

Wedding dresses reflect brides' style Tuxedo details sets the trends

BY SHARON MOSLEY

Copley News Service

It is no surprise that modern brides are increasingly doing their own thing when it comes to planning their wedding. Individuality is the key to expression of brides and their grooms today, says Jeff Moore, vice president of David's Bridal.

"Brides are looking to make a personal statement," he said. "Now she's saying, 'How do I make my wedding an expression of my life and my future spouse?'"

And there are overwhelming choices available, from bridal gowns to tuxedos to locations to flowers.

"While the formal gown is still as popular as ever," Moore said, "many brides are choosing less formal silhouettes for smaller weddings in a garden or a chapel or a destination beach wedding. Tea-length gowns, or short, slim sheaths in organza, satin and lace are favorites of these brides."

But today, most brides are taking care of all the details themselves and, according to Moore, "throwing convention out the window."

The choice of their bridal gown reflects this new trend of personalization.

Color is increasingly becoming a way brides can individualize their wedding dresses. While ivory and white still play an important role, more and more brides are choosing gowns with accents of color — dresses with waists encircled with colored ribbon belts; beads shot with metallic thread; pastel embroidered vintage-inspired lace delicately dyed; and layers and layers of tulle in subtle colors, piled on top of each other.

From pink to blue to green to lilac, color is fast becoming the wedding "theme,"



Anita Shepard, owner of Formal Affair, says that fuchsia is the most popular color red for daring brides. She also said that 'ruching,' the retro gathering pictured above, is a new trend.

not only in attire but in matching invitations, flowers and reception decor.

"It's a very Caribbean-inspired color palette," said Moore. "The bolder tropical blues are particularly popular for this spring."

The newest silhouette for bridal gowns is changing, too. The big, poufy ball gowns are fading into slimmer shapes reminiscent of sleek Hollywood glamour girls who slinked into the movies of the '40s and '50s in soft, body-conscious gowns that draped and swathed a goddess-like figure.

"Gowns are much less structured," Moore said. "The fabrics are lighter and airier and instead of a dress that wore the bride, you

Wedding dress trends

■ Color, color, color:

Blue is awash in spring dresses by Alvina Valenta.

■ **Embroidery:** A garden of colorful vines climb up a white gown at St. Pucchi.

■ **Soft and sleek:** At Elizabeth Filmore, goddess gowns hug the body in silk charmeuse. Jim Hjelm's silk satin skimmer dress is trimmed with crystals and detailed with a full-pleated skirt.

■ **All layered up:** Layers of tulle and satin at Vera Wang.

■ **Tea lengths:** A new length to consider for more informal weddings. Tea lengths abound in Lazaro's collection.

■ **Chic and strapless:** At Eugenia Couture, strapless is a satin sheath with a pleated tiered organza skirt.

■ **Halter necklines:** An alternative to the traditional gown. Halters show up in many collections, including Stephen Yearick, Amsale and Watters Bridal.

■ **Feathers:** They're flying into the bridal market in dresses and accessories. One of the season's best is Angel Sanchez's feather-hemmed empire-waist dress.

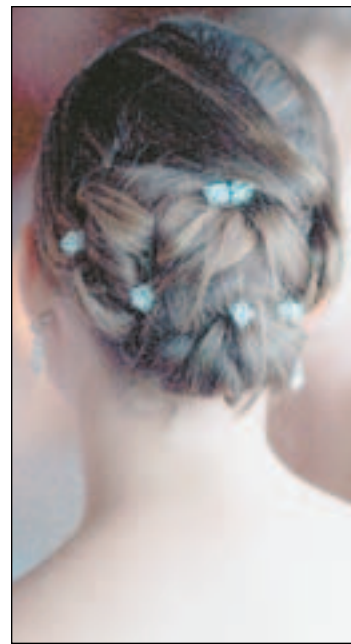
have beautiful brides in a vision of their own personal style."

Simplicity is the central theme of today's wedding gown style. But that doesn't necessarily mean conservative. The sexy strapless gown is also still a big favorite of brides this spring. The lace-up corset dress is another preferred silhouette of today's brides. For warmer weather, halter wedding gowns are also popular.



Tuxedo style trends aren't as dramatic as bridal gowns, but details change. Left, the tux from Clairborne 2.0 is classic black, with banding on the lapel. The tux on the right, from Chaps/Ralph Lauren, is steel grey, a popular color. Other tux decisions are wing collar vs. laydown and the classic 1- or 2-button jacket or more fashion-forward 3- or 4-button coat.

Hair and makeup timeline



Kachadurian Photography

Melissa Burgess, hairstylist and makeup artist at Allure Salon in Traverse City, says that "99 percent of the brides that come in know how they want their hair done." About a month prior, the bride comes in for a trial run trying hairstyles and makeups. After deciding what styles are most flattering, the next time she comes in is with her attendants the day before the wedding for spa therapy. Finally, they come in for hair and makeup, which takes several hours depending on the party's size.