

Wedding table themes take on creative, personal flair

Meghan Walton and her fiancé, Patrick, aren't quite sure what their favors will be, or if they will even have them, for their June 2010 wedding, but the table theme at their reception will reflect something special to both of them: the story of their engagement.

"Our table theme is Italy/Venetian," Walton said. "The floral arrangements will be in Venetian looking pots and vases."

The bride-to-be added the tables will not be numbered but will instead bear the names of Italian cities.

The couple, who will be married at the Marikle Chapel of the Annunciation at the College of Notre Dame, became engaged in March in St. Mark's Square in Venice.

"Pat was studying abroad in Rome for the semester, and I went over to visit for a week," said Walton. "We took a trip to Venice, and the day after St. Patrick's Day, right before midnight, after having a candlelight dinner by the Rialto Bridge and listening to a violinist while having dessert, we were strolling through St. Mark's Square when Pat got down on one knee and proposed."

Walton said the proposal "was like a fairytale, and I want my wedding to capture some of the romance and magic of that night."

Renee Novak, who was married at St. Patrick Church in Havre de Grace, believes couples in the process of wedding planning should "choose a table theme that is truly unique to them and their personalities. I think guests really love to see creativity and personal touches; those are the weddings and details that they will always remember."

Novak, who is part Italian, also had an Italian table theme, and several favors which tied into that theme. Her favors included "decorative wooden picture frames with a hand-stamped music theme around the frame — these also doubled as our

placeholders,” she said, “homemade chocolates from Bomboy’s with the Italian theme ‘La Dolce Vita’ written on the gold boxes; and also decorative wine bottles that had labels on them which were small copies of several colorful paintings I had made over the years.”

She said the wine bottles were the centerpieces for each table and “held fresh gerbera daisies and were surrounded by candles and iced grapes.”

“The whole table design just glowed,” Novak said. “I think the guests loved the fact that the favors and table settings were creative, simple and homemade, and reflected both my husband’s musical personality and my traditional, ethnic roots.”

While Becky Ballenger and her husband, Wes, did not have a table theme at their reception, their homemade favors paid homage to the couple’s musical talents, in addition to offering one of Ballenger’s favorite sweets: cupcakes. Ballenger, married at St. Margaret Church in Bel Air July 27, 2008, said she “was interested in having an edible favor and not something that guests would feel obligated to keep.”

She and her mother came up with the cupcake idea while in the baking aisle of the supermarket one day.

“On the friday before the wedding, my mom, grandparents, maid of honor and one of the bridesmaids, and I baked 175 cupcakes,” said Ballenger. “The table in my parents’ dining room was covered with them.”

Ballenger said they iced the cupcakes and “added yellow sugar bass and treble clef candies that we also made on top ... my husband and I are both musicians, so that’s where the clef candies came in.”

But for couples not interested in offering a favor, Walton had another idea, one that she is considering:

“We were thinking about giving money in honor of all of our guests to our favorite charity,” she said.