

PULSE

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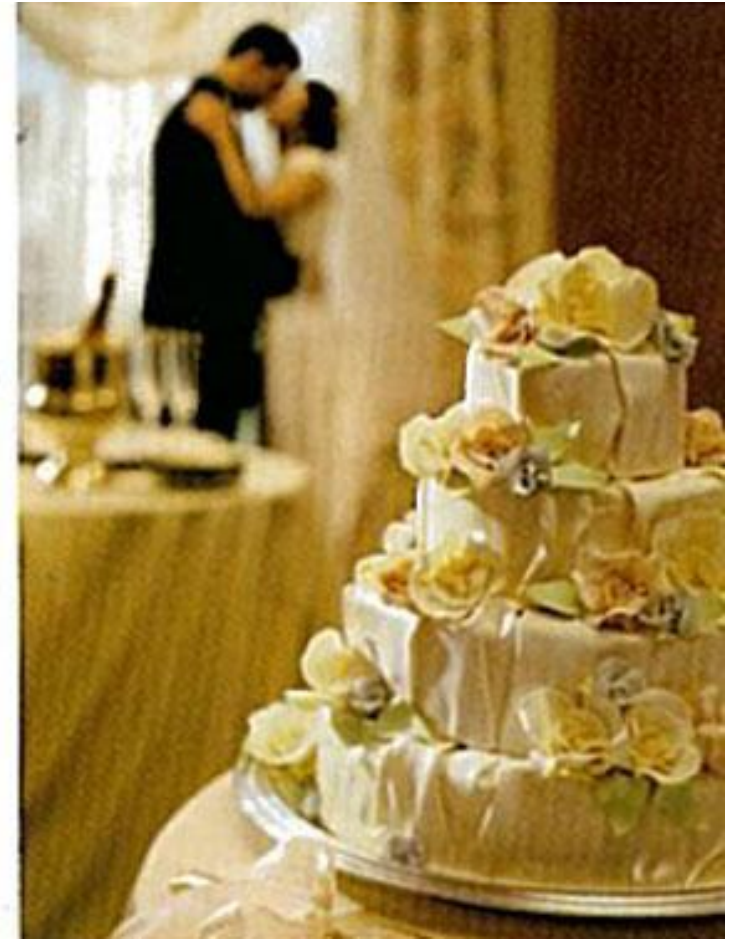
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THE *Female* FACTOR

Learning How to
Walk in Her Shoes



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Many couples opt for a destination wedding, allowing their friends and family to experience a vacation alongside the nuptials. Resort/hotel spas are equipped to cater to these types of guests by working alongside the other management departments at their property and the bride- and groom-to-be.

Las Vegas area spas definitely know a thing or two about weddings. "Today's bride wants something uniquely her own, and believes that she can accomplish this by having a destination wedding," says MGM Grand Wedding Chapel Manager Glynnis Sherwood.

Plan Ahead

Just like planning a wedding, spas plan their bridal menus, packages and special discounts out well in advance, but leave room for flexibility. "We set up simple packages that can be altered to have that one-of-a-kind customized feeling with various options and à la carte add-ons," explains Lori Kruk, Spa Director at The Spa at Elbow Beach in Bermuda.

And Verena Lasvigne-Fox—Spa Manager at Four Seasons George V in Paris, France—agrees, advising spa operators: "Keep it simple and understand

your guests. We sell custom-made packages to fit 100 percent of our guests' needs."

Another important factor to remember when planning is price point. "Keeping budgets in mind, I create three simple, adjustable packages ranging from low-cost to cost-not-being-an-issue," says Kruk. Lasvigne-Fox adds, "Having a fixed package can frustrate some guests with certain budgets who would still like to come get a massage."

Incorporating local ingredients in your offerings is the perfect way to create lasting memories of the spa experience. In Paris, the romance capital of the world, Lasvigne-Fox ensures Four Seasons George V guests receive a touch

DAY SPA TIP: Partner with a local wedding planner or hotel without spa facilities to spread the word about your wedding packages. Fayez Tamba, owner of Fayez Spa in London, Ontario, Canada wisely drives business to his spa by "partnering with local hotels and reception venues to recommend brides to the spa."

of elegance. "The creativity of your team is on demand especially if you want to create the most romantic moments. We think of champagne with strawberries, rose petals and candles." At Elbow Beach, on one hand, Bermudian aspects like rum swizzle cocktails, products using pink sand from the nearby beach and picturesque views in the treatment rooms help create a lasting impression with wedding parties.

As you're planning for large parties, the amount of space you have available needs to be taken into consideration. "We can manipulate our space by moving to guest rooms, our Spa Pavilion on the beach or staying in the spa. If a bridal party is over 20 people, the key is to have enough space so we can make it intimate, calming and relaxing," Kruk says. Even if you have to take the spa experience into the guest rooms, create ambiance with music, aromatherapy and candles.

The number of staff members that are on hand and able to perform the requested treatments should not be overlooked. If you have a bridal party of 20 people, you might not have the staff to cover everyone at the same time. In this