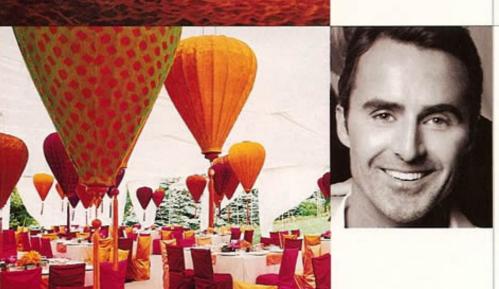## Bronson Van Wyck

✦ You're the host, so act like it. Greet guests as they arrive and see to their physical needs — food and drink. Move on to the spiritual needs of interaction, connection, and affirmation. ✦ Mix and match. The biggest mistake a host can make is to invite the same old people or to invite too many guests who are alike. ✦ Keep your surroundings in mind. Don't invite the boss and his wife and seat them on a couch with plates on their laps. The environment you create is the most important element of any event. ✦ Remember the power of surprise. If guests think they are coming for a simple dinner, surprise them with a six-course meal.

Kate Edmonds

✦ Your invitation should give an indication of what a guest should expect. The paper, design, and font should reflect the level of seriousness of the event. Do we really need a black suede portfolio invitation for a child's 13th birthday party? ✦ A pet peeve of mine is being invited for a 2 p.m. wedding with a reception starting at 6 p.m.! Whether it is a wedding, a Bar Mitzvah, or an award ceremony, make sure that food and fun follow immediately. ✦ The selection of a great band is key to a successful event. Remember to ensure that the band will play softly during meals, and that the guests at no time will be blasted out of the room. ✦ If incorporating an animal in a wedding, make sure that no one in the bridal party is allergic!

Antony Todd

✦ Create a list of people who will interact well, especially for a seated dinner. (Caution: Your guests may never leave.) ✦ Be sure to spoil your guests. I love to serve two types of hors d'oeuvres —gravlax and crème fraîche and caviar — both on crisp blinis. ✦ Pay attention to detail with your atmosphere. Give thought to the music/entertainment. Mix up the music—opera with ambient grooves, jazz, and classic disco all work well together. ✦ I limit drinks to a deliciously small selection—one great cocktail with plenty of champagne and wine with a limited bar (vodka/gin/scotch/Campari) works very well.