

[WEDDING, ENGAGEMENT, ANNIVERSARY & COMMITMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS]

TOGETHER

Sweets for the Sweet

Exquisite desserts join the wedding cake at the reception

Sugar is sweet, and this season, wedding receptions are getting sweeter, too, as dessert tables become more ubiquitous than chocolate in Willy Wonka's factory. Though the dessert buffet is certainly not new, couples are satisfying their sweet teeth — and indulging their guests — with a variety of fresh ideas.

Whether it's a decadent candy buffet, playful root beer float shots or a chic dessert display with color-coordinated Parisian *macarons* and truffles, there are many delicious trends on the rise.

According to Barbara Brass, VP of catering for Wolfgang Puck Catering, sweets tables are fast becoming the norm. "I haven't done a single wedding in the past year that hasn't had a dessert buffet," she said.

Among Wolfgang Puck's signature treats are cheesecake truffles, warm Valrhona molten chocolate cakes, *crème brûlée* tarts and cheesecake cones.

Savvy event planners are stepping up to fulfill the sweet desires of brides and grooms, but one dessert table designer who stands out is Amy Atlas. Known for its chic color palettes, the New York-based Amy Atlas Events has created stunning event displays for the likes of Oprah Winfrey and is now doing events in Los Angeles as well.

Nothing less than edible art, Atlas' displays often consist of treats such as hand-painted truffles, artisan marshmallows and cookie ornaments strung from whimsical craft trees.

According to Atlas, brides love everything to be coordinated, from invitations to favors. "A dessert table may be the lasting impression guests will have of the event, so why not do it up?"

"It's a great way to personalize your wedding," said Beverly Hills event planner Mindy Weiss, adding that, "people love dessert."

Some of Weiss' favorites include ice cream sundae bars provided by Van Nuys' Dandy Don's HomeMade Ice Cream, ice cream sandwich bars by



1. Coolhaus ice cream sandwiches come in myriad combinations of flavors. Photo by Brian Leatart.
2. Popular for dessert tables, Parisian *macarons* are French delicacies made with ground almonds. Photo courtesy of Wolfgang Puck Catering.
3. This dessert table by Amy Atlas was inspired by the couple's wedding invitations' cherry blossom tree motif. Photo by Gemma Comas.

L.A.-based Coolhaus and warm made-on-the-spot doughnuts by the Fry Girl Inc. of L.A.

When to serve these extra treats is all up to the sugar-pushers ... er, couple.

Dessert buffets may appear with the wedding cake, but the sweets can also show up throughout the evening. Weiss often has her staff deliver warm chocolate chip cookies and milk to guests on the dance floor as a sweet respite.

Jacqueline Sorkin of Los Alamitos' Custom Candy Buffet Bars finds candy smorgasbords to be great conversation starters.



"People stand around the candy bar and talk about all their favorites that they haven't had since they were kids," she said.

"I don't know what it is about a table full of sweets," said Sorkin, "but even the oldest guests turn into kids again."

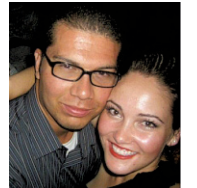
— Jennifer Evans Gardner
Special Advertising Sections Writer

BRYANT - CUE



Erin Bryant of Little Rock, AR and Zachary Cue of San Diego, CA will be married on July 24, 2010 on the campus of UCLA. The couple met before beginning their graduate programs in Education. Currently, Zachary teaches at West Adams Preparatory High School, while Erin continues her doctoral program. The couple is excited about their new journey and look forward to celebrating this momentous occasion with family and friends.

VILLA-STREICKER



Eric Villa of Torrance California and Nicole Striecker of Long Beach California announce their engagement which occurred on August 1st 2009. The young couple, both at 24 years of age, are ready to start their new life together and arrange to be married on March 21st 2010. Grounded by love and a solid spiritual foundation, they plan to live in union with one another forever!

CHAVEZ - MENDIAZ



Julio Chavez & Valerie Mendiaz are pleased and proud to announce their engagement to be married on Saturday May 22nd, 2010 during an intimate ceremony in Burbank, California

Your good wishes will be in our hearts on this beautiful day.

MAKARENCO MONTES



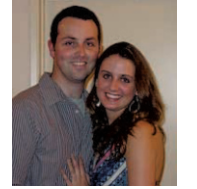
Marcia Makarenco of Pacific Palisades announces the engagement of her daughter, Nicole Makarenco, to Jose Luis Montes of Peru. Nicole, a summa cum laude graduate of Ohio Wesleyan Univ. & San Diego State Univ. (MA) is a speech-language pathologist. Jose Luis, a graduate of Instituto Superior Antonio Lorena, works in the tourist industry. An August wedding is planned in Peru where they met in 2008.

LINQUI - PALOMINO



Yeni Linqui and Diego Palomino together with their families are happy to announce their engagement. A fairytale wedding is planned for April at the Disneyland Hotel. Miss Linqui is a 2003 graduate from the University of California-Santa Cruz and is a Community Organizer for the EHC. Mr. Palomino is 1998 graduate from La Jolla High School and is a Chief Operations Officer for Legacv. APC.

SANTOIANI-GLAZIER



Jenna Santoianni, daughter of John and Francine Santoianni, will be married on September 4, 2010 to Sean Glazier, son of Patrick and Debbie Glazier. Jenna works in the feature film industry and is a graduate of Marquette University. Sean is a personal finance planner and attended the Ohio State University. Sean proposed to Jenna on October 23, 2009 and they plan on celebrating their marriage in Redondo Beach over Labor Day weekend.

ONG - PETERSON



Mr. and Mrs. Leoncio Ong of Yorba Linda, California, announce the engagement of their daughter, Lana Evangeline Ong to Jeffrey Scott Peterson, son of Mr. and Mrs. David Peterson of Goodyear, Arizona. An April wedding is planned.

(Don't) Let Them Eat Cake

For many brides, a white wedding cake is an integral element of the dream wedding, along with the white dress and dashing groom. However, today's couples love to shake up tradition, which means that the conventional cake is no longer a given. Rather, couples are choosing their own "cakes," which could be anything from a tower of cupcakes to sugary doughnuts.

Cupcakes have been enjoying their moment in the sun — some say ever since "Sex and the City's" Carrie Bradshaw made them hip by eating a pink-frosted one in front of New York's Magnolia Bakery — and there is no sign the trend is waning. "Cupcakes have become part of the familiar language of our culture," said Tyra Abrams, owner of Magnolia Bakery, who plans to open a Magnolia Bakery in Los Angeles this spring. "It makes sense that these lovely little cakes would attract the attention of brides-to-be."

Abrams added that "cupcake trees are an affordable way to create a visually stunning and delicious wedding dessert."

They're also practical. "There is no need for plates, forks or a catering staff," said Amy O'Kane, the owner of the year-old Amy



A tower of chocolate Merlot cupcakes by Amy Bakes Cupcakes. Photo by Ken Kienow.

Bakes Cupcakes in San Luis Obispo.

Another reason cupcakes are popular? "They're more fun," said O'Kane, laughing. "You don't have to pick just one flavor." With her wine country-esque flavors of chocolate Merlot and blackberry port, choosing just one might prove impossible.

But cupcakes aren't the only cake alternatives. Here are some others:

Croquebouché

The traditional French wedding cake isn't a cake at all, but a croquebouché (translation: crunch in the mouth). This stunning tower of profiteroles (cream puffs) makes an exquisite wedding gâteau. Huguette Coffyn, owner of Maison Richard in L.A., often gets requests for this pastry masterpiece, though they usually come from a bride or groom who is French, she said.

Parisian treats

Delicate almond meringue-based Parisian *macarons* have been the rage in Paris since Pierre Desfontaines (of the famous Ladurée Paris tea salon) had the idea of sandwiching ganache or jam in between the cookies in the

1930s. So it was only a matter of time before they came into their own in the United States.

Paulette Koumetz, co-owner of the Paulette macaron bakery in Beverly Hills, said macaron towers are "a hit for parties" and "for weddings, too." Though the *macarons* come in vivid hues and flavors such as violet cassis, New Orleans praline and Earl Grey tea, Paulette makes a sweet wedding almond macaron that makes a stunning *pièce montée*.

Cookies, doughnuts and pies, oh my

Now that the cake is not a given, couples are choosing all kinds of sweets to serve. "American Pie" actor Jason Biggs and actress Jenny Mollen, for instance, chose a multi-tiered Rice Krispies treat as their "wedding cake."

Though wedding cakes won't be riding into the sunset any time soon, it's nice that there are alternatives. As Abrams said, "The boundaries of how we define 'tradition' at weddings have expanded."

And for those who prefer the old traditions ... well, let them eat cake.

— Jennifer Evans Gardner
Special Advertising Sections Writer

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CHO-OSTROWSKI



Patricia Cho, daughter of Dr. & Mrs. Byung Won Cho of Rolling Hills Estates, CA, and James Ostrowski, son of Mr. & Mrs. James Ostrowski of Boca Raton, FL were engaged while vacationing in Mexico in September 2009. They are planning their wedding for May 2010 in Palos Verdes, CA.

HOLBROOK - MILLER



Meghan Ann Holbrook, daughter of Chuck and Linda, and David Harold Miller, son of Alan and Susanne, are engaged to be married next September in Paso Robles, California. Meghan and David look forward to a life of love, laughter, shop projects, dog park trips, traveling, and so much more. The happy couple would like to thank their friends and family (especially Lacey and Lola) for believing in this match made in heaven from the start. FINALLY!

HATFIELD-VOWELS



Preston Vowels made Katie Hatfield laugh and they fell in love even though they lived 200 miles apart. Their love grew stronger despite poor cell phone reception. After countless trips up and down the 405, they finally moved to the same town. He asked her to marry him while they were taking a ride on their beach cruisers. They will marry on a ranch in San Diego in April 2010. They can't wait to celebrate with their loved ones and start their new life together.

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