

Wedding consultants can take the 'oy vey' out of your big day

By Deb Silverthorn

How to do, what to do first, who to call and when to get it done — the list of questions that roll through the mind of a bride and groom, and likely their parents', is seemingly endless. Seemingly, only because there is an answer and that answer comes in the form of a wedding consultant. Certified Wedding Consultant Ruth Spirer, who was trained and certified by the Association of Certified Wedding Consultants, says "I enjoy parties, celebrations and the happy moments of life," said Spirer. "As a wedding and event planner, I get to spend my days putting together joy and beauty. I can't imagine a better way to live."

Spirer began her career 16 years ago at the Tel-Aviv Hilton in her homeland of Israel. After moving to Dallas 10 years ago with her husband Eli and children Tal, Lior and Yael, she worked as the social

catering manager at the Doubletree Hotel Dallas-Campbell Centre before starting her own company, "Weddings and Events by Ruth." In 2000 she was awarded the hotel's Manager of the Year title and nominated for Hilton Hotels' Spirit of Pride Award.

The cost of Spirer's services — either as a full-service, from beginning to end arrangement, or as the "day-of coordinator," which really means bringing all the vendors and plans together in the month leading up to the wedding — is almost always significantly less than the amount of money a family can save through her expertise. "My knowledge and database of vendors — florists, entertainers, locations, caterers and more — can save a couple not only so much time and energy, but also in the pricing they can secure. The relationships I have with the vendors I recommend are

true and lasting and they will often work with me to help meet a budget."

"There are not enough good things that I can say about Ruth and her dedication to her couples," said caterer Ricki Epstein of Affairs to Cater, who has worked with her on many events. "Every nice word there is can be used to describe this beautiful person who cares so much about her clients. It really is as though their important day is her own and she'll leave nothing to chance."

"I love working with her because she will move mountains for her clients," said Epstein.

Weddings and Events by Ruth offers assistance with finding the ceremony and reception site location, developing a concept and theme, determining a budget and managing to stay in the lines, contract negotiation, vendor recommendations, menu selection, wedding and reception itinerary



"Weddings and Events by Ruth" owner Ruth Spirer put her heart and soul into the wedding of Tali Briskman and Shahar Macfud this past summer. "Every bride's day is just like my day," said Spirer. "I make sure that nothing can go wrong."

preparation, direction of rehearsal, wedding and reception and more.

"The top stresses when planning a wedding are budget, coordinating the wants of the couple and their parents as to what 'the dream' of the wedding means, and the conflicts of daily life, whether it's going to school or involvement in work, that makes planning and attending to all of the details so difficult," said Spirer. "I can take any budget and help the client create their dream. Sometimes it may take a disc jockey for \$1500 instead of a 10-piece band

at many thousands of dollars, but with the right entertainer, the same results, people dancing and celebrating late into the night, can be reached. A planner takes all of those pressures away, finds the answers, and brings back the package without excess decision-making."

"I can't imagine planning our wedding without her help," said Tali Briskman Macfud, who married her *besheret*, Shahar, on June 25 at the Westin Park Central. "She took quite a load off us and instead of visiting numerous hotels, she narrowed the list to four that would meet our budget and either allow us to bring in a kosher caterer or who had their own kosher kitchen. I can't imagine not having had her help."

When Macfud's mother Barbara passed away last year, her father Mark Briskman took the role of father-of-the-bride beyond the traditional walk down the aisle. "I wanted Tali to have a beautiful wedding and, while I know that Barbara would have known what to do, I didn't. I had such confidence in Ruth and her connections and abilities and when it came to the day of the wedding, Ruth made sure that everything was just right and that it all flowed so nicely. The follow-through from start to finish was exact and I really got to enjoy this very special day."

Spirer's days are spent with brides and grooms, their mothers and fathers, and clients with other event needs, meeting every detail, covering every corner, and making sure that come the "big day," there is nothing but the glimmer in the eye to think of. "It's beautiful at the end of a simcha to see the happy couple and their parents breathe sighs of relief amongst the blessings and compliments of their guests."

Ruth Spirer, and her database of answers to all of your wedding and event planning questions, can be reached at (972) 386-4519 or www.weddingsnevents.com.



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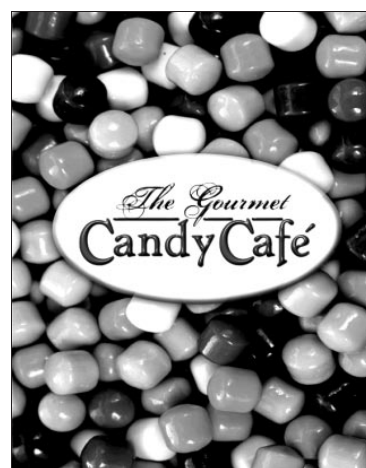
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