

CELEB  
PLANNER  
Q&A

## la vie en luxe

Three of the country's top event designers—Colin Cowie, Mindy Weiss and David Stark—share stories from the ultra-fabulous world of celebrity weddings.



### colin cowie

#### We hear you got an interesting start into designing weddings. What happened?

I was in Europe by chance and met a couple from Los Angeles, which is where I was moving. I had no idea the man was president of Playboy. Hugh Hefner had just gotten engaged to Kimberly Conrad, and I was asked to be a food consultant for the wedding (I owned a small catering company at the time). I was not at all impressed with the vision for the wedding, so I shared my ideas with his staff. Before I knew it, I was in Hef's office and was hired on the spot to produce the ultimate bachelor's wedding. The wedding was to be held at the Playboy Mansion in less than two months from then, and I did a complete redesign.

#### What's been your most lush event to date?

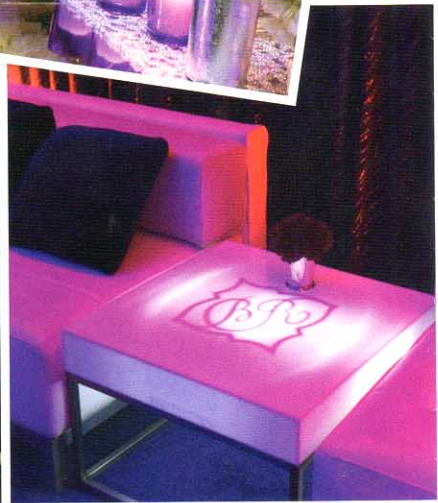
I designed and produced a wedding in three months in the Middle East for 2,000 people. Everything was built in LA and flown out on five 747 jumbo jets that we chartered just to bring everything there (75,000 square feet of carpet, 1 mile of custom railing, 500,000 flowers, 7 miles of electrical cable and more).

#### How do you manage to pull off such large-scale events so seamlessly?

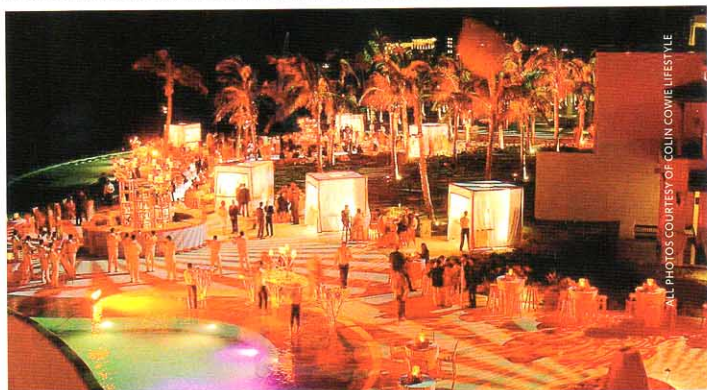
There is an art to throwing a wedding, and it's all in the timing. A well-produced wedding has a distinctive beginning, middle and end, everything smoothly orchestrated without downtime. In the end, everyone leaves saying they can't believe it's already over—because it moved along so elegantly.

#### Any style advice for brides?

True style has nothing to do with how much money you spend. It's about how you treat your guests. Your wedding is an opportunity for you and your fiancé to function as the quintessential host and hostess for the first time together. The comfort of your guests is of most importance. >>



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP Mirrored tabletops add depth to low centerpieces; Colin made a custom logo for this couple, which appeared throughout the wedding; lighting can transform any event space, creating interest and movement; when it comes to certain details like the cake, sometimes subtle hints of color are all you need.



ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF COLIN COWIE LIFESTYLE