

Alternative Wedding Gifts?

Contributed by Chris Morton
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Couples often joke that one of the best reasons to get married is the gifts. New brides and grooms can spend hours after the big day opening presents, discovering cash surprises, and checking things over their registry list. But what about couples that don't really need all of those gifts? What do you give a celebrity couple?

A Quiet Affair

On December 27, 2006, former supermodel turned mom and business owner, Niki Taylor, and her fiancé, NASCAR rookie Burney Lamar, exchanged their vows. The ceremony was relatively small with a guest list of only 60 people which did include her twelve year old twin sons, Jake and Hunter. The bridal party at the low-key affair wasn't made up of other models, but of Niki's family - her sister and her niece. Of course, no supermodel - no matter how long it's been since she was on the runway - would walk down the aisle without a designer wedding dress: Niki wore a Vera Wang dress.

The ceremony at the Grande Colonial Hotel in La Jolla, California was officiated by the pastor from the couple's church back in Brentwood, Tennessee where they both live. After the early afternoon wedding, guests were treated to a delicious lunch including lobster.

And Now the Twist...

Despite all of the trappings of a traditional wedding, Niki and Burney's marriage did have a major twist - they didn't want gifts. The couple asked that their guests make donations to the Victory Junction Gang Camp, a camp for children who have terminal illnesses which was the idea of the late Adam Petty from the legendary Petty racing family, instead of buying them gravy boats and other wedding gifts.

While gifts are great and many couples do benefit from those wedding presents, there are other couples who are financially comfortable, who have stable careers, and who really don't need much of anything. Instead of asking for "No Gifts," why not follow Niki and Burney's example?

Worthy Causes

There are hundreds of worthy organizations and causes out there which need donations. As a couple, you could choose one together. Obviously, Niki and Burney chose their cause because it was associated with race car driving and children - two things that are important to them - so you could pick an organization that's special to you. For example, if you are both animal lovers, then you could request donations be made to your local humane society or other animal welfare organization. If cancer or another disease has affected your families, then those causes might be a good location for donations.

The main idea is that your marriage could not only be a happy day for you but also for these non-profit organizations and for the people (or animals) they help. Is there any better way to start off a marriage than with the warm feeling of doing something good for others?

Incidentally, choosing this gift route also means you won't have to deal with transporting all of those gifts from the reception back home and writing out thank you cards will be a lot easier! Just something to think about if you're one of those couples who really doesn't need more towels and dishes.

About the Author: Chris Morton ran hotels and restaurants for 17 years - catering for 100's of weddings. His wife Sue is a wedding planner with 10 year's experience. Together they have established <http://www.TheWeddingWizards.com> to

provide unbiased help for brides and grooms.