

I-do-it-yourself wedding ideas

BY SARAH E. WHITE

Do-it-yourself projects have been booming over the past few years, and the trend has struck the wedding market with a bang. Brides on a budget or those who want a truly unique wedding experience can now find many books offering advice. From making your own décor and invitations to baking your own wedding cake, these books are sure to inspire a perfectly personal event.

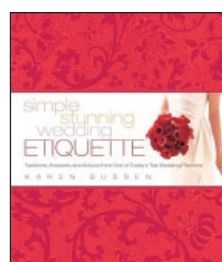


Beauty on a budget

Crafts of all sorts have made a huge resurgence right along with the DIY trend, and women who knit, sew or are otherwise crafty will want to incorporate some of that into their wedding (and save a little money in the process). Khris Cochran's **The DIY Bride: 40 Fun Projects for Your Ultimate One-of-a-Kind Wedding** (Taunton, \$19.95, 224 pages, ISBN 9781561589647) provides inspiration and projects for save-the-date cards, invitations, jewelry and accessories, ceremony decorations, programs, favors and more. Cochran, who founded the website DIYBride.com, also provides a cost comparison to show how much a similar item would cost if purchased in a store, allowing busy couples to decide whether it would be better to buy or make certain projects. A hair ornament for a flower girl, for example, costs about \$5 to make but would cost about \$40 to buy. **The DIY Bride** provides clear instructions and suggests whether a project could be completed by the couple themselves, with the help of the wedding party or with members of the family, offering clever ideas and the potential for fun invitation-building parties with friends.

It's the money, honey

Bringing all the pieces of a dream wedding together can be difficult no matter how organized a couple is. Staying on budget can be even trickier, as there's always one more detail (and expense) to add. **Rich Bride, Poor Bride: Your Ultimate Wedding Planning Guide** (Wiley, \$24.95, 224 pages, ISBN 9780470154465) aims to help couples stick to their priorities and their budgets. Based on the WE television show "Rich Bride, Poor Bride," this general wedding planning guide contains tips from couples and wedding planners who have seen everything. The book emphasizes the importance of having a wedding planner, since their experience with vendors allows couples to stay on budget and keeps them from having to deal with last-minute details. But even for those who don't hire a planner, **Rich Bride, Poor Bride** offers advice from the pros that will be useful in getting to the ceremony with finances and sanity intact.



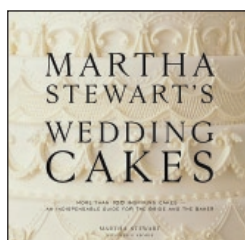
Minding p's and q's

There's a lot of tradition behind the wedding ceremony, and while some of that can be tossed aside in favor of what makes the couple happy, it's useful to have a guide to explain how things should be done. **Simple Stunning Wedding Etiquette: Traditions, Answers, and Advice from One of Today's Top Wedding Planners** (Stewart, Tabori & Chang, \$19.95, 128 pages, ISBN 9781584796497) by Karen Bussen, follows in the footsteps of Bussen's other books by pairing useful information with beautiful photos. From handling pushy parents to wording the wedding invitation, from talking about prenuptial agreements to canceling the event, this guide covers the basics of etiquette for the modern wedding. It also covers wedding showers, putting together a non-traditional ceremony and planning the reception. **Simple Stunning Wedding Etiquette** serves as a reminder that the right thing to do in almost any situation is the thing that makes the people who are important to you most comfortable.

Fresh from the oven

Martha Stewart provides some do-it-yourself inspiration in her new book with Wendy Kromer, **Martha Stewart's Wedding Cakes: More Than 100 Inspiring Cakes** (Clarkson Potter, \$60, 260 pages, ISBN 9780307394538). While there may not be many brides who have both the skills and interest necessary to make their own cakes, all brides will benefit from learning how cakes are put together and what to consider before ordering one. Stewart and Kromer suggest basing your choice on the style of wedding, the season, a stylistic element of the wedding or the wedding's location. Brave souls who do want to go it alone will find recipes for several of the cakes and a section explaining how to bake, decorate and transport them. For everyone else, the 100 color photos and detailed descriptions of fillings, icing and embellishments serve as a great jumping-off point for a discussion with a professional cake baker. ♡

Sarah E. White put together the invitations and programs for her wedding.



A whale of a job: training your spouse

BY JAY MACDONALD

For those who have ever said of a spouse or partner, "Can't live with them, can't live without them," Amy Sutherland offers a third option: train them. The Boston-based writer had been immersed for a year in the world of exotic animal training when the light went on: Why not try these progressive training techniques on my husband, family and friends? After all, humans are just a DNA twist or two away from jungle creatures, and they bite less frequently (on average).

In her new book, **What Shamu Taught Me About Life, Love, and Marriage: Lessons**



Amy Sutherland and friends

for People from Animals and Their Trainers (Random House, \$18, 208 pages, ISBN 9781400066582), Sutherland surveys the training techniques behind SeaWorld and Siegfried & Roy and finds, to her surprise, that they are equally effective on her husband, Scott, and assorted other humans. What's more, they tend to be far kinder than the clumsy techniques we use at home.

Let's start with the obvious: Why Shamu, as opposed to a fox or ferret?

The *New York Times* selected Shamu for the headline of the column my book is based

on, but it was such a good fit I kept it for the book title. That humans have been able to train killer whales, the ocean's top predator, speaks to the wonders that progressive animal training can accomplish.

Many of these techniques run counter to the way we train animals, kids, and yes, even spouses. What are we doing wrong?

We use punishment too much, and in hundreds of little ways we aren't aware of. In doing that, we often discourage behavior we want. It also erodes our relationships. We'll never stop using punishment, we are primates after all, but I hope this book encourages people to at least lay off a little.

What was your scariest moment during the research?

While doing my research I got to pet cheetahs, walk alongside cougars and kiss a couple sea lions (really soggy smooches). I was always super-cautious, but only once was I scared. One day, as a student took Rosie the baboon for a leash walk, an awning flap blew against her and scared her. She screamed, jumped around and showed her teeth. Baboons are freakishly strong and the student was relatively inexperienced, but to his credit he calmed Rosie down pretty quickly.

Humans assume that because we have speech, we communicate much better than other animals. Not true?

Well, we underestimate how much animals communicate and overestimate how much we do. We are terribly lazy and over-rely on the power of speech. Working with animals forces you to learn how to read body language and behavior. That done, you see how that says volumes.

The notion of "training" one's spouse seems somewhat cold.

Spouses have been calculating how to change each other's behavior ever since homo erectus stood up and thought, "Wow, this is a lot more comfortable." I realized I already was essentially "training" my husband, but in a very ham-fisted way that often blew up in my face. Lucky for me, animal trainers showed me a much more effective, not to mention kinder, way.

Did it change your dynamics?

Yes, for the better. We're more appreciative of each other. There's just a lot less daily wear and tear, and snarling. I nag less. He bosses less. The small animal kingdom of our house is much more peaceful.

Based on our cultural norms, who are the better innate trainers, men or women?

I'm not sure if either is a better innate trainer. Women are more motivated, I think. Men can and do use dominance to get what they want. That doesn't work nearly as well with women, so they are more likely to turn to diplomacy, which training basically is.

How would you solve the current debate over spanking a child?

Well, progressive trainers would rarely, if ever, hit an animal because that's clearly punishment, which can create more problems than it solves. They realize that the blow would damage their relationship with the animal and, if used too often or thoughtlessly, would lose its effect. So whether it's wrong or right, spanking, from an animal trainer's perspective, is a flawed technique. Better to try something else.

Did your immersion into progressive training leave you with a generally optimistic view of the world?

Very much so. First, to see that these behavioral principles work across all species, us included, speaks to the great web of life. I am happy to be so clearly reminded that I am a member of the animal kingdom. What works on Shamu works on me. ♡

