

BRIDE & GROOM™

Spring/Summer 2009

Magazine

50

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MADE TO MEASURE

Small weddings with big style

by Andrea E. McHugh

Surrounded by family and just a few very close friends, Tracey Manzi and Timothy McNamara tied the knot overlooking Newport's First Beach on the veranda of the luxurious Chanler at Cliff Walk.

Alternate Angles/www.alternateangles.com

Toula Portokalos, the notorious bride-to-be in the box office blockbuster, *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, wouldn't have a prayer at pulling off what many engaged couples are doing these days: keeping their guest lists small to make way for more extravagant events. Intimate, boutique or cozy... no matter what you call these smaller gatherings, their more concise guest lists are allowing luxury-seeking couples to plan more lush weddings featuring multi-course menus, fine wines or elaborate event design, to name a few. So whether your desire is for an opulent event or simply for some lavish elements, the planning options a smaller guest list can afford are numerous.

Here are a few.

Inspired by Nantucket's whaling history, Karen Bartolomei of Grapevine Paperie fashioned a hard-cover whaler's journal wedding invitation complete with custom nautical illustrations, a monogram, hand lettered calligraphy and gold detailing on the book's cloth cover.

Accoutrements

According to Karen Bartolomei, owner and creative director of Grapevine, a paperie and invitation design studio in Boston, interest is shifting toward wedding invitations that make a statement. "Recently, I have noticed brides are turning again to vintage artwork, mixing patterns with crests or monograms engraved in metallic inks on luxurious four-ply invitation cards with hand-painted edges, or deeply letterpressed in multiple colors on soft cotton rag paper with matching custom envelope liners," she said.

Though every bride and groom wants their wedding invitation to make an impression, those with a guest list of 20, 30 or 40 may find more flexibility within their wedding budget and, thus, opportunities to create jaw-dropping, one-of-a-kind invites. "Many couples choose to personalize their intimate wedding celebrations through completely couture paperie suites starting with save-the-dates and invitations and finishing with personalized thank-you notes," continued Bartolomei. "Though the fixed design and printing costs are spread out over a smaller number of pieces, which means the cost per piece is higher,



Revy Yobai, Documentary Photographer / www.revy.com