

WESTCHESTER • Hudson Valley weddings

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FARM WEDDINGS

HOW TO BE (JUST) A
LITTLE BIT COUNTRY...

BOUQUETS

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USE REAL FLOWERS

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Take Your Breath Away

MINIMOONS

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Phew!—It's All Over

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POP THE BUBBLY

COUPLES WHO WANT TO ADD A RETRO FEEL TO their weddings are finding fizzy thrills—and we don't mean Champagne. Good, old-fashioned sodas—with their throw-back bottle designs, colorful liquids, and all-ages appeal—are popping up all over wedding receptions. You can find the syrupy sweetness in signature drinks, as a design element in centerpieces, or in soda bars (like a candy buffet, with soda bottles lined up in rainbow colors for guests' choosing). "I personally like to recommend doing something like this pre-ceremony, as guests enter, especially if it is hot," says Lauren Sozmen, owner of Loli Events (lolievents.com). "Visually, they are so pretty—and you can keep them within your color scheme. Soda bottles can also be a part of your table décor, or you could do a two-in-one and use them as escort or place cards by attaching name tags to them. Vintage soda is a great non-alcoholic option at the bar throughout the reception; if there are a lot of kids, it makes them feel special, too." You can find a selection of sodas of all colors at sodapopstop.com.

CREAM OF THE CAKE

FROM SWISS DOTS TO COLORED RIBBONS TO nothing at all (daring!), cake-decorating trends seem to cycle in and out as quickly as the fashions on runway models. So, what are the best-dressed cakes wearing this season? "We're seeing a huge return to the art of handmade sugar flowers and artisanal decorative techniques," says Jay Muse of Lulu Custom Cake Boutique in Scarsdale (everythinglulu.com). "Especially popular is taking the bride's bouquet and then recreating it out of sugar throughout the cake." Muse adds that interesting textures, graphic dots and patterns, and unexpected flavors (such as chocolate and chili) have also been big trends this year.

LOCAL FLAVOR

ON YOUR WEDDING DAY, THERE'S NOTHING wrong with bragging a little—and, living in our area, there's a lot to brag about. This goes double when it comes to the bounty from our local farms. Even if you're not having a barn wedding, you can give your guests a taste of the Hudson Valley to take home with them—and drool over. For example, Raspberry Fields Farm in Marlboro (845-236-2551; raspberryfieldsfarm.com) creates favor-sized packages of its signature raspberry granola (though the raspberries and other fruits are imported). "We have a commercial kitchen here, and we stir it by hand, bake it by hand, pack it by hand," says owner Sara Higgins. "We really consider it an artisan product. People want to go back to simple, basic ingredients, and since ours is all handmade it tastes really good—and it has that local flavor." Prices start at \$2 for a 2-ounce bag and increase based on volume of granola and degree of customization (ribbons, tags, and labels can be customized). Or, you can go for the 2-ounce bear-shaped jars of raw honey harvested from Remsburg Maple Farm & Apiary in Pleasant Valley (845-635-9168; remsburgmaple.com). Bears cost \$2 each in quantities of 50-plus, labels can be customized for a nominal fee (or a tulle veil can be added for fifty cents each), and you can add a cute wooden honey dipper (\$2 each). They'll certainly make for a sweet end to the evening.