



KRISTIN BANTA EVENTS

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When looking for the perfect event planner, some basic assets are a necessity: creativity, warmth, knowledge, experience, attention to detail, and passion about event design. But how about trained in welding? Apprenticed in interior design? Experienced in catering, florals, stage lighting, and carpentry? Kristin Banta possesses all of these credentials and more, having worked in every facet involved with event production and design. It's these unusual skills that make Kristin so versatile, accomplished, respected by her peers and beloved by her exclusive clientele.

In order to provide the utmost in personalized attention, Kristin accepts only 10-12 events a year where she does full event production and design. There are many event planners in Southern California, and all differ in style and approach, but since she is also a designer, Kristin uses her unique knowledge to develop a full planning experience where she can dig deep to figure out who her clients are and bring their visions to life in grand scale.

Kristin started out designing window displays and events for a fashion designer. That experience segued into planning events for non-profit organizations as well as recording artists, and later to the production side of a major record label. It was from there, in 2000, that she established her own company, Kristin Banta Events. Now her events, much like her career, benefit from her willingness to push the envelope, inspiring the exciting question, "What's she going to do next?"

Working with artistic people such as actors and musicians always allows for the opportunity to take creative risks. In my attempt to create a gypsy tent village for a recording artist, I sought out a variety of fabrics with unfinished seams, which were layered, bustled, and thrown over the tables in an eclectic Bohemian vibe. Objects like compasses, urns, and chunky glassware were landscaped on top of the tables, to look like treasures collected by explorers while sailing around the globe. I wanted each element to feel as though it had a different origin, conveying warmth and romance while still being cohesive.





Photograph by Mei & Sonja Photography



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Photograph by Victor Savinore Photography

Above: The graphic ultrasuede table runner adorning the mirrored tabletop provided inspiration with its vibrant raspberry color and masculine sensibility. To offset the strength of the print and soften the look, we used small but lush flower arrangements and a variety of curvaceous vessels of varied heights. I couldn't find suitable napkin rings, so at the last minute I wrapped each napkin with reflective silver wire to add texture and originality.

Facing page: The wedding of Good Charlotte guitarist Billy Martin and Linzi Williamson remains one of my favorites, partly because they had such dramatic personal style. The event had a haunted quality to it, as if it were happening in a romantic, ancient European village. We didn't use many florals, but instead covered the two long tables with vintage pieces and Victorian collectables. The success of any event depends upon the stimulation of multiple senses, thus each guest had a different table setting, which provided a visual impact.

"If we oversimplify the plan, we take the soul out of the spectacle. Dare to design from within."

—Kristin Banta



Photograph by elizabeth messina, kathlegroom.com



Photograph by elizabeth messina, kathlegroom.com

Above and left: Something I truly love to do is to bring nature to indoor spaces and make the outdoors feel more intimate. I wanted to transform a ballroom to be reminiscent of a Mediterranean piazza, so I had pepper trees and olive trees placed throughout the room. We hung Tivoli lights in the corners and created a custom stage front covered in creeping fig to make it look like an authentic element of the piazza. An aged stone fountain with floating blossoms was placed in the center of the room, and all the florals looked as though they could have been picked from a hillside near the villa. Raw wooden tables and various natural fibers created a feeling of European hospitality.

Facing page: The cobblestones of Two Rodeo, a street in the heart of Beverly Hills, inspired me to reproduce a French street scene to appear as if the local merchants and villagers had all contributed wares from their shops and attics for a village feast. In the midst of some of the world's most revered brands, I thought it would be fun to showcase items that seemed as though they had been abandoned for ages and then rediscovered and put on display. It was a nine-course dinner, providing the guests ample time to examine the collection and speculate over its rich and colorful history.

"Take risks! Use unexpected elements, find your own voice, and definitely have fun."

—Kristin Banta



Photograph by Evolve Photography



Photograph by Evolve Photography



Photograph by Miki & Sonja Photography



Photograph by Kelly Corcoran, David Michael Photography



Photograph by Jennifer Rogers Photography

"The challenge of any event is to make it original yet relevant to the host; the uniqueness of each individual is what inspires me."

—Kristin Banta

Right: There are three things I think every design can benefit from: texture, dimension, and personality. At the end of the day, your event should reflect who you are and what you love.

Facing page top: A quick way to add visual interest is to play with the design of the liners. Some tables might have only a runner, while others can be swathed in copious amounts of fabric. The key to making the look harmonious is having each tabletop tell a similar story with its décor.

Facing page bottom left: One groom, who could only see in shades of gray, inspired me to create a wedding that conveyed a significant visual impact that would not be dependent upon one's ability to see color. For the ceremony, we covered the white Hotel Bel Air gazebo in hundreds of monochromatic burgundy red florals, emphasizing texture and dimension. Following the ceremony, the guests were escorted into a cocktail area, a transitional space decorated entirely in champagne hues, intended to be a visual palate cleanser. The ballroom was completely enveloped with multiple fabrics and décor in a color spectrum of pearl, silver, platinum, charcoal, and pale gray. By using varied hues of the same color we created one of our most dramatic weddings to date.

Facing page bottom right: Celebrating inside an old car showroom allowed for the mingling of both modern and organic textures. Cement floors, hanging glass lanterns, reclaimed wooden tables and chairs, nubby Russian linen tablecloths, not to mention unexpected flower pairings all combined to form a quirky yet splendid atmosphere.



Photograph by Evolve Photography

views

It's easy from a production standpoint to be formulaic, to make every table setting the same. But by mixing things up—playing with different textures, colors, and design elements—you will ensure that your guests are stimulated by the visual aspects of the space in addition to the food, wine, entertainment, and company. As the discoveries unfold, your guests will have a lasting impression they will talk about long after the event is over.