

# Fashion Outlook

Romance and frills

## Brides are showered with lingerie

By Joan Lebow

At 30, bride-to-be Susan Devine doesn't need mixing bowls, a blender or even a toaster. Devine, who books models for a Manhattan agency, had her own place before she began living with the man she intends to marry this spring. But that certainly didn't stop her friends from planning a bridal shower.

"They asked what would I prefer as shower gifts: pots and pans or lingerie," Devine recalls, "I don't need kitchen stuff. Lingerie sounded like a lot more fun."

Laced into the trend of women marrying later is the increased appeal of lingerie showers. Silky peignoir sets, frilly baby dolls or his-and-her robes are replacing Tupperware, vases and cookbooks as popular gifts for the engaged. Grab bags, once filled with spatulas and melon ballers, are now stocked with sachets, scented soaps, panties and garters.

"Chances are the bride and groom already have household accessories," says Pattie Charles, marketing director for Victoria's Secret, a chain of more than 170 lingerie stores. "A lingerie shower is much more personal."

Today's bride-to-be often lives on her own while building her career, so she doesn't need the same starter kit that helped her mother set up house-keeping. Indeed, household items — while undeniably useful — don't exactly make the bride feel pampered. Fine lingerie is an indulgence.

"I never buy lingerie, even though I like it," explains Nancy Lauritzen, 26, who will be a June bride in Canton, Ohio. "Lingerie would seem more like a real gift than getting things you have to buy anyway."

This sensual shower goes hand in hand with the return of romance. Once again, brides and grooms have embraced the formal wedding. With long white gowns and long guest lists back in vogue, other formal traditions, such as the trousseau, are also making a comeback.

Although a trousseau is literally "a bride's outfit of clothing," the term generally connotes sensuous peignoirs and unabashedly frilly underwear to take on the honeymoon.

And there's no doubt that lovely lingerie appeals to the groom as well. "I've been living with my boyfriend for a while," says 26-year-old Amy Brunhuber, who plans a September wedding in Nantucket, Mass. "So when I get married, I'd love a whole new wardrobe of lingerie, something different."

When consumers talk like that, advertisers listen. According to editor-in-chief Barbara Tober, Bride's magazine has seen a significant increase in lingerie ad pages. "After every issue we hear there's two things readers want more of: one is lingerie, the other flowers," she says. "I think working women are wearing more sexy lingerie under their business clothes. And as these career women get married, they want more silly, frilly lingerie."

Designers and retailers agree. The Ultimate Bride in Chicago, Ill., recently added more intimate apparel, especially sexy white nightgowns and



NATORI's first Trousseau Collection includes this brocade robe (\$275) and a variety of luxurious accessories.



VICTORIA'S SECRET's bridal registry features this romantic duo, trimmed with embroidery and lace. Gown is \$48 and robe is \$78.

matching robes. Department stores that offer bridal registries — even if they don't carry wedding gowns — hope to lure brides and their wedding guests to the lingerie department by creating trousseau shops filled with white nightclothes and romantic gifts.

Victoria's Secret even established a bridal registry. The company provides 24-hour telephone access for catalogue orders. Intimate apparel isn't the only gift idea; Pattie Charles suggests "unexpected pleasures," such as padded satin hangers, soft

travel cases and dressing table accessories.

Leading lingerie designers also romance the bride and her friends. Just in time for June brides, Natori & Co. will introduce a special Trousseau Collection, available twice yearly in major stores. The collection includes Natori's opulent silk lingerie, as well as slippers, lace pillows, fragrances, jewelry rolls and hosiery bags.

Eve Stillman will also sell trousseau creations in major department stores. Says the designer, "Many brides are getting a trousseau from their wedding shower. Marriage, romance and monogamy are in again, but women still want to wear sexy lingerie when they're married or have a steady beau."

## Add a splash of color to your wardrobe

Dyed fabrics are an exciting project to tackle for a number of reasons. While you do the work quickly and with little expense, you also have the satisfaction of transforming dull, lifeless materials into dynamics colors.

Denim pants or jackets are especially versatile because the lighter, reverse side dyes brighter than the front. Rolled back sleeves and pants legs create a sparkling accent to your outfit.

If you want to experiment with several colors or want to create several articles of one color to coordinate with jeans, try tinting socks, nylon tights, T-shirts or scarves. Or fashion your own warm-up suit by dyeing sweat-pants and shirts in a custom color.

Just remember to wash dyed garments separately in cool water to keep the colors bright.

Always begin your project with clean garments, which you immerse in warm tap water in

your sink or washer. Once the garments are thoroughly soaked, remove them from the water without wringing them.

If you are dyeing large clothing such as jeans or a sweatsuit, it is most convenient to do this in your washer. Always clean the washer immediately after use by running a complete wash cycle with a cup of detergent and cup of bleach.

In either the washer or the sink, first fill the unit with the hottest water possible. If you are using liquid dye purchased in bottles, add it directly to the water. Powdered dye must first be dissolved in a pint of boiling water.

Place wet garments in the washer, set for the longest wash cycle. Let the washer run for the complete cycle, then follow with two rinse cycles of cool water to flush out any excess dye.

If dyeing items in the sink, you must stir them continuously for 10 to 15 minutes.

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