

# Bridal Corner

## Merci, gracias, thank you

*In any language, it's important to write thank you notes to gift givers*

The wedding was beautiful and the honeymoon was a blast. But now those fun-filled days are over and you're back home. Time to start your new life, and one of the first tasks you face is dealing with your wedding gifts. Remember that pile of gifts you received at your wedding? Well, not only do you have to open them, but you have to thank the people who gave them to you, and doing so by phone or e-mail just won't do. A handwritten note on formal stationery is the best way to say thank you.

Fortunately, thank you notes don't have to be long. Most new wives have far too many things to do than to sit down and write each of their wedding guests a two-page thank you letter. A few sentences of appreciation will suffice. You can also enlist the help of your husband to complete this task.

Organization is the key to writing thank you notes.

### Give a gift that's out of the ordinary

It used to be that women lived at home before getting married, so when they got married, they needed everything to "set up house," thus the bridal gift registry was born.

Now more and more women and men have been out on their own or have been living together before they get married, so chances are they have all the household wares they need. In terms of what to ask for as wedding gifts, what is a couple to do? How about having guests buy a non-traditional gift?

At the Home Depot, couples can register for a home security system or power tools. Some nurseries also allow couples to register for trees and shrubs for their new backyard. Here are some other gift ideas:

- A pure-bred puppy
- A new computer or software
- Gourmet cooking classes
- Membership to a museum
- Dance lessons or art classes
- Maid service
- Art either in the form of a painting or sculpture
- Antiques
- Home repairs (painting, landscaping)
- Home entertainment system/plasma TV
- Mortgage payment donations

Registering for non-traditional gifts such as these will allow your guests a little more flexibility in their gift giving.

Hopefully, you've been keeping track of the gifts you have received up to this point and may have even sent thank you notes for those already. If you haven't, now's the time to do so. Grab a notebook, sit down with your husband and write down the following for each gift:

- Giver's name and address
- Where the gift was purchased (if you can determine that)
- Description of the gift
- Date the thank you note was sent

After you've completed this step, you can start writing thank you notes. Share the task with your husband. Let him do the notes for his family, while you do the notes for yours. Divide the notes for your friends between the two of you.

Write your thank you notes on formal white or ivory stationery with a blue or black pen. Neatness is a must. Don't cross out words or leave messy globs of ink. If you have some pictures of the two of you, you may enclose one of those with your note if you'd like.

Start off your thank you note with a personal greeting and then name the gift you received, thank the giver for it and for attending your wed-

ding, and tell them how you plan to use the gift. If the gift was monetary, you don't need to state the amount, just how you plan to use it. Write thank you notes for the gifts you received damaged or plan to return the same as you would for any other gift. Be gracious, warm and appreciative. Do not, under any circumstance, inform the giver that their gift was damaged or that you intend to return it.

Mail your thank you notes no later than two to three months after your wedding. The sooner you get them done, the better. Not only will the gift givers appreciate your prompt response, but they'll be happy to know you enjoyed their gift and you'll be relieved to have one more task off of the way.

Few people like to write thank you notes, but it's a task that's got to be done. The more organized you are, the better your thank you notes will be and the faster you will finish them. So grab your stationery and your husband and get busy!

—By Tresa Erickson, speaker



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