

# Bridal Corner

## Don't want to look like Cinderella at the ball?

### Opt for a non-traditional wedding dress



**Y**ou have finally set a date for your wedding, and now you are ready to find a dress. But lace, sequins, beads and bows aren't your style. You long for something different. You want a non-traditional wedding gown.

But what is appropriate and where do you find a non-traditional gown? Weddings are not what they used to be. Many couples no longer feel compelled to get married in a church. Some, in fact, are adventurous and choose to get married in unusual places, like a hot air balloon or a volcano. For others, it's their second marriage, and they

don't want another traditional wedding.

Whatever the reason, it is no longer necessary, or expected, for the bride to wear a gown like Cinderella. You can opt for something more simple or dramatic. You can select a short dress or a long gown. You can even wear purple, red, blue or the traditional white and cream. The choices are endless and available in a variety of places.

The first and perhaps easiest place to start searching for a non-traditional gown is at your local bridal shops. Call around and see if any offer non-traditional gowns. If not, try looking through the bridesmaids' dresses. Although equally elegant, most bridesmaids' dresses aren't as detailed as bridal gowns.

You can also try looking through the formalwear in big department stores and specialty clothing stores. In addition to bridesmaids' gowns, you can look at cocktail dresses and evening wear. Shopping around the holidays or prom time may result in better, and perhaps more interesting, choices.

If you can't find the perfect non-traditional dress in your area, trying searching for it on-line. Places, like e-Bay and weddingbargain.com, offer hundreds of dresses. Some are wedding gowns; most are not. The prices are generally lower, too. You may just find the perfect dress at a bargain price.

If all else fails, go to the fabric store and check out the dress patterns. You may find one you like, and if you don't sew or know someone who does, many stores have a list of local seamstresses. You may have to wait

longer to get the dress, but you won't have to settle for just any old color since you'll be picking out the fabric and you won't have to deal with alterations since you'll be trying on the dress from time to time anyway.

Finding a non-traditional dress is easy as long as you know where to look. Selecting one, on the other hand, may not be so easy with all of the choices available.

Just remember not only is it appropriate

nowadays to wear a non-traditional wedding dress, but in some instances, like a beach wedding, it is preferable.

You can wear whatever you want—a long, red sequined gown, a pale yellow sundress or even a short, black cocktail number—as long as it suits you and your wedding motif.

—By Tresa Erickson, special

## Wedding traditions around the world

**T**ossing the bouquet. Wearing something old, new, borrowed and blue. Throwing birdseed or confetti. These are just some of the traditions of a typical wedding in North America. But what about the rest of the world? Here is just a sampling.

- In Peru, charms are attached to ribbons and placed between the layers of the wedding cake. Before the cake is cut, the single women gather around and pull a ribbon. The one who pulls the ribbon with a ring attached is the next to marry.

- In Chile, the couple exchange rings when they announce their engagement. They wear their rings on their left hands until they are married, and then switch them to their right hands.

- In Egypt, the groom's family proposes to the bride.

- In Morocco, the bride becomes mistress of her new home by walking around

the outside of it three times.

- In Sudan, seven broomsticks are burned and thrown away to symbolize the couple's discarding of any bad habits that could pose a threat to their marriage.

- In India, the bride must enter her in-laws' home for the first time on her right foot and knock down a container of uncooked rice to bring good luck.

- In China, a hair stylist arrives at the homes of both the bride and the groom the night before their wedding to comb their hair for good luck and prosperity.

- In Poland, the bride's mother gives the bride and groom each a shot glass. One is filled with colorless vodka and the other with water. Whoever receives the vodka is predicted to be the breadwinner.

- In Italy, the groom's tie is cut into many pieces, and the pieces are then sold to guests to collect spending money for the couple on their honeymoon.

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