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THE SHOPPING GUIDE
FOR WOMEN WHO KNOW BETTER

**DREAM
WEDDING
DRESSES**
**EXTRAORDINARY
DESTINATIONS**

SPRING'S
CHICEST
LOOKS

**WHITNEY
HOUSTON**

**MICHELLE
OBAMA**

**SPECIAL
ISSUE**

TESTED &
APPROVED
LIPSTICK,
FOUNDATION,
MASCARA,
POLISH & MORE

**BEST IN
BEAUTY**

375

CERTIFIED WINNERS

+

**WENDY
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SPRING BEST IN BEAUTY ISSUE DISPLAY UNTIL AUGUST 1

The Ultimate WEDDING GOWN GUIDE

When it comes to your wedding day, there are too many to-dos to actually do. The invites, the catering, the cake, the music, the list goes on and on. Many women start planning the day in their own heads even before the engagement. And there's still not enough time. Whether you're a bridezilla or a dead-beat bride, there is so much that can take your attention away from the things that matter.

You can spend months or even years preparing for a wedding that only lasts a few hours, so don't let the little things stress you out. Your wedding day is not about your future in-laws and what table they want to sit at. When the pressure starts building, it's easy to lose focus on what's important. From your dress to your makeup to your hair, you want everything to be perfect—by your own standards. When you walk down that aisle, all eyes (and camera lenses) will be on you. Remember, you'll have to live with yourself, your husband, and the photos—for better or for worse.

GOWN *Hunting*

10 STEPS TO FINDING YOUR WEDDING GOWN

One thing is for sure, every bride wants to look stunning on her wedding day. Here, everything you need to know, including how to shop for your wedding gown, a runway report on 2012's breathtaking gown trends, and accessories advice from WE tv guru David Tutera. With this handy guide, you're sure to meet with sweeping success finding the best look for the most important day of your life.

By Meredith Harper Houston

Some BRIDES

have been envisioning their wedding gowns since they were little girls. But the quest for a dress that will make your groom's heart stop can be an overwhelming experience. There are so many options for silhouettes, necklines, and everything in between. Should you wear a mermaid or ball gown? Will you need Spanx? You only have one shot, don't mess it up! Luckily, Cristina DeMarco of New York's Bridal Reflections (she helped LaLa Vazquez Anthony find success) is here to help navigate the anxiety-filled waters of finding your fairy-tale wedding gown.

1. Establish Your Budget

"Have an idea of where your comfort zone is in terms of pricing. It's a matter of what you want to spend and what you're comfortable with. And once you establish that, then there are so many different designers that can offer what you're looking for stylistically."

2. Come Prepared For Your Consultation

"You should consider that you're going to be undressing in front of a bridal consultant so you do want to have a panty and a bra on. Most bridal salons provide strapless bras for clients to put on. Make sure you are comfortable."

3. Find The Right Fit For You

"This is not a time when you want to go by trial and error. Knowing exactly what looks best on you will save you time and needless frustration. The key is to minimize what you hate and accentuate what you love."

4. Complement Your Skin Tone

"Brides with olive to caramel complexions look lovely in soft, silk white where it still warms the skin beautifully but is not as bright as a blue white. There's an ivory hue called antique ivory. It gives you the essence of wearing a white wedding gown. A bride with a brown to a dark brown skin tone does not have to shy away from white—it's stunning."

5. Sometimes It's The First Gown

"There is no rule that you have to try on at least 50 gowns. Your wedding gown is an emotional purchase, and you have to go with your heart. If you feel the dress, you love the dress, there is no need to look any further. Trust your judgment, and move on to accessories."

6. An Expert Tailor Is Key

"If you find the perfect dress and you feel like you can't move in it, there are ways that a reputable salon can fit the gown to your comfort. You might have to open up the lining

a little bit to give it a little ease without making the gown look bigger on you. An expert salon has couture spinners who can zero in on what you need."

7. Be True To Your Vision

"It's all in what you feel comfortable with, so you can wear anything. There's no right or wrong. It's got to be how you want to look on your wedding day. Some brides have destination weddings on the beach and wear full ball gowns. It has to be what you love."

8. Ball Gowns Are Not Off Limits For The Over-30 Bride!

"Today's bride has an education and has a career. She can take care of herself. If she imagines herself in a beautiful ball gown, there's no reason why she can't wear that. The key is picking a ball gown that is more streamlined and elegant,

less fairy-tale princess."

9. Explore A Fabulous New Trend

"Adding to the strapless gown what is called an 'illusion yoke' is on trend. Let's say you have a strapless gown and then you have a sheer material, which is like an English net that's sheer and covers your chest. It goes around your neck like a T-shirt cut, and you could have it sleeveless. It creates an essence of more fabric, yet it's sheer and beautiful."

10. When It Comes To The Color Trend, Think Of The Future

"Right now color accents and black detail are trends. You have to be willing to commit to that. You have to think of the trends of today when you select your gown. Do you think you'll love it 20 years from now? Only you can ultimately make that decision."



"I Do"

Makeup Tips For Photos That Will Last Happily Ever After

Do schedule facials and other skin treatments at least a week in advance to avoid blotches and irritation.

Do have eyebrows professionally groomed to frame your face several days in advance.

Do choose a foundation with staying power that matches your skin tone.

Do keep makeup in place by using minimal moisturizer under foundation and by setting your makeup with a pressed powder.

Do wear waterproof mascara.

Do rehearse your makeup ahead of time, especially if you plan to do your own.

Do take test photos of your makeup to see how your makeup looks on camera.

Do hire a professional makeup artist if you want to be pampered and the guarantee that you will look flawless on your wedding day.

Do know that wedding photos last forever, and forever is a mighty long time.

—Meredith Harper Houston

DRESS Breakdown

Ball Gown

This is the statement gown, often referred to as the "fairy-tale dress." A ball gown has a shaped bodice, a defined waist, and a full skirt. It's best on a bride who is tall, slim,

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and with a well-balanced shape. Ruching on the bodice can soften the shape. Ball gowns should be avoided if you are petite, have a pronounced pear shape, or a large hourglass shape.

Empire Line

These dresses fall softly from under the bust and are straighter than an A-Line and less figure-hugging. Empire lines

tend to elongate the body, giving the impression of being taller. They can also conceal a larger waist. They work best on petite shapes, smaller busts, and larger waists.

A-Line/Princess

This dress is less full than a ball gown, with a shaped bodice until the hip where the dress falls away to an A-shaped line. There is usually no seam at the waistline. This is a balancing style that is flattering on most figures and works especially well with full-figured and pear-shaped brides.

Sheath/Column

Timeless and classic, a sheath hides nothing. Following the body's contours, everything is on display. Columns have a sleek, elegant, modern look and can be stunning. They look best on tall, narrow frames. They don't work well on curvy, pear-shaped, full figures, or petite brides.