

# Catering magazine

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# Love on Lake Tahoe

Merrily Wed ●●● [merrilywed.com](http://merrilywed.com)

Last July, Merrily Wed helped a couple, Katey and Mario, transform a private lakeview estate perched high on a bluff in North Lake Tahoe, Calif., into their dream wedding locale.

"They knew they wanted a venue that displayed the beauty of the lake, but would also provide an opportunity for them to create a unique feel where they could showcase their personalities and creativity," says Merrily Rocco, head designer and owner of Merrily Wed in Tahoe City, Calif. "Villa Bella was just the right place; it has a stunning view of the lake and a space that allowed Katey's vision and Mario's creativity to come to life."

That vision included the bride's desire to incorporate geometric shapes and patterns throughout the event, resulting in such details as wire-rimmed geometric glass lanterns and more than 25 hanging







geometric figures, which had been welded by Mario and his cousin, Giovanni. The duo also crafted a circular arch that served as the backdrop for the vows, and a 15-foot open-air teepee, under which a poet sat during the reception, typing customized poems on a vintage typewriter.

The wedding motif of mixing shapes and patterns continued in the dining tent, where wooden farm tables alternated with round tables. A prairie-blue and white china pattern, selected by Katey for the round tables only, echoed the Mexican-inspired dinner menu—which was written on paper bags holding tortilla chips.

Passed appetizers included fresh seafood ceviche with tortilla chips and spicy whipped guacamole; artichoke heart, sun-dried tomato and onion tartlets with balsamic reduction; and quesadillas with mozzarella, pasilla chiles and black beans topped with cilantro cream. After a plated salad and tortilla chips served with salsas and guacamole, the 137 guests dined from a family-style buffet of steamed tortillas, tri-tip asada, chile-cumin marinated mahi mahi, peppers and onions, Mexican-style boiled corn and Yukon gold potato gratin. A lavish cookie bar featured such varieties as lavender tea, chocolate mudslide and gluten-free peanut butter, as well as a giant chocolate chip cookie cake.

To pull off the event, guests needed to be shuttled onto the 40-acre property, due to the long driveway. "We lined the guests' pathway with a welcome sign and balloons," says Rocco. "Another challenge



was making sure we cleaned up at the end of the night and did not leave any scraps for the neighborhood bears! We even rented a locking dumpster to keep them out."

The estate on the bluff proved to be the ideal canvas for the couple's artistic touches. "Looking back, our wedding truly was a reflection of us and everything we could have ever imagined," summed up Katey and Mario.



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