

Newsday

bridalplanner



Healthfully ever after

Working
kale into the
bouquet and wellness
into the wedding **H4**



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Longtime couple Michael Russo and Richard Piana threw a picture-perfect — and celebrity-studded — wedding, set to be featured in a reality-TV series. **H14**

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ON THE COVER

Lifestyle expert Arielle Haspel on her wedding day carried a bouquet featuring flowering kale, a seasonally appropriate choice — and a favorite vegetable.

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SMOOTHIES AND SPINNING? HOW COUPLES BRING WELLNESS TO THE WEDDING

BY BROOKE SHOWELL

Special to Newsday

Here comes the bride, with a bouquet of . . . kale? That's exactly the type of celebration Arielle Fierman had in mind for her Nov. 23 wedding last year to Lee Haspel at Great Neck's Temple Israel. After all, it fit their lifestyle: The bride, 30, is a nutrition and lifestyle expert who runs the company Be Well With Arielle and is the host of Glamour's healthy cooking video series, "Treat Yourself." Her husband, 30, an assistant portfolio manager, is known to whip up green smoothies in the morning before work, and the two enjoy checking out fitness classes and farmers markets together.

"Because I work in the health and wellness industry, I wanted the wedding to be a reflection of me and my husband," Haspel says of her nuptials. "This is a lifestyle we live already. So many weddings are so cliché — I just wanted it to be us, and be

Lee and Arielle Haspel on their wedding day in November. "I just wanted it to be us, and be totally different," the bride said.

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fitness and in health



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Above, place cards nestled in fresh grass at Arielle and Lee Haspel's wedding. At right, the bride strikes a favorite yoga pose in Manhattan. Guests feasted on guilt-free fare, like coconut-crusted cod, below. Smoothies, left, were served as an alternative to soda.



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totally different.”

Haspel isn't the only health nut in town. With boutique fitness classes and juice bars spreading through the tristate area faster than an engagement announcement, couples are carrying their more-chia-seeds and less-cheese-plate habits into everything from “clean” bridal showers and bachelorette weekends to gluten-free dessert bars at the wedding reception.

Wanting to do something fun and physical with her friends before her September wedding in New York City, Jordana Kier, 28, took her pals for a spin — literally — at the East Hampton SoulCycle studio in August. The group fitness activity felt like a fun and upbeat way to break up her relaxing bachelorette weekend on Long Island, says the entrepreneur bride, who has completed two triathlons

and amplified her workouts in the months before her wedding.

“Everyone had a really good time and could keep up with the class,” Kier says of working up a sweat with her group of 12, who piled into a Saturday morning class and pedaled together on two rows of bikes. Although their skill levels varied, from first-timers to spin regulars, “Everybody felt comfortable,” she says.

So, has Pilates replaced party buses when it comes to pre-wedding blowouts?

“I wouldn't say the days of debauchery are gone, but I'm seeing more brides going to bikini boot camp or a yoga retreat as an alternative,” says Sarah Pease, owner of Brilliant Event Planning in New York. Some couples are even starting the actual wedding day with a fitness break to calm any pre-wedding jitters. For instance,

Haspel and her four bridesmaids enlisted a yoga instructor to lead them through calming stretches in their Manhattan hotel room before they got glam for the festivities.

“It was a great way to start the morning,” says Haspel, who also showed off one of her favorite yoga poses in her wedding portraits. “I was able to move my body and get

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energized without wearing myself out, and make myself feel more present, centered, focused and grateful.”

Pease has even worked with brides who led their attendants on an exhilarating 5k run the morning of the wedding. “It’s a nice bonding activity,” she notes, plus “they’re up early, anyway.”

Not only are couples drinking veggie juices, they’re using those leafy greens as decor. That’s exactly what Jennifer Gilbert, founder of the New York event company Save the Date and author of the memoir “I Never Promised You a Goodie Bag,” had in mind for Lilly and Niklas de la Motte’s June 30, 2012, outdoor wedding under a clear-topped tent at their Water Mill home. Since the property itself borders a farm, Gilbert suggested decorating with vegetables and herbs from local farm stands — “things that look and feel like the landscape of the Hamptons,” she said. The sophisticated black-tie affair for about 200 guests elevated the concept of vegetables as art. Centerpieces of broccoli, asparagus and carrots made for charming conversation pieces. “It was different than saying Table 8 — it was the asparagus table,” Gilbert says. The couple, of course, was thrilled with the clever take on tablescapes.

The menu continued the healthy theme with foods from local farm stands, fresh catch from nearby fishermen, wine from Wölffer Estate Vineyard in Sagaponack and crisp seasonal salads. “Anything closer is fresher, and supports the community in the Hamptons where they live,” Gilbert said.

Haspel, who also emphasized guilt-free fare, agrees. “Food is so important to me, so I made that a priority,” she said.

A pre-wedding conversation with her caterer resulted in healthy (and fun) substitutions for the typical wedding bites. Bar snacks included kale chips and maple-sesame crusted cashews (using recipes on her blog), and smoothies (in flavors like berry and pineapple mint) were served with or



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For Lilly and Niklas de la Motte’s June 2012 wedding in Water Mill, New York event planner Jennifer Gilbert incorporated the bounty from Hamptons farms, including centerpieces that let guests say they were sitting at the “carrot” or “mint” table.

without alcohol as an alternative to soda. Nutrient-rich entrees like coconut-crusted cod and acorn squash ranked high with guests, and late-night snacks included hydrating coconut water (high in

potassium to help ward off hangovers). Even the coffee bar featured almond milk instead of fake creamer.

Best of all, the healthy substitutions were easy to implement. “[The caterer]

was so happy to learn about coconut milk ice cream,” Haspel says of her dairy-free dessert twist.

Were friends and family disappointed by the lack of trans fats? No way.

“They loved the smoothies — it helped energize them and made them feel healthier,” Haspel says. “The one thing they said at the end of the night was, this wedding was so ‘you.’”