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 MOUTH-WATERING CAKES.
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FLORAL PIECES CREATED TO BE EXACTLY WHAT THE CLIENT IMAGINES; WHILE MAINTAINING BUDGET & PREFERRED COLORS.

Alicia's Authentic Mexican Cuisine

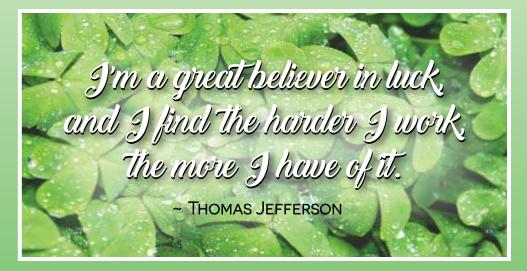
TEMPT YOUR TASTEBUDS WITH TACOS, TOSTADOS & BURRITOS!

- CASE CREDIT UNION
 PARTY SMARTSI
- SPECIAL A'FARE CATERING

AN ECLECTIC MENU THAT EVOKES A FEAST FOR EYES AND A "YUM" AT FIRST TASTE!

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LIVE · Work · SHOP



Chamberlin PHOTOGRAPHY

☆ by Amy Piper

As a child, Mark Chamberlin would "steal" his mother's camera from the kitchen table to take pictures. In those days, cameras took film and his mother said he was costing her too much money, Mark recalls. His mother implemented a "token economy" where cleaning his room earned him three pictures, another chore would earn two. That required him to think about each picture, so when it came time for Mark's payment; he knew exactly what pictures he would take. Now 40 years later, he teaches others "to take pictures intentionally."

Mark has had a studio in Lansing for about six and a half years and offers a number of photographic services. Photography is Mark's career. In addition to weddings, graduations, and headshots, he takes real estate photos, corporate events, pictures of businesses and products.

WEDDINGS

In 1978, he began shooting weddings doing 30 to 45 weddings a year. He's shot thousands of weddings. He enjoys the personal aspect and intimacy of being part of someone's important day while connecting with people. Mark has an MA in counseling and working with couples. He finds out their hopes, dreams, fantasies, and how their photos should look. He makes it come true. He listens to what they want and goes about capturing the moment as it goes organically, rather than creating the moment.

Mark works full-time as a professional photographer and his turnaround time for wedding photos is one to two weeks.

GRADUATIONS

A typical senior shoot is a hybrid of studio, including special effects like Green Screen and outside in the famous Old Town Lansing environment. This is one of the most popular combinations for seniors. Mark has strong listening skills and is successful in getting information out

of his clients to achieve their desired results.





In order for a home to sell quickly in Lansing's real estate market, you need quality photos. Mark has the capability to deliver that through the right lighting equipment and angles.

Headshots are great for social media. They let people put a name and a face together.

Product Photography is critical in today's market place. People are into visuals, they look before they read. You must determine what story you want to tell and why; then communicate it. The value of photography is in the visuals. Mark says, "Decisions are based on information, the better the information the better decisions."

Mark also will photograph your business, both interior and exterior. These types of shots are for all types of marketing materials.

SMARTER PICS PHOTOGRAPHY SCHOOL

Mark has a passion for evangelizing photography and he openly shares his knowledge. He has mentored dozens of photographers, helping them develop their craft.

There are several classes including: spotting a great shot, learning your camera's knobs and dials, and using light-room to process your photos.

The hands-on class size is generally under ten people. He offers several classes all focused on showing the participant, "how to get out of the 'point and pray' mode and take a great photograph intentionally."

PHOTOGRAPHY MEETUP GROUP

Mark started a photography MeetUp group in Lansing that now has about 500 members with 15 to 20 attending each event. The free meetups are the third Wednesday of each month. To join go to www.meetup.com/lansingphoto.

Mark plans various places and activities for members to meetup and make images. There are annual favorites such as portraitures with models at the Turner-Dodge House and new favorites like the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum. Members are all skill levels and willing share knowledge to help improve your images.

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CAKES A BLOOMIN'S Jody Love sculpts moist, mouth-watering cakes

Jody Love baked and decorated her first cake when she was nine, and by 19, she started her own *cake decorating business* – Cakes A Bloomin'. At first, she sold cake decorating supplies and taught classes, all the while perfecting her talent at creating from-scratch cakes, cupcakes and other sweets.

Using her secret butter cream frosting recipe, she can transform a client's cake dreams into sheet cakes, multi-layered wedding, anniversary and birthday cakes.

Imagine seeing your first glimpse of your wedding cake come to life exactly as you pictured it would when you met with the wedding coordinator. Each tier is a different, but equally moist flavor of cake, covered in light-as-air buttercream icing. The delicate design perfectly matches the wedding theme.

Perhaps you've wondered how multi-layered cakes are supported. Cake decorating architecture requires careful layer construction, held together with special support dowels. Special appliques to cake often require sturdy fondant icing design. For wedding cakes, Jody requires 2-3 months' notice, depending on the cake's complexity. A wedding cake's cost can has a wide range from \$100 to \$1000 or more, depending on servings and design. Most wedding cakes will cost \$3.20 per serving.

Brides and grooms planning to eat the top layer of the cake on their first anniversary are advised to seal the cake in a water-tight plastic freezer bag and a water-resistant box. "Otherwise," adds Jody, "the top layer will take on tastes of the freezer." Or, a couple can ask Jody to replicate the top layer as their first anniversary draws near.

Sheet cakes for birthdays, graduation open houses or other special events can range from \$24 to \$100, depending on the design and number of servings. Two days' notice is needed for sheet cakes. "We strongly suggest that our cakes be kept in a cool or refrigerated area prior to serving. There's nothing worse than frosting melting into a Salvador Dali-like puddle."

Cakes A Bloomin' also creates intricately frosted cupcakes, cookies, cheesecakes and caramel corn. "We have one customer who orders 600 bags of caramel corn at the holidays each year." The butter cream frosting for cakes and cupcakes can be infused with more than 15 flavors, chocolate cherry, caramel turtle, mint chocolate and banana cream, to name but a few.

One of Jody's former employees is from the Upper Peninsula, and wanted to create homemade pasties, and these are offered daily in ground sirloin (plain or with rutabaga), chicken or vegetarian.

Our pasties are fully cooked but stored frozen with heating instructions on the label.

Cakes and other confections can be picked up or delivered. "We advise wedding clients to let us deliver their cake, so it arrives in perfect condition, ready to be served at a pre-determined time. Generally, they deliver within a 50-mile radius of Lansing.

She and her staff of six work out of a west-side, 2000-square-foot kitchen with walk-in refrigerator and freezer. Her husband, Jeff, handles the paperwork and handyman repairs. Jody insists on training cake decorators from methods she's found to be effective. Bakers are expected to be attentive to recipes and ensuring the cake layers are as moist as the frosting.

Even though decorating cakes and other sweets demands 70-80 hours a week. Jody concedes she loves what she does. "I've never lost my childhood professional dream. I'm always delighted when a parent brings their child in to pick up a birthday cake, and they grin from ear to ear, as they anticipate that first piece of cake." 🗱

CAKES A BLOOMIN' 412 Elmwood Rd. Lansing, MI 48917 517.321.2230 Cakes-A-Bloomin.com



The Manzul family – parents Kamal and Nadia, and their children, Jean-Paul, 8, and Grace, 6 – fled from unrest in the Democratic Republic of Congo to neighboring Uganda in 2012 with nothing but the clothes on their backs. Their immediate families had all been murdered.

The Manzul family knew they were not welcome in Uganda, as the country had taken in more refugees than it could accommodate. Three years after applying for refugee resettlement in the U.S., they are about to be met at Lansing's airport by managers from St. Vincent Catholic Charities Refugee Services Program (STVCC).

Awaiting the family is a fully-furnished, two bedroom apartment in Lansing. For the next 90 days, a Refugee Services case manager will help the Manzul family integrate into the community, learning English, finding employment for the parents, enrolling the children in school, helping them master the transportation system to get to and from work, and showing places to shop and do laundry.

Back to the Manzul family in a moment. For the last 40 years, STVCC has served as mid-Michigan's only resettlement site for families and children approved for refugee status. This April, St. Vincent's holds its annual "**Spring Into Giving**" month-long drive for donations to assist refugee families. In 2016, St. Vincent's helped resettle 776 refugee individuals and families in Lansing.

"Our spring drive for donations helps make possible fully-furnished housing for refugee families." Everything needed for a household is welcome during the spring drive – new twin and double sheets, towels, washcloths, lamps, slightly-used furniture (no mattresses), cleaning supplies and household tools, gift cards to purchase clothes and food, bath needs, including

shampoo and soap, shaving items, deodorant, toilet paper and tissue, and CATA bus passes. Items can be dropped off during business hours at the 2017 Refugee Resettlement sponsor, LAFCU (check to see if your branch participates) or at St. Vincent's, 2800 W. Willow Road, between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday. Financial donations to the Refugee Resettlement Program are also appreciated.

Essential to St. Vincent's Refugee Resettlement Program are volunteers like Dave Herring, who has served on the Board of Directors, as a family mentor and tutor. He recalls helping young adult women learn how to maintain donated bicycles. "The refugee families may show tough exteriors, but inside they are no different from my grandchildren, who wanted to be listened to and loved. The same holds true for adults, who have endured physical, emotional and mental abuse from those trying to impose their political will, while tearing down families' social heritages and religious practices."

Karasinski adds: "As a Catholic agency, we resettle refuges because our faith tells us all human life has value. Refugees are individuals who have sought asylum from their native country due to persecution for their race, religion, nationality or group affiliation. These individuals fear for their lives and their family. They seek safety in a country that will use their unique gifts for family financial security and inclusion in a diverse community that can benefit from embracing the cultural experiences these families bring."

Nine months later, the Manzul family has mastered basic English. The father, Kamul, had a variety of mechanical skills and is employed as a janitor by a local Catholic parish. The mother, Nadia, knows how to cook, and is employed at

"WE WORK WITH LOCAL LANDLORDS AND PROPERTY MANAGERS TO SECURE SAFE HOUSING WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS TO RESETTLE FAMILIES,"

SAYS JOHN KARASINSKI, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND MARKETING AT ST. VINCENT'S.

a local restaurant, preparing soups and salads. Both children are enrolled in Lansing Public Schools, quickly learning English and cultural norms that they then teach to their parents.

Kamul and the children ride bicycles to work and school, and Nadia has mastered the bus transit system to get to and from work. Their apartment is spotless. They have joined a local parish, and a Refugee Services mentor has helped them continue English classes, arranged for health care, and helped the parents learn basic budgeting and establish an account with a local credit union.

Before they ever arrived in Lansing, the Manzul family was interviewed by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. They are among the less than one percent of refugees accepted for resettlement in the U.S. STVCC, in collaboration with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, continues to serve as a refugee resettlement center. The resettlement program employs 35 staffers, 10-15 contractual interpreters and more than 60 volunteer mentors and tutors.

Andrea Sekya, CEO of STVCC, affirms the agency's commitment to refugee resettlement, despite action taken by the new U.S. administration. She adds: "Lansing has benefitted economically and culturally, as these refugees have revitalized our neighborhoods, supported our businesses, and graduated from our public schools. We are proud to be mid-Michigan's refuges resettlement agency, and to provide a safe, welcoming home to these families."

"Refugee families," concludes Judi Harris, "are required to repay the U.S. government for their travel to the U.S., which helps them build financial credit. We have families who have repaid their travel in less than three years. If you think about how much these families have to learn, it's amazing how much these families contribute to the local economy and community. They work hard, they give back, and they are so grateful for being able to start a new chapter in their lives. Our 'Spring Into Giving' is what gives these families a second chance."



ST. VINCENT CATHOLIC CHARITIES
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Shoplocallansing · March 2017

The Bead Boutique

Plan, Design, Create for Special Occasions

Let's say you're getting married and want a one-of-a-kind stunning bracelet for your bridesmaids that they will treasure, yet won't break the bridal budget. Barbara Murray, owner of The Bead Boutique, has helped many brides hold parties where they make identical bracelets or necklaces under Barbara's coaching. The bride pays for the parts (about \$25-\$35), and her bridal party each chip in between \$10 and \$20 to learn the art of jewelry beading. "They leave with a beautiful bracelet or necklace they can wear again and again," adds Murray.

The Bead Boutique officially opened June 1, 2009. Rick, her husband, assists Barbara in the business by teaching Kumihimo, or Japanese braiding. He designed his own Marudai that is used for the braiding of his necklaces and bracelets. One of his popular bracelets with brides is Swarovski crystals on silk.

Practically any occasion can be marked with specially-designed Austrian Swarovski crystals, Druk glass beads, Chinese crystals, Bali or Thai silver, and semi-precious stones or freshwater pearls. Murray recalls a young man who wanted to surprise his bride of 20 years with an anniversary/birthday necklace of garnet Swarovski crystals and a gold charm. Barbara designed the piece, and he called the following week to report: "She absolutely loved the necklace and knew where I'd gotten it the minute she opened the box."

Barbara has always been interested in creating jewelry. She's self-taught, very visual, and can put together a necklace, earrings, bracelet, brooch or ring in just over an hour. She teaches classes on beading, pearl-knotting, peyote and herringbone basket-weave, showing individuals how to use a variety of clasps, wires or leather to create unique jewelry or gifts. Classes are taught one-one or as a group, and Barbara tries to accommodate schedules. Repairs are offered on a next-day basis. \$\preceq\$

"THE IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN MY BUSINESS IS THAT PEOPLE, WOMEN AND MEN, LEARN HOW EASY IT IS TO BE CREATIVE, AND THEY LEAVE WITH A LOVELY PERSONAL PIECE OF JEWELRY OR A GIFT THAT WILL BE TREASURED LONG AFTER THE CLASS IS OVER," SAYS BARBARA.



THE BEAD BOUTIQUE

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The Plant Professionals

"WE LOVE GETTING TESTIMONIALS LIKE THIS ONE: 'THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THE WORK YOU DID FOR OUR WEDDING. YOU EXCEEDED OUR EXPECTATIONS - WE BOTH ARE SO HAPPY TO HAVE HAD YOU. THE FLOWERS AND CAKE WERE ABSOLUTELY BEAUTIFUL! YOU HAVE OUR RECOMMENDATION ALWAYS..." I UKF & FAYE

🛭 by Gretchen Smith

"Dave Mansfield, our lead floral designer, loves it when brides-to-be contact us with photos of floral styles and colors they want to use. Personalized items they would like included in their bouquets or for the groom are always welcome. It's even better, says The Plant Professionals' President and Owner Kathy Valentine, when the bride makes an appointment to come to our design room, so Dave can discuss her wedding floral wishes in depth.

"There is so much detail that goes into wedding planning. We welcome brides-to-be to come in six months or more ahead of their wedding date. Dave and I ask a lot of questions so we can customize all floral pieces to create the mood and look she desires."

Depending on the bride's interest and budget, The Plant Professionals can use live plants to highlight the wedding venue and reception, whether inside or outdoors. The season of the wedding, the bride's colors and budget are perhaps the most important aspects that determine what will be suggested to the bride.

"We design floral bouquets that hold up under heat and humidity, and sometimes travel from the wedding site to other photo locations before the bridal party reaches the reception," adds Kathy.

"In a wedding we worked on a few years ago, the bride wanted an ancestral antique locket, a keepsake from her grandmother, incorporated in her bridal bouquet. In another wedding, the bride is marrying an outdoorsman, and her future husband and groomsmen will wear Baby's Breath emerging from an empty shotgun shell. Men can be hard on boutonnieres, so we select hardy, sturdy flowers and natural flourishes, like Dusty

Miller or Bear Grass, that hold up over hours of celebration. We encourage brides to express their personal style, and we make recommendations based on seasonal availability and the bride's priorities. "For the reception, the bride may have a well-developed idea for her table centerpieces, and we use her colors to interpret her theme. It's quite popular to do mirrored vases or canning jars, or to use succulent bowls or lanterns as centerpieces, which can be rented, rather than purchased.

"We welcome the bride to come in the afternoon before her wedding to look at what we've created to ensure her approval. We always provide a written quote in advance to ensure we meet her budget. Set-up and take down are included in our quoted price. We don't want her to experience any floral surprises on her special day.

"We also create centerpieces and provide plant rentals for corporate and social occasions throughout the year, including charitable events.

"Dave Mansfield owned Norm Kesel Flowers for over 20 years, and brings a creative imagination and wealth of experience in designing floral arrangements for any occasion. Our goal with any floral piece is to create exactly what the client imagines, providing we can get product in preferred colors and within budget. \(\text{\text{\text{\text{can}}}} \)

THE PLANT PROFESSIONALS, INC.

16886 Turner Road Lansing, MI 48906 517.327.1059 www.theplantprofessionals.com





Tempt your Tastebuds with tacos, tostados & burritos

☆ by Gretchen Smith

Name an event – wedding, anniversary, retirement party, graduation, birthday, business meetings - and ask Alicia's Authentic Mexican Deli to spice things up with dishes like chicken mole, carne guisada, burritos, tamales, tacos, fajitas or enchiladas, tamales, menudo and barbacoa. Don't forget the postre (sweets), like apple burritos, crispas, flan or Mexican wedding cake. Fat-free beans, vegetarian and gluten-free food options, along with an American menu, are also available.

Alicia Gonzales has been cooking since she was a young woman, the eldest in her Texas family. After raising seven children and working in human services for 30+ years, she's revived her love for cooking with her restaurant and catering business. The restaurant at 5025 West Grand River Avenue seats up to 75, and is the site of many business meetings, social gatherings and catered special events. Alicia's will be happy to cater your event when you rent the restaurant dining room.

She also has a deli case full of homemade goodness - homemade tamales, chips and salsa, desserts, and familyfriendly platters of enchiladas and wet burritos. You can also find Alicia at the DeWitt and Bath farmers' markets.

Serving the tri-county area, Alicia has thrived in the last nine years, providing catered meals and taco bars for factories, law enforcement and firefighters, universities, utilities, Michigan State, Lansing Community College, and many area businesses. With a staff of six and her manager, Steven Gonzales, Alicia can cater small or large events. She has catered an event for almost 900 guests.

"We take catering very seriously," says Alicia. "When we cater an event, we are very punctual and plan for generous servings. Every event is done with style and excellence. I strive to meet the customer's wishes in planning their special day. We will work with a client's colors or decorating theme. Our crew believes in teamwork, so the guests have a special Mexican experience."

Prior to a wedding, Alicia can arrange for a taste testing of food items with her client. She requires 24-48 hours' notice for small-medium catering events, and one to two weeks for weddings and open houses. Alicia and her staff prepare every dish from scratch from her private recipes.

Alicia has a heart for the Lansing community and a desire to be servant-focused. She often donates catered events to churches and agencies that provide services to children, non-profits and Michigan State students.

On the west wall of her restaurant is a community prayer wall, which is a reflection of her strong community roots. Anyone can post a prayer request. 🛭



Alicia says: "God has blessed me with so many friends and forever relationships through my restaurant and catering service. (want every guest to feel they've had excellent service, fresh authentic Mexican cuisine, served with a smile."

ALICIA'S AUTHENTIC MEXICAN DELI 5025 W. Grand River Ave. • Lansing, MI 48906 517.580.8417 • AliciasMexicanFood.com



PARTY SMARTS

FROM GRADUATION PARTIES TO WEDDINGS, PLANNING LARGE EVENTS TAKES A GREAT AMOUNT OF TIME TO ORGANIZE. FINDING A VENUE, FOOD, RENTING TENTS, TABLES, CHAIRS.... THE LIST IS ENDLESS. THEN, THE BILLS START ROLLING IN; WILL YOU BE ABLE TO PAY THEM OFF WITH EASE OR WILL YOU BE CONSUMED WITH THOUGHTS LIKE, "WHERE WILL I COME UP WITH THE FUNDS TO PAY FOR THIS?"

WE'LL BE TAKING A LOOK AT SOME IDEAS ON HOW TO KEEP YOURSELF WITHIN YOUR BUDGET. First, develop a checklist that you can follow. If possible, have someone review the checklist who has previously organized an event to ensure you have all of your bases covered. Next, cross off each detail as you complete it. Not only will this provide you with a sense of accomplishment, it will help keep you on track with your budget. Then, review the expenses and determine if they are reasonable. If not, think on what you are able to compromise on within the budget.

Another thing you should consider before proceeding, is how large the event will be, and how many people will be invited. To help you decide on where you hold the event, think about how much you can afford to spend from your budget as the location may end up consuming the majority of your budget.



At your home: Having the event at your home saves you money in the long run. A point to remember is with those savings comes more stress and work for you to do. Here are a few tips to help lighten your load:

- Create a list of contractors and vendors others have used and found to be practical.
- Ask family and friends to provide a recipe or offer to bring their favorite dish to pass.
- If your friends have children, hire them to assist in set up and tear down. They may also be able to assist during the event to allow you time to spend with your guests.

- Use décor others have used for events in the past.
- When people ask you if they can help, take them up on the offer.

At a venue: When you hold the event at a venue, you let others do the work for you, although there may be higher costs associated with that. A few ideas to help you potentially lower the costs are:

- Plan your event during a nonpeak time, you may find your costs substantially lower.
- Ask for a price cut if you use more than one of their services.
- Find foods that will feed more for less money. Examples are hors d'oeuvres or appetizers.



INVITATIONS

Invitations, if needed, can be very simple and sent via social media or by a personal telephone call. If you are planning a wedding, check with your list of vendors to see if they offer options for printed invitations. Often times, you can qualify for a discount by signing up for multiple services.

By skipping the extras that add to the bottom line, you can stay within your budget and forego the buyer's remorse. Your guests will enjoy the event and so will you knowing that you did it all on an affordable budget.

WWW.CASECU.ORG

Special AFare Catering's eclectic menus evoke feast for eyes and "yum" at first taste!

☆ by Gretchen Smith

As Special A'Fare Catering in Okemos embarks on its 32nd business year, Jennifer Hoffman and Lorraine Hoffman and their staff transform any catering event into a magical taste experience. From breakfast to hors' oeuvres to a grand dinner, they match food and decorations to the style and preferences of the host or event planner.

They are a full-service catering company that can pull an entire event together with aplomb and perfection. This includes ordering flowers or other visual accents, renting china and linens, tending a hosted bar, and staging the dinner or buffet specific to the host's theme.

Their full-service kitchen in Okemos, Michigan, comes close to being a scratch kitchen. They take pride with offering eye appealing, palate-pleasing cuisine. They are not a caterer that relies on ready-made food that's just needs heated or open and serve. They want to provide guests a unique, flavor-popping experience. They also cater to clients' dietary needs, and do whatever possible to meet those needs. Vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free entrées are available upon request.

They service the greater Lansing area and are willing to travel to your location to put on your Special A'Fare!! They do simple to elaborate events: BBQ's, picnics, tailgates, corporate business meetings, rehearsal dinners, weddings, graduations, memorial luncheons, birthdays, luncheons and dinners, retirement parties, anniversaries, brunches, baby and bridal showers.

"We customize each event," adds Jennifer.
"If we cater a wedding, a group of 12-1,500 guests, or a new client, we make sure everything meets our standards of perfection. All staff are trained in how to display dishes, serve hors' oeuvres and entrees, and we ensure the presentation is as

eye-pleasing as the food is to savor."

SPECIAL A'FARE

CATERING CO.

One unique event Special A'Fare offers is catering corporate tailgating events. "While we don't own a liquor license, we can have alcohol delivered to an event, and as long as the bar is host-sponsored, we can offer bar services, including creating unique cocktails," says Lorraine.

Bridal parties are asked to book their event six months to a year in advance, and other special parties three to four weeks in advance.

Special A'Fare books many events by pleased client recommendations to family, friends and colleagues. Their website features an event planning guide and request form. Follow-up contact occurs within 24-48 hours. "We try to make event planning enjoyable and painless," notes Jennifer. "The best recommendation is when a client tells us: 'I was so impressed with the layout of the food and how scrumptious it was. You went above and beyond what we expected. I know someone who could use your services'." \times

SPECIAL A'FARE CATERING CO.
4661 Okemos Rd. • Okemos, MI 48864
517.349.6663 • www.SpecialAfare.com

IPS FOR SUCCESS FROM LOCAL BUSINESSES



FINANCIAL TIPS FOR PLANNING YOUR NEXT EVENT

Look for non-peak times to hold the event. Example: ask the venue if they will hold the wedding on a Sunday. In most cases can save you thousands of dollars!

Plan for unexpected expenses to pop up, leave a portion of your budget aside for those expenses.

Look for package deals; bundling is a good way to keep it organized and lower the costs. Example: find a vendor that would coordinate the services of caterers, photographer and entertainment.

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TRAVEL TIP NUMBER 1: Always use a travel consultant and keep your business local.



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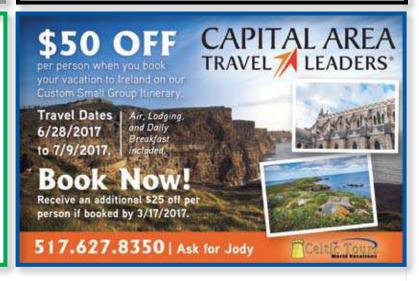


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