

# Elegant Bride

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## paper perfection

Invitation designer Karen Bartolomei delivers supremely stylish wedding stationery **By Zibby Right**

**SAYING THAT PAPERIE COORDINATOR** Karen Bartolomei of Boston-based Grapevine provides good customer service is an understatement. Bartolomei gets to know her brides intimately through her "Exclusive Invitation Design" process, creating gorgeous save-the-dates, invitations and programs, and strives for absolute perfection. She's been known to send items back to the printers five times to get the color just right. Bartolomei even books (refundable) plane tickets to clients' weddings in case any last-minute paper issues arise. "But I haven't had to use a ticket yet!" she says. Her one-stop shop for all customized-paper needs ensures that brides won't have to look anywhere else. With her passion and imagination, we don't know why they would.

### TOP TIPS FOR ELEGANT BRIDES

**CHOOSE ONE STATIONERY DESIGNER.** Work with her throughout your planning period to minimize stress. (Using different companies for your save-the-dates and invitations, for instance, makes color matching a challenge.)

**USE CUSTOM MAPS.** They're a unique keepsake item for your guests and they generate excitement about what's to come. Bartolomei hand-draws whimsical maps and has a cartographer at the ready for more traditional versions.

**PERSONALIZE YOUR FAVORS.** Bartolomei once created alternating tags with the couple's names that said "Brian loves Kate" and "Kate loves Brian".

**BE CREATIVE WITH YOUR SIGN-IN BOOK.** For her own wedding, Bartolomei (a huge movie buff), had guests sign their names by their favorite quotes or movies in the book *Hollywood: A Celebration*. "It's still on my coffee table and friends keep adding to it," she says.

**CONSIDER YOUR TABLE MARKERS.** While venues typically provide standard signs, they "clash with the table design and seriously detract from your centerpieces," Bartolomei says. Instead, she creates silk-covered easels that blend in.

### BARTOLOMEI'S FAVORITE THINGS



Add an element of fun to your guest book with a unique pen. Billiard ball pen, \$26, by H&H Pens.



Put keepsake maps in your invitations or tuck them into guests' welcome baskets. Custom maps, price upon request, by Grapevine.



For a festive send-off, offer guests scoops of biodegradable, water-soluble confetti. Ecofetti, \$8 for 25 scoops, from Ecoparti. Silk tossing cone, \$8, by Grapevine.

Look to the pros for wedding-design inspiration. *Signature Weddings: Creating a Day Uniquely Your Own*, \$50, by Michelle Rago.



# elegant touches



**BOUQUET** Accent a navy-and-white nautical color scheme with a fresh hue such as light, bright green. Berries and other green non-floral elements add texture to arrangements, and embellishments like the carefully chosen ribbons and anchor pin on this bouquet of hydrangeas, ornithogalums, hypericums and button mums, \$225, by Antheia, complement your decor.

## going nautical

*Infuse your wedding decor with a clean, classic look inspired by the sea*



## INVITATIONS

*all aboard*

**AIM FOR A LOOK** that's shipshape by using shades of blue from periwinkle to navy, a motif like a compass or a knot, or a rope tied around your invitations. A combination of custom calligraphy and illustrations are letterpressed on white card stock, by Karen Bartolomei for Grapevine. Enclosure cards in staggered heights tuck away into a wave-shaped pocket. To add to the nautical feel, the invitation is tied with periwinkle silk cord, \$6,000 for 100 sets. For a subtler look, use a classic combination of navy and white, like the triple-layered invitation ensemble enclosed in a deep-blue pocket folder, \$2,100 for 100 sets, from On Paper Press.