

Santa Barbara

MAGAZINE

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PLUS SO MUCH MORE!

Heidi Merrick at Serena Point

LOCATION, LOCATION

With brides and hosts trading the glitz and glamour of gatherings past for intimate, natural, and one-of-a-kind soirees, 2014 finds Santa Barbara's preeminent event designers looking to exotic settings for an extra dash of joie de vivre.



WHO With a background in fine art and fashion, Mindy Davidson of **MINDY RICE FLORAL AND EVENT DESIGN**, 805-688-2499, mindyrice.com, seamlessly fuses her innate sophistication with the flavor of her events' various locations.

STANDOUTS Rich Asian culture and talented local vendors made a recent "elopement" to Vietnam extraordinary.

FUTURE FETES Though Santa Barbara is always a favorite, the designer anticipates a surge in requests from clients for mountain and desert settings. "After all," she says, "a weekend away at a beautiful dude ranch with 90 of your closest friends is not a bad way to celebrate your nuptials!"

WHO Industry veteran Merryl Brown of **MERRYL BROWN EVENTS**, 805-453-5729, merrylbrounevents.com, is widely recognized among Santa Barbara's elite for her opulent, color-saturated parties and her flair for timeless European elegance.

STANDOUTS A three-day event in Pietrasanta, Italy, commencing with a candlelit celebration on a mountaintop and ending with a dinner in an ancient wine cave, is among the most magnificent the designer has ever executed.

FUTURE FETES Sunstone Villa's sweeping Santa Ynez views and sunlit vineyards will provide the inspiration and setting for a chic Angeleno couple's wedding.

WHO Known for her experiential and thinking-out-of-the-box occasions, Tamara Jensen, owner of Santa Barbara's famed **I.D.O. EVENTS, INC.**, 805-898-2436, idoeventsinc.com, pulls ideas for her spirited decor themes from her multifaceted settings.

STANDOUTS Peter Island, in the British Virgin Islands, set an idyllic stage for a recent affair.

FUTURE FETES Montecito's Lotusland has served as a backdrop for many of Jensen's events, and the designer eagerly anticipates transforming the delightful, world-famous garden

into a fantasyland for its annual 2014 fund-raiser.

WHO Though Kimberly Curtis of **TOAST**, 805-960-2330, toastsantabarbara.com, accommodates her clients' varied visions, Santa Barbara's landscape remains a sublime canvas for her classically formal yet natural aesthetic.

STANDOUTS A canopy of intertwined trees, a wandering herd of cattle, and a custom bar carved from a fallen oak distinguished a recent wedding at a private Santa Ynez ranch.

FUTURE FETES The designer looks forward to lending her artful eye to an event at Carpinteria's chic Villa Sevillano later this year.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Mindy Davidson and her desert-inspired bou-tonnieres; a Parisian-themed Lotusland gala by Tamara Jensen; Kim Curtis and a bucolic Santa Ynez wedding; a romantic Sunstone setting by Merryl Brown.

