

## Not Your Average Napkin

To reflect the care with which your reception tables are set, have your napkins folded in an equally elegant style. Follow these simple steps to perfectly natty napkins:

### The Satchet

1. Fold the napkin into horizontal thirds, the top portion folded down and the bottom portion over that, as you would a business letter.
2. Take the top layer and fold it down twice to form a narrow band at the middle of the napkin.
3. Hold the two sides of the band and flip the napkin over.
4. Fold both short sides of the

- napkin twice towards the center (the two sides should meet, forming equal halves).
5. Vertically fold the two halves down the center so they meet back to back. At this point you should have a tall rectangle with a band in the middle.
6. On the square above the band pinch the top layer of material (in the center) and pull it down to the band. Then tuck this piece under the band to form a diamond.
7. Repeat step 6 using the square below the band.

### The Waterlily

1. Fold all four corners of your napkin into the center, leaving you with another square.
2. Fold all four corners of this square into the center.
3. Carefully holding the whole thing together, flip the napkin over. You should have a square facing you without any creases.
4. Again fold all four corners into the center.
5. While tightly holding the center (you may even want to place a small heavy object

here to hold the corners down) reach underneath each corner and pull out the loose fabric to form petals.

6. To hold your lily in place, scoop up your creation and place it in a bowl. Then you can get creative. Garnish your napkin with: fresh or dried flowers, ribbons, placecards, wedding favors, or even a dinner roll.



For more napkin folding ideas check out *Guy Merrill Gross's Folding Napkins* (Friedman, Fairfax, \$12.95).

## Hors D'oeuvres Du Jour

Gone are the days of simple, covered-cracker appetizers. "Today's brides want elaborate, passed-around fare at their wedding receptions," says Scott Reichelsdorf of Chicago's Calihan Gotoff Catering. Here's his top-10 list of trendy, tantalizing tidbits.

1. Gingered brioche toast topped with marinated yellow peppers and fresh rosemary chevre mousse
2. Chinese noodle pancake served with a julienne of duck, hoisin sauce, and leek crisps
3. Sweet-potato chip with blackened sea bass and a light tarragon sauce
4. Toasted scallion and sesame-oil bread with ginger-and-coriander seasoned sea bass, garnished with blackened sesame seeds
5. Jicama (a carrot-like vegetable) flower topped with chopped avocado, tomato, and cilantro
6. Pear and brie quesadillas with cilantro and fresh basil
7. Smoked salmon and chevre quesadillas
8. Focaccia cup with a sauté of wild mushrooms, roasted tomatoes, and fresh herbs
9. Grilled polenta triangles topped with sun-dried tomatoes
10. Savory gougere (puff pastry) with Caesar salad

## The Main Course: Catering 101

Chances are your wedding is the first "big event" you've ever planned—and catering is almost always the priciest part of your wedding budget. So when choosing a caterer shop wisely and ask as many questions as you need. To put you on the right cuisine course we talked to Scott Reichelsdorf, wedding consultant for Chicago's renowned Calihan Gotoff Catering. Here's what he had to say:

- Once you've found a reception site ask for a list of approved caterers. Most "off premise" reception locations (public spaces such as museums or historic homes) will want you to work with caterers who have a liquor license and enough insurance for any possible damage.
- If your list has 10 or 12 different caterers on it, don't drive yourself nuts trying to meet with all of them. Narrow it down over the phone by asking if they are available on your date, what their prices are, and what type of food they typically serve.
- Find out if the reception site provides tables and chairs or if your caterer needs to supply them.
- These days, vegetarian entrees are standard. But if any of your guests have more exacting dietary requirements, say a Kosher or vegan meal, give your caterer lots of advance warning. • Don't assume a buffet meal is less expensive than a sit-down dinner—it can be quite the opposite. At a buffet the caterer doesn't have control over the quantity of food—a guest could come back to a particular station many times, taking another plate and fork each time. So the caterer has to double the amount of dishes and utensils he'd use. Set portions at a sit-down dinner mean the caterer can control costs—saving you money too!

