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Hampshire

Bride & Groom

Quarterly guide to the perfect wedding

**Destination
Weddings
Personal
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New Hampshire Bride & Groom

Quarterly guide to the perfect wedding

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Unexpected ways to make your destination wedding unforgettable

Wedding planning season is in full swing and trend forecasts show more brides selecting destination weddings than ever before. Not only are destination weddings an affordable alternative to massive traditional weddings of past generations, they also make it easy for couples to create a customizable wedding that perfectly suits their personalities.

If you think a destination wedding might be right for you, these ideas for creating an incredibly distinctive event are sure to inspire:

Unique ceremony locations

A beach is typically the top choice for destination weddings because it gives guests a vacation setting to enjoy before, during and after your big day. Keep in mind, just because you select a beach locale doesn't mean you must have a seaside ceremony. Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, is a top location for destination weddings, but there are countless gardens, pergolas and fountains couples can choose as the backdrop for their vows.

Standout accommodations

Big weddings are becoming a thing of the past; consider intimate spaces that bring guests together in an incredible setting instead. For example, the Bridge at North Beach Plantation in Myrtle Beach is a luxury penthouse suspended



within the bridge that connects the two towers at the 4-diamond resort. With seven bedrooms, seven and a half baths, a media room and sweeping views of the ocean, everyone is sure to enjoy their time together to the fullest.

Localized gift bags

Although the ceremony may be intimate, guests will likely be traveling from all over the country. Start the experience right by creating localized gift bags that can be placed in rooms to greet your guests upon their arrival.

Live artists

Want to make your reception one of a kind? Hire a local artist to capture the moment in a memorable keepsake. For example, some artists specialize in painting live events; you could hire one to capture the magic of the gathering.

Guests will love watching the painting evolve throughout the night, and you'll get a special piece of art you can display at home.

Hand-painted cakes

One of the hottest new wedding trends is hand-painted cakes where a master baker uses artistry to create beautiful patterns and floral designs on fondant and other types of frosting. Cake artist Heidi Vukov of Croissants works closely with brides planning destination weddings to ensure their hand-painted cake is perfect for their big day.

Reception surprises

Unexpected surprises tied to the couple's personality can make a magical day that much more memorable. For example, if you met your beloved at a concert or your spouse has a special love for Adele, Bruce Springsteen or Elvis, hire a celebrity look-alike from a local theater to make a surprise appearance.

Memorable thank-you gift

Forget the box of candy almonds. Thank them with a special gift. Look no further than the local culture for inspiration. For example, the Gullah people local to the Myrtle Beach area weave gorgeous sweet grass baskets in traditional designs, a perfect gift for wedding guests. (BPT)



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Personal style redefines tradition for engaged couples choosing tableware

(BPT) - Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue. The well-known saying may seem cliché, but the adage defines tabletop trends for spring wedding registries. Engaged couples are steering away from the conventional choices made by their parents' generation. Experts say they are instead opting for personal style over tradition. They're blending patterns, shapes and colors mixing old and new.

"Today's couples are mixing a lot of different design elements on their table that traditionally wouldn't work together," says visual merchandiser John Griffith. "They're pairing florals with patterns featuring wide bands or stripes; it's a mishmash look that, quite honestly, just works." Griffith leads wedding tabletop design



seminars at Replacements, Ltd., known as the world's largest retailer of old and new china, crystal, silver and collectibles. He observes that vintage continues to be one of the hottest trends, whether that means incorporating a family pattern or finding one reflecting the couple's sense of style and combining it with something new. Popular picks include those evoking the classic elegance of older fine

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English and French china, such as delicate lace patterns along the lines of English high teas and formal dining influenced by both the younger members of the British royal family and TV series *Downton Abbey*.

"Whiteware is a perennial favorite, but choosing a white pattern with more flair gives your table an identity that is yours," says Replacements' designer Julie Robbins. "I am seeing more embellished white patterns, both embossed and decorated with white decals. White also blends effortlessly with many heirloom patterns, and this gives the table a sense of your family's roots."

Designers are seeing many wedding couples start with white and other neutral shades, then adding splashes of trending colors including Scuba Blue, Strawberry, Tangerine and Marsala, Pantone's color of the year. Metallics, especially golds, add new dimension to the table.

"We saw a renewed interest in gold flatware and gold trim last year, but this year gold has taken off on a much larger scale," Robbins adds. "Service plates and dinner plates with wide gold rims or heavy encrusting can take a sleek, simple pattern to an amazing level of decadence. Gold brings a rich, warm look to any table, and we're even seeing it in casual dining setting."

Flatware manufacturers such as Oneida and Reed & Barton offer a range of gold electroplate patterns. One throwback to tradition this season



marks the return to sterling; with the price of silver dropping, Replacements is seeing an uptick in registries for sterling flatware patterns.

One challenge couples often encounter with heirloom pieces lies in the fact they may only inherit a few pieces of family china or perhaps the name of the pattern has been lost or forgotten. Griffith suggests taking advantage of Replacements' free pattern identification service. He

notes the company also offers personalized guidance with design questions.

"Our design team works one-on-one with wedding couples looking for guidance translating their personal style to their table," he says. "It's easy to reach out to us with your design dilemmas by either emailing us through our website, replacements.com or posting questions to our Facebook page."

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Secrets to creating the shabby chic wedding

Wedding trends come and go, driven by many cultural influences, but few are as enduring and romantic as shabby chic/shabby glam. With its perfect combination of elegance and softness, bright sparkles and gentle hues, a shabby chic wedding complements the individuality and beauty of brides of every age and walk of life. And, thanks to many rental stores increasing their inventory of shabby chic items, it's also one of the easiest and most fun wedding themes to create.

Vintage wedding gowns, repurposed items and a wide inventory of thematic rental items can all work together to create a shabby chic wedding that is unique, memorable and affordable.

You can visit RentalHQ.com to find your local American Rental Association member store that will help you with your individual needs. To create a wedding theme that is the perfect marriage of shabby and glam follow these three simple steps:

1. Flowers and lace are the perfect marriage.

Lace isn't just for your wedding gown and flowers aren't just for your bouquet. Touches of lace added throughout the ceremony and



reception underscore the air of nostalgic elegance that's essential to shabby chic. This can be as easy as adding lace touches to wedding invitations or using pieces of lace as placemats or coasters on reception tables.

Or, it can be as grand as a lace tent liner that evokes a romantic, bygone era.

Florals are key to creating a shabby chic look. Whether the bride and groom stand beneath a bower of pastel blooms while ▶

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exchanging vows, or floral accents throughout the bride's couture, flowers and floral patterns lend romance and grace to every aspect of a shabby chic wedding.

2. Light the way.

Light plays an important role in any shabby chic themed event. For weddings, vintage-looking chandeliers, candelabras and hurricane lamps act both as decorative items and sources of romantic light. It's easy to add thematic lighting to any wedding, even if your reception will be in an ordinary hall or tent. Rental companies offer an array of lighting options that can be temporarily outfitted to any venue. Adorn tables with classic silver candelabra or add a stunning crystal chandelier to an outdoor tent.

You can find a variety of lighting options on RentalHQ.com. Many rental stores have increased their inventory of shabby chic decor items to meet brides' demands, so renting can give you access to greater variety. Plus, you'll reap the cost savings of renting versus buying.

3. Layers of texture.

The pleasing union of diverse

colors and textures is at the heart of a shabby chic wedding. Soft colors are the perfect foil for sparkles, and distressed wood complements the beauty of aged metals like silver and pewter. All these elements come together to evoke the grace and comfort of bygone times.

Look for creative ways to harmoniously incorporate these touches into your wedding. For example, display your wedding cake, adorned with real flowers, atop a rustic wooden table. Decorate an antique metal birdcage with lace and ribbon and use it as a holder where reception guests can deposit cards for the bride and groom.

Add petite crystal and pearl accents to bouquets and centerpieces. For a rustic food table, rent wooden barrels, top with an aged wooden plank, and present food on vintage serving plates.

Finally, look for inspiration online. Resources like Pinterest, Etsy and theknot yield a wealth of ideas, and you can browse photos of other weddings and bridal creations to find the perfect look for your shabby chic wedding. (BPT)



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Domestic bliss: 5 fabulous wedding registry upgrades

Getting ready to say "I do?" Of all the tasks you'll do to prepare for your big day, creating your wedding registry will be one of the most fun. It's your chance to choose everything for your home, from towels and linens to plates, flatware and kitchen gadgets. Be sure to add choices in a variety of price ranges so guests can decide how much they want to spend, while still getting you and your new spouse something you really want. Dream big - in addition to the basics, take this opportunity to ask for premium gifts. Here are a few items any couple would be thrilled to receive and enjoy.

Mixing up magic

A high-performance blender is a must-have for any newly married couple or family. Ask for one that can help with every meal of the day, such as the Vitamix S55. With a smaller footprint than conventional blenders, this powerful machine offers the convenience of four pre-programmed settings and two container options, including a blend-and-go smoothie cup. Use the S55 to make breakfast smoothies in the morning, salad dressing for lunch, soup for dinner, and even dips and drinks for last-minute entertaining.

Multi-taskers

Pots and pans are a registry staple, but you should also add specialty cookware and bakeware, such as a roasting pan, rectangular baker or covered baking dish. Choosing oven-to-table pieces makes it easy to go straight from cooking to presentation, all in one dish that works for both tasks. Many of these dishes also include lids for easily storing leftovers. By asking for a set that comes with multiple pieces, you'll ▶



be ready to create brunch casseroles, lasagna for dinner and a warm bread pudding for dessert.

Backyard barbecues

An outdoor grill can help set the scene for family gatherings, tailgate parties or just relaxing with friends. Decide if you prefer gas, which offers easy operation and clean-up, or charcoal, which many barbecue connoisseurs say provides a more intense, grilled flavor. Also, think about extra features you may want, such as a built-in thermometer, side burners, shelves or tool hooks. Don't forget skewers, cooking utensils such as spatulas, tongs and grill forks, as well as other accessories like a grill mitt, grill basket or pizza pan. Be sure to consider space as well. If you live in an apartment, you may opt for a smaller grill or one that hooks directly on your balcony.

Serve in style

Be ready for dinner parties with formal dinnerware and crystal stemware. Select timeless patterns that will look fresh and inviting on your table for years to come. Add a pop of color and personality with low-cost, on-trend accent pieces, such as chargers or a coffee or tea pot. Register for a few different types of glasses including water goblets, wine glasses and stemless or highball glasses, depending on your drink of choice. Experts recommend requesting eight to 12 place settings, but you may want more if you plan to host large events.

Unconventional tools

Once you've got the basics covered, consider some out-of-the-box kitchen items. Keep recipes handy by registering for a cutting board that has place for a tablet. For easy entertaining, a slate cheese board enables you to write the name of each cheese or appetizer right on the board. Or, pick one with a hidden drawer for knives and storage.

Friends and family often like to give a signature gift that will make you think of them each time you use it. If you need extra advice on what to choose for your registry, don't hesitate to ask a consultant at your local department store or download checklists from popular wedding websites and blogs. Creating a wedding registry is often the first step toward building your home as a married couple, so get the right items to make it a happy one. (BPT)

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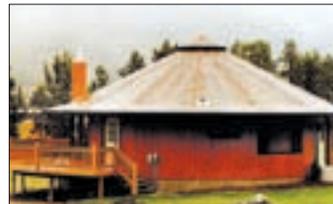


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Hottest hair trend of 2015: Curls are in

Pack away that flat iron because curls are making a comeback. Trend watchers are praising curly hair as celebrities, politicians and even business leaders are starting to embrace their curly tresses. From runways and the big screen, to boardrooms and capitol buildings, curls are taking center stage.

A third of American women have curly hair, according to Kantar Worldpanel's Ethnic Hair Analysis. Yet a Dove Hair study found that 70 percent of women with curly hair feel they need to regularly "tame" their curls, and only 10 percent said they were proud of their curly hair.

"I work with many women who love their beautiful curls, but often struggle to manage them, and instead opt for flat irons or chemical straightening," says celebrity stylist Cynthia Alvarez, a curl expert for Dove Hair. "But curls are having their moment. The secret to rediscovering a love of your curls is to keep them nourished so they are soft, smooth and defined."

Curly hair may vary by texture and pattern, but the common denominators seems to be dryness, frizziness and lack of moisture. Women can achieve beautiful curls when they



find the right products.

"No two curl patterns are the same, so it's important that you find products specifically designed to nourish your curly hair," Alvarez says. "I like Dove Hair's new Quench Absolute Collection. The products, with a blend of protein, nutrients and Brazilian Buriti Oil, improve manageability, quench dryness, and smooth, strengthen and nourish curly hair."

Curls are definitely in the spotlight and with the right cut, style, products and tips women can achieve their full curl-potential.

Alvarez offers some tips for caring for your curly hair:

- Embrace your curls. Flat, straight hair isn't for everyone. Celebrate your natural curls and focus on keeping them healthy-looking and beautiful.

- Choose products specifically designed to nourish and hydrate curly hair. Naturally wavy, curly hair needs nutrition and deep nourishment from within.

- Deep condition often with a product like Dove Quench Absolute Intensive Restoration Mask. The product envelops each curl to deliver intense nourishment for a smooth and shiny finish.

- Lose the terry cloth towel and switch to a micro-fiber towel that is gentler on hair and able to help dry hair faster without creating frizz.

- Try a leave-in treatment like Dove Quench Absolute Supreme Creme Serum, which adds an extra layer of moisture to help fight frizz.

For more curly-hair tips and products, visit www.dove.us.

"At the end of the day, whether your hair is curly and bouncy or straight and sleek, you should nurture the beautiful hair you were born with," Alvarez says. (BPT)

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Money-saving wedding-planning tips for any budget

Weddings can be expensive, and most brides and grooms need to establish a budget before they start planning the wedding so they can afford to get hitched. Many couples are now getting married later in life and paying most or all of the costs themselves, so it's important to start budgeting sooner than later. The following tips will help you and your fiancé keep your costs down so you can stay within your wedding budget.

1. Set a long engagement - It allows you to spread costs over several paychecks. For example, if you get engaged this spring, you can choose one month to put a down payment on the reception hall, and another month for purchasing the wedding dress and renting the tuxedo. A third month could be used for purchasing honeymoon trip tickets, and a fourth month for the photographer's down payment. During your engagement you can also start putting money into a savings account so you aren't strapped for cash immediately following your wedding. Another reason a long engagement makes financial sense is that many couples will set a seasonal theme for their weddings, wanting to decorate the wedding and reception hall in that theme. The best time to purchase decorations and supplies for seasonal events is immediately following those events,



because stores discount them when it's time to get them off the shelves. If you are planning a fall theme, for example, keep an eye on the shelves for these kinds of discounted decorations right after Thanksgiving or Halloween. Longer engagements allow couples to take advantage of a these seasonal discounts at least once, if not twice.

2. Combine your resources - A couple living in the same household can save hundreds of dollars monthly by combining expenses related to rent/mortgage, utilities, groceries and even transportation. If you recently became engaged and are considering moving in together, calculate how much money you'll be saving so you can apply those savings toward your wedding budget. During the moving process, you can save additional money. For example, when you combine

your households, will you need two sets of dishes and furniture? Probably not. Perhaps you can even host a garage sale to sell the items you don't need duplicates of; then you can put that money toward a wedding-related item. As you plan your big move, be sure to check out great moving services like Penske Truck Rental, which offers AAA and other great discounts to help soon-to-be newlyweds save money on moving costs.

3. Find the best deals - If you've always dreamed of getting married under a tent at a local park, you might discover that tent rental far exceeds your budget - especially if you live in an urban setting. This is where the Internet can be very helpful. Sometimes it's cheaper to rent equipment like tents, folding chairs, wedding canopies and other decorations from businesses that are located outside of your community. To save even more, drive your personal car to the community where you'll be renting the equipment, rent a truck to transport all the equipment to where your wedding will be, and then return the equipment in the truck once you're finished with it. Then you can simply pick up your personal car for the drive home. When you begin planning your wedding, keep your budget-balancing stress to a minimum with these helpful money-saving tips. (BPT)

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America's secret 2015 foodie destinations

With their incredible restaurants seemingly appearing overnight, cities such as Brooklyn and Portland have long since been discovered as foodie destinations. If you want coal-fired pizza ovens, craft beer or artisan doughnuts, you only have to stroll down the street a few blocks. But while these destinations have been basking in the limelight, other cities across America have been transforming their food scenes to much less fanfare. If you're searching for the mod craft cocktail bar, the boat-to-table seafood or the next big thing in fusion cuisine, DreamPlanGo suggests picking up a fork in these cities:

*** Providence, Rhode Island.** No one is sure who coined the phrase "boat-to-table," but Providence does it right. Many up-and-coming restaurants have fish delivered daily from the docks to their tables. If you are looking for an exquisite creation with Italian, Portuguese or simply New England roots, Providence will serve you up in style. Save a special corner of your stomach for Providence's fabulous hole-in-the-wall cafes and tucked away bars. In discrete, sometimes rough-around-the-edges locations, you'll find the burgers, pizza and beer that sustains locals whether they are out sunning on the patio or hunkered down for a gale. And, while it makes some people

shudder, you can't leave town until you sample the residents take on pizza - its grilled, not baked.

Minneapolis, Minnesota. Better known for hot dish and General Mills products, the Mill City actually has a lot of new food going for it. Sure you'll find things like artisan SPAM bites tucked onto menus, but you'll also be able to sample fresh grilled walleye pulled from a lake near you, delicious Minnesota-grown produce, wood-fired pizza, local craft beer and mouth-watering French pastries. Food trucks have also taken the city by storm with everything from burritos to lobster rolls. If you are looking for Asian and Southeast Asian cuisine in particular, neighboring St. Paul has an enormous collection of authentic, inexpensive and just plain delicious family-run restaurants.

Santa Fe, New Mexico. Santa Fe doesn't have the big-name restaurants, but that suits the locals just fine. Santa Fe has always been known for its homey and rich southwestern cuisine, which you can still enjoy in abundance. When you are being served, waiters will ask whether you want red, green or Christmas referring to the color of the chili sauce you want placed on your order. However, many new restaurants are subverting these old favorites to make them lighter and airier.

Instead of heavy sauces, you'll find cuisine being served with delicate infusions of southwestern flavor. Many chefs are blending the flavors they've grown up on with influences from Mexico, France and the Mediterranean. The result is a delicious collection of Southwest fare prepared in new and innovative ways.

Memphis, Tennessee. Memphis is legendary for its barbecue, which you can enjoy everywhere from honky-tonks to famous restaurants. With an exquisite plate of ribs before you, you may be tempted to look no further, but Memphis also has an amazing collection of up-and-coming restaurants that showcase some of the South's other best food traditions. Be sure to try New Orleans-style redfish, succulent Lowcountry shrimp and grits and delicious servings of hominy, succotash and other Southern favorites.

Las Vegas, Nevada. While everyone was busy gambling away the 1990s and early 2000s, Las Vegas was slowly developing a chef-driven food scene. If you don't mind paying top dollar, you can have an incredible meal in Vegas. Fresh seafood, premier sushi, heritage meats, caviar - it can all be found here. But be warned, Las Vegas does have a dearth of neighborhood restaurants, farm-to-table operations and farmers markets. ▶

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Savannah, Georgia. Savannah is rightly famed for its coastal fine dining, so be sure to sample scallops, crabs, shrimp and redfish while you are in town. In Savannah, bounty from local producers is transformed to dishes served everywhere from your local neighborhood cafe to the up-and-coming downtown bistro.

San Diego, California. So. Cal's foodie up-

and-comer has the market cornered on amazing fish tacos. Set right against the Mexican border and the Pacific Ocean, inspiration flows both from the South and the sea. San Diego's warm climate helps small farms thrive and you can be sure that restaurants are taking advantage of the locally sourced meat and produce that have become the mainstay of trendy new dining.

Portland, Maine. Not to be confused with its western counterpart, Portland, Maine has a formidable food scene bolstered by its close proximity to fresh seafood and its long history of farm-to-table dining. Sample the town's micro-brews while exploring the cobblestone Old Port. Dig in to slow-foods movement creations and sample the Maine lobsters that encourage diners to return again and again to the seacoast.

Durham, North Carolina. Southern Living called Durham the "South's Tastiest Town," so you've got to bring your appetite and check out the city's new foodie appeal. Served to you in the city's old tobacco warehouses or on roaming food carts you'll find exquisite pies, fresh doughnuts, artisan coffee and elevated casual fare that will make you never want to go back to your old greasy hamburger joint again.

Traverse City, Michigan. Downtown Traverse City's restaurant boom is in part due to the growth of local wineries. When you visit, you'll have to divide your time between good food, wine and the beach. What could be better? Like so many foodie areas, Traverse City takes it local. You'll be dining on locally grown cherries and apples, foraged morel mushrooms and fish pulled right from Lake Michigan.

Traveling abroad to satisfy your food cravings? Visit DreamPlanGo.com to find Europe's 2015 Foodie Destinations. (BPT)

Paul Howe photographs weddings by blending a photojournalism style with the more traditional formal photographs to capture the individual personality of each wedding.



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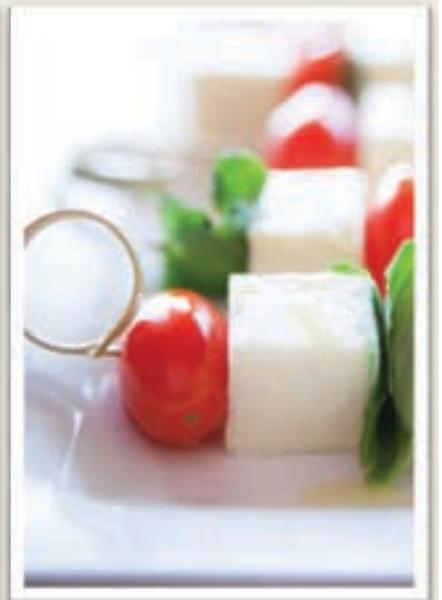
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