

Wedding dresses made exclusively for Lady Luck

The bridal dress is one of the most important elements of any wedding. If you are superstitious here are some tips for fending off any bad luck.

A white dress is said to stop the evil eye, which accounts for both the bride and bridegroom wearing white at an Orthodox Jewish wedding. However, in Islamic countries brides often wear red and widows wear white. Icelandic peasants, in contrast, used to wear black dresses, embroidered with gold and silver thread.

Look for a wedding dress with as many buttons as possible. The

French believe that a bride will live the same number of years as there are buttons on her gown. The rhyme 'something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue' is also a good one to follow. The new items are to show acceptance of married life to come; the old and borrowed to keep happiness already won, or borrow some from others.

They are a lot of traditional customs to ensure good luck. Greek brides hold a lump of sugar in their wedding gloves, to give sweetness to

their married life. In Sweden the bridegroom had garlic and thyme sewed into his wedding outfit to keep away the evil spirits with the smell.

Dressmakers sometimes sew a hair into the wedding dress for good-luck.

German brides used to carry a hair from every animal on the nearest farm in their shoes, while the groom carried a grain from every crop in the field. This was to bring luck to the harvest, rather than their marriage.

German mothers also dropped dill and salt into their daughter's shoes, as a protective charm.

However, if this seems a little extreme, then just trust in yourselves and your compatibility.

Know your diamonds

(From page 12)

its brilliant sparkle. Light is reflected best through a well-cut stone and the arrangement of its 58 facets... the tiny planes that give a diamond its "fire". It is important to distinguish between the cut (a technical matter) and shape (a matter of personal taste). The most popular shapes of diamonds are round (brilliant), marquise, pear, oval and emerald.

2. Clarity - A diamond's clarity is determined by the degree to which it is free from inclusions... natural imperfections such as spots, bubbles, or lines. Most diamonds contain some inclusions... in fact, a "flawless" diamond is extremely rare. The size and position of the inclusions, which were formed millions of years ago, affect the value and cost of the diamond.

3. Colour - The determination of a diamond's colour is measured by the degree to which a diamond

approaches colourlessness, allowing the diamond to cleanly refract light. The best colour is no colour. A diamond expert defines the colour of a diamond on a letter scale beginning with D, which is absolutely colourless and very rare. But also rare are diamonds with a strong, pure colour found on the opposite end of the alphabet. They are called "fancies". Pink, blue and canary yellow are the most prized, but virtually any hue is also possible.

4. Carat - Carat refers to the weight of the diamond, not its size. There are 100 points in a carat; therefore, a diamond of 50 points weighs 1/2 of a carat. Large diamonds... one carat or more... are rare and of greater value per carat. The rarity of a diamond is appreciated even more with the knowledge that approximately 250 tons of ore must be mined and processed in order to produce a one-carat polished stone.

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