WEDDING PLANNER

KATE MILLER SAYS 'I DO' TO THE LESS-THAN-GLAMOROUS WORK BEHIND A

COUPLE'S BIG DAY, BY CATHERINE WARMERDAM

ou have a really tough job-to make the most important day in a couple's life absolutely perfect in their eyes. How do you handle the pressure?

I am a perfectionist at heart. One of the things that I've come to terms with is that it's not going to be perfect. But what I can do for those clients who want what I do-for everything to be perfect—is to play the role of buffer and liaison. I'm good at thinking on my feet and solving problems quickly. Pristine wedding day memories are what we're trying to accomplish.

How much of your work involves simply keeping the bride calm?

A lot. But a lot of that work is done well before the day of the wedding.

Any bridezilla stories you can share?

I don't typically get bridezillas. It could be my personality-maybe I scare them away.

What's the strangest or most extravagant request you've gotten from a couple?

We had a couple who was really into magic so we flew a magician up from Los Angeles and it was a complete surprise to everyone—the vendors as well as the guests. He came as a "guest" and then during the cocktail hour, he went around pulling quarters out of people's ears.

Have you found that grooms are getting more involved in the planning?

Absolutely! It's usually about food, music and booze for the guys, but it has been fun seeing more of them get involved with the aesthetics and the floral arrangements. The wedding should be about the couple and not the bride, so to me it's great that guys are getting more involved.

What would surprise people about wedding planning?

There's a lot of vomit at weddings.

From nerves or alcohol or what?

There's a lot of alcohol consumed at weddings. I always advise hiring good bar staff to make sure that it doesn't happen, but at least three or four times a year I have to deal with vomit. It's totally unglamorous.

What advice do you have for engaged couples?

Hire a wedding planner the soonest you can and even if you don't hire one, do a budget meeting before you book anything. Also, pick a day of the week where you don't talk about the wedding. Otherwise, it can be all-consuming.

