

Lots of heart, soul and edible delights go into their big day

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In planning his wedding to Jesus Salgueiro, Art Smith did not think small.

Oprah Winfrey's former chef, the owner of Art and Soul in the District and Table 52 in Chicago, wanted his big day to be comfortable, extravagant and newsmaking.

So Saturday's affair was a day-long event with plans for the following elements:

An 8 a.m. run with 200 people to the Lincoln Memorial, where spiritualist Marianne Williamson would bless the couple. (Smith has lost 85 pounds in the past year and wanted wellness to be a priority for the wedding.)

450 guests for a midday barbecue at Art and Soul in the Liaison Hotel. On the menu: fried chicken, coleslaw, potato salad, baked beans and more than 300 pounds of meat. (That wellness focus was tempered by pulled pork sandwiches.)

Fourteen executive chefs, including barbecue legend Myron Mixon, former "Top Chef" producer Lee Anne Wong and James Beard Award-winner Michelle Bernstein. D.C. chef Carla Hall made granola to fuel the morning runners.

More than 35 cases of wine; five cases of vodka; 55 cases of water.

A surprise performance by the 10-man a cappella group Straight No Chaser. After the wedding, the group planned to take off for its regular gig at Harrah's in Atlantic City.

A nine-tier cake by Duff Goldman's team at Charm City Cakes, of the Food Network show "Ace of Cakes." The celadon-colored cake was to be accented by white gum paste flowers and include layers of white chocolate raspberry, almond amaretto cream and cardamom pistachio.

Six security officers working from morning until night.

A six-hour nighttime pool party on the hotel's roof.

400 individual pizzas made by New York City's Keste Pizzeria & Vino.

600 cupcakes with custom fondant icing by Georgetown Cupcake. Flavors include: red velvet, salted caramel, peanut butter fudge and vegan chocolate.

Music by Virginia Beach DJ Eric Jones.

Gift bags for each guest, to include sandals by Okobos Footwear. (The company's cushy flip-flops usually retail at \$80.)

Smith and Salgueiro, an artist, got engaged at Smith's 50th birthday bash in March. The two met more than 10 years ago at a flower shop in Miami where Smith was ordering an arrangement for Oprah. They were set up a year later by a mutual friend and have been together since.

They started talking about getting hitched when the D.C. Council took up a bill to legalize gay marriage late last year. Salgueiro had cancer three times -- in his brain, lung and large intestine -- and the legal protections of marriage hold particular value for the couple.

They also wanted the wedding to be a grand public statement celebrating the evolution of gay rights. And Smith credits Oprah with shaping his philosophy on hospitality: "She told me, 'Always, your best,'" he says. "If you serve champagne, it should be the best champagne you can afford."

Smith won't say whether Oprah would be there or name other VIP guests -- except his 75-year-old mother, Addie Mae Smith of Jasper, Fla.

In some ways, Smith treated the wedding like a giant fundraiser. In lieu of gifts, he and Salgueiro asked for donations to Common Threads, the nonprofit they founded six years ago. The organization attempts to bring children of different backgrounds together through cooking classes and arts programs. Smith's birthday celebration raised close to \$1 million for the charity, and he was hoping to hit that mark again.

"Our goal is that at the end of the day people had a good time and enjoyed themselves and that maybe we put something in their heads for them to think about," Smith says.

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