



## Tie one on: The latest gown trend is corsets

By SHARON MOSLEY  
Copley News Service

Just when you think it's safe to let it all hang out and walk down the aisle in a flowing chemise, it's time to

suck it in again. At least that's what many bridal designers are touting with their new corset gowns — all laced up and ready to say "I do" to the latest trend in wedding attire.

How many of us have eyed the cute little things in the

stores and toyed with the idea of jazzing up the dress for damsels who don't consider themselves in distress at all?

Enter the "mock" corset — fake the lacing and you never have to worry.

Of course, the corset has a long, stylish history — each generation reinventing it and adding their own twist to shape bodies. It seems we've always had to push or shove something into place somewhere, whether it was the hips, the bust or the stomach. Since the word originated from the French word for body — corps — it seems we've never been quite satisfied with our anatomy and where things naturally belong.

Greek women reportedly strapped themselves in with leather strips to accentuate their figures under their robes in the 16th century; later, the corset was a stiff device complete with metal, wood or whalebone — worn by men and women.

Then the men got smart and left the uptight undergarments to the women, who continued



to have fainting spells until around the turn of the last century when designer Paul Poiret made loose chemise dresses all the rage. Women could finally breathe again.

The new corsets cropping up in fashionable wardrobes now, however, bear little resemblance to their painful predecessors. The newest interpretation of the corset has been romanced into silk and satin, all laced up with ribbons and bows to make a memorable impression when a bride walks down the aisle. After all, what does the audience see during most of the ceremony? Why the back of the bridal gown, of course.

Fashion designers who favor the tight embellished bodices this year include Reem Acra, Vera Wang, Richard Tyler, Carolina Herrera and Amsale. Elegant touches adorn these body-hugging dresses for the modern bride.

With bridal designers choosing to bring up the rear in wedding attire this season, there may not be a better way to make such a dramatic statement than to show off a tiny bit of skin while at the same time emphasizing the waist and decollete. There is some reason the corset has remained a timeless design. Just be sure the knot is tied — tight.



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