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SAN FRANCISCO

# Brides

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## *California Dreamin'*

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THE BEST GREEN VENUES AND  
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**PREMIERE ISSUE**

# WED DOSSIER VENUES

BY KAREN PALMER



## IT'S EASY BEING GREEN

*With the Bay Area's stunningly sustainable new venues, brides and grooms are booking the most eco-fabulous of weddings.*

The wedding color everyone's talking about is no longer white—it's green. Couples are trying to make their celebrations as sustainable as they are memorable, and ground zero for an eco-fabulous wedding is an equally eco-fabulous event space.

Sustainability expert Corina Beczner, owner of local green event and wedding planning firm Vibrant Events and the author of the upcoming book *The Sierra Club Guide to Green Weddings* (Sierra Club, 2009), explains, "Choosing a green venue is one of the top five things you can do to green your wedding. After all, because they use so much energy, buildings are one of the top contributors to climate change."

Bay Area brides have more eco-conscious choices than ever. Here are our top picks.

### CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

The new Academy of Sciences is touted as one of the most sustainable—and stunning—public buildings in the country. Boasting a "living roof," floor-to-ceiling windows for natural light, and much more, the building is something of an eco-friendly mecca. Couples will be able to explore the facilities for weddings starting in summer 2009—and the possibilities are nearly endless. The Academy can host everything from small cocktail receptions to an all-Academy buyout for 3,000 guests. Plus, private events can even take advantage of the two culinary geniuses behind the Academy's Moss Room restaurant, local luminaries Charles Phan and Loretta Keller. Now that's what we call a green dream. *55 Music Concourse Dr., Golden Gate Park. 415.379.8000 or calacademy.org*

### CAVALLO POINT

Located just a quick jaunt across the Golden Gate Bridge at Fort Baker, Cavallo Point offers classic San Francisco military-style architecture, both historic and contemporary guest rooms and suites, and breathtaking views of the city. Named for the wild horses that used to inhabit the land, the newly opened hotel reused materials, restored the landscape with native plants, and utilized green building elements to create a resort that's as gorgeous as it is eco-conscious.

Aside from indulging in the sweeping views and 10,000 square feet of outdoor space to host the perfect al fresco wedding, the betrothed can enjoy creations from Cavallo Point's double Michelin-starred chef, Joseph Humphrey, who will create local, organic, French-inspired seasonal menus for wedding celebrations. *601 Murray Circle, Fort Baker. 415.339.4700 or cavallopoint.com*



Green doesn't have to be a dream at eco-fabulous venues like (clockwise from top left) Solage in Calistoga, Fort Baker's Cavallo Point, and the California Academy of Sciences.

### BENTLY RESERVE

The Bently Reserve fits the bill for any couple planning an elegant and eco-friendly wedding. With its to-die-for beaux arts architecture and opulent Banking Hall, it has been one of San Francisco's most coveted event spaces since it reopened this past spring. On track to receive LEED Silver certification, the Bently Reserve has used low-VOC paint, and its floors include FSC-certified Brazilian cherrywood, all of which creates a stunningly sustainable experience. The Bently Reserve is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and once stepping inside, you'll see why: think French and Italian marble walls, solid bronze doors, and original chandeliers. *301 Battery St. 415.728.6729 or bentlyreserve.com*

### SOLAGE CALISTOGA

The newest luxury spa to open in Napa, Solage offers more than just relaxing treatments. With initiatives such as an onsite recycling and a green sheets program, it's also an eco-chic setting. Starting in 2009, brides can book a new "Wine Country Weddings with a Conscience" package, which includes a locally sourced, seasonal menu, organic wedding cake, biodynamic wine, and organic linens. Plus, Solage's wedding planner will work with couples to add additional green elements, such as recycling, composting, and donations to local charities. *755 Silverado Trail, Calistoga. 866.942.7442 or solagecalistoga.com* ■