

# Weddings

NEW YORK

WINTER 2008/SPECIAL ISSUE

## The Perfect New York Wedding

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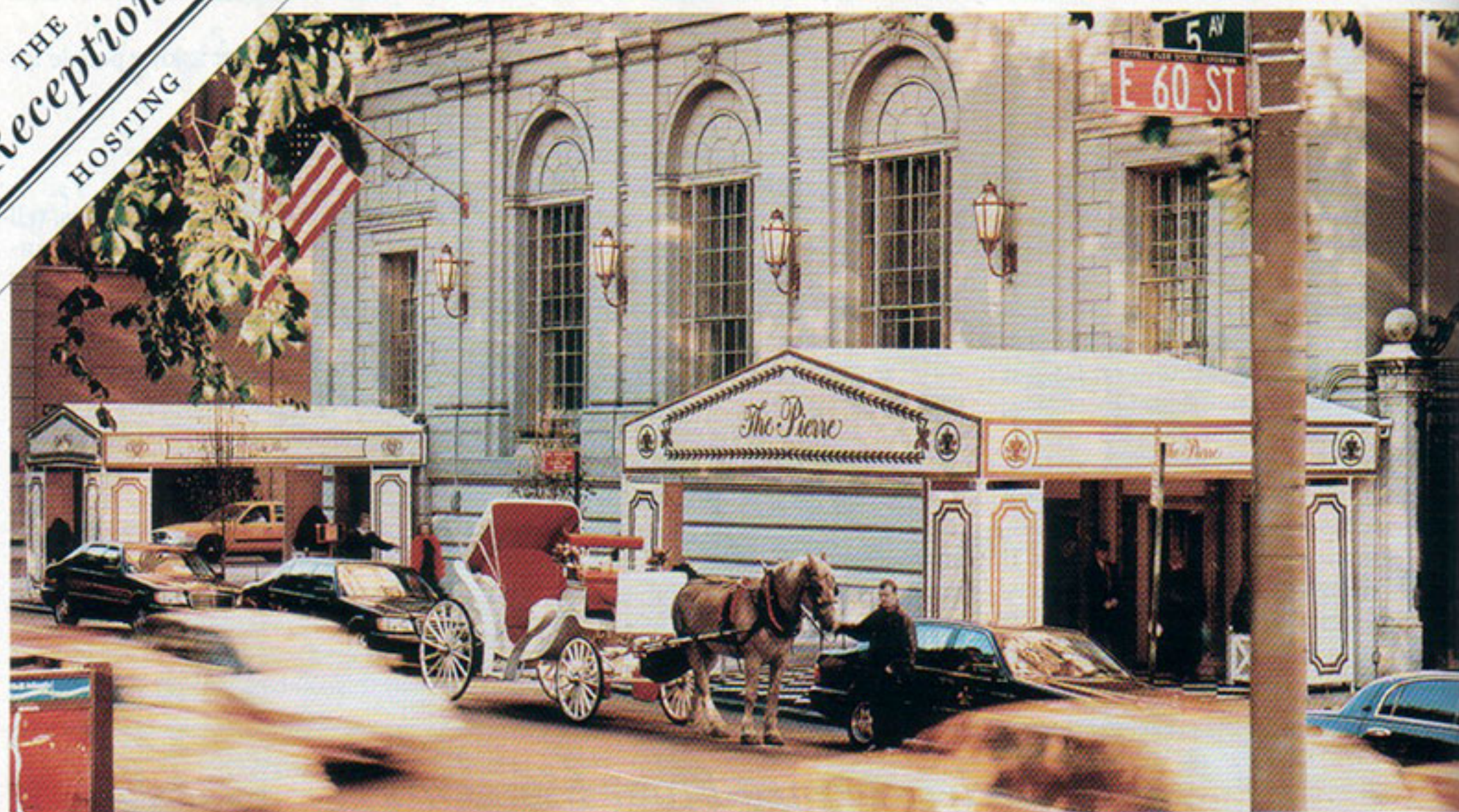
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## Welcome, Out-of-Towners

*How to be a good host when your local reception is a destination wedding for many of your guests.*

**F**IRST THINGS FIRST: Where will they sleep? Reserving your guests' lodging is more than a gracious gesture—it's expected. Start the process as soon as you choose your reception venue. A block is usually a minimum of ten rooms per night, and "the rate will be higher than what you'd currently find online but will definitely be lower than a month before the wedding, when most guests will call to book their rooms," says planner Xochitl Gonzalez of Always a Bridesmaid. Look for three hotels in the vicinity of your reception site. Don't let the criteria of convenience and budget overshadow taste—Hotel on Rivington's graffitied neighborhood may not be for everyone. Choose one hotel in each of three price ranges: \$150 to \$250 per night; \$250 to \$350; and \$400 and up. (Planner Loulie Walker suggests trying alum institutions like the Yale Club and the Harvard Club

for competitive rates.) If you're marrying in New York's high-season (September and October) be prepared: "Most hotels don't offer group blocks in those months, and when they do, they often require an 85-percent guarantee," says Gonzalez. Negotiate that clause out of the contract, as it means you're promising a certain amount of revenue even if you don't fill the rooms. When all is said and blocked, print the list of hotels as well as the date prior to which guests need to make reservations on your save-the-date card. Pop these in the mail up to six months in advance (nine months if your wedding is over a holiday). Usually guests pay for their accommodations, but if you want to pick up someone's tab, make it clear to the front desk that you're covering the room, not incidentals, lest a steep bill of late-night mini-bar raids and in-room tomfoolery land in your newlywed lap.

JACKIE SCHNEIDER

### VISITORS' SWAG

## Open Upon Arrival

WHILE FAVORS ARE AN UNNECESSARY expense, welcome bags for out-of-town guests are not. Don't skimp with a bottle of water and a bag of peanuts. (Are you really going to give them what they just had on the plane?). Also, "include a list of places that are significant to you—the restaurant where you had your first date, where he proposed, your favorite bookstore," says planner Soraya Jollon. If you've run out of time for such customization, co-opt these ideas.

DORIA SANTLOFER



### AN INSIDER'S GUIDE

An elegant little black book to jot notes in, with inconspicuous city maps inside, so they don't look like tourists (NYC Moleskine, \$17.95 at the Conran Shop; 212-755-9079).



### HOLD THE STINKY CHEESE

Locally made Z Crackers, from everyone's favorite cheese store, won't overperfume the room or ruin your guests' pre-wedding diets (\$4.99 at Murray's Cheese; 212-243-3289).

# ITINERARY

## The Thursday-to-Sunday Guide

SO YOUR GUESTS HAVE a place to stay. Now what will they do in all their spare time? Below, the luxe concierge service Quintessentially schedules an hour-by-hour, day-to-day hypothetical plan to keep out-of-town visitors entertained (and out of your hair) from check-in through Sunday brunch. When delivering the weekend's plans to your guests, just remember to make "optional" the operative word.

J. S.



Gramercy Park Hotel



### DAY 1: THURSDAY

#### 1. Gramercy Park Hotel

2 Lexington Ave., nr. 21st St.; 212-475-4320  
Check-in, 3 to 3:45 p.m.  
Room rates begin at \$500 per night.

#### 2. Okeanos Club Spa

211 E. 51st St., nr. Third Ave.; 212-223-6773  
Spa treatments, 4 to 5:30 p.m.  
Go to the spa for a co-ed Russian steam sauna with platza treatment. Half-day-long facility use (including sauna, steamroom, and lounge) is \$50 per person.

#### 3. Italian Wine Merchants

108 E. 16th St., nr. Irving Pl.; 212-473-2323

Private Italian wine-tasting and dinner, 8 to 10 p.m.

The private vintage room accommodates up to eight guests; the Studio del Gusto comfortably houses 20 to 125.

#### 4. Private Roof Club bar at the Gramercy Park Hotel

After-dinner drinks, 10:30 p.m. to midnight.  
Drink under a retractable glass roof; ogle art by Andy Warhol and Damien Hirst.

### DAY 2: FRIDAY

#### 1. Clay

25 W. 14th St., nr. Sixth Ave.; 212-206-9200  
Ladies' workout, 10 to 11:15 a.m.

Enter with a day pass (\$35) and sign up for the Body Wedge workout.

#### 2. The Golf Club at Chelsea Piers

Pier 59, 23rd St., at the Hudson River; 212-336-6400  
Guys' outing, 10 a.m. to noon.  
Hang out at the three-tiered outdoor driving range, open year-round, or take a private class (ball cards \$20 to \$100; club rentals \$4 to \$12).

#### 3. Blow

342 W. 14th St., nr. Eighth Ave.; 212-989-6282  
Blow-out for the ladies, 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.  
From \$40 per person.

#### 4. Pastis

9 Ninth Ave., nr. 11th St.; 212-929-4844  
Lunch, 1 to 2:30 p.m.  
Eat at a large communal table (for groups of up to 20) at Keith McNally's French bistro in the heart of the meatpacking district.

#### 5. Chelsea Art Gallery Tour, by Beyond Times Square

Chelsea Art Museum, 556 W. 22nd St., nr. Eleventh Ave.; museum: 212-255-0716; tour: 212-564-1001  
Private tour, 3 to 5 p.m.  
Take a two-hour customized tour of art galleries in Chelsea (for groups of 10; \$45 per person).

#### 6. Country

The Carlton Hotel, 90 Madison Ave., nr. 29th St., second fl.; 212-889-7100  
Rehearsal dinner, 8 to 11 p.m.  
Host it in the upstairs open-kitchen dining

room (for 10 to 120 seated; from \$125 per guest for prix fixe).

### DAY 3: SATURDAY

#### 1. North Cove Marina

World Financial Center at Battery Park; 212-619-0885  
Brunch sail, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Take a trip on the Shearwater, an 82-foot private sailboat, with a full brunch served. Carries up to 48 passengers including captain and crew (\$79 per person).

#### 2. Gramercy Park Hotel

Frédéric Fekkai stylists do hair and makeup in guests' rooms, 2 to 5 p.m.  
Blow-outs start at \$70 per person.

#### 3. 632 Hudson

632 Hudson St., nr. Jane St.; 212-620-7631  
Reception, catered by Neuman's Catering, 8 p.m. to midnight.

#### 4. Marquee

289 Tenth Ave., nr. 26th St.; 646-473-0202  
After-Party, 12:30 a.m.  
Dance and drinks, \$15 cocktails. Cover is \$20 per person; call months before for table reservations.

### DAY 4: SUNDAY

#### 1. Freeman's

End of Freeman Alley, off Rivington St., nr. the Bowery; 212-420-0012  
Brunch, 1 to 3 p.m.  
Order the macaroni and cheese and hot artichoke dip. They take brunch parties of up to 100 guests (\$40 per person prix fixe; additional buyout fee varies by season and by day).



#### ESPECIALLY FOR FIRST-TIMERS

A prepaid ticket to the city's major museums, the Empire State Building, and the Circle Line (CityPass, \$65 at the Museum of Modern Art; 212-708-9400).



#### CHEAPER THAN THE MINIBAR

Miniature cans of bubbly with straws for fast consumption while getting ready in the hotel room (Sofia Mini, \$4.99 for four at Winfield-Flynn; 212-679-4455).



#### 2 A.M. SNACK

Maybe not okay for rock purists, but perfect for tourists. Tastier than the hotel chocolates they leave on the pillow, too (CBGB truffles, \$25 at Chocolate Bar; 212-366-1541).



#### NOT FOR THE KIDS

Fun souvenirs of the city—and practical, should the party continue after the after-party (NYC condoms, free at Kenneth Cole; 212-965-0283).