

'Accessorizing' the positive for a beautiful bride

BY NANCY SUNDSTOM
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Your wedding day is the one where you want every detail to be perfect.

There does come a point, though, when the big decisions are all made and that it comes time to focus on the finishing touches for the reason everyone invited is coming to see — the bride.

That is where accessorizing comes in. Brides have myri-

ad choices they can make to complete their ensemble, far beyond the traditional dress and veil. There are many options for shoes, hosiery, garters, handkerchiefs, jewelry, gloves, money bags, purses, head pieces and tiaras.

Local experts providing bridal services say that while those items can help complete a total look for a bride, they find that their

customers put more emphasis on hair, makeup and skin care.

Ann Pujos, owner of Pavlova European Spa and Salon in downtown Traverse City, says her team of hair stylists, makeup artists, nail technicians and skin and body professionals frequently work together on behalf of a bride and her party, even including the mother and mother-in-law of the bride in process. The mission, she says, is to create a look that is as unique and special as the bride herself.

"We don't just offer services, we work to give the bride a complete feeling of confidence about she looks," Pujos said. "This is the most important day of her life, and how she looks needs to be just right, and whatever we do will be customized for her."

As a full-service salon, Pavlova offers a diverse menu of options for skin, hair, hands, feet and face. Pujos says they often hold bachelorette parties where a group will come in for a treatment package, as well as day-of services, which primarily address hair and

make-up. A new service at Pavlova is a personalized gift basket that can be prepared for any member of the bridal party, and includes different products available at Pavlova.

At Allure Salon in Traverse City, salon coordinator Bob Derrer agrees that making a bride feel at her best is always the priority, and to ensure that happens, Allure stylists began coordinating a bride's look sometimes as far as six months away from the wedding date. Derrer says Allure makes sure to schedule a "dress rehearsal" to allow the bride or bridesmaids an opportunity to alter anything, ensuring "perfection" for the big day.

"We also tailor whatever we do to the bride, her personality, the dress and veil she's chosen, and the type of ceremony that will be held," Derrer said. "When a bride first comes to us, she usually has chosen her dress, so we began coordinating hair and make-up around that. A veil, headpiece or other accessories also play an important role in what we do, but the main thing is to have the bride looking her very best."

Sheri Stelzer, who bases some of her work out of Valerio's in downtown Traverse City, also owns DTY Salon Services, which provides on-site, day-of services for brides, including hair, make-up, manicure, pedicures and massage, among others. Stelzer has done this for three years and has seen the demand increase dramatically since.

Stelzer regularly works at bridal events held at Black Star Farms in Suttons Bay and the Homestead in Glen Arbor and travels as far as the Petoskey area for her clients. She also has a team of sometimes up to eight other stylists and technicians who assist her. Her services are on her Web site, www.dtyexpress.com.

"The main advantage to what I do is that I am right there, on-site and the bride doesn't have to take time out from one of the busiest days of her life to go to and from a salon," Stelzer said. "It's one less thing to worry about on a day filled with distractions. We've generally taken care of all the details in advance, so the bride can enjoy a few relaxing, stress-free moments while we attend to her and make her everything she should be on a day when all eyes are on her."

Stelzer says most of the accessorizing she does pertains to hair and that special touches such as putting flowers or jeweled hair pins in a wedding day hair style are still in demand.

"Most brides ask for a simple, natural look that heightens their best features and compliments everything else going on in the wedding, especially her dress, she said. "The last thing you want is for hair or make-up to compete with anything."

Nancy Sundstrom is a local freelance writer.

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