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simchahs

BLESS THIS DRESS

The perfect dress is out there, but expect to hunt for it.



PHOTO: DAVID SANCLAIR

Betsy Robinson's
Bridal Collection dress,
Tiadora necklace from
Betsy Robinson's Bridal

Emily Jacobs

Special to the Jewish Times
Finding the perfect wedding dress is something every bride-to-be dreams about. The hunt can be as challenging as finding the perfect husband. How do you, as the bride, know where to look or what style will look best?

We asked three major bridal boutiques about the latest trends in

bridal fashion to help brides-to-be with this challenge.

Betsy Robinson, of Betsy Robinson's Bridal, has been in the wedding dress business for many years. She explains that while there are many new styles coming out, a main factor in all of those dresses is lace.

"We are seeing a lot of lace dresses and lace-embellished dresses," says Ms. Robinson. "Lace has always been important in the bridal market."

Sharon Tamberino, a bridal consultant at Gamberdella's, which has been around since 1978 and is located in Towson, shares the same opinion.

"Lace is classic and timeless, and we're seeing many more styles with lace than with beading."

Lace is so popular because it is extremely versatile and can go over any style dress.

"It's easy to mix lace with, let's say, a mermaid style dress or an a-line dress and still have it look amazing," says Ms. Tamberino. "Designers are using lace, which is more classic and traditional, and putting it over a more modern silhouette."

While there are many new, modern styles coming out today, Ms. Robinson explains that there are still brides who want the romantic "full, over the top ball gown or dress of toile."

Those new, modern styles include vintage looks, soft-white dresses, and dresses with a touch of color.

"Some brides like to have a sash of color, which adds a little bit of 'bling' to the dress," says Ms. Robinson.

One of the most popular styles of wedding dresses has always been a strapless gown. Ms. Tamberino says, "Today, brides are choosing more V-neck shaped dresses, instead of the classic strapless dress."

Becoming popular as well are mermaid-shaped dresses, organza fabric and empire-waisted dresses.

At Gamberdella's, Ms. Tamberino says, "The newest style is the idea of a belt. Many designers have introduced a beaded belt."

The beading is placed on a piece of organza fabric and can be put around many different styles of dresses,

whether they are a-line dresses, empire waists or mermaid-style dresses.

"If we have a plain dress, we can make it fancier with the beaded belt," explains Ms. Tamberino. "It fits around the natural waist and ties in the back."

Laura Barnaba, a bridal consultant at Juliet's Bridal, which has been in business in Parkville for 23 years, adds, "There are many dresses with really flowy fabric, with empire waists and chiffon."

Aside from finding the right dress, finding the perfect veil to complete the look is essential. Today, there are many styles, including ornate beading and netting.

Ms. Barnaba explains, "Really ornate veils with a lot of beading and detail on them are really in style."

Some veils can even have the bride's

says, "Lots of brides are wearing more chunky, chandelier earrings and have a bare neckline."

Ms. Robinson explains that she has seen an increase in brides wearing bracelets.

"Bracelets are really pretty and look wonderful in pictures, and when the bride is walking down the aisle holding flowers."

For brides who are looking for a more conservative look, Gamberdella's will custom-make a lace bolero that can go over any style, including lace and V-neck dresses. According to Ms. Tamberino, "It looks like an integral part of the dress."

Jennifer Case, a bridal consultant at Betsy Robinson's Bridal, explains that there are many popular brands for wedding dresses.

"We're seeing more and more styles with lace rather than with beading."

— Sharon Tamberino

initials embroidered into them.

Ms. Tamberino from Gamberdella's adds that designers are coming out with many new, modern styles in veils.

"We're seeing a little more fullness in a shorter veil as well as Russian netting around the face."

All three bridal boutiques say that there has been a definite decrease in the number of brides who want the full, tiara-like headpiece. Instead, brides are requesting silk flowers in their hair and scattered jewel pieces, to really make the entire look pop.

"We're seeing a lot of scattered jewel pieces in the hair, as well as combs and really fun pieces that are done with feathers and silk flowers," adds Ms. Robinson.

As far as shoes go, designers are coming out with more shoes that have "bling" on them.

"We like to add open-toe shoes with 'bling' on them, so the bride will look beautiful from head to toe," says Ms. Robinson.

What would complete the bridal look more than jewelry? In the past, it has been classic pearls around the neck and ears. Today, Ms. Tamberino

"If you want a nice dress for a good price, I would recommend Pronovias, from Spain," says Ms. Case, a recent bride herself.

She continues: "If you're looking for a more high-fashion, couture dress, then I would go with Rivini."

Finding the perfect wedding dress should be a fun experience with a minimal amount of stress. At most bridal boutiques, there are trained and experienced bridal consultants who can help you with everything from head to toe, including proper undergarments.

For more information about these three bridal boutiques, visit their Web sites at: robinsonsb bridal.com, gamberdellabridalsalon.com and julietbridals.com. □

Emily Jacobs was an editorial intern last summer for the BALTIMORE JEWISH TIMES.

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