

BRIDE'S GUIDE

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Bring out your inner child with these ideas for incorporating sweet treats into your big day

BY JILL JARACZ
CTW FEATURES

How sweet is your love? Show your guests with candy! This versatile sweet treat can add an element of surprise to many aspects of your wedding, so use these ideas for a fun twist.

Candy-centric

Make candy the heart of your wedding theme. For a Willy Wonka-inspired wedding she coordinated, Tracie Morris, Certified Wedding Planner at You're the Bride in Detroit, says the couple sent "golden ticket" wedding invitations, had candy references throughout the event and even set up a candy store at the reception.

A Sweet Ceremony

To make a sweet statement during your ceremony, try lollipop bouquets. Morris says flower girls can skip the usual flower baskets and carry large lollipops down the aisle instead. Bridesmaids can carry lollipop bouquets in the couple's colors, with ribbon "greenery."

On the Menu

Naturally, candy makes a great treat at the end of an evening. A candy bar is one popular way to give your guests a sugar fix. "You have a great opportunity to be playful, fun and young, and not have any rules to adhere to," says Olivia Colt, owner of Salt & Honey Catering and Events in Berkeley, California.

A candy bar can coordinate with your wedding colors, or it can be a mix of favorite candies you loved as a child, says Colt.

Candy buffets can also complement your theme. "Use a theme and your imagination, such as your beach honeymoon," says Shelley Grieshop, writer for Totally Promotional, a promotional products company. Clean sand pails and shovels double as containers and scoops. Fill them with nautical-themed candy like Swedish fish and chocolate with sea salt.

Delicious Décor

Candy can be functional too. "While the candy bar is a popular choice for many couples, now we are seeing candy themed centerpieces where couples incorporate these sweet treats seamlessly into the reception décor with candies in their wedding colors," says Kim Forrest, editor and trends expert at Wedding Wire.

For centerpieces, Forrest advises filling vases with a candy base like rock candy, jellybeans or hard candy. Then add other elements such as flowers, feathers or even lollipops or cotton candy to complete the look.

Colt says rock candy is a versatile – and budget-friendly way – to elaborate on a geode theme. Clusters of rock candy can simulate crystals as table décor for a fraction of the price.

Candy can even be used as a whimsical backdrop. Sabrina Cadini, founder and creative director at San Diego-based event planning firm La Dolce Idea, suggests creat-



ing salt-water taffy garlands by stringing the wrapped candies on colored embroidery thread.

Table Talk

For holiday weddings, candy canes make a great functional decoration. At one of Morris' weddings, the bride tied all of her guests' names and table numbers to a candy cane and put them on small Christmas trees. The result was a festive,

functional favor.

Candy elements give an extra wow factor to place settings. Cadini suggests chocolate-covered pretzel sticks as a way to enhance the table and give your guests a fun snack.

Have a Drink

Try a cotton-candy themed drink as your wedding beverage. Rock candy stir sticks are fun cocktail garnishes.

Rock candy's versatility also lends itself

well to coffee and tea bars. Colt says a rock candy stir stick is a good replacement for regular sugar, as guests can keep it in their drink and also eat the candy.

However you decide to give your guests that sugar high, using candy will definitely make your wedding day a little bit sweeter.

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Ask a bride

What is the Etiquette for Plus-Ones?

Our resident bridal expert offers her advice to your biggest wedding queries

BY RENEE LEE
CTW FEATURES

Q: Do I have to let all of my guests bring a plus-one? How do I decide who gets to bring someone?

A: The short answer is no. Plus-one invitations are tricky and each situation is different. Guests who are married, engaged or living together should definitely be invited as a pair, but even then

the rules aren't entirely rigid.

Start by taking an inventory of your proposed guest list and calculate the total head count both with plus-ones and without. Extra guests means more money is going into the wedding, so if your budget is tight, it will pay to closely examine any plus-ones you have listed.

I have personally debated the plus-one question regarding single friends with my fiancé, and while I think we'll end up giving people at least the option of bringing someone (though it's unlikely everyone will take the offer), my gut reaction was thinking I didn't want to have a bunch of complete strangers at our wedding.

Whatever your strategy may



be, be consistent — either give every person a plus-one, or have guidelines. Perhaps plus-ones are

only given to close family members or members of the bridal party. Or maybe you break it

down to age groups, like plus-ones only for those over 18, for example.

Also consider that without a plus-one, some guests may not know anyone else at the party, which can happen if you're inviting an old childhood friend or a co-worker from years ago. For me, many of my single friends are already friends with a number of other guests, so I know they'll still have fun going solo.

Overall, there are no hard and fast rules about plus-ones. Just be sure to be clear with your guests in the invitation if they're allowed to bring someone.

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