

Destination Weddings

You can take it with you!

by Jennifer Teel-Wolter

Just because your wedding will be out of town doesn't mean your vendors have to be. Sacramento has some of the most talented wedding professionals available and, as bride Nancy Fu found out, there are big benefits to keeping your vendors close to home.

For her September 15, 2007 wedding, Nancy selected a beautiful estate in the small town of Angwin, just outside St. Helena in the Napa Valley. While the location was charming, there was little in the way of local wedding vendors. At the suggestion of her wedding coordinator, Debra Hiebert of Très Fabu Event Planning and Design, Nancy chose to work with Sacramento vendors and asked them to travel with her for the big day.

"At first I thought I would need to choose vendors in Napa and San Francisco, just because it was closer," says Nancy. "But Debra really encouraged me to work with Sacramento vendors. There is so much talent here, I didn't feel the need to look elsewhere...and I saved a lot of money since Sacramento vendors are more affordable."

Sound unusual? It's not. Many local vendors are willing to travel and welcome the opportunity. And, if your location isn't too far, overnight accommodations may not be necessary – making it even more cost-effective and convenient.

If you will be getting married outside of the Sacramento area, there are many reasons to consider bringing local vendors with you. For many brides, bringing along vendors will represent a substantial cost savings. Because vendors in outside areas often price their services far above local rates, importing Sacramento professionals can greatly reduce wedding costs and offer you top-quality service, regardless of your location. Travel costs can be a consideration, but check with your vendors. Many

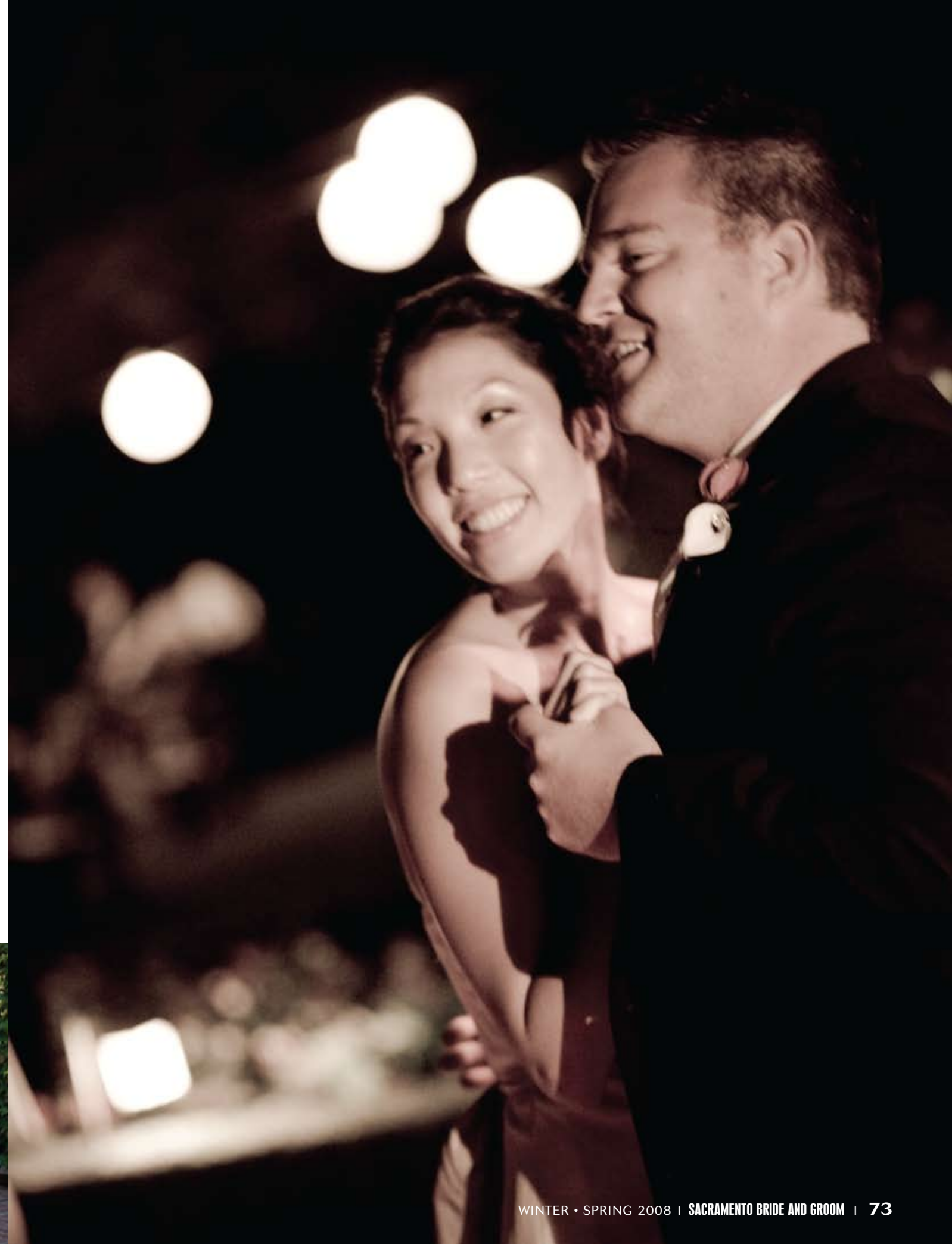
include travel up to certain distance in their fees, such as 1-hour drive time or 45-mile radius from their office. If your location isn't much farther, travel costs could be negligible.

Additionally, choosing local vendors allows a bride more time to get to know the professionals that will be working on her wedding. Menu tasting, hair and makeup trials, and sample floral designs are much easier to accomplish for a destination wedding if the selected vendors are local. Lastly, communicating with local professionals is often easier than trying to reach out of town vendors, resulting in a more cohesive and stress-free destination event.

"For a destination wedding, the hardest part can be communicating with out of town vendors," says Debra. "By working with people in Sacramento, you can talk with them face to face before the big day."

Following Debra's lead, Nancy began the planning process for her September day by selecting simple and elegant wedding invitations from Philosophia Custom Invitation Paperie. To further bring Nancy's vision of understated elegance and classic beauty to life, Debra worked with the florist to accent the Napa Valley estate's lush grounds with cream and white floral arrangements, centerpieces, and aisle décor. Table settings and linens with a touch of burgundy would add a splash of color to the day.

The morning of the wedding, Nancy and her bridesmaids treated themselves to makeup design by LeiLani Bryan of Makeup by LeiLani. Because her studio would be more than a short trip away, LeiLani took special care to bring all supplies with her and brought an assistant to help keep the bridal party on schedule. Once hair and makeup were complete, Nancy sat for a series of beautiful photographs with photographer Cindi Kinney.





Then, surrounded by family and friends, the couple recited their vows outdoors at the end of a rose petal strewn aisle, as white paper lanterns danced above in the breeze. Sentimental and heartfelt, Nancy and Darrick's ceremony touched their guests with its sincerity and there was hardly a dry eye in sight. Special tribute was paid to Nancy's father, who, because of illness, was fearful that he might not be able to attend.

After the ceremony, guests made their way from the garden setting to a lush, outdoor reception area. As dusk fell, the wedding feast began and guests were treated to enticing dishes created by Karen's Bakery of Folsom, each custom-designed to Nancy and Darrick's specifications. The focus was fresh, seasonal fare including late summer delights such as heirloom tomatoes, fresh mozzarella, early-harvest wine grapes, and local plums. And, because Nancy enjoys a sweet treat before a meal, Karen included chocolate fondue for guests, complete with dipping items such as mini rice krispy treats, fresh fruit, and homemade marshmallows cut into a heart shape.

For the dinner, Karen worked with Nancy to create a casual, refreshing menu. Entrée choices included freshly grilled halibut with a summer corn risotto or flat iron steak served over a zucchini and mint salad with pecorino cheese. Instead of the traditional wedding cake, Nancy and Darrick toasted one another over miniature dessert cakes.

After dinner, the party was in full swing as guests danced to musical entertainment by Matt Brys of Extreme Productions. Nancy and Darrick chose a variety of upbeat songs that appealed to guests of all ages. Cindi Kinney Photography captured the fun on film and with Element Studios serving as the videographer, documenting every toast, laugh, and kiss of the day.

Despite the extra travel involved, the Nancy and Darrick's wedding was flawless - an experience enjoyed by vendors and guests alike.

"Nancy and Darrick's day was great; everything flowed really well," recalls Rod Atwood of Element Studios. "As a videographer, I always welcome the opportunity to work out of town. It's nice to see something new and have a challenge. I use destination weddings as a chance to spark my creative juices."

Want to give your destination affair some local flair? Follow Debra Hiebert's tips for traveling successfully with vendors:

- Plan carefully: Destination events take extra effort. Make sure your vendors are organized and clearly understand their responsibilities.
- Communicate: Give your vendors the information they'll need for a successful event, such as clear directions, detailed schedules, approximate travel times, a map of the surrounding area, and the contact information of the other vendors booked for your day. This way, if a challenge arises, your vendors are equipped to solve it quickly.
- Visit the spot: Chances are your vendors haven't worked at your location before. Take them on a trip to your venue so they can plan for logistics before the big day.
- Plan for the weather: Even if you're just an hour away, there may be weather patterns that you're not accustomed to – plan for anything!
- Build in extra time: Schedule for unexpected delays. Even the smallest errand can take more time when you're unfamiliar with the area.
- Over pack: Vendors will need to bring all necessary supplies, such as flowers, cosmetics, and batteries with them. Include extras to handle last minute needs. ☺



Nancy's Destination Wedding
 Everything, except the estate and the ice, came from Sacramento for Nancy's Napa event. Here's who participated:
 Coordinator: Très Fabu Event Planning and Design
 Invitations: Philosophia Custom Invitation Paperie
 Caterer: Karen's Bakery Cafe & Catering
 Makeup: Makeup by LeiLani
 Photographer: Heartstrings Photographic Artistry
 Music: Extreme Productions
 Videographer: Element Studios

