

Today's brides seek elegant simplicity in gowns

By Nikki B. Godfrey
Copley News Service

Open any 16-pound, doorstop-thick bridal magazine and there seems to be a glamorous ad for a wedding gown in every style imaginable for every kind of ceremony. But inundated with such a variety of bejeweled, beaded and embroidered designs, the dream dress the bride-to-be has carried in her thoughts since early adolescence seems to fly out of the window, rather than float down the aisle, as all the gowns start to look alike.

In addition to having at least a general idea of the dress you want to say "I do" in — whether it's a body-hugging sheath or a more traditional flowing ball gown — being up on the current fashionable styles can be a great help in defining and refining your look for the big day.

Martine Niddam-Aerts, fashion and beauty editor of *Brides & Your New Home* magazine, reports that along with elegance, sophistication and simplicity are more luxurious choices for this year's gowns, featuring beading, embroidery and even touches of silver and gold.

The shape of a wedding dress is the most important choice of style which to embellish with decoration and accessories. As always, styles to fit all tastes are available for the upcoming wedding season, from simple and sleek to elaborate, opulent and ornate.



A simple body-hugging satin sheath with detachable chapel train highlights the elegant simplicity many brides seek this season.

Niddam-Aerts says the traditional looks featuring full skirt and Basque waist are always popular. But, she says, this year the princess silhouette is everywhere, the sheath continues to be a dominant fashion statement, and the A-line silhouette is flattering to many figures and is especially popular today as the average age of brides matures.

On the more traditional end, designers are producing a more extensive array of vintage period gowns than ever before.

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Grooms

(From page 4)

charcoal gray, and the new "black watch plaid" with just a touch of color, such as deep greens and blues — and perfect for less-formal weddings.

She says in addition to single-breasted and double-breasted jackets, the European-inspired three-button single-breasted jacket, worn with only the top two buttons buttoned, is the new look for the season.

shawl lapels are still around. Niddam-Aerts reports that what's new is the rounded notched lapel, with the bottom of the notch slightly curved, giving a less angular look than the traditional notched cut.

When it comes to shirt collar styles, hip grooms striving for an avant-garde look this season may want to consider wearing a banded collar, worn with a button cover instead of a bow tie, as opposed to the more traditional wing and lay-down collars.

For the final touch of what to wear on the feet, Niddam-Aerts says slip-ons, lace-ups, pleated and flat shoes are still in. But leave the velvet slippers for the bride to wear, because for the groom, velvet slippers are a goner, definitely on their way out this season.

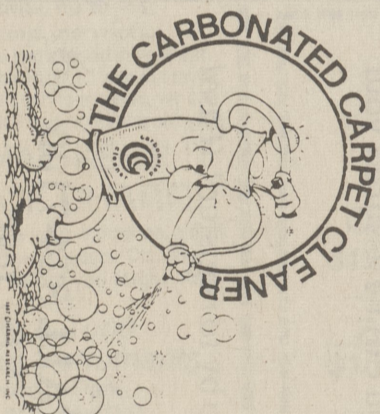
For the bride's sake, sports fans should also keep NFL-logo high-tops and cleats for wear on the football field and never, ever at their own wedding, team tux or no team tux.

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