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WEEKLY POST
TOWN OF MOUNT ROYAL
WEEKLY POST

February 19, 1987

Invitations, thank-yous part of traditional wedding

With the return of the traditional wedding comes the return of tradi-

tional choices in invitations and thank-you notes.

With longer engagements, brides have more time to make the appropriate selections for all the formalities surrounding their weddings. This includes finding the perfect invitation.

The tony U.S. store Neiman-Marcus, for example, plays the arbiter of taste in handling only Crane paper, ecru in color and engraved in black ink.

"The basic invitation package," according to a Neiman-Marcus spokeswoman, "is your engraved invitations, two envelopes — an inside one and outside one, a reception card and response card with

envelope. And, of course, the invitations are issued."

Stacey Himmel, who has been helping couples select their invitations for the last several years, also notices a traditional trend.

"There is more and more engraving... but the message inside the invitation may be personalized for friends and family."

Among the contemporary selections made by her clientele, florals remain a popular choice.

Handwritten invitations are acceptable and appealing for those having a small wedding of fewer than 50 guests. Handwriting on the envelopes adds a personal touch to the most formal invitation. For an extra touch, brides can have professional calligraphers address the envelopes being sent to guests. Calligraphy for the invitation message also can be reproduced by thermography, a heat process that fuses ink and powder and resembles engraving... but is less costly.

Some couples personalize their invitations with a photograph taken by a professional or friend. Some prefer formal studio sittings, while others like a carefree, relaxed pose outdoors.

A couple should choose their invitations no less than 10 to 12 weeks prior to their wedding date so there will be time for word selection and proofreading, delivery and addressing. Invitations with photographs may require additional time.

Invitations should be mailed at least one month prior to the ceremony. This allows adequate time for guests to respond and make gift selections.

With gifts in mind, the bride may wish to select her thank-you notes at the same time she selects her invitations. A blind-embossed thank-you card with her maiden initials can be used prior to the wedding for shower thank-yous. For after the marriage, an engraved ecru thank-you card



with the name of the married couple is appropriate.

How can the bride keep track of hundreds of invitations? For years, brides made 3-by-5 cards listing guests' names and placed them alphabetically in a box or binder. They used the cards to eliminate duplications, check spellings, tally the wedding and reception counts and do necessary cuts to keep the event within budget. Today, any family that has a computer might try out its mail-merge system. Lists can be placed in the computer, alphabetized, tallied for responses and gifts can be listed for thank-yous.

For addressing the invitations, a bride can hire a service or undertake the task herself. The bridesmaids might want to lend a hand over

afternoon tea. All invitations should be hand-addressed in blue or black ink. A typewriter should never be used.

The thank-yous also should be handwritten, but only by the bride and groom. Since timeliness is important, most experts suggest writing thank-yous as soon as the gifts are received. Otherwise, the couple may never catch up. Also, it is easier to be sincere while enthusiasm for the gift is still real.

The pleasures of invitations and thank-yous, done with a sense of tradition, add an important touch to a wedding. The invitation is something a bride treasures all her life as it becomes part of her wedding album. She should take the time to make the right choice.

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2. Veal alla Napoletana

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Selection of Vegetables

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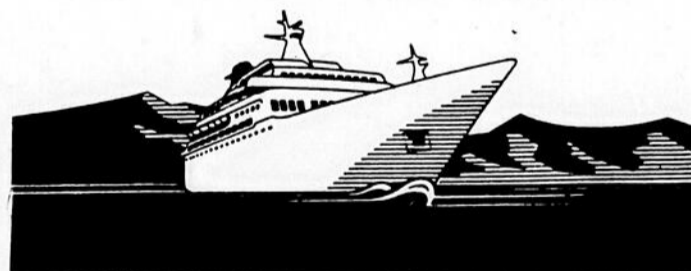


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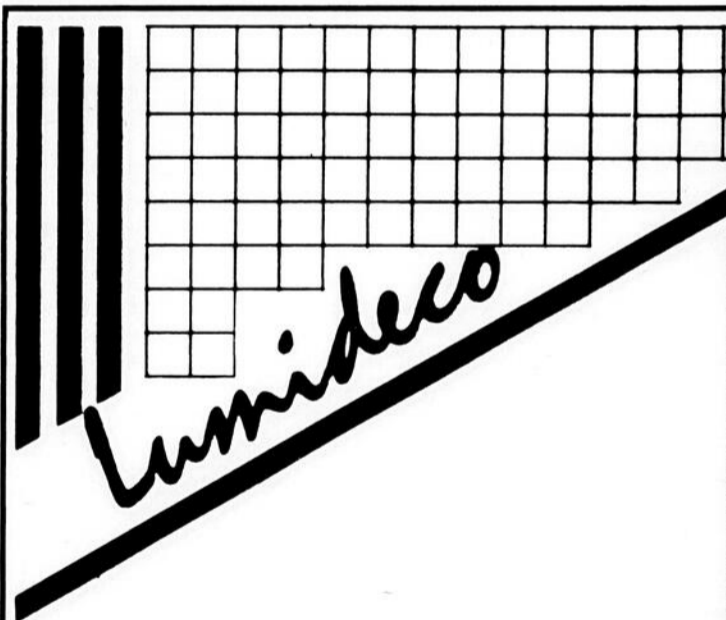
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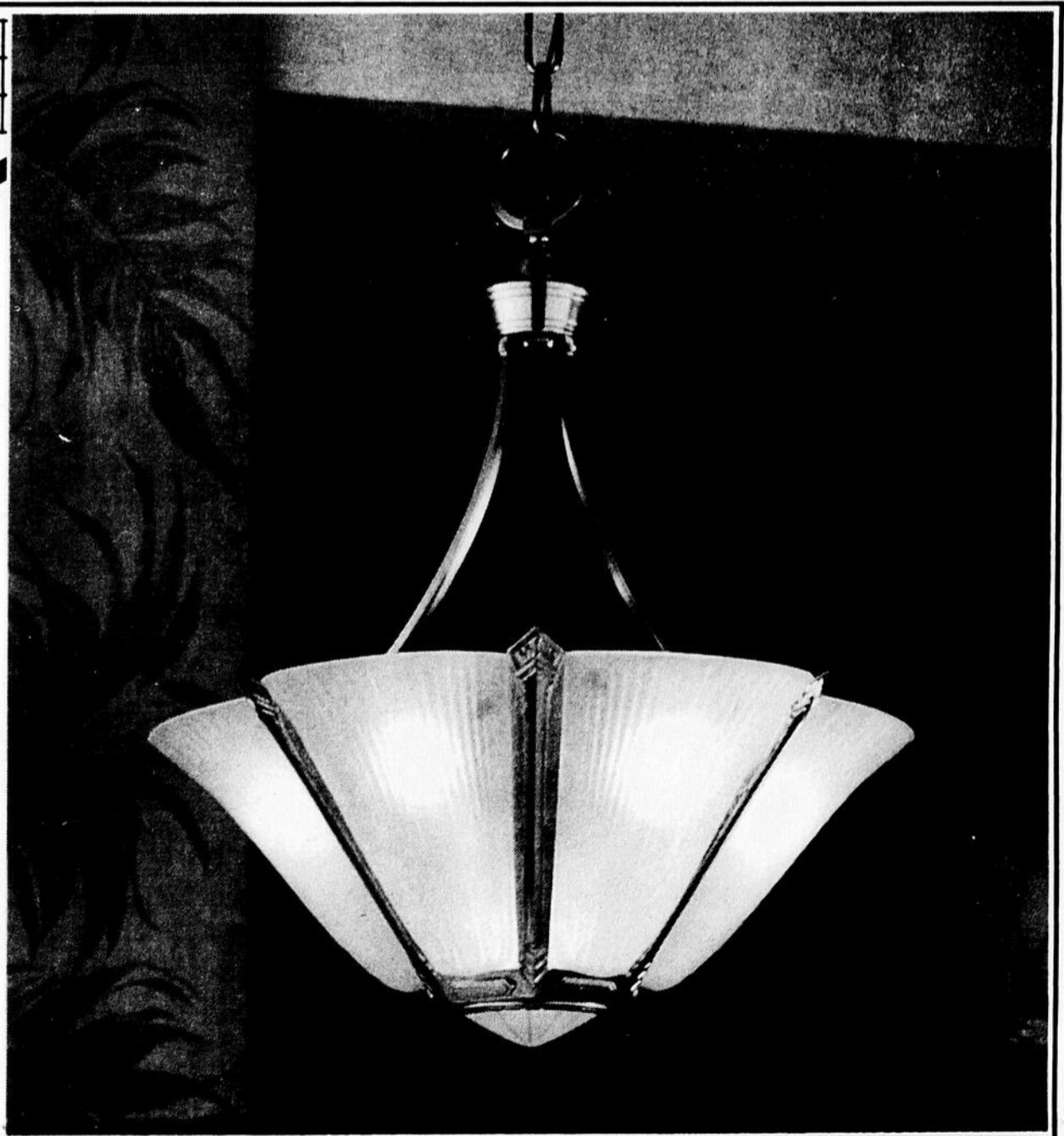
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Diamonds not solitaire as wedding ring gems

There was once a time when a woman was a *bride* only if she wore a shining diamond rising from a white gold band. The ring symbolized marriage. Time has seen this message change. Now an eclectic collection of ring styles tells the world that this man or woman has tied the knot.

Not that the diamond solitaire has gone the way of the dowry. Today's couples still symbolize their nuptial vows with precious stones and metals. But they're also recognizing

other mediums such as colored gemstones and custom-designed bands as ways to express commitment and taste.

Diamonds are forever: In 1477, the archduke of Austria linked diamonds, love and marriage when he slipped a diamond set in a simple gold band onto the third finger of his fiancé's left hand as a token of their engagement, according to *Us* magazine. Today, 75 percent of the two million annual first-time brides in

the United States receive a diamond engagement ring. Men spend an average of \$952 per engagement ring.

Whether it's a two-carat pear-shaped diamond set in a thick sterling silver band that will serve as both an engagement and wedding ring, or dozens of tiny sparkling diamonds channeled in twin gold bands, pay careful attention when purchasing diamonds.

According to experts, the first and most important quality to look for in a diamond is the cut. Of the four diamond variables, known as the four "Cs," it is the only factor completely controlled by man. Ideally cut diamonds have 58 facets, cut to scientifically determined proportions, in perfect symmetry. They reflect

and refract optimal light, which then blazes through the top, giving diamonds their unique beauty. Diamonds that are not cut correctly have gray rings or dark centres that detract from their brilliance.

Another factor is color. Aside from rare colored diamonds, the most valuable diamonds are those that come closest to being perfectly colorless. The majority, however, have a slight tint of color that does not affect their sparkle or brilliance.

Clarity refers to the degree to which tiny flaws called inclusions are present in a diamond. Often, inclusions cannot be seen without magnification. Personal priorities regarding flaws can be determined with the help of a fine jeweler.

A diamond's weight is measured in

carats. Every carat is divided into 100 "points." So a 50-point diamond actually weighs .50 carats. This is an indication of the diamond's size, the most obvious variable, but the least important in judging its brilliance and quality.

It's a gem: You may have admired your grandmother's aquamarine engagement ring. Colored gemstones, which were rare in engagement and wedding rings a few years ago, are the rage again, just as they were at the turn of the century.

Today, many brides choose to use large semi-precious stones because of their affordability and beauty. According to *Emily Post's Etiquette: A Guide To Modern Manners* (Harper & Row), an aquamarine is the first choice as a diamond's substitute. Amethysts, topazes and transparent tourmalines also are good selections, but a bride can even choose her birthstone if she wishes.

The perfect setting: Choosing a setting for your stone is like choosing a frame for an exquisite painting... you want something that will enhance the overall ring, yet not overpower the stone. Today's couples are taking a second look at sterling silver as a viable alternative to white gold. Some designs are bolder, more geometric, while others remain true to tradition.

Men's rings have evolved from plain gold bands with channel-set diamonds, stair-step geometric molding and heavy inlay work.

While there are literally thousands available, many couples are opting to design their own settings or unadorned wedding bands. Typically, a couple has a vague vision of their ring style sketched on paper when they approach a designer. Working with the couple, the designer makes a wax mold of the ring and incorporates any suggested changes. The ring is then cast and gems are set.

Golden oldie: Jewelry stores aren't the only place to buy wedding rings. You might happen upon a "find" in an antique store, or maybe your fiancé's grandmother left him her engagement ring. When buying an heirloom ring, make sure you know what you're getting and talk to a jeweler about any necessary repairs.

Buying tips: Wedding experts agree the "surprise" proposal with the man producing the never-seen-before ring from his pocket should happen only in the pages of romantic novels. The bride and groom should play equal parts in choosing the rings that will, we hope, serve them for life.

Also recommended is dealing with a trained gemologist. Anyone can set up shop and sell jewelry, but not just anyone can ascertain the value of gemstones and jewelry. Find out who the jeweler is certified by and inquire about his gemological training.

When comparison shopping, make sure to compare like items. A diamond ring at Store A may look similar to one for \$1,000 at Store B, but in reality, it may be of very different quality. Ask the jeweler to discuss the quality and cut of the gemstones and workmanship of the pieces.

And, don't buy under pressure. Too often, "lemons" have been purchased when the salesperson applied the pressure.

It is hoped that finding the perfect rings will be as easy as falling in love.



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Taking the mystery out of wedding dress adjectives

The bride wore a taffeta gown featuring a Sabrina neckline, illusion yoke and molded bodice accented with silk floss Schiffl embroidery, and Elizabethan sleeves. From the basque waistline flowed the skirt which swept to a cathedral train.

Get the picture?

Descriptions of wedding attire often fail to conjure up a clear picture to readers of newspaper wedding announcements. Only recent brides and people in the bridal gown business know the meaning of all those strange-sounding adjectives.

Michele Piccione, design director of Alfred Angelo Bridals, helps take the mystery out of wedding fashion terms.

"Since Lady Di's wedding several years ago, taffeta has emerged as a popular fabric for bridal gowns — and one that seldom had been used in the past. Sharing the spotlight are satin, silk charmeuse, crystal organza and all-over lace," Ms Piccione says.

A Sabrina neckline goes straight across from shoulder to shoulder much like a bateau (or boat) neckline and often features detailing such as beading, lace or embroidery. The illusion yoke is so named because it creates the illusion of bareness while actually providing cover — usually in English net.

Fitted or molded bodices gently hug the body and often taper to the flattering deep V- or U-shaped basque waistline. Schiffl embroidery is yarn embroidered onto a background, usually of net or organza. Silk floss embroidery uses short silk fibers which give a sheen to the fabric.

Elizabethan sleeves pouf from the shoulder to be caught in a gathered effect above the elbow and then are fitted and slim from elbow to wrist.

"A cathedral train," Ms Piccione says, "falls two-and-one-half to three yards from the waistline and is very full. Shorter and somewhat narrower are the chapel and semi-cathedral trains." Only a court train is longer — and that extends to 12 feet.

Among other fashion terms you're likely to read about for this season's bridal wear are:

- Appliqué — a lace cutout applied on another fabric with an outline stitch.
- Medallion — a single lace motif bound on all edges or clipped from a wider lace.
- Ballerina look — the filmy, floaty

Continued on page 10



Sleek and sophisticated is one of the options for the spring and summer bride — as reflected in this imported crystal organza gown designed by Michele Piccione.

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Memories of the big day linger on in keepsakes

The last guests are on their way out the door, the wedding cake is almost gone and the band members are packing their instruments. Hard to believe the wedding that required all those months of preparation and planning is over.

Yet, the memories of the day can linger on, especially if the bride and groom decide on the wedding keepsakes they want months before they finally say, "I do."

Wedding planners: Wedding planners, or organizers, help you sort through the seemingly endless

details of planning a wedding, be it a long-term engagement or a whirlwind courtship. Later, you can look back at your wedding plans. Many planners are designed in workbook fashion so you can pen in plans, and include a directory section for important names and numbers, a pocket to store receipts and contracts and an index for quick reference.

File boxes that contain the names of wedding guests in alphabetical order come in handy long after the vows are said. You can use the file to catalog the gifts you receive, the thank-yous you send and the file becomes a permanent reference for Christmas cards, letters and other correspondence.

Photograph albums: Photographs probably are among the most cherished of wedding keepsakes. To ensure that you get the pictures you want, it's best to rely on a professional, one whose work and reputation you are familiar with.

Tell your photographer what you want in advance. While he will take a mixture of traditional shots — both posed and candid — he will need to know the shots you don't want him to miss along with the guests who should be included in photos.

While you'll depend on your photographer for a good photographic roundup, you still can encourage friends and relatives to bring their cameras. Their pictures will add to your visual record.

Once you've arrived home from your honeymoon, reviewed the proofs and received your order, store them in a worthy album... maybe one of wood or covered with velvet or leather. Creative brides can embroider or quilt an album cover with supplies from fabric and craft stores.

Not all photos belong in the album. Frame your favorites in sterling silver or crystal if they're formal, cloth or smooth metal if they're casual. Novelty frames, like a ceramic heart-shape, could complement light-hearted photographs.

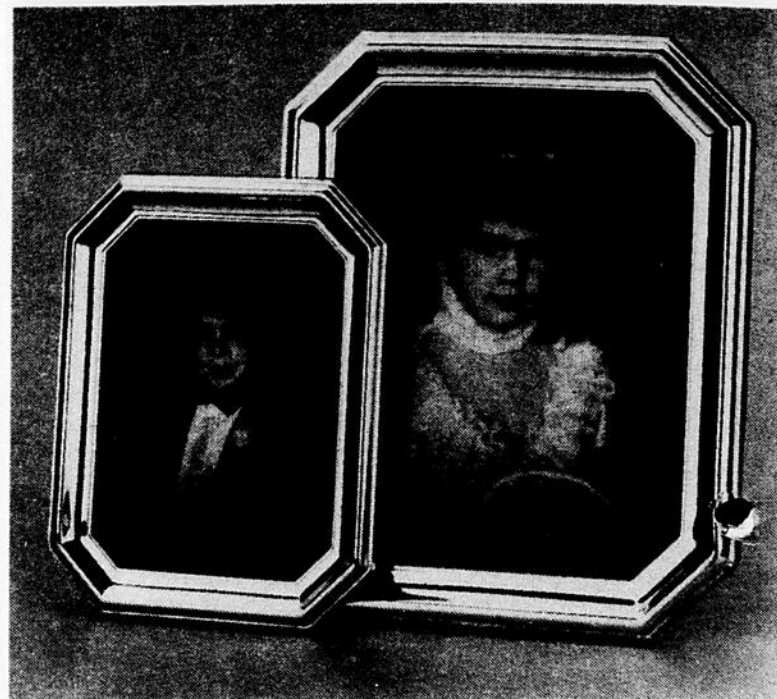
Videotapes: For a moving record of your day, why not hire a professional videographer? Many studios have several types of packages just for weddings. You can choose to have the ceremony filmed (make sure that the church where you'll be married allows photography) or only the reception, according to *Modern Bride* magazine. The most popular package is a video of the entire day.

Discuss your expectations in detail with your videographer and indicate whether you want VHS, Beta or 8mm.

Guest books: With all the fanfare, you probably won't remember every soul who attended your wedding. But with a guest book, you'll have a written record... and in each guest's handwriting. Many books come with space to note gifts. Pair the book with a quill pen.

Bride's journal: Maybe you made your last diary entry when you were 14. Think about reviving the practice, at least during the months before your wedding. By writing it all down, you'll never forget how you felt on the eve of your wedding.

Reception memorabilia: Store your cake decorations, the knife and cake server you use to cut your cake



Choose a worthy complement, like this silver-plated frame from the Sheffield Silver Company, for your precious wedding photos.

and champagne glasses in your hope chest. Instead of tossing your bouquet at the reception, have the florist make a duplicate so you can keep your own.

To dry the flowers from your bouquet, tie them together tightly with a pipe cleaner, then hang upside down in a dry, dark place. Once dry, reassemble the flowers, then seal them in a see-through box or bell jar.

Or press some flowers between the pages of a thick book for at least six weeks and encase in a picture frame. Your florist also can use silk flowers in your wedding bouquet.

You can discover a keepsake for all the funny, poignant, touching memories that add up to a wedding you won't forget. Yours will be a wedding unique and joyous, and you can cherish it for a lifetime.

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Throwaway bouquets larger, more sophisticated

Everyone hopes that a bride and her new husband will be together for many happy years, but a bride and her bouquet are soon to be parted.

Still, a traditional bride wants a bouquet brimming with flowers for the wedding and reception, even though it eventually will end up in the hands of a lucky wedding guest.

Is a bridal bouquet a necessity? Not really, according to Jacqueline McCord Leo in her book, *The New Woman's Guide to Getting Married* (Stam) but it is nice symbolically and practically. Flowers have served as symbols of emotions and values for centuries, and early Roman brides carried bunches of herbs under their veils to symbolize fertility. Aside from being pretty and traditional, the bouquet gives the bride something to do with her hands besides fidget. Bridesmaids also walk more easily and gracefully with flowers in hand.

Today's bouquets are larger and more sophisticated than in recent years, thanks to the return of traditional, formal weddings and the increasing availability of flowers from all over the world. If you want Sonia roses and gardenias, that's likely what you can get, even if you're getting married in the dead of winter.

According to Ms Leo, the wedding bouquet should reflect the bride's personal choice. To get ideas, talk to a professional flower designer, browse through bridal magazines and increase your floral literacy by learning the different types of flowers recommended for bouquets.

Basic bouquet shapes include traditional cascades, round nosegays, long-stemmed arrangements, hearth baskets, single flowers, sprays or a



prayer book with flowers attached. Besides flowers, arrangements also include fillers (like baby's breath or candytuft) and greenery. Here are some ideas:

- Try calla lillies with white fragrant roses for a sophisticated bouquet.
- For a romantic look, combine sweet-smelling freesias with daisies and baby's breath in a fragrant nosegay.
- For a casual look, try a hand-tied bouquet of roses, yarrow and baby's breath.
- If your wedding is informal, you might order a colorful corsage for your dress or wrist instead of a

bouquet.

Besides your own bouquet, you'll want to consider those for the wedding party. Traditionally, the bridesmaids and honor attendants carry similar arrangements of the same flowers with the maid of honor's often in a contrasting color or shade to set her apart.

For a thoughtful touch, ask that a tiny potpourri sachet be included in your bridesmaid's bouquets as lasting keepsakes.

Flower girls often carry miniature bouquets of flower arrangements in a basket or attached to a muff or fashioned into a nosegay.

The groom and other men in the wedding party will wear bouton-

nieres pinned to their left lapels. The groom's should be slightly different — give him white roses, for instance, if the rest of the men will be wearing white carnations.

The mothers and grandmothers of the bride and groom also are given flowers to wear. Their personal preferences, along with the colors and styles of their dresses, should determine their corsages.

If you love flowers, you don't have to let the arrangements stop with those traditional to the wedding party. Crown your head or decorate the brim of your hat with fresh flowers. Have a tiny flower or two attached to your garter.

Consider floral arrangements for your wedding and reception. Altar arrangements and pew markers made of flowers can brighten a chapel. Jewish brides might even want a floral huppah — a canopy under which couples stand while taking their vows.

At the reception, fresh flowers can

take the place of their frosting counterparts on a wedding cake. Floral centrepieces can carry out your color theme and your flower girls can hand out single stem flowers to guests as favors. You can also order heart-shaped wreaths of twigs and baby's breath to hand in the doorway of your reception hall.

A sentimental bride might hesitate to toss away her lovely bouquet... after all, it would make a lovely keepsake. One suggestion is to have a smaller version of your wedding bouquet made to toss at the reception so you can keep yours as a memento.

Another thought: use silk or dried flowers in wedding party flowers and other arrangements for lasting beauty long after the wedding is over.

The crowning touch to your flower-filled day? Order flowers to be sent to your parents' home one or two days following the wedding as a sign of your appreciation and love.

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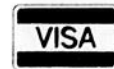


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Bride can help nature to ensure radiant look

All brides are beautiful on their wedding day, but how do they get that way?

Tradition, expectation, that glow of excitement that comes from within — all of these play a part in bridal beauty. Of course, there are a few little things the bride herself can do to promote that wedding day radiance.

Weddings are joyous, but they also are stressful, and a regimen that starts months prior to the event can make any bride feel her best the day of the wedding.

It is not recommended that brides-to-be undertake strenuous diets in the months before the wedding, although a balanced diet with at least 1,000 calories or more a day is fine if she wants to drop a few pounds. A week at a spa with a cherished childhood girlfriend or the bride's mother might be the best way for the bride to lose inches and tone up while revitalizing.

"Many engaged women and their mothers come here as a way to have time alone before the planning and events go into high gear," says a representative of a California health spa.

The regimen of exercise and diet, plus massage, makeup lessons that such spas provide can help the bride prepare physically and mentally for the busy weeks ahead.

No radical changes

The bride should not change her appearance radically for her wedding day. She wants to create an image that is timeless, yet uniquely her. Thus, big changes in hair color and cut should be considered carefully before the wedding. If anything, a consultation with a hair professional should take place months before. A style should be selected that will complement the bride's lifestyle and formality of the wedding.

Once the bride selects the headpiece, she should take it to her stylist so modifications can be made.

A bride's skin should glow. Traditionally, brides were pale and veiled. Today, the modern bride might want to visit a tanning salon to develop a deep glow or work with a makeup artist, who can define her looks for the approaching wedding festivities.

An initial visit to a makeup artist a month or two before the wedding gives the bride time to select makeup types and become comfortable with them. She can adjust her makeup palette when wedding colors and clothing are selected. A real treat is being made up the day of the wedding, so the bride is truly her most radiant... with just a little help.

For radiance, a bride's skin should be buffed to perfection. A good regimen of cleansers and toners can be suggested by a reliable professional.

Bridal beauty should go right down to the fingertips. The ring will be seen by all, so hands and nails should look their best. A bride might want to have a professional manicure a day or two before the wedding and then touch up with a matching polish just before the ceremony. For those who break a nail, there are acrylic nails or salon silk wrap to mend the frayed edges.

Some frayed edges might be internal. If the bride finds herself nervous and edgy, a few stress reduction exercises might help. She could pam-

per herself with a massage, or listen to a relaxation tape or soothing music. It is also a good idea to have an emergency kit, especially if the bride is dressing away from home. The kit should include the marriage licence, the rings, toiletries, tissue, extra hosiery, sewing kit and extra nail polish and gloss can help avoid last-minute panic.

Bathing just prior to dressing can refresh and relax. The bride can dab

on perfume to last all day, apply deodorant while skin is still damp for greatest protection and dust on talc.

Finally, she can slip on her dress, apply makeup and comb out her hairstyle with confidence before adding the headpiece.

Radiance comes from within, but the modern bride who has prepared herself knows she has done everything she can for her outward appearance.

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Bridal party fashions reflect style of ceremony

The royal weddings of the Prince and Princess of Wales and the Duke and Duchess of Windsor and others involving celebrities have heralded the renaissance of the traditional wedding ceremony in its most elegant, formal and elaborate form.

"Large and fancy weddings are in," says Marie Rama, director of weddings and entertaining for Korbel Champagne. "Brides-to-be are returning to lavish, formal, traditional weddings."

Lavish weddings, of course, call for larger bridal parties. According to *Modern Bride* magazine, 98 per cent of all weddings of first-time brides in 1986 were large, formal ceremonies that involved approximately five female and five male attendants.

Fashions for members of the bridal party have become elaborate and inventive. While there's no doubt the bride is still the centre of attention, the groom, groomsmen and bridal attendants will be able to hold their own with fashions that catch the guests' eyes after the bride has made her way down the aisle.

BRIDESMAIDS

One of the freshest looks for

bridesmaids is the English garden print, according to *Modern Bride*. This style is best in chintz, with bouquets of peonies and cabbage roses in soft pastels and earth tones. Also popular is the Victorian dress with delicate embroidered necklines, lots of beading or the Lady Diana look in full-blown taffeta.

Joan Bobrow, spokeswoman for Alfred Angelo Bridals, says the colors for bridesmaid dresses span the color wheel. "Anything goes," she says. "There's a whole rainbow of colors."

Pale pinks, aquas and lilacs especially complement this year's popular ballerina look — filmy floating dancing skirts.

Another trend in wedding wear is a return to the 1930s look. In bridesmaid dresses, this translates into dropped waistlines, bateau necklines, cap sleeves and elegant fabrics.

Whatever look a bride chooses for her bridesmaids, she should make sure the dresses complement her own look in length and formality. She might even consider consulting her maid of honor and bridesmaids before choosing a style since they'll pay for their dresses.

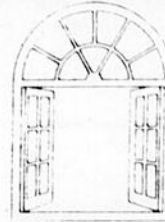


Something new is something old... one of the fashion trends for 1987 is the return of the classically elegant dropped-waist look of the 1930s. This Dance-Allure bridesmaid's gown features a bateau neckline and cap sleeves.

groom don't have to relegate themselves to matronly styles of crepe or chiffon... after all, Jacqueline Onassis looked anything but dowdy when she attended her daughter's wedding in a Carolina Herrera creation. Floor-length or evening dresses

made of luxurious fabrics like satin and lace in any color of the rainbow (except black and white, of course) are appropriate for traditional, formal weddings.

Fathers usually follow the groomsmen in attire for formal affairs.



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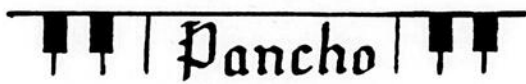
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THE GROOM

There's no doubt a traditional bride will wear white or ivory on her wedding day and, in 1987, she might very well be joined by the groom. This year marks the return to the all-white wedding, according to Ms Bobrow. Traditional grooms also will be in high style sporting dolphin gray or black tuxedos.

The style of tuxedo the groom will wear depends largely upon the time of day and formality of the wedding. For a formal daytime affair, the groom might choose a grey cutaway coat, white shirt and striped silk ascot. After six, he might choose "white tie" formality — a black double-breasted tuxedo with matching satin-trimmed trousers, stiff-front shirt and wing tips.

The groomsmen traditionally dress like the groom, but a top hat, ruby studs, gloves or cummerbund can set the man of the hour apart.

Most couples rent their wedding tuxedos. It's best for a bride and groom to make their final choices six to eight weeks before the wedding so they'll get the styles they want.

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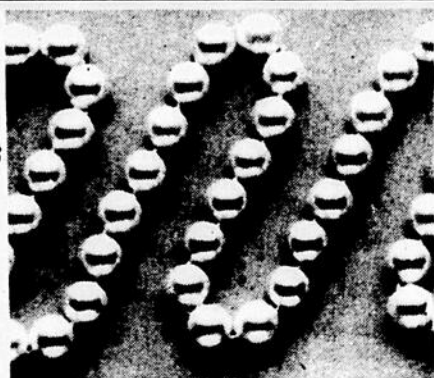
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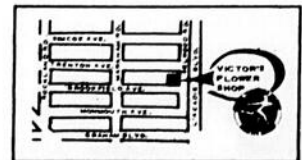
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Engagement customs have long history



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Proposals have been emblazoned across cakes, tucked inside fortune cookies, etched in the sand, written in the sky, placed in newspaper ads, sent via telegram and carrier pigeon and lettered five feet high on billboards.

But no matter how unique the method of popping the question, the "engaging customs" that follow have survived centuries, and the background of these traditions can be as meaningful to today's bride and groom as they were to the first

Egyptian who gave a ring to his betrothed.

If you're wondering why you're attending showers, saving for your hope chest or wearing an engagement ring on the third finger of your left hand, *Bride's* magazine provides some interesting answers.

Why an engagement ring? A symbol of the groom's honorable intentions, a ring also was considered partial payment for the bride. Under Roman law, a bridegroom furnished a ring as a sign of security,

to protect the interests of the bride-to-be. The ring is worn on the third finger of the left hand because the pharaohs of Egypt believed a vein, the "vena amoris," ran from that finger directly to the heart.

Why a trousseau or dowry? The 20th century dowry — the material goods a bride brings to her marriage — is considered the career and salary of the working bride. But the custom of a dowry began in Europe sometime after 500 BC, when the esteem in which the bride was held was heightened by her dowry — the land, money or household goods she brought with her. As long as the husband and wife were married, he benefitted from the dowry, but if the husband died or the marriage was dissolved, the bride had her dowry to fall back on.

Why a bridal shower? Tradition has it that a Dutch maiden fell in love with a poor miller, and when her father denied her a dowry to marry, the miller's friends showered the bride with gifts to help the young couple set up housekeeping. In the 1890s, this theme was furthered when friends put presents in brightly colored Japanese paper umbrellas; when the bride popped it open over her head, the parcels "showered" down on her.

Why a bachelor party? While the days of the dancing girl jumping from the cake may be past, few grooms pass up the chance to gather with buddies before the wedding. Traditionally, the purpose of the bachelor party was to raise a fund for the groom so he could continue to go out with his friends after his bride took control of the household

finances. But the gathered bachelors mainly mourned the loss of one of their own, even as they toasted the bride with champagne, and smashed the glasses in the fireplace or underfoot so the glass would never be used for a less worthy purpose.

What is a hope chest? Your hope chest may be a recently acquired trunk of gifts and purchases for your new home, but originally the bride's family began preparing for her marriage when she was born. Collecting, embroidering and crafting items to store in a marriage chest, even a bride's childhood was spent "hoping" for the day she would marry and share the precious things inside.

DRESSES . . .

Continued from page five

dancing skirts so popular in ready-to-wear now influence bridal attire as well.

• Peplum — a section of a garment

attached to the waistline; usually flared, it calls attention to the hip.

• Trumpet sleeves — puffed from the shoulder, taper at the elbow and then flare out in a wide cuff (picture the instrument with its funnel-shaped bell).

"Look for gowns elaborately beaded with infinite trains enhanced with embroidered cutouts — or simply sophisticated with lowered waistlines and slim skirts," says Ms. Piccione. "Both are trends important in wedding fashions for '87."

When you have decided the general mood of your wedding, at least a few of the elements you want in your dress, the time for the ceremony, the degree of formality and a relative price range, you're ready to start shopping. Here are some tips from *Bride's* magazine:

• Call ahead. Make an appointment at your bridal salon, especially during the pre-summer and preholiday rush seasons. This way, you'll be assured of unpressured personal service.

• Shop early. At least six months, or even more, before the big day. Most dresses are special-ordered and take a couple of months between order and delivery. And you'll want extra time for last-minute alterations. If you're short on time, gowns with fewer production details are sometimes available.

If you're sewing your own creation, plan on a month of weekend sewing for a simple wedding gown or allow at least a month if you have your gown made.

• Shop alone or with just one other person whose taste you trust. The fewer opinions you have to contend with, the better. And wear or take along appropriate shoes that are a good height and style for the dress you have in mind.

• What to bring? The most important thing to bring with you to the bridal salon is patience. Your search will be easier if you allow plenty of time to try on a variety of styles. You'll also need a longline bra, pale, sheer, white or ivory hosiery and other undergarments that will give you the best impression of how the dress fits and looks. And don't forget your chequebook. You should be prepared to leave a deposit on your order. You'll be asked to pay the balance, possibly in cash, when you pick up the dress.

• Keep time in mind. When the consultant writes up your sales slip, be sure she includes the date you'll need your gown. Ask how long it should take for the order to be filled (usually six to eight weeks). Then make an appointment for a fitting as soon as the store notifies you that your dress is in.

If you decide to rent, make sure you reserve your choice in advance.

When you've made your choice, ask about any instructions on caring and dry cleaning for the gown. Once you get it home, you should unpack it and lay it flat. Hang it up the day before the wedding to shake out any wrinkles.

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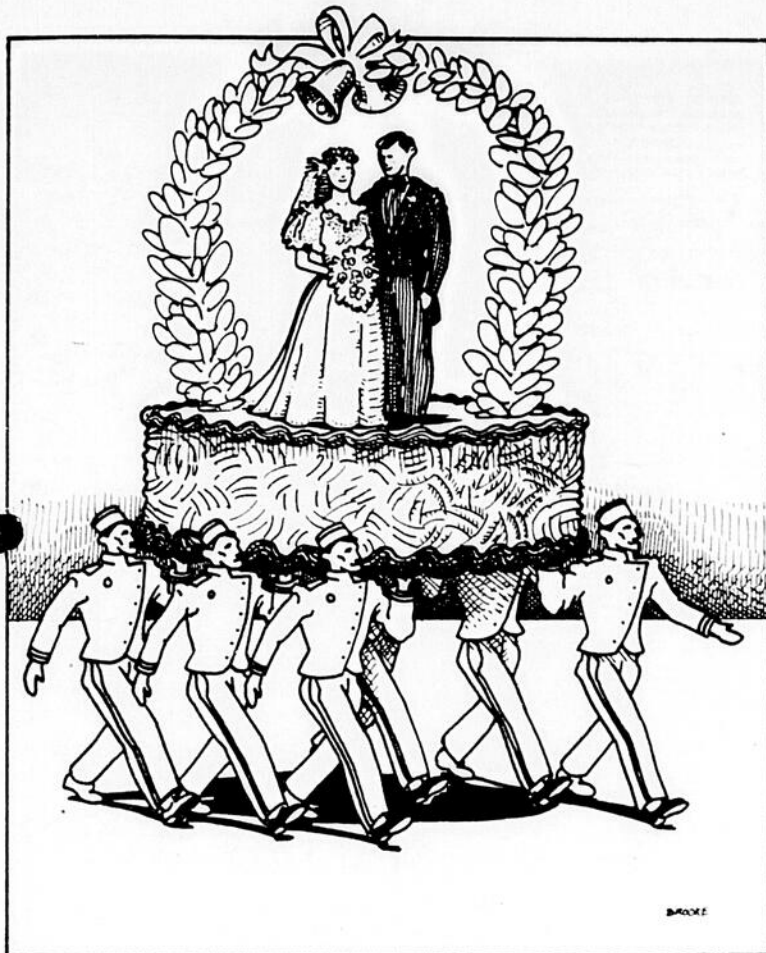
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Today's brides and grooms can be inventive when it comes to their reception refreshments. Predictable is out... imagination is in. So order ethnic foods, dozens of desserts or all-vegetarian cuisine to your heart's content. Etiquette suggests only one rule of thumb: give your guests the amount and type of food that they would normally eat at that time of day. A luncheon would be appropriate at midday, while cocktail fare would be fine for the afternoon or late evening, according to the "Bride's Book of Etiquette" (Perigee).

But no matter how *nouveau* the menu, you'll probably want to give tradition a nod by ordering a wedding cake and champagne for toasting.

Planning the menu is the easy part... most minds abound with delectable suggestions. The trick comes in budgeting, planning and pulling it off. Here are some guidelines to consider when planning your incredible wedding edibles:

Caterers: In the case of a large wedding reception, wedding experts usually recommend hiring a caterer rather than letting the bride's family take on the job themselves.

Most caterers provide everything you'll need for the perfect party: food, staff (waiters, bartenders in uniform), tables, chairs, barware, plates, flatware, linens, liquor and cake. Some itemize costs, others have an all-inclusive per-head price, that varies with the menu.

According to *Glamour* magazine, the more you know about your caterer, the better.

- Go by word of mouth, considering only the caterers referred by trusted friends. Make sure the caterer is licensed for food handling and carries insurance for his staff.
- Quiz the caterer. If you have a location, meet him there and discuss logistics and colors, asking for his suggestions. Find out what services he can provide (the wedding cake, open bar) or at least coordinate.
- Get proof of service. See written references and a photo portfolio and ask permission to see a party in progress or at least walk through beforehand. Also, sample the desired menu items.
- Be honest about money. Ask for suggestions that will fit your budget.
- What would your caterer do in the throes of disaster? Ask him how he

would handle a fallen cake or a power outage?

- Comparison shop, checking individual tabulations for food, rentals, beverages and labor instead of one overall price.

- When you've narrowed the list to two or three caterers, go with the one who seems genuinely interested in your wishes.

Do-it-yourself: If you're planning a small reception, you might find catering your own affair cost-efficient and rewarding. Use the opportunity to your advantage — take a cooking class to learn the latest techniques in pastry and candy mak-

ing. Send your aunt with a flair for frosting to a brush-up so she can decorate your cake.

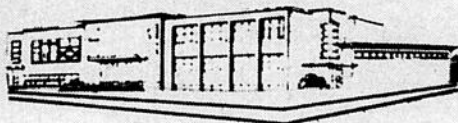
Here are some do-it-yourself guidelines from author Jacqueline McCord Leo in "The New Woman's Guide To Getting Married" (Bantam):

- Forget the pasta. Plan a menu for which everything can be bought, prepared and stored in advance. Avoid entrées that require last-minute cooking.
- Rent or borrow all the equipment you need from a party rental service, from tables to silver salad tongs.
- Don't do everything by yourself.

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