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Eco-friendly beauty treatments for winter

When temperatures drop, our hair and skin often become dry from exposure to the elements, according to the Smart2BeGreen Web site. Use natural shampoos, which leave out harsh chemicals that make hair dryer. Organic moisturizers keep skin refreshed, made from ingredients such as olive oil, almond butter and cocoa. And pick up chapstick made from beeswax or peppermint to avoid putting harmful additives near where you ingest food.

Environmentally friendly 'I do'

Planning a green wedding easier than you think

By Juliette Funes Staff Writer

Trying to plan a green wedding can be difficult, but it can be done. And inexpensively, too. Just ask Kate Harrison.

When she was planning her wedding three years ago, Harrison, an environmentalist, had a hard time finding the information to create an eco-friendly event.

"My husband and I wanted to have a wedding that was in line with our values and beliefs — and that was to have as little impact on the planet as possible," she said.

With few local vendors to choose from, Harrison looked for earth-friendly alternatives.

She chose a local venue and locally grown flowers. She bought a used pair of Vera Wang shoes on eBay and a wedding dress she recycled and donated to Brides Against Breast Cancer.

Depending on what choices a couple makes and how many green elements are incorporated, Harrison said a green wedding can save a couple up to 40 percent of the cost of a traditional wedding.

To make it easier for environmentally conscious couples to plan their own green weddings, Harrison released "The Green Bride Guide: How to Create an Earth-Friendly Wedding on Any Budget," a comprehensive resource full of green products, services and information.

"This was a book that I had really wanted to have while we were planning," Harrison said. "I wanted to make it easier for everyone to go green by compiling a small list of local green vendors."

The book, released last year, has chapters on ceremony locations and receptions, seasonal flower decor, recycled invitations and local organic food.

And Harrison launched The Green Bride Guide Web site in October to keep up with the rapidly growing green market.

One of the stores listed in the directory is Pasadena-based InviteSite.



The Angelica style invitation, by Pasadena-based InviteSite. InviteSite creates do-it-yourself invitations made from tree-free paper and 100 percent post-consumer recycled paper.

Photos courtesy InviteSite

InviteSite creates do-it-yourself invitations made from tree-free paper and 100 percent post-consumer recycled paper.

"I wanted to bring back the old beauty and reintroduce paper that wasn't made out of trees," said Helen Driscoll, one of the owners of InviteSite.

For 15 years, Driscoll has made it her mission to make wedding invitations drop-dead gorgeous, using vegetable-based ink, recycled paper and packing material made of dissolvable cornstarch.

InviteSite even makes plantable wedding invites, with Cosmo or marigold seeds embedded in the paper.

E-mailing invitations "tends to put off people who really want to do something green," she said. "The handmade papers and the tree-free papers are really beautiful and work



Photo courtesy EcoChoices Natural Living Store

These pajamas, in natural and charcoal, come in women's and men's sizes and are made of organic cotton. They are available at EcoChoices Natural Living Store in Glendora.



The Plum Seedling invitation, by Pasadena-based InviteSite.

well with the invitations."

Another store in the directory is EcoChoices Natural Living Store in Glendora, which helps create a nontoxic environment where couples can eat, sleep and live.

They sell organic and eco-friendly products for the home, such as natural soy and beeswax candles, bamboo and organic towels, organic wool and cotton sheets, energy-efficient refrigerators and biodegradable trash bags.

Mireya Navarro, an environmental writer for the New York Times, has also given some green direction to couples in her book, "Green Wedding: Planning Your Eco-Friendly Celebration."

"It's easier than people think. It is not a plan or checklist of things to do, but simply looking for the alternative that is more envi-

ronmentally sound to whatever element of the wedding you're planning," Navarro said.

A lot of couples are incorporating green elements without being completely green, she said.

Choosing local, seasonal food instead of meat reduces both the carbon footprint and expenses. Setting the wedding in a park also saves expenses on flowers.

"In looking for ways to hold a simpler wedding, many of the choices are going to be green," Navarro said. "Just by downsizing the guest list is green in itself."

Having trade-offs to avoid waste is the key to saving money and being environmentally conscience, Navarro said.

"It's not about giving up anything," she said. "It's a question of rethinking the wedding, and always asking yourself is there a more eco-friendly alternative to consider."

Navarro and Harrison said green weddings can be a learning experience for both the couple and guests.

"It's a chance to educate hundreds of people on how they can go green in their own lives in a way they never thought about," Harrison said. "It really is a statement about the kind of people you are, the kind of life you want together, and the kind of lives you're going to provide for your children and your planet."

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