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INSPIRATIONS

Kate Esquivel: Hitting All the Right Notes

Listening closely to feedback (verbal, not audio), creating the right play list and reading the room are part of Kate Esquivel's side gig as DJ Kate, co-owner of Fernando Productions KC. Personality, tone, musical knowledge and energy make Kate a popular DJ in the KC metro. For her, connecting with the couple is the key to a successful party.



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A woman with blonde hair tied back, wearing a red tank top, black shorts with white trim, and a black watch, is running on a paved path. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees and a building.

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So much goes into planning a wedding. Finding the perfect dress, the venue, a photographer, flowers; the list goes on and on. It can be exciting and stressful at the same time. Everything that goes into preparing for the big day, and trying to make it perfect, is worth it when it all comes together. Then there's the reality. It doesn't always go exactly as planned. Maybe it rains; that's good luck, right? A bridesmaid gets sick or a bump all of a sudden appears on your face out of nowhere. Truth is, things always happen that are out of our control. It is the imperfections that keep us on our toes and in tune with reality.

It is easy to get wrapped up in trying to make your wedding day perfect, as you should since it's one of the biggest days of your life. Don't forget to enjoy the day and soak up each and every moment. Know that if everything was just perfect, it would be too easy and then you would have less to laugh about later.

I think the same goes with marriage. We put so much pressure on ourselves, from the day we get married, to stay in the "honeymoon" stage. We try to have the perfect marriage, or what we and our peers believe to be perfect. I know I did. It was a hard reality to accept, but no marriage is perfect; every marriage is different. Marriage takes



No relationship is all sunshine, but two people can share one umbrella and survive the storm together.
- Unknown

a lot of work and practice, but doesn't everything that we value?

I know that my marriage isn't perfect, but is anything? I am happy knowing that it is something worth working on and investing time in. There are highs and lows, but we learn from the lows and grow stronger. We enjoy the highs and strive for more. I learned the hard way not to compare our marriage to others be-

cause only you know what works for you. Just as no two wedding are exactly alike, neither are two marriages.

So, whether you're planning your wedding, just got married, or have been married for a long time, appreciate the imperfections. Nothing ever goes exactly as planned but know that is okay and be okay with it. Control what you can control. Enjoy your wedding day and every day that follows, perfect or not.

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REGULAR WARDROBE ITEMS: DON'T FORGET THE SUPPORTING CHARACTERS!

BY ABBY WOOD

It's February in Kansas and let's be honest, the groundhog is most definitely going to see his shadow. Winter is not just coming; it is here for a little while longer. What's a girl to do besides hibernate inside, drink coffee and online shop, right? Wrong. Shopping because you don't have anything better to do is a true recipe for a disaster wardrobe.

In the e-commerce world of fashion, January and February are notoriously used to liquidate leftover clothing to make room for fresh merchandise from the upcoming season. Everything is on sale; everything is going to appear practically free and it is hard not to swipe up on that great deal that every influencer is pushing on you through your social media channels. Right now, the only reason you should be shopping for regular wardrobe items is because you have analyzed your closet to determine the gaps, truly need something for an upcoming trip or have a shopping strategy in place.

I do have one exception. Notice how I mentioned regular wardrobe items? Most people spend all their wardrobe budget shopping for their daily clothes and forget to spend money on your top two drawers. So, I'm giving you the green light to go ahead and invest some money and shopping time on updating your lingerie and your pajamas.

HOW MANY BRAS SHOULD I HAVE?

Every woman should have three or four regular bras in their top drawer, one to wash, one to wear, and one on deck for the next



day. Rotating your bras daily will extend the life of each of them. I suggest three neutral-colored bras and one black or some combination of that. This number does not include specialty bras such as a strapless or sleep bras. You will need those as well.

HOW DO I KNOW WHEN IT IS TIME TO REPLACE MY BRAS?

Typically, a bra is built to last nine months to one year. I know it seems like a short life span, but hear me out. Women wear bras every day, all day. They get almost as much facetime with you as your shoes. True, not many will see it, but having a stretched out and ill-fitting bra will alter the way your clothing looks and ultimately kill your entire look. If your straps are continuously falling off your shoulders or you are constantly getting the dreaded double bubble under your shirts, it is time for a replacement.

DO I NEED TO BE PROFESSIONALLY FITTED FOR A BRA?

In short, yes. I have always recommended a professional bra fitting once per year for all my clients. If you lost or gained weight within the year, you would go buy new clothes, right? Same idea goes for



Abby Wood is a wardrobe stylist and style blogger in Kansas City, and her education in design plus retail experience make her an expert in fit, fabric, style and trends. Her professional experience in fashion began with an apprenticeship with a bridal designer, shifted to creating and showing her own line, moving up to management and training at a retail level and now professional styling as an independent consultant. Abby loves to help individuals develop and evolve their own sense of style.

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your lingerie. Prioritize your lingerie wardrobe to be just as important as your regular wardrobe and I promise you will feel and look better.

HOW MANY PAIRS OF PANTIES SHOULD I HAVE?

The best rule of thumb is two to three panties per bra. They don't have to match unless it makes you feel better and more put together to have matching sets. The most important thing to me is that I cannot see panty lines. Whether you prefer a thong or a brief, there are lots of different styles that will give you that invisible panty look we all want.

DO PAJAMAS NEED TO MATCH?

Yes! Nothing makes me feel better when I go to sleep than having matching pajamas. They don't have to be ultra-sexy or overly fancy; they can be warm, cozy and as comfortable as you want, as long as they match. Many companies even do capsule loungewear and sleepwear so that you can mix and match a few pieces.

DO I NEED SHAPEWEAR?

This totally depends on you! Are you the type of person who wants to feel a little bit more held in during the day? Then yes, shapewear will give you a more polished look. Are you someone who gets hot easily during the day? Then no, shapewear isn't a high priority. If you think you will need it for an event, then wait to purchase shapewear that will go with that particular look. Housing it in your top drawer before you need it isn't necessary. ♦



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BEDTIME AND OUR HEART: HOW SLEEP MAKES A DIFFERENCE

BY LISA TARANTO BUTLER

Sleep can make us feel satisfied or silly. Our day can start spectacularly with a full night's rest or begin badly if we had a hard time dealing with the doze devil. Over 70 million Americans suffer from sleep disruption, and many experts say lack of sleep is the most underappreciated health problem today.

Too little sleep can impact daily function, causing loss of focus, increased risk of weight gain, less production at home and work and generally just making us grumpy. Perhaps more importantly, losing sleep can affect our heart.

According to the Center for Disease Control, adults who sleep fewer than seven hours a night are more likely to have health issues including obesity, asthma and depression. It's no wonder doctors and researchers continue to tell us to get our shut-eye. Lack of sleep affects the processes that keep our heart and blood vessels healthy, making it difficult for the body to heal and repair. Research shows that sleeping fewer than six hours per night, as opposed to seven to eight hours, could increase a person's risk of atherosclerosis, a condition in which plaque builds up inside the arteries.

BEDTIME MAKES A DIFFERENCE?

We already know that people who don't sleep enough are more likely to get cardiovascular disease, but does our bedtime affect our chances as well?

As adults, we may not think about our bedtime very much, but it can be very important for our heart health. A study published late last year in the *European Heart Journal - Digital Health* reveals that



adults should put just as much emphasis on their own sleep cycles as on their kids'.

Researchers found that going to bed between 10:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. local time lowers the risk of developing heart disease compared to any other time of night. People who hit the sack after midnight have a bigger chance of heart-related declines in health. The study also found that that even bedtimes earlier than 10:00 p.m. increased the risk of cardiovascular disease in adults.

From the results of the study, the researchers shared that deviating from the body's ideal bedtime in the body's 24-hour cycle can be harmful to our heart health. But why would going to sleep after midnight be the riskiest time of night to hit the hay? The

study's results showed that diminished exposure to morning light disrupts the body clock, or circadian rhythm. This, in turn, can put stress on our cardiac system.

THE DATA

Statistically, the study says that people who fell asleep after midnight had a 25 percent higher chance of developing heart disease compared to those who went to bed between 10:00 pm and 10:59 pm, which researchers noted as the bedtime sweet spot. Those going to bed between 11:00 p.m. and midnight had a 12 percent greater risk of developing heart issues. Meanwhile, people with a bedtime earlier

than 10:00 p.m. also had a 24 percent higher risk for heart problems than those going to bed after 10:00 p.m.

SLEEP TIMING MORE IMPORTANT FOR WOMEN

When women sleep at wide-ranging times each night, the endocrine system responds to a disruption in circadian rhythm, so the risk of heart health may be more pronounced in women than in men. The experts noted that the gender difference was a “surprising finding” of the research and possibly could be linked to the hormonal impact of menopause or endocrine differences between genders.

Alternatively, researchers also speculate that the older age of study participants could be a perplexing factor since women’s cardiovascular risk increases post-menopause, meaning there may be no measurable difference of the association between women and men. More research is needed, but if findings are confirmed in other studies, sleep timing could become a factor to lowering heart disease.

BACK TO BASICS

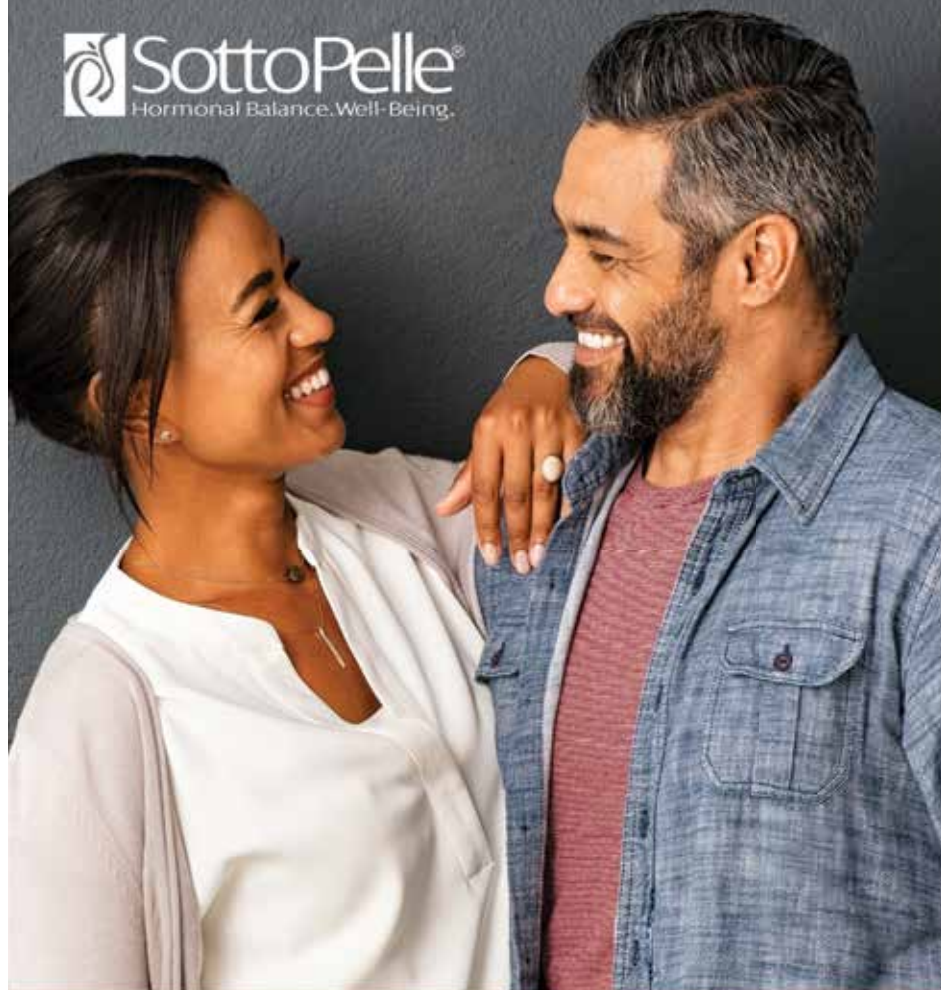
To feel rested, most experts agree we should follow the fundamentals: a well-balanced diet, regular exercise and adequate sleep. When it comes to getting our 40 winks, we should take it seriously. Should we adjust our bedtime? Maybe, according to the study, but the CDC offers simple ideas to snooze:

Try to go to bed and wake up at the same time every day, including weekends. Sleep in a dark, quiet place set at a comfortable temperature. Eliminate electronic devices from the bedroom. These can interfere with sleep.

Avoid caffeine, alcohol and large meals before hitting the pillow. Exercise! Physical activity during the day makes it easier to fall asleep that night.

For the best rest ideas, talking with our doctor or healthcare provider can make a world of difference. If you have symptoms of a sleep disorder, a health practitioner specializing in sleep can offer some suggestions for shut-eye, which will keep our heart healthier in the long run, no matter what time we go to bed. ♦

SOURCES: academic.oup.com, cdc.gov and healthline.com.



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THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS HEALTH SYSTEM'S CENTER FOR ADVANCED VASCULAR CARE

NEW LOCATION PROVIDES COMPREHENSIVE VEIN CARE

BY JUDY GOPPERT

Did you know that your varicose veins and spider veins may be hereditary? Or that painful varicose veins on your legs can be easily removed, and the procedure may be covered by insurance? The talented team at The University of Kansas Health System's Center for Advanced Vascular Care can improve your life in ways you might not realize.

Dr. Jenny Cho is one of the four experienced medical professionals specializing in vein care at the Center for Advanced Vascular Care. She has been with the current group for 11 years, and she's happy to be in the new, larger facility that opened November 1, 2021.

EXPANDED CARE

"Our new vein care services are located on the Indian Creek Campus of The University of Kansas Health System on Nall Avenue. This new location is where patients are seen for initial evaluation, diagnostic ultrasound testing is performed and vein procedures are done." Dr. Cho noted. "One of our primary reasons to move is that we have grown. It's a much larger facility, which is an updated version of what we were doing at a much larger scale."

Four vein specialists work together in the Center for Advanced



Vascular Care. The collaboration among the four, with their three specialties, makes them a team that can diagnose and care for any patient's need. "I am a vascular surgeon, as is Dr. Richard Arnsperger. Dr. Adam Alli is an interventional radiologist; Dr. Georges Hajj is an interventional cardiologist," she reiterated. "We do the vein procedures in our new center using local anesthesia; we also see all the patients in the center and do the ultrasounds they need for testing. The smaller percentage who may require advanced treatments then go to the hospital for procedures that are typically outpatient as well."

PROVIDING PAIN RELIEF

These vein care experts specialize in the most current technologies and techniques for minimally invasive treatment of



Dr. Adam Alli



Dr. Jenny Cho



Dr. Richard Arnsperger



Dr. Georges Hajj

spider and varicose veins. They treat all aspects of vein disease such as venous skin damage, ulcers, blood clots and congenital vein disorders.

Spider veins, those little red and blue veins in your legs, can be treated with sclerotherapy, in which tiny injections are made into the skin to cause them to fade. Patients with bulging varicose veins often receive a treatment called endovenous ablation, which reduces pain and inflammation, along with microphlebectomy or foam injections of the varicose veins. These are the most common procedures. “These procedures are all done within our new facility and usually take 30 minutes to complete,” she explained. “After patients recover, they are at our center about an hour or an hour and a half and can return to their normal activities very quickly. Years ago, people had to undergo general anesthesia. Now, they can relax, listen to music, have their treatment and walk out on their own!”

The team works closely with wound care centers, which refer patients who may be suffering with disease in their legs. For example, if the patient has venous ulcers, our vein care team provides treatment to help heal the ulcers.



Varicose vein issues typically affect 20 to 25 percent of women. This does affect men, but it is a little more prevalent in women, especially those who have had multiple pregnancies,” she related.

DEEP EXPERTISE

Dr. Adam Alli has additional expertise in treating complicated congenital vein disease procedures, pelvic congestion syndrome and intravenous treatment of deep venous thrombosis. As an interventional radiologist, he performs these procedures in the hospital following diagnosis at our location on the Indian Creek Campus. Dr. Georges Hajj, as an interventional cardiologist, also treats heart and vascular disease, which is often diagnosed first at the Center for Advanced Vascular Care, providing office evaluation and cardiac testing. Dr. Richard Arnsperger and Dr. Jenny Cho, as vascular surgeons, also treat arterial diseases such as aneurysms and occlusive disease with operative repair and bypass surgeries.

“Varicose vein issues typically affect 20 to 25 percent of women. This does affect men, but it is a little more prevalent in women, especially those who have had multiple pregnancies,” she related. “In the past, a lot of varicose vein disease were labeled cosmetic. We now know that they cause symptoms in patients that are real, including pain, achiness, fatigue, heaviness and swelling in legs. Our goal is to help people have healthier and more comfortable legs. Because of that, many insurance companies will cover the procedures.”

Dr. Cho has seen people of all ages, from teenagers to women in their nineties, who suffer from varicose veins. As bodies age, vein disease worsens. It is not diet-related and there is no medication to stop it. She has treated marathon runners in the best shape of their lives for hereditary vein disease. “Standing and not moving around, and prolonged sitting can increase symptoms,” she related. “Exercise can help alleviate some of these symptoms because it causes your muscles to pump and helps squeeze the veins. But, when you are ready for a real solution, come see us!”

Diagnosis is the best way to prevent serious health issues, and the Center for Advanced Vascular Care may be the first step on your journey to a more enjoyable, fulfilling life. ♦

The University of Kansas Health System’s Center for Advanced Vascular Care is located at 10700 Nall Avenue, Level 3, Suite 300, Overland Park, Kansas. Call 913-588-1227 and visit kansashealthsystem.com for more information.

MANICURES FOR THE BRIDE: THE LATEST TRENDS

BY LINDA R. PRICE

Every bride makes personal decisions for her wedding day—the gown, trousseau and hair style—so it makes sense to include a stylish manicure to emphasize the hands and rings as the wedding date approaches.

Some brides choose to make a dramatic statement by using classic red or even edgier colors such as black, burgundy and indigo. Yet most brides are not looking for wild, outrageous nails, but classics from the neutral palette with a modern twist.

A neutral palette includes nudes, pinks and whites, but today's palette might also include the lightest of mauve, blue or grey.

Modern brides want a little more than the humdrum polish covering the whole nail. Trendsetting manicures use the classics only as a starting point.

NAIL ART

Bridal nail art is the latest trend. Nail art has been around for years with home kits of decals plopped on the nails by teens experimenting with new looks. But, nail art has come a long way, baby! Decals are thinner and stretchy and to look real, they need expert application. Brides can expect to book up to two hours to get an appointment with an exclusive stylist who does original nail art.

White nails are beautiful for brides, but which white? There's a stark, chalky white or a softer, creamier white. One of my favorite designs is the white nail with a thin line of glitter down the center of the nail, which elongates the nail. The line of glitter can be gold to emphasize gold rings or silver to go with platinum bands. The line of glitter can be embellished with a rhinestone at the top or



left unadorned.

Geometric designs are easily achieved on the stark white base. Contrasting colors can be painted on with a very thin brush. A big pop of color will add a surprise factor to a plain look. Baby blue is a bridal favorite. Dots of stark white on a creamy white base are another easily achieved style for the bride who desires subtlety.

One of the most popular trends is the gradient glitter

look. The glitter used on the nails is micro-fine and lends itself to delicate nail art. The heavier concentration of glitter is placed at the base of the nail and fades into the tip of the nail. Some prefer just the opposite! Make the heavier glitter concentration at the tip and allow it to fade into the cuticle bed. This look is good if the bride is planning a long honeymoon and doesn't have time to redo her nails to hide nail growth.

FRENCH NAILS

French nails are no longer limited to the pale nail with a thick white edge. Newer versions include the same idea but with a thinner line at the nail tip. For the purist, a white on white manicure may be the ideal version of the French manicure. Select a white base color and then a white tip color two shades darker. Voila!

The reverse French manicure is the newest flip on this elegant manicure. Paint the base coat as you normally would, then paint the white line around the cuticle base of the nail. For an edgier look, and one that emphasizes yellow or rose gold rings, use gold as your line color.

Nail tips may be embellished with glitter, tiny jewels or small designs.

Emphasize squared-off nails with a white right-angle line painted on one side of the nail. Start at corner of the nail and paint to the center only for a cool right angle. If your nails are ovate, follow the shape of the nail with a narrow strip of white around the tip and a very narrow stripe above it for a double line.

OMBRE NAILS

Ombre nails are showing up everywhere and in all colors. Ombre nails are a layered manicure that is a seamless, blended color gradient that transitions from light to dark or vice versa. Ombre is sophisticated and possibly one of the easiest trends to achieve at home. Ombre nails can be decorated or left unadorned.

Paint the nail in your palest color. Let the nail dry completely. Then, paint parallel stripes of your other polishes on a makeup sponge allowing them to slightly overlap. Lightly apply to your nail and allow nail to dry. Reapply colors to sponge as needed to do the complete manicure. Clean the edges of each nail with a Q-tip dipped in polish remover.

Peruse the internet to narrow down your choices, save to Pinterest and carefully analyze them. If you choose to do your own nails, start practicing early so they look flawless. If you have them done in a salon, book an appointment with a stylist well before the day. Whatever you choose, a beautiful manicure is the perfect finishing touch for the bride. ♦

SOURCES: *brides.com, pinterest.com, goodhousekeeping.com and makeup.com.*



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KATE ESQUIVEL

HITTING ALL THE RIGHT NOTES

BY CINDY MCDERMOTT | PHOTOGRAPHY BY AMBER J DEERY
SHOT ON LOCATION AT SKYLINE & CO.

It is said that music soothes the savage beast, but Kate Esquivel isn't looking to calm her listeners. As DJ Kate, her throbbing rhythms and towering tunes allow her to create a dance floor that's enticing and engaging for everyone she is entertaining. She is co-owner of Fernando Productions KC and an in-demand female DJ in the Kansas City metro, a rarity that brings perfect pitch to weddings or other events she emcees. While she is focused on ensuring every event runs effortlessly, Kate's impressive expertise allows her to rock any party.

“When I first started out here in KC, potential clients were hesitant to book a female DJ and were open about sharing that feedback. It was such a male-dominated role, that I think they felt more comfortable seeing a guy behind the mic. But within the last three to four years, it's completely changed; I get a lot of love with wedding planners who really support their couples in booking a female DJ as well,” DJ Kate noted.

But make no mistake, the Lenexa, Kansas, resident knows her business. Her full-time gig is as a risk manager for a consulting company in KC, but she DJs 12 to 15 events a year and nearly all are weddings. Her attention to detail, musical background, ability to sustain a crowded and exciting dance floor and impressive customer service hit all the right notes, ensuring couples can simply enjoy the happiness of their big day. She started out making mixes for her friends who competed in fitness shows. Years later when she met

her husband, Fernando Esquivel, founder and head DJ of Fernando Productions, Kate saw how those skills could be transferred to weddings. Attending with him, she had fun making suggestions on the music or helping with the timeline. It wasn't long before he asked her to join the team.

“That was such a big part of me getting into the business. I'd be standing with him at weddings and loving his connection with the crowd,” she remarked. “You'd be hard pressed to find another job like this. It's great; you can't beat it.”

PERFECTING HER PITCH

Music has always been a passion for DJ Kate; however, growing up in Colorado, her musical exposure was scarce, limited to two radio stations. But when she came to Kansas City as a teenager, her ability to absorb many more musical genres exploded. “I have seven siblings in my family, six brothers and a sister, and each of them had their



Weddings hold a special place for me, and I do remember every couple I've DJed for. I remember the night and think about them going forward," she said. "In this business, it's very personal, not just for the couple but for us as DJs. It's not something that I take lightly."



own musical taste. So, believe me, I've heard it all," she noted. "My Spotify playlist is all over the board."

This broad knowledge of musical genres is put to good use when DJ Kate sits down to talk with a couple and plan the event. They can feel confident that she will spin all the right tunes for their big happening. "Even though I'm a DJ, I help them coordinate and manage the timeline of the event. You want to keep that vibe energetic; you don't want things to drag out with people waiting two hours to have dinner. The energy goes down when people are waiting," remarked DJ Kate. "My job is about controlling the speed of the evening and giving people cues when we're moving onto the next part to keep them engaged. When it comes to the party, it's the music that gets people moving. It's about reading the room."

CREATING A PLAYLIST THAT WORKS

Certainly, the wedding couple will know their guests and can suggest selections that will strike a chord with their guests. DJ Kate develops a playlist according to those wishes. She inquires about the vibe that the couple wants to set and what they want to accomplish. What's the style: traditional or more modern? "You pull in what they want to hear, but I always ask if it's more important that I play the music that they give me or if they want me to keep the dance floor full because they might not match. The couple may want hip hop, but the crowd might be going harder at funk," she noted. "It's very much about reading the crowd, and if something doesn't work, you need to

get out of it very quickly. We're true mixing DJs. It's blending songs that you're listening to as another song comes in. We make it fluid to keep the energy and vibe going. It's all about paying attention."

DJ Kate notes that about half of the couples she works with use a wedding planner and the rest do not. Even with a wedding planner at the event, she has control of the mic and helps control the evening. It is her responsibility to move things along and keep to the schedule, or important pieces of the event could be missed, such as the photographer getting all of the necessary shots.

ENSURING A SMOOTH GATHERING

Fernando Productions pulls out all the stops for its clients and offers an electronic, state-of-the-art planning system for every event. Couples can log into the system and request music they want to play and build a list of songs they do not want to hear. Couples can create their timeline, enter notes and control the flow of the entire event.

"We utilize a planner system to ensure the timeline for the event is correct. What goes into that outside of the music are details we want to know such as doing a champagne pour for the toasts, so we know that's ready before we begin," she said. "When we discuss music, we focus on the style of music. Do they want hip hop? Define that to me. Hip hop to one may mean Usher or old Kanye and Megan Thee Stallion to another. I'll also need to know if we'll need to be cognizant of playing clean, radio versions. I'll also ask them about their 'do not play list' and that's when the comments really start pouring out."

Weddings can be one of the most moving events for anyone to experience. After more than ten years in the business, DJ Kate has plenty of poignant stories to share. "I'm a fan of surprises, and a few years ago, it was the first time for me to be a part of the private last dance trend," she shared. "The party is over, the guests leave and then the couple stays behind for one last dance. Just the two of them. The day goes by so incredibly fast for them and that's a huge moment for them to share."



For me, it's the value of connecting with those in the industry, and then connecting with the couple to make them feel good. If you do a good job, you get referrals. We have not done a bridal show or any marketing in years and our business is solid. That's due in large part to the friendships and partnerships we've made in the years."

All live event managers know there's no happening that takes place without a snafu or two going on behind the scenes. The key is the ability to assess the situation and develop a plan to address the issue, and DJ Kate has worked through many. However, her favorite tale to tell is how she overcame a near disaster when the electricity went out. "The power went out due to a storm, and it was only 20

minutes into the event,” she recalled. “We hooked up a generator from our warehouse and used the LED lights to shine on the buffet to see the food. For the dance, we ran only the speakers, no lights and they partied all night.”

HITTING THE RIGHT NOTES

DJ Kate and Fernando have built Fernando Productions KC into one of the stellar DJ services in the community. In one weekend, the business offers a selection of DJs, two full-time roadies and the equipment to power up to nine events. Given their success and longevity, she offers these words of wisdom for other entrepreneurs to help make their business a success.

“You need a supportive person in your corner. You need someone to be supportive of the time commitment and sacrifice that goes into your business,” she commented. “For me, it’s the value of connecting with those in the industry, and then connecting with the couple to make them feel good. If you do a good job, you get referrals. We have not done a bridal show or any marketing in years and our business is solid. That’s due in large part to the friendships and partnerships we’ve made in the years.”

DJ Kate adds that her ability to fit into a typically male-dominated DJ industry comes from much hard work, musical knowledge, experience and a healthy dose of “girl power.” “It’s a cultural movement because socially we’re seeing more woman empowerment. It’s interesting that couples are looking specifically for me and that I have something different to offer. Also, they’re excited to support minorities and women in business,” she revealed. “It doesn’t hurt to have a good relationship with wedding planners because they can be very supportive. They recommend me along with other vendors. That’s a nice bond to have, but of course, the decision is made by the couple.”

Over the years, DJ Kate has performed at over 200 weddings and events, delivering all of the bells and whistles her couples could ever imagine. While those numbers can be a blur in the memories of most people and some DJs, each one has a unique spot in her heart.

“Weddings hold a special place for me, and I do remember every couple I’ve DJed for. I remember the night and think about them going forward,” she said. “In this business, it’s very personal, not just for the couple but for us as DJs. It’s not something that I take lightly.” ♦



INSPIRATION FOR AN ON-TREND WEDDING RECEPTION

BY PATTY COOK

The month of February is short, perhaps for good reason. There are more hours of daylight, but winter's chill has a firm grip on much of the country. A parade of dreary days passes by as leafless trees stand against a gray sky.

What a great month for the celebration of lovers on Valentine's Day! Was it by accident or design that a month noted for bleakness was chosen for a celebration of warmth and love?

For many couples, February is a month to take things to the next level. Those who proposed marriage over the holiday season are in the midst of preparing for a wedding this year. In the dead of winter, their focus is on a special day, whether it's in the blush of spring or sultry summer. Brides-to-be study wedding ideas on Pinterest. It's time to make choices. What's trending? What's in and what's out? Let's take a quick look.

In the past few years, weddings have featured rustic decor, Mason jar decor, burlap, chalkboard signage, buffet dinners and cupcake bars. Although they were once innovative, trends are now moving toward different directions.

Beverages may focus on local offerings. A sampling of local craft beers, served in bottles with custom labels, celebrate the bride and groom. In a more formal setting, guests could choose elegant flights of beer or wine. A local craft distillery may inspire a signature cocktail.

Another popular trend is wedding cocktails featuring edible flowers. Yes, flowers are not just for the bridal bouquet. You'll find them featured in beverages, salads and on the wedding cake. We'll talk about dessert trends in a moment, but first let's plan the meal.

If your goal is to have guests circulate, consider having an hors



d'oeuvre reception. This arrangement is similar to a cocktail supper. It features a variety of food stations or food bars throughout the room. Guests have the freedom to mingle while they choose their own menu. Some popular stations include light selections such as seafood, sashimi and sushi. More substantial offerings of tapas, cheese and charcuterie, tacos or a variety of Italian foods such as antipasto, pizza or pasta can satisfy any appetite.

For a different take for a reception with food stations

in an outdoor setting, go for the "wheel deal" and choose a variety of food trucks. The options are limitless—barbecue, Asian cuisine, foods of South America, sweets such as cotton candy, or a combination of all these. The cost per person is often less than a buffet or sit-down dinner.

With more people interested in sustainable, farm-to-table and organic foods, many caterers now work with local farmers to source ingredients using local, seasonal foods. And thoughtful hosts are also mindful of guests whose diets may require dishes with vegetarian, vegan or gluten-free ingredients. The good news is that it has become easy to plan meals that include delicious options for entrees, sides and desserts that meet any special dietary needs.

Speaking of dessert, the happy couple is free to choose whatever pleases them. The traditional wedding cake has given way to personal preference. Whether it's cupcake bars, doughnuts, pies, ice cream served in pint containers or sandwiched between cookies, there's no

limit to what any couple wants to serve.

But the traditional wedding cake is not only still with us, it's making a bit of a comeback, with a twist. Naked cakes, devoid of icing, may have cream filling between the layers, such as carrot cake with cream cheese filling. These exposed cakes may be totally naked or decorated with fresh fruit or flowers. For iced cakes, the trend is toward a minimal look. A cake with simple white icing may be adorned with metallics, either edible metallic icing or fresh fruit, such as figs or raspberries, dusted with edible gold.

If your wedding includes a night of dancing, your guests might appreciate midnight snacks. Think small plates: mini grilled cheese sandwiches balanced on an espresso cup of tomato soup, cheeseburger sliders served alongside a shot glass of fries that are nestled atop a dollop of ketchup, or tiny ramekins of mac-and-cheese.

Did you know that the definition of "reception" is literally the action of receiving something? Your reception is a process, the first time the two of you receive your tribe of family and friends, and for them to receive you, as a married couple. Mindy Kaling said it best: "Shouldn't a wedding be an awesome party you throw with your great pal? A great day, for sure, but not the beginning and certainly not the end."

Whether your budget is \$70 a person or hundreds of dollars per plate, make sure you take time to relax and enjoy each other and your guests. Good food and good company will create good memories. ♦

SOURCES: *theknot.com, weddingwire.com and pinterest.com.*



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EASY WINTER CITRUS SALAD

RECIPE & PHOTOS BY LAUREN LANE | LAUREN-LANE.COM



INGREDIENTS

DRESSING

- 1 lemon or orange, zested (about 1 tbsp. of zest)
- 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon or orange juice
- 2 or 3 tablespoons of honey
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- ¼ teaspoon Kosher salt, or to taste
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil (Olive Tree Blend recommended)

SALAD

- 1 large pink grapefruit
- 3 oranges, a combination of blood orange, tangerines, clementines or your choice
- 1 bunch kale or spinach, chopped into bite-sized pieces.
- ¾ cup blackberries

DIRECTIONS

In a small bowl, whisk together the zest, juice, honey, mustard, salt, pepper and olive oil. Taste and see if you'd like to add more honey, lemon, salt or oil, so it's just right for your taste. Remember, the dressing needs to season the entire salad. For the salad, peel citrus using a knife to remove as much white pith as possible. Slice into wheels about one-quarter inch thick, discarding any seeds. Add greens in a large bowl. Drizzle in half of dressing and toss. Place on serving platter. Layer fruit on a large serving platter, overlapping slices. Drizzle additional dressing over the citrus if desired. or add more salt and pepper if needed depending on your citrus. ♦

TIPS...

1: *Additions/Substitutions:* add a half cup toasted nuts; add 3 ounces of goat or feta cheese; substitute blueberries for blackberries.

2: *Serve with grilled chicken or roasted shrimp for a complete meal.*

3: *For easy entertaining, make the dressing the day before, slice the citrus and chop the greens early in the day; store in the refrigerator until ready to toss and serve.*



After 25 years in creative design and management with Hallmark Cards, Lauren Lane retired to pursue her lifelong passion for food and entertaining. The ensuing years have been an amazing educational journey as she pursues her dream of helping people appreciate food more fully, and enjoying how it brings people together. Lauren continues to experiment with how to make food more delicious, more approachable and share the experience more fully with her audience.

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Gary Zancanelli Jr.
1965-2022



That tagline describes Red Door Woodfired Grill perfectly. If you haven't been to one of the five locations—six with the opening of Lee's Summit soon—you need to change that. Red Door Woodfired Grill is a neighborhood joint, which I love, since each restaurant reflects the community in which it's located while keeping true to the brand. This means you'll always get delicious, amazing food, but the ambiance might mirror the demographics of the area just a bit.

**WRITTEN BY MEGAN NEHER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY AMBER DEERY**



Chipotle Chicken,
Carne Asada and
Adobo Shrimp Tacos

When you visit one outside your neighborhood, you'll see what I mean. Have fun and explore because all the locations are fantastic and have unique personalities of their own! Leawood was the first to open in 2013; Brookside second in 2016, followed immediately by Overland Park, then Liberty in 2018 and Lenexa in 2020.

"We're involved in the local neighborhoods that we serve and we ensure our restaurants fit into the local neighborhoods," said Josh Pedersen, director of operations for Red Door Woodfired Grill. "We're upscale with quality, well-thought-out food on our menus, but not pretentious. It's a place where you can bring your clients as well as your friends and family. And the 'joint' part is very important in the tagline because that illustrates, we're fun!"

Red Door Woodfired Grill's commit-

ment to weekly specials makes your visit fun. Founder and longtime partner Gary Zancanelli had multiple Kentucky Fried Chicken locations throughout the years and had an extraordinary appreciation for fried chicken. The fried chicken Thursdays helped put Red Door Woodfired Grill on the weekly specials map when we began to sink our teeth into this incredible recipe and understood why it's only available one day a week.

"It's quite a process," said Pedersen. "We start on Sunday with the marinade and in all it's a 96-hour progression. The chicken soaks in the jalapeno, buttermilk and spice marinade. We have special pressure cookers used only for the fried chicken; that ensures each piece is juicy inside, crispy outside and those juices and flavors are perfectly sealed and ready for each order on Thursday."

Josh Pedersen and culinary partner Issac Pulido provided an incredible feast of some of the restaurant's most popular items for



Raspberry Coconut
Chicken Salad

our tasting. I was already a fan of the **Pretzel Bites**, served with smoked green chile queso. These aren't your average pretzel bites. They're clearly made from scratch, just like everything at Red Door Woodfired Grill, soft with a little crust on the exterior and just the right amount of sweet and salt.

Next, we sampled the **Classic Tomato Soup** served with a cheese fritter. It was fascinating to learn how this soup is made, from scratch, of course; Issac Pulido shared that they roast the tomatoes in olive oil and then blend with garlic, spices, onions, carrots and their own house-made Bloody Mary mix. It has some cream, of course, but they assured me not too much! Then, for the cheese fritter, which is like a floating grilled cheese sandwich that you cut and savor for as many bites as possible, they simply bread and fry a blend of cream cheese and other wonderful cheeses.

When COVID-19 hit, many restaurants struggled. Red Door Woodfired Grill used it as an opportunity to refine and perfect its menu items. I could taste the upgrades! One of the areas of improvement and refinement was the salads. Josh Pedersen explained that a culinary consultant worked with the menu and spent extra time elevating select menu items with a special emphasis on the lettuces



Left to right: Issac Pulido, Kelsey Stringfellow and Josh Pedersen

for the salads. "We put all of our energy into the best items on the menu," he said.

This renewed energy was evident in every bite of the **Raspberry Coconut Chicken Salad**, sweet/savory coconut-breaded chicken tenders, field greens, artichoke heart, avocado, grape tomatoes, red onion, Swiss cheese, tomatoes, almonds, ranch dressing with a raspberry coulis drizzle. I'm not a coconut fan, but salad is beyond heavenly.

Pikes Salmon was something I hadn't tried before, but it's at the top of my new preferred list. It's a woodfired grilled salmon over farro and vegetable sauté, almonds, herbs and feta cheese, a healthy option that's amazingly appetizing too.

I had been notified before the tasting about the return of the tacos at Red Door Woodfired Grill so I was especially keen to taste them. Josh said it had been received *extremely* well by guests, and I can see why. The choices are **Chipotle Chicken** with baja slaw, pepper jack cheese, avocado-jalapeno

When other restaurants scaled back on discounts, Red Door Woodfired Grill doubled down and held true with specials almost every day of the week. This dedication to their loyal customers paid off and helps keep weekdays hoppin' with packed restaurants throughout the metro.

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Pretzel
Bites

aioli and cotija cheese; **Adobo Shrimp** with baja slaw, pepper jack cheese, pineapple salsa, pico, adobo crema, cotija cheese and pepitas; and **Carne Asada** made from marinated striploin with baja slaw, pepper jack cheese, guacamole, cotija cheese and cilantro. I tasted all three, and it's too difficult to select one winner.

Remember, this menu has been refined. These items are perfected and upgraded. All the menu items we tasted were scrumptious. You'll want to go back several times to taste each of them, as well as visit each of the neighborhood joint locations to get a feel for the individual restaurant's personality and understand Red Door Woodfired Grill as a Best Little Upscale Neighborhood Joint. ♦

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Journalist-turned-PR-professional Megan Neher has never forgotten her true first love: writing. Today, Megan owns her own PR firm, Megan Neher Public Relations; she's a wife, mom, marketer, student and spends a lot of time cleaning up after her four pets and two teenagers. Her dream is to live on a tropical beach somewhere where she can stroll barefoot to a nearby grass hut for a fish taco and margarita.

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IS YOUR EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK UP TO DATE?

BY TINA V. SAVAS

The employee handbook is one of your company's most useful and practical tools. But is it up to date with the changes taking place in the workplace?

It's easy to overlook the importance of keeping it current, but if it's outdated, your business could suffer a losing court battle or even a boycott.

Experts agree that your handbook should be updated every year, along with your company's underlying policies and procedures. Local, state and federal laws change rapidly and so does technology. Securing legal counsel will ensure your handbook offers protection for both your company and its employees.

Of course, a handbook won't cover you completely, but if your employees are aware of your policies and know that you review it every year, it's easier to resolve problems. Be sure to redistribute copies to your employees and require their signatures acknowledging the updates.

According to the Society for Human Resource Management, laws on leave, overtime and social media are changing quickly and require annual revision. Social media and data privacy rank at the top of necessary updates, since so many people work from their personal phones and tablets. But they also conduct personal business and play with social media such as Facebook and Messenger. Your handbook should be clear that employees will retain no right to privacy while accessing social media at work or on company-owned equipment. For example, if your employee is found playing Solitaire on a work desk-top for hours on end, it will make termination easier. Not clicking on links, downloading apps or disclosing proprietary information about your company should be clear also.

Next in importance are reasonable accommodations for your employees. Under certain circumstances, such as physical health conditions, religious beliefs, pregnancy and childbirth, among others,



employees are entitled to reasonable accommodations. Be certain your handbook spells out exactly what accommodations are, how they should be requested, when and by whom. You need to explain the legal bases for accommodations and your company's intent to comply.

Recently, the most common charge brought by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has been retaliation. Since the process needs to be fair for both the person making the claim of retaliation and the

person who is accused, your handbook should state that your company can't promise confidentiality, but that identities will be revealed only when necessary.

Wages and payroll are the two pay-related issues that cause problems for companies. To minimize liability, be clear on overtime and pay deductions. Federal laws regulate overtime pay for salaried and hourly workers, so you should put it in writing that your employees may not work overtime without prior permission, and if they do it anyway, they may be disciplined. The handbook should also explain pay practices in detail, and that your company will always strive to correct mistakes with regard to pay.

Leave benefits are becoming more generous, especially since large companies are expanding their parental leave policies and federal law changes are on the horizon. Some offer pay with jury duty, domestic violence leave and blood donation leave. The consensus is that these add-ons promote your employee's quality of life, boost morale and serve as positive worker retention and recruitment tools.

Attendance proves to be murky for some employers. Be careful to emphasize in writing who may qualify for the Family and Medical

Leave Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. In some cases, an employee may qualify for an accommodation under both acts.

Yet another area to emphasize is smoking, including the use of e-cigarettes and medical or recreational marijuana. E-cigarettes should be included in your handbook, just like other tobacco products and where, when and how they are permitted, or not. Marijuana can generally be treated as other drugs in your handbook, but state laws are changing rapidly. For example, if your company is located in Arizona, you cannot fire an employee for a positive marijuana test if that person has a valid medical marijuana card.

Finally, in 2015, the U.S. Supreme Court held that states must recognize same-sex marriage. The ruling requires a company to extend the same health and retirement benefits to all married couples, regardless of their gender identification. Your handbook should clarify this. The lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender employee is now protected within the Civil Rights Act, so it's a good idea to add a general statement to your handbook that you do not discriminate at all. The Department of Labor, states, municipalities and court decisions constantly change and influence employment laws, and your company is responsible for staying informed and updating your handbook. Nevertheless, distributing a new handbook annually is appropriate.

Nothing contained in your employee handbook will prevent problems in the workplace, but it's a necessary tool to minimize the risks. Final advice: always consult an attorney with experience in this area. ♦

SOURCES: infinitehr.com, hrmorning.com, sba.gov and shrm.org.

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GREEN UP YOUR WEDDING!

BY LISA TARANTO BUTLER

Planning the perfect wedding can be exciting and unique to your personal tastes. Friends and family look forward to sharing a little bit of your and your partner's style while congratulating you on the start of the rest of your lives as a couple.

The path to a beautiful wedding can be earth friendly as well as fabulous.

Why not put your best foot forward with a few green wedding ideas and begin your marriage journey with an eco-friendly footprint?

WITH THIS RING

The engagement ring is the official launch of a wedding journey, but most large mining practices take a toll on the local environment. You could try to lessen your carbon handprint by investigating and purchasing an ethically mined gem, but often this information is too vague to decipher, even with careful examination. Why not go vintage and use a family heirloom to seal the deal, or buy a used engagement ring that you both adore? By combining antique gemstones with recycled metal, just about any preservation-minded couple can make beautiful bling for the beloved left hand.

LOCATION

One of the first major decisions a soon-to-be bride and groom must make together is the venue for those vows. Since hotel ballrooms and large resorts typically use lots of electricity and water, why not incorporate nature in your plans from the get-go? Small churches, parks, farms and meadows can provide an amazing backdrop for the most beautiful day of your life. The changing leaves of autumn can provide a variety of colors and textures, while a spring wedding may offer new blooms and a touch of greenery. Think beyond the standard setting for the base of your big day and congregate in one of nature's lovely locations.

INVITATIONS

Although many couples choose to help the environment with evites and word-of-mouth invitations, nothing says "Please



Join Us" more than a good old-fashioned letter from the U.S. Postal Service. Look for invitations made from 100 percent recycled paper, and forgo the excess envelopes and RSVP cards in favor of tallying responses via a wedding website. If Aunt Dorothy isn't comfortable with the computer, give her a call to check her attendance status. On the flip side, stay away from using the "environmentally con-

scious" cause when it comes to sending a thank you acknowledgment. Appreciation of gifts is best said with a handwritten note, not an email.

THE GOWN

It's tricky to find another reason to wear your wedding gown twice unless you save it for renewing your vows in the future. If, by chance, you and your mother have similar tastes, altering her preserved dress and making it your own might be a perfect fit. But if you're looking forward to choosing your own gown, which is understandable, check out the wedding dresses at vintage stores and consignment shops. These days, wedding gowns don't have to be long and white. Choose a style and color that touts your tastes as well as your thoughtfulness for the eco-future.

As for the wedding party, consider letting them wear something they already own. It's doubtful you will find a former bridesmaid donning the tea length, teal, tulle dress she once wore in a wedding for another occasion. Give your wedding party guidelines, such as black dress, knee length, but let them choose something they can easily repurpose for another fabulous event.

FOOD

The catering at a wedding is the talk of the party, whether a

scrumptious success or a failed food flop. Ensure the conversation about your food is fabulous. Organic food can be quite costly compared to typical catering, so make sure to account for the extra cash in your budget. Choose a farm-to-table caterer to cut down on waste and electricity. Fresh food needs less packaging and shorter time in the fridge. Include your caterer in your plans to provide a zero-waste reception (or at least pretty close to it). Some eco-friendly caterers will donate or even compost any leftovers.

PARTING GIFTS

Although most couples may feel their mini-gift is usable, when it comes to wedding favors, they typically get thrown in the trash. Why not chuck the idea of wedding favors all together? Instead, leave guests feeling giddy after making a donation to a charity of your choice in their name. Or go the edible route and give your guests a homemade treat or delicious delight from a local bakery or farmers' market. Try to resist adding more packaging. Perhaps the treat will be devoured on the drive home.

The path to a wonderful wedding can be beautiful but excessive. Why not make the first steps to your union eco-conscious yet memorable. By using all of these tips or just one of them, your journey will start a little more earth friendly. ♦

SOURCES: *greenbrideguide.com and theknot.com.*



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JUST SAYIN'

BY Q104 PERSONALITY JENNY MATTHEWS

I can hardly believe my husband and I will celebrate 20 years together as a couple this year. I feel like our first date was just yesterday. Over the years, I've lovingly joked on-air about how we met when he was "caller nine." That's not entirely true. But, technically, we did meet through radio! Here's what happened.



I was co-hosting a morning show on a station in West Palm Beach, Florida. One day, I received an email from a listener asking if I was single or attached. Literally, that's all it said. For no good reason I quickly replied, "very single." I remember laughing a little to myself as I hit send because I had just gotten out of a pretty-long, not-so-great relationship. I was happily single and definitely not looking!

I didn't think much else of it until the next day when I received a reply. This mystery listener sent me a photo of himself and another short note asking me to take a look. If I was interested, let him know. Well, I took one look at his picture and could hardly believe my eyes. He was absolutely gorgeous. After my bad luck with relationships, I figured there must be something wrong with him! This was just too good to be true.

We spoke on the phone a few times and decided to meet for dinner. By the end of the meal, we were eating off each other's plates and practically finishing each other's sentences. We definitely had a connection and for the first time in my life, I found myself in a healthy, stable, amazing relationship. I had not only found true love,

but I found my soul mate. Coming from a divorced home as a child, I never dreamed of those things. I never imagined a prince sweeping me off my feet. I wasn't so sure that was in the cards for me. But I was so sure that I had met the one, I wrote him a letter after one of our first dates and told him that I had no doubt that we were meant to be forever. I gave him that letter on our wedding day. Gosh, any sooner and he might have run for the hills! Ha!

Anyway, I feel really lucky and I don't take it for granted. I know a love like ours is hard to find and I know what it's like to be in unhealthy, toxic relationships. If you're single and looking, or like me back then, happily single, my one piece of advice is to know your worth and don't settle. Life's too short to sell yourself short or to stay in a miserable situation. We all deserve love and happiness.

It's so out of character for him to have sent me a "single or attached" email! It wasn't exactly like me to write back "very single." But, if either of us hadn't taken a leap of faith, we never would've found each other. Take the chance. It just might lead to something pretty incredible. ♦



Jenny Matthews was on the air at Mix 93.3 for 15 years and in 2019 moved to Q104 to co-host The Morning Drive with Mike Kellar + Jenny Matthews, 6:00 to 10:00 a.m., Monday through Friday. Check out her podcast, *Real Life with Jenny Matthews*, follow along with her blog and connect at jennymatthewsonair.com.

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Jenny Matthews



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Jenny Matthews

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CAPRICORN
(DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

Valentine's Day is the day when most turn their hearts toward love, but you may find yourself focusing that love energy on yourself. There is nothing wrong with this, so put aside all feelings of guilt.



TAURUS
(APR. 20-MAY 20)

This will be a significant month for you, but the universe is going to have to teach you a lesson about stubbornness unless you can learn to rein it in. Lucky breaks are going to manifest in odds-defying numbers, allowing you to deal with some issues you've been having in the area of debt. The key to making the most of this is being ready and willing to let go of those things that no longer serve you.



VIRGO
(AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

February is a time for coming together, and your sign typifies this in February. Allow yourself to become very adaptable; avoid judgmental thinking toward others, and literally you can write your own ticket. Small details may bog you down this month, so resolve yourself to being a "big picture" thinker for the duration.



AQUARIUS
(JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

Taking things easy is good advice this month. Most attempts to start anything new are likely to blow up in your face. Relax, take things as they come, be willing and flexible to try new things, and challenge previously held ideas about the world around you



GEMINI
(MAY 21-JUN. 20)

With ruling planets positioning themselves above your horizon, this means that it is full steam ahead for you in all areas. Even the retrogrades won't be problematic for you. The tendency is going to be to overdo it, as your energy levels will be very high. Make sure that after the 20th you allow yourself some down time.



LIBRA
(SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

It would serve you well to remember that inner harmony can give rise to outer harmony where that special someone and family are concerned. Most of the ruling planets are in auspicious positions to give you the needed energetic push that you've been looking for to complete tasks and projects. You may very well receive a special surprise from someone close.

STAR JOURNEYS

BY MELODY BUSSEY

February brings renewal and feelings of the heart and home. For most signs, this will manifest not only as tender feelings for those they love, but for themselves as well. Taking a moment to acknowledge yourself makes you more available emotionally for those you love. Loving someone often means loving yourself, too. This is a time when the ruling planets are moving forward, bringing you along for the ride.



PISCES
(FEB. 19-MAR. 20)

That feeling of loving and being loved will be strong. Single Pisces stand a chance of meeting "the one" this month, while those who are in relationships will see them grow and deepen. You will also become more social, making it enjoyable to meet people. While the retrograde that happened in December might have left you feeling impatient regarding a new situation, project or idea, it will be in February that you will receive good news about it.



CANCER
(JUN. 21-JUL. 23)

Long-term changes to your financial horizon will happen this month. These changes are going to have far-reaching consequences for the better. A change in jobs, careers or occupations is likely and your social calendar will be full.



SCORPIO
(OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

Jupiter is moving into your "house o' love" on the 15th, meaning that things are going to sizzle for you in time for Valentine's Day. Make sure that prior to the day you lay a good foundation for making that happen, leaving nothing to chance. You love to take risks, so why not take a chance on love this month?



ARIES
(MAR. 21-APR. 19)

You may find yourself at a crossroads this month as your short-term projects have been completed, leading to a "now what?" moment. You are going to be dynamic in dealing with people, so take advantage of it and try your hand at something new.



LEO
(JUL. 24-AUG. 22)

This is a time of transition for you, and you are going to feel the strain of it. Remember that you are never given more than you can handle. Make sure to be kind to yourself and rest if you need to. Exercise your good humor to make it through this period.



SAGITTARIUS
(NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

This is the month to let your softer, caring side shine. Set aside the stubborn streak, the need to have things your way all of the time. If you can do this, your Valentine's Day will be spectacular. On the career front it is best to just let things coast.



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