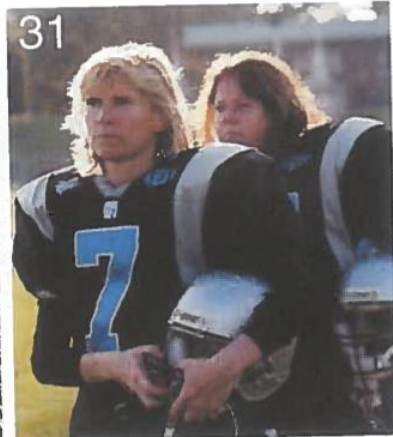


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ON THE COVER photo by amy chace

Michelle, age 29, is originally from Boston and moved to the Lower East Side a year ago. She keeps her body rockin' working as a bike messenger by day, and in the wee hours she is training to be a comedienne. She is currently single and searching for a woman with a sharp tongue and a clever wit.

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OUR VERY OWN NYC WEDDING RESOURCE GUIDE

FROM ATTORNEYS TO TUXEDOS, EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT PLANNING THE BIG DAY

BY CHLOE

WED MY FIRST WEDDING when I was ten years old and on the terrace of my childhood NYC home. Barbie wore her obnoxious pink confection, while Brunette Barbie sported a outfit (clearly a butch/femme couple). I would repeat the and then scream "Mazel Tov!" and break something. If Ken ven allowed at the wedding, he would just hold Barbie's veil ve drinks. Even then, I knew a man's place.

uch has changed for me. I would still choose Barbie over and I would still like a glamorous wedding overlooking attan. Sadly, as queers, we have no legal right to wed our ates. Although we can hold ceremonies that resemble of our heterosexual counterparts, a key piece of the puzzle sing—a marriage license that protects us.

getting active with projects like Lambda's Marriage Project (LambdaLegal.org) and organizations like MENY (www.marqualityny.org) is important, we should still wed "unlawfully" ve loud. Our unions are not just for place settings and s! Our ceremonies are political rallies and glorious tions—even if we think we are just decadently eating and dancing.

when we at GO NYC applaud you gals in love who want Sapphic knot. We are here to direct you towards gay or gayly businesses to help make your special day something out airy tale. Your entire wedding, from invitations to flowers, d reflect the personalities of you and your partner. Whether ant a simple affair in a backyard or a glittery extravaganza at aza, this will help you start your wondrous carpet ride.

ONDS ARE A GIRL'S BEST FRIEND

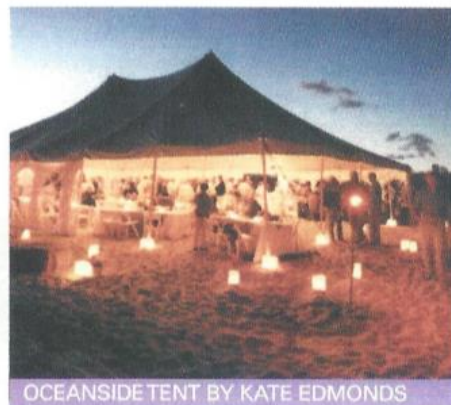
ding to the Gemological Institute of America, the value of a nd is determined by four separate factors - Color, Carat, Cut larity. Cruise 47th Street's many diamond jewelry booths to ur pricing homework before settling.

Clay Pot (800-989-3579, www.clay-pot.com) in Park Slope, lyn showcases handcrafted and absolutely unique rings. **Metal** (www.dedemetal.com) will specially design chunky r roll rings for you and your lovebug. **Fortunoff** (212-758- www.fortunoff.com) is an unpretentious alternative to

some of the grand jewelry houses along Fifth Avenue. The bon if you want to upgrade your ring later, the store's trade-up po allows you to apply what you paid toward the cost of a larger finer diamond. More of a rainbow stone kind of a gal? Check **Jewelry by Ponce** (800-969-RING) which specializes in super creations. If you're a die-hard traditionalist with a big budg **Tiffany & Co.** (212-755-8000, www.tiffany.com) offers an er floor of engagement jewelry at their flagship store.

MAKING IT LEGAL

While gay marriage is not yet legally binding, many couples op endow their partners with certain legal rights. Many attorney



OCEANSIDE TENT BY KATE EDMONDS



RESTAURANT

the city concentrate on lesbian and gay family law and es planning. Living wills, and domestic partnership agreem should be considered by any couple entering into a comm union. **Roz Quarto** (212-807-0900) and **Ruth Gursky** (212- 4445) are two out lesbian attorneys who specialize in these ar

INVITATIONS

There are invitations, and then there are *invitations*. Whe you are interested in a one-of-a-kind love-o-gram or a sir invite, your choices are unlimited. Commissioning a gra designer to conceptualize something special for you and partner-to-be is an affordable and truly personal option. **Dirty** (www.dirtyal.com) offers one-on-one design consulting. f your invitation artwork at **Prestone Printing** (212-334-5353) **Big City Graphics** (718-706-9670), queer-friendly printers do an efficient and fast job. If you want classic white raised

OH MAKE ME OVER

Bridal primping is a must for any blushing bride. **Avalon Salon and Spa** is a full service salon (212-337-1966) where you can get everything from manicures to anti-waterretention treatments before the big day. At **Carapan** (212-633-6220, www.carapan.com), the "Aromatherapy Rituals" combine massage, energy work and essential oils.

As for hair, I offer two words: plan ahead. Wear your hair up if you'll be dancing all night. Short-haired brides can consult a stylist about spicing it up for the special day, perhaps with tiny exotic flowers. Troye Evers at **Salon @ LES 21** (212-431-5443) is fantastic for elaborate up-do's. Too stressed to get to the salon? Lesbian hairstylist **Arzo Nazamy** (212-647-0625, arzo@ureach.com) will color, cut, and style you anytime and anyplace. Make-up artist **Dina Gregg** (www.DinaGregg.com) does amazing natural bride make-up.

BOOKS FOR THE D.I-Y BRIDE

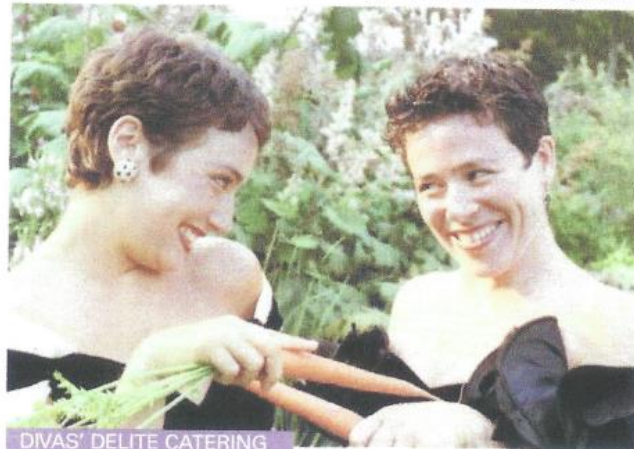
The Essential Guide to Lesbian and Gay Weddings by Ayers and Brown is the ultimate do-it-yourself planning guide. **The Anti-Bride Guide: Tying the Knot Outside of the Box** offers unusual ideas for brides looking for more than the standard fare. Check out **A Legal Guide for Lesbian and Gay Couples** (11th Ed.) by Curry, Clifford, and Hertz, to learn about domestic partner benefits, planning for medical emergencies, buying property together, providing for each other at death, and more.

WANT TO USE A PLANNER?

"I can plan the wedding myself." The infamous last words of certain personality types (you know who you are). Professional wedding planners are experienced in planning huge affairs. They can coordinate details or they can plan the whole affair for or with you. Try www.gayweddingplanners.com or **Lamor Wedding Center** (800-766-5991, www.lamorweddingcenter.com), planners for the LGBT community. Wedding planner extraordinaire **Kate Edmonds** (212-366-4447, contact@kateedmonds.com) can create your vision of the perfect day, from a small intimate affair to a dazzling reception for 500 guests. See her fabulous Q&A advice column in this issue. For information, www.twobrides.com, www.bridaltips.net, and www.civillywedd.com.

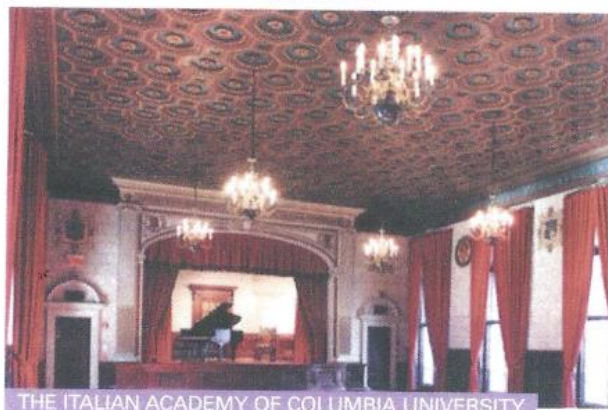
ALTERNATIVES

Donna and Luisa, a Staten Island couple with four children, got married at last year's NYC Gay and Lesbian parade with the group **The Wedding Party** (www.theweddingparty.org). Luisa says it was an "amazing" experience getting hitched with sixty other gay and lesbian couples. The Wedding Party is an organization that "celebrates same-sex partnership and creates events that draw national attention to and educates the public about the need for securing equal marriage rights for same-sex couples." This year, MENY and The Wedding Party will present NYC's second annual **Same-Sex Wedding Expo**.



DIVAS' DELITE CATERING

If you want to tie the knot on the beach, Cherry Grove in Fire Island is a short jaunt from NYC and is truly a lesbian paradise. Check out **The Cherry Grove Beach Hotel** (631-597-6600, www.grovehotel.com). Want to elope to Vermont? Visit www.gayweddings.com to find out how.



THE ITALIAN ACADEMY OF COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Newspaper announcements are de rigeur for Manhattan's high society. Since **The New York Times** now lists same-gender couples, you stand a chance to get in. See www.nytimes.com/ref/fashion/weddings/howtosubmitwedding.html for details. To announce your engagement to our community, place an announcement in one of the local papers or **GO NYC!** Be proud and tell the world about your love.

Gone are the days of trying to placate relatives still uncomfortable with the idea of queers. As lesbian activist Del Martin says, "Although we've been together almost forty years and own our home jointly, we've been told that legally, we are strangers...The time will surely come when same-sex relationships will no longer be a big deal—except to the individuals involved." Tell it on the mountain, girls.

CHLOE JO BERMAN (www.chloejo.com) is an event planner (GLOSS), writer, editor, and singer. She will one day wed her girlfriend in a Jewish extravaganza. You are all invited.