Something Old… Simple Comforts

I recently attended an outdoor lakeside wedding on the most beautiful summer day. Perfect—except that I'm very pale and had forgotten sunscreen (a must for me), and there was no shade to be had anywhere. What I wouldn't have given for a bottle of SPF 15! The mistake was mine, but it brings up an important point: namely, that seeing to guests' comfort goes beyond keeping their drinks full. Think about any needs your guests might not have anticipated or little extras they might be grateful for. At a summer wedding party, bottles of water, sunscreen, paper fans (you can even dress them up with quotations or pictures of the couple), or inexpensive Chinese parasols all make welcome additions. (If the party's at the beach, consider providing basic flip-flops to keep barefoot guests from scorching their fee.) For winter parties, have a clean path cleared to the door and hot cocoa or cider waiting to warm up guests coming in from the cold. A little thoughtfulness will leave a lasting impression!

Something New… Go Green

Green just may be the new white in the world of weddings. From using recycled paper invitations to ordering organic flowers, there are endless ways to throw a beautiful party while also doing your part to help the environment. Here are a few ideas you might consider incorporating into your planning:

- Use invitations made with recycled paper. Look for paper manufactured from recycled or tree-free material, processed chlorine free (PCF), and printed with soy inks. Some even come with seeds for trees or wildflowers embedded in the grain of the paper, so guests can actually plant their invitations later!
- Hire a "green" wedding planner.
- Choose organic products wherever possible, from food and drinks to flowers. And be sure to send the flowers and extra food to a good home after the party, so they won't go to waste.
- Support local vendors—less energy will be used to transport goods, and the money you spend will go back into your own community.
- Skip the party favors, and let guests know you've made a donation to a charity in their honor instead.
- Use biodegradable plates and utensils at the party—or, if you're using non-disposable

items, wash them with biodegradable cleaners.

- When renting transportation for the wedding party, take advantage of the environmentally cleaner rental cars now being offered and rent a “luxury” car that’s been converted to reduce emissions.
- Finally, “going green” can also mean cutting back on consumption altogether—which will save you money, too!