical and doing what you can to lessen the impact of your event.”

Harrison covers everything, from the engagement to the honeymoon. For example, chapter three (“Here Comes the Eco-Chic Bride”) is further broken into segments covering gowns, shoes, veils, jewelry, hair, and make-up. She lists suggestions in ascending order of approximate cost.

Her least expensive alternative for a veil is to borrow one, or go one non-traditional route and convert a lace headscarf or table cover “into a beautiful veil (and no one needs to know).” Other ideas: real flowers, pearl or crystal hairpins, even ribbons or feathers.

Each chapter is filled with this much attention to detail. As a tech-savvy student of the Internet age, she offers multiple Web site addresses for resources. Harrison includes her own Web site, which offers updated product information, photos of “green” in her wedding, and even a question and answer section. Her narration style is very personable; it’s like sitting down with a friend to plan the Big Day.

Even if a wedding isn’t on the calendar, readers will find many of her ideas can be adapted to their own lifestyle, no matter the party or occasion. A list of all her sources, a recommended reading list, and “sustainability worksheets” which can be photocopied and used when choosing a location or caterer, etc., are all contained in the back of the book. Harrison’s hope is: “Do your best, enjoy the process, and know that every green element you choose makes a difference.”

ROBIN FARRELL EDMUNDS (November 17, 2008)

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