



The Daily Gleaner

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It's a Nice Day for a Green Wedding!

Are you planning a summer wedding or know someone who is? Well, you are not alone - summer is upon and that means it's the season for nuptials. But have you ever wondered what the environmental footprint of that one glorious day in the spotlight might be? Two friends of mine and recent newlyweds, Stephanie and Shane, certainly thought about it. And this spring they made every effort to have a wedding with minimal impact on the environment. I was so impressed with their attention to 'green' detail that I wanted to share it with our readers. If you think it might be a daunting task, it's not; here's how they did it.

One of their main goals was to create as little waste as possible. This started with the invitations. Using a popular website called e-vite.com, wedding invitations were sent out electronically and in fact, all communication about the wedding went out through email. This small gesture eliminated any waste of paper; especially considering that wedding invitations are often printed on metallic and/or heavy glossy paper, which is not always recyclable.

Next up for the couple, registering gifts. The bride and groom specifically used two local and independent businesses as their primary source for gift registry. The gifts they chose to register for were made from natural/organic/sustainable fibres, such as bamboo linens, salad bowls, eco-friendly frying pans, etc.

The décor of the reception hall was simple and beautiful. Locally grown and in-season tulips were used in the bouquets and as centrepieces on the tables. The bride's friends decorated the hall with beautiful flower baskets, and satin sashes (made by the mother-of-the-groom) draped the tables for a splash of colour and elegance. They specifically chose not to use balloons, and candles provided most of the lighting. Move over Martha Stewart - this simple but defining décor throughout the room was absolutely stunning!

For the reception, only real cutlery, glassware and plates were used. And because the start time of the wedding and reception was later in the evening, appetizers were served rather than full meals. I often find that so much food is wasted at wedding receptions, so this detail seemed to me to be a very smart decision. Being cautious of the type of food served, many vegetarian options were presented and leftover food was used for brunch the next morning.

To top it all off, the wedding cake, which in my experience usually doesn't get eaten either, didn't go to waste at all. A friend made a chocolate cupcake tiered wedding cake for the couple, so it was cupcakes for dessert and believe me none of it went to waste! And on top of that, the cupcake display structure was made of recycled wood from the couple's house renovations.

As parting gifts, rather than giving out something that would sit in a drawer and later get thrown away, the couple offered a gift that would live on...we planted our tree seedling at 2:30am after the reception. And it seems to be enjoying its new home on our front lawn.

Stephanie is a yoga instructor and her own business is one of Fredericton's Green Shops (www.greenshopsfredericton.com), so it is no surprise that the natural world and respect for it has great significance in her life. The wedding took place along the path at Killarney Lake. The natural setting set the atmosphere for the rest of the evening and was in the true spirit of what embodies this couple and their beliefs. It was truly a magical evening – and an event they can both be proud of as ‘treading lightly upon this good earth’.

Valerie Hillier is a Frederictonian who also tries to tread lightly; and notices when other people do too! If you have a topic you would like our Green Matters writers to write about e-mail us at greenmatters@fredericton.ca.