



Guides For Brides

Creating A Pleasingly Personal Wedding

(NAPSA)—Frank Sinatra's theme song, "I did it my way," could be the background music for many weddings this season.

More couples are expected to depart from tradition to create weddings shaped by their own individuality.

This trend may be expressed in simple individualized gestures such as handmade wedding invitations or wedding favors that express a favorite pastime.

Or some couples may plan theme weddings, with wedding attire, flowers, linens, invitations, food, entertainment and favors coordinated to carry out a specific theme.

The motif may be based on a special interest or a piece of personal history. It may express an ethnic or historical orientation, such as a Renaissance wedding.

In New York, a bride and groom memorialized their first meeting in an Asian restaurant with an Asian-themed wedding, complete with Asian buffet.

A California wedding featured a "pirate" theme. The bride wore a red corset wench-style gown and carried a royal scepter of dark red roses.

Fresh flowers remain at the heart of the event. According to *Florist* magazine, the flowers are the second most important wedding element, after the bride's gown, and they consume about 10



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percent of the wedding budget. Flowers can help establish a theme, such as sunflowers for a Western wedding, or evoke a mood, such as orchids and lilies for a tropical ambiance. The pirate wedding featured centerpieces of treasure chests overflowing with exotic flowers.

While the tradition of the white wedding gown will not see much change this season, the bride's bouquet is evolving into a more colorful complement.

Bouquets of cream, blush and champagne are still a strong preference, but some brides are requesting bouquets of rich color, such as red roses, or bouquets with variations of one color.

Tones of pink, from pale to deep rose, golden yellow and hydrangea

green are favorite choices this year, says Christopher Norwood, a floral designer in Little Rock, Ark.

The favorite flower choice continues to be roses—spray roses, garden roses and unique varieties. In California, commercial rose growers have developed a vast assortment of "boutique" roses with a wealth of choices among color, flower form and even fragrances to help brides come closer to the bouquet of their dreams.

Bouquet style is also changing. There is a move away from tight clumps of flowers toward looser, more natural, garden bouquets with a mixture of colors and types of flowers.

California-grown specialty flowers such as sweet peas, stock, freesia, lisianthus, and delphinium, along with fresh herbs and wispy grasses, enhance this look.

Bouvardia, snapdragon, astilbe and gerbera are choices that add bright color.

Today's weddings are limited only by the imagination. For more information on your dream flowers, visit the California Cut Flower Commission's Web site at www.cffc.org. You can also write to the CCFC and request their free *Easy Steps to Flower Arranging* brochure.

Simply send an SASE to Easy Steps, CCFC, 73 Hangar Way, Watsonville, CA 95076.