

life's a beach for Malibu's Table Maven

Malibu woman creates lasting memories with luxurious beach picnics

BY JUDY ABEL

The latest trend in gift giving today is actually to not give a gift at all. Forgoing presents for experiences are sure to bring happy memories that will last a lifetime. That's the philosophy of Robyn Ritter Simon, the Malibu Table Maven. The Malibu local arranges gorgeous picnics accommodating two people to 20. Through artful staging, her picnics are intimate affairs not to be forgotten. Robyn's specialty is elaborate decorations. Think flowers, champagne and the most tasteful accoutrements from pillows to luxurious flowing fabrics meant to elevate a picnic to the most sophisticated affair, all individualized to your taste.

"People don't want to gift things anymore. Coming out of the pandemic we've learned that what we all value more than things is the experience of being together. And what better way than to give someone a beautiful picnic at the beach, the park or in their backyard with a beautiful table scape where friends and family can all gather?"

Robyn made it clear she's not suggesting that physical gifts are not lovely and thoughtful. "That's not it at all. I just think especially now when we were all so starved for human connection and we couldn't get together previously that now we're really searching for ways to share experiences that are a little more unique. And we happen to live in a part of the country where we can take advantage of the beautiful climate and nature we live in and be outside."

Malibu Table Maven gift certificates are especially popular with realtors. After closing escrow, instead of sending congratulatory gift baskets to clients they send certificates for future luxury picnics.

"Closet organizers also say, 'I definitely don't want to give them more stuff. We just organized their home. The last thing they need is more stuff,' so they gift their clients with a beach picnic. What a lovely gift," Robyn mentioned.

The Malibu Table Maven is a covid launched business success. "In March of 2020 when the world shut down I had a book of clients and I was happy," the former political fundraising events producer explained. Her contracts were

honored until "we saw it was inevitable that events would not come back for a long time." Robyn always loved to entertain and set beautiful curated table scapes. So, she had the idea to bring elaborate picnics to the beach "a natural resource."

The desire to still gather outdoors has not waned "just because we're allegedly coming out of covid." Her business has grown and she has no desire to return to her past career in politics. Robyn calls her Malibu Table Maven business "very joyful. The expressions on people's faces when they walk up to their picnic or come to their backyard and see their beautiful table set is priceless. I work with happy people."

The Malibu Table Maven has created beach picnics for wedding proposals, and wedding and baby showers where the photos from the event were turned into baby announcements.

"There's nothing like being a part of that. You can't help but feel there's hope in the world. When people are young and they want to form a union together and you're a tiny little part of it, there's tears. I love it. I feel honored I'm invited into that special space."

Robyn takes care everything from bringing the picnic tables, seating, decorations, stemware, and décor.

During the pandemic when restaurants were closed many people turned to take out food to escape the confines of home which may have left them stir crazy. Robyn expanded that concept with lunch picnics on the beach, but elevated the event to a luxurious experience. Business is booming too now that people are celebrating again. Lately, Robyn has hosted events in her own Malibu home. She recently created an elaborate event for a Pepperdine sorority. As a Pepperdine graduate, she called the event "coming full-circle. To give back makes me happy."

"My office is the beach. I get to go to work and be outside in the fresh air on the magnificent Malibu coastline. I feel blessed that I've been able to take something I love to do and create fanciful, whimsical experiences that bring so much joy."

For more information on Malibu Table Maven visit her on Instagram @malibutablemaven. 🍷

