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Headache-free seating arrangements

What is the most difficult aspect of planning a wedding aside from conflicts of interest with your future mother-in-law? You guessed it — the seating arrangements.

Brides-to-be can spend hours with their fiancé pouring over scribbled charts, coloured construction paper cutouts and guest lists all in an attempt to make guests comfortable. Yet, this part of planning often ends up being the most stressful — is there an easier solution?

— Devote your attention to the task at hand. Choose a time to sit down with your fiancé that is free of other distractions.

— Gather your tools. If you have all your elements in one place, you'll be less likely to get frazzled nerves, searching your home for guest lists, RSVP cards and dinner selections. It also

might be helpful to have a room layout provided by your catering hall manager so that you'll know exactly where everything is located.

— Accept that you can't please everyone. Part of the problem of seating arrangements is that the prospective couple tries to cater to all of the guests' needs. Invariably there will be someone who won't get exactly what they want.

But, after all, the evening only lasts a few hours, and you're hoping guests won't be glued to their seats, therefore a short time of minor inconvenience shouldn't offend too many people.

— Make the party memorable. If your wedding is one to remember, your guests will probably forget about where they sat anyway.

Choosing your dream wedding gown

Whether you're planning an intimate gathering for your very closest family and friends or a gala fit for royalty, you'll probably plan for months to achieve memories that will last forever.

One of the most important part of wedding planning is choosing your bridal gown. You're probably daydreamed about what you will wear, now it's just a matter of finding the ideal gown. Here are some tips to make the selection process easier:

— Do your research — Make a list of the things you're looking for, including dress silhouette, neck, length, fabric, sleeves and embellishments.

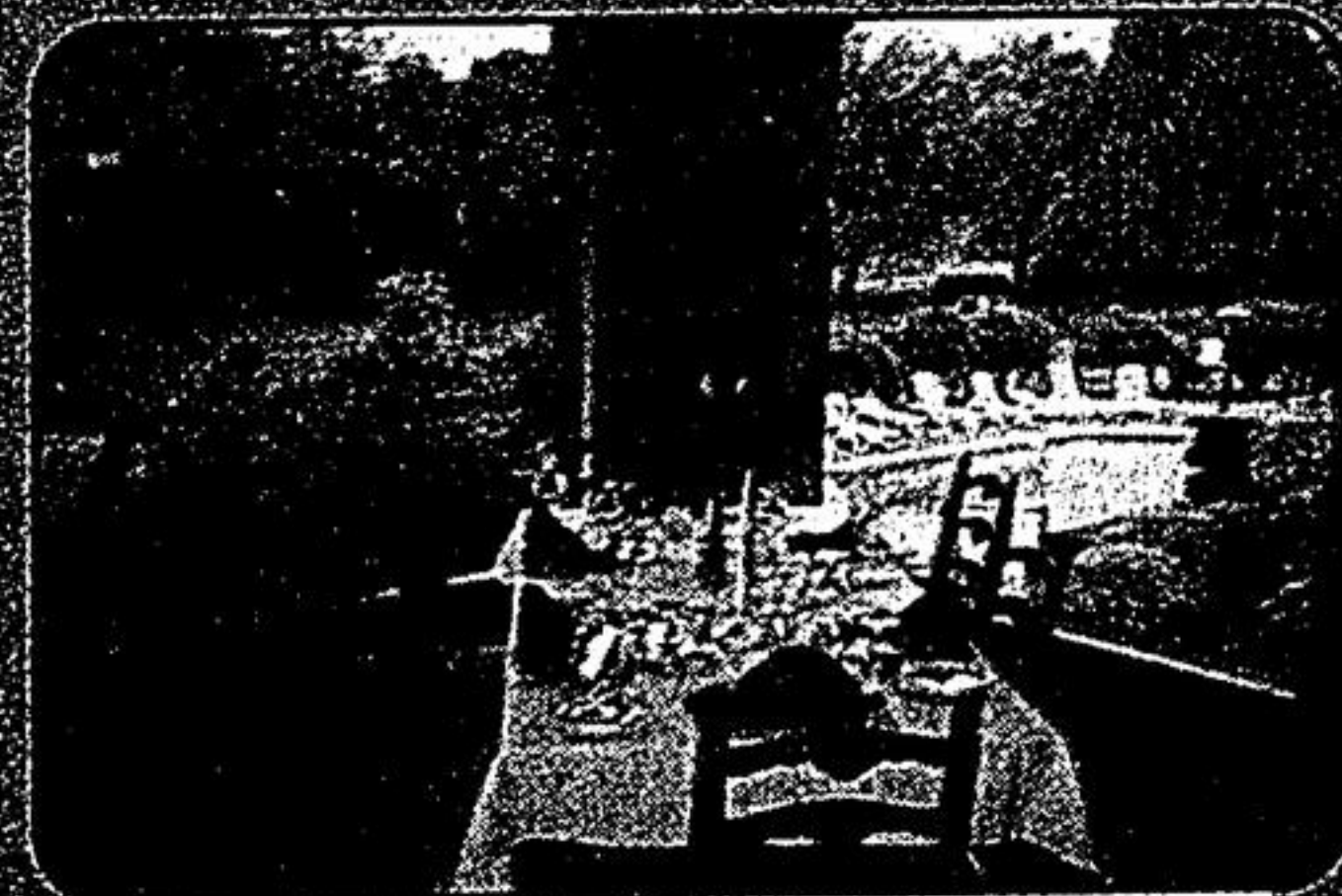
— Don't judge gowns by their "hanger" appearance — the dress will take its shape while it is on your body and will look completely different from the way it did on the hanger.

— Do try on a variety of styles — Perhaps you ruled out strapless gowns before heading to the store. Try one on anyway, it could actually turn out to be your dream dress.

— Don't be "size-conscious" — Wedding gowns are cut smaller than your usual size. You'll probably have to try on a larger size which will be tailored to your body.

— Do consult bridal magazines for ideas and designers.

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