

Put your personal spin on wedding preparations

Planning a wedding is no small task! Every bride and groom wants to include that special “wow” factor that will set their celebration apart from any other. There is no bigger thrill for a guest than spotting something they have never seen before.



Jacquie Bennett

A wedding is the perfect occasion to put a personal spin on classics and create something unique to the special couple and the journey they are about to embark on.

I have gathered together some unique planning ideas that just might inspire you.

Formal receptions are slowly moving back into the wedding scene. With this comes a return of more traditional type invitations. Calligraphy is an elegant

way to create a formal flare from the moment a guest opens their mailbox. Gold font adds a luxe feeling to an invitation. Fancy techniques can be used sparingly and still provide a luxurious vibe. For a more cost effective approach, use them to call out key details — the wedding date, names or special design elements. Keep the other fonts and designs subdued.

Instead of traditional bachelor and bachelorette parties, soon-to-be-weds are saying good-bye to single life with action packed events. Think about something you have always wanted to do, then go for it. An intense paint ball competition is a fun way to get both sides of the aisle to bond. Arrange a scavenger hunt or road rally with the final destination being the couple's favorite hang-out spot or the place where they meet. The possibilities for adventure are endless.

This season runways gave a real nod to the '70s



in wedding attire. Many top designers showed white pant suits and one-piece jump suits. A fashion forward bride may love the look, but still yearn for the opportunity to walk down the aisle in a traditional white dress. Think out of the box for rehearsal dinner or a reception change.

A new trend in table decor is putting a lid on fresh blooms. Floral designers are glassing in cen-

terpieces with apothecary jars and domed cloches of different sizes and shapes. These table toppers work well in clusters, using just a few blooms surrounded with greenery. The low height creates a conversation friendly tablescape. You can also instill a personal touch to your tables by naming them after your favorite movies, songs or literary works.

Simple folding chairs

are taking a back seat to more sturdy wooden models, complete with custom seat covers reflecting the color scheme of the wedding. Chair covers over the seat backs also add to the decor element and bring out the romantic look of the day.

Remember the intrigue of delicate spun sugar? Bakers are using the technique of threaded sugar to create intricate, 3D designs as cake toppers. It may take a little practice, but it is sure to attract the attention of the guests.

There are many ways to create memorable reception moments. Instead of fireworks to light up the sky at the end of the evening, why not put on a light show. You can create a sunset or fireworks inside. A one-of-a-kind performance by dancers, a singer or even acrobats can provide a rare treat for guests.

There are all kinds of ways for a bride and groom to make an entrance — on a

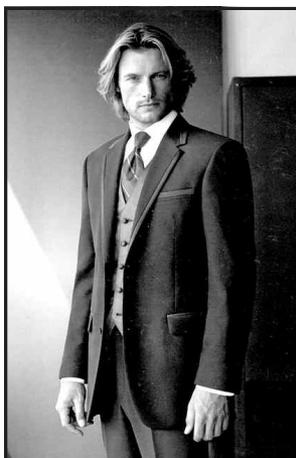
horse, in a carriage, or a hot air balloon. Treat guests to a ride during cocktails.

Instead of the typical morning-after brunch for out of town guests, be a gracious host by delivering good-bye baskets filled with bagels and cream cheese, scones or muffins along with a small bottle of souvenir champagne. Include a few local favorite snacks for the trip home. It's a no fuss approach and allows guests to start their day at their own pace.

Above all, your wedding is the chance to express your style. You need to be able to transfer your wedding vision into a reality. The most popular trends that brides are loving this season are vintage (with feminine details and nostalgic decor), classic (think lace and ruffles, lush blooms highlighted with tons of votives), elegant (ballroom style, with luxe elements, crystal chandeliers and cascading

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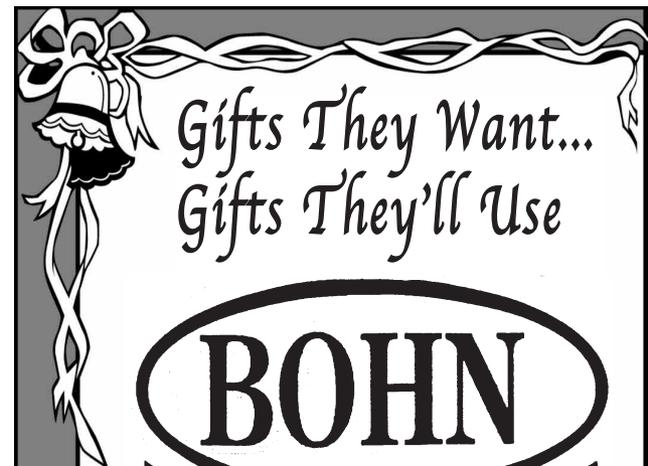
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