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## Bridal showers are

The bridal shower is strictly a 20th century invention. Starting as simple gatherings of the bride's closest friends, they assumed outlandish proportions in the Roaring 20s and the 30s, and the shower loot often outshone the wedding gifts.

A good side effect of the current inflation and recession squeeze could be that the custom of giving the bride a shower so voraciously has cooled off. In more sensible proportions, personal, liquor and silver showers might give way to less expensive but still enjoyable gatherings.

It's a personal quirk but it is still believable that a bride-elect enjoys a shower of kitchen knick-knacks as much as she does a deluge of luncheon sets and satin sheets and cases that she may never have a call for.

When a popular young bride-elect is to be feted, the hostess might consider asking her guests to go together in paying for one outstanding gift. It may not be as much fun as a constant series of oohs and aaahs as present after present is opened, but it has its advantages. Question: Who gives a bridal shower?

Answer: The girls in the office,

close friends of the bride, but never relatives. However, because our society is made up of many ethnic groups this ruling about close relatives (mothers, sisters, grandmothers and etc.) being shower hostesses must be amended to fit certain situations.

Some European countries have the custom of Dowry dinners, hosted by the bride's parents. Generations of people who moved to the United States from their native lands have continued the custom here but adopted the shower tag to the occasion.

The gifts presented at these events are often large and expensive. Such a custom is rightfully continued here but only if the family involved is entitled by its native background to do so.

Question: Must one invite all the guests who are invited to showers, also to the wedding?

Answer: Yes, unless the ceremony and reception is confined to families and this situation is known to the friends of the bride who might be on shower invitation lists.

But in the case of a large ceremony, one should think twice about inviting friends to showers.

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