

BRIDE'S
Special Issue

Receptions

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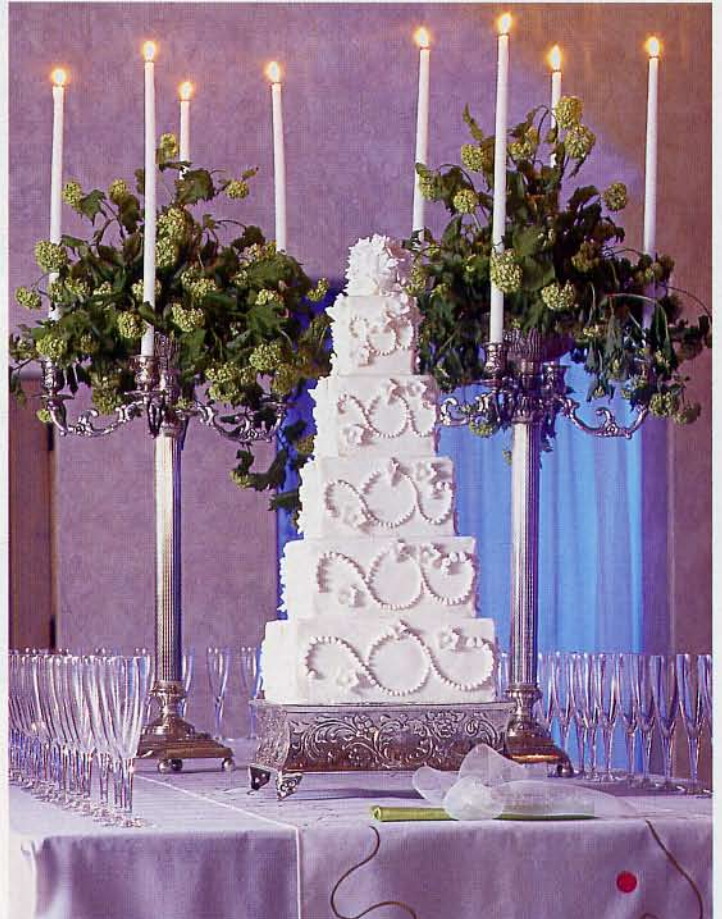
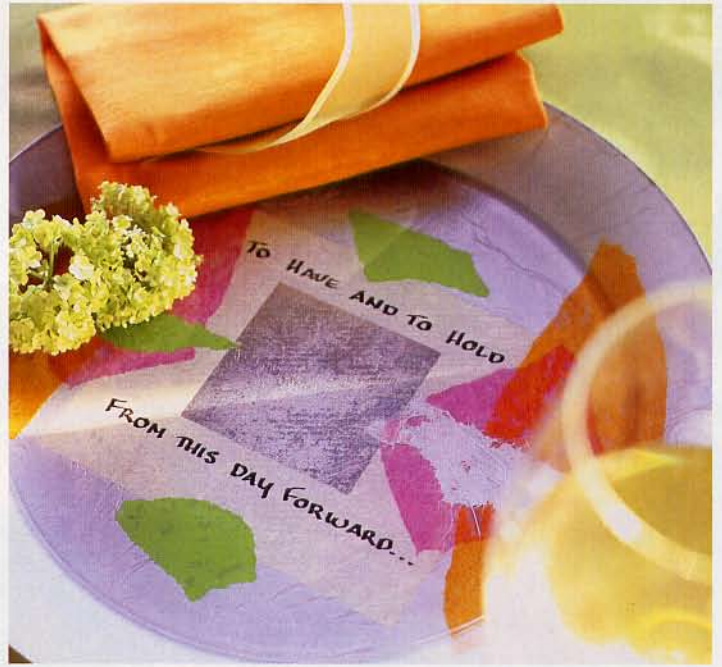
desert delight

A desert breeze fragrant with the scent of oranges. The warm, dusty earth tones basic to Spanish colonial style. Golden late-afternoon sunlight that melts into the crystalline sparkle of a million stars. There is everything to love about a reception that lets you feel that you and your guests have discovered a sensuous oasis in time and space.

Photography by
Gaby Zimmermann



Some natural settings, such as the color-shifting, low-lying mountains of the **SONORAN DESERT** in Arizona, don't need much enhancement to help create a romantic mood. Here, the pretty **ORANGE-TREE** theme in the runner and screen is inspired by the surrounding grove, where the ripe fruit hangs invitingly from the branches. A late-afternoon ceremony guarantees **GLORIOUS LIGHT** to bathe you in a flattering glow.



A Southwestern setting requires a bold design and color scheme to stand up to the intense natural shades and light of your surroundings. THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: Give guests a preview with **BRIGHTLY HUED INVITATIONS**. The food makes an equally vivid impact: Fresh fish and fruity California sauvignon blanc are preceded by tastings of bay shrimp with mango relish, and smoked salmon with caviar (serve them as starters in fumble-free individual teaspoons). "To have and to hold" chargers make special gifts for guests. The cake may be an ivory tower, but color has a role here as well, with a playfully looping design on the hand-painted table runner. **TALL CANDLESTICKS** add to the Spanish fantasy. OPPOSITE: **A TABLE GLORIOUSLY DRESSED** in lime green is topped with a centerpiece luxuriously layered with Circus, Orlando, and Miracle roses atop brilliant-green viburnums. Keep the color coming with brightly shaded linens and acid-green votive candleholders; miniature oranges strung on ribbons from the chairs add a quirky touch in keeping with the citrus theme. Sheer curtains permit a diffuse glow and invite soft breezes.

Prospecting for prices

- You can create the look of an expensive hand-painted aisle or table runner for less by using stencils of fruits and leaves to transform a length of canvas or linen into a piece of art.
- Hors d'oeuvres are labor-intensive; limiting your selections to just four delicious choices keeps your budget in check and your guests happily munching. Go for a variety of tastes.
- If your heart is set on a desert resort locale but you can't swing the rates, consider having your celebration in the weeks just before or after high season, when the prices tend to be lower but the weather is generally excellent.



Flavorful food and
desert-bright
colors bring a
Southwest-style
celebration
brilliantly to life