

# [brides party people]

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**ALL IN THE FAMILY** "SOME OF THE BRIDES WHO HIRE ME TO DO THEIR WEDDINGS ARE ACTUALLY EVENT PLANNERS THEMSELVES," SAYS AMY. "THAT'S THE ULTIMATE COMPLIMENT!"

## AMY NICHOLS

Amy Nichols Special Events | San Francisco

**A CAREER IN BANKING** might seem like an unusual launch pad for a wedding planner, but for Amy Nichols, that stint created an early outlet for her party-planning bug. "I was in marketing, and my boss saw that I was adept at putting together events. Before long, I was ordering all the gift baskets and hiring the caterers," recalls Amy. Fortunately, a corporate mind-set has served her well: When a Filipino groom's family repeatedly burst into song throughout dinner, Amy managed to keep the caterer on schedule. For another wedding, the cupcakes that were promised didn't appear, so she threw on an apron and helped whip up a batch. "No matter what happens, I don't freak out," says Amy. "No one is paying to see me panic!" —*Hillary Quinn*



**IT'S A WRAP** TUCK VIBRANT BOUGAINVILLEA INTO A ROLLED NAPKIN AT EACH PLACE SETTING. "IT'S SUCH A LOVELY WELCOME GESTURE."



**KEEP IN STEP** GIVE YOUR WEDDING DAY AN ETHNIC SPIN, AS ONE BRIDE DID BY DANCING A POLKA WITH HER (POLISH-BORN) FATHER. "THE WHOLE CROWD WAS CLAPPING AND CHEERING."



**CHILL OUT** FORGET YOUR STANDARD ORANGE ICE POPS—AMY LIKES THE GROWN-UP VARIETY, LIKE TANGERINE AND PINEAPPLE, FOR A CASUAL DESERT AT OUTDOOR FETES.



**HAT TRICK** WANT TO SURPRISE YOUR SPORTS-LOVING GROOM? OUTFIT THE BARTENDERS OR WAITERS IN CAPS BEARING HIS FAVORITE TEAM'S SLOGO.



**SAY CHEESE** FOR A FUN APPETIZER, SET OUT A RUSTIC WHEEL OF PARMESAN; GUESTS BREAK OFF A PIECE AND DRIZZLE IT WITH HONEY OR BALSAMIC VINEGAR.

## AMY'S TAKEAWAY TIPS

"Limit the maids' bouquets to the same color, but add interest by giving each girl a different flower—one carries white roses, another cream tulips—and you get lilies of the valley."

"Customize your table numbers by having them correspond with special dates in your family's life. For example: 1975, accompanied by a framed photo of your parents' wedding."

Turn to Shopping Guide

PHOTOS: CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: KARINA MARIE DIAZ PHOTOGRAPHY/COURTESY OF AMY NICHOLS; GETTY IMAGES; TED MORRISON (2); LISA LEFKOWITZ; JUPITER IMAGES (CENTER); PROP STYLIST: WENDY SCHELAH.