

# Here comes the bride of the '80s

Traditional and romantic describe the bride of the 1980s.

That's the word from the salons that package weddings, the people who provide the essentials from invitation to the last flower.

"The traditional wedding is back," says Jeff Atkins, general manager of the Boulevard Bridal Salon in Birmingham.

"The '80s will bring a strong return to traditional and formal weddings," echoes Lynn Morrison, Jacobson's Birmingham store fashion coordinator.

"This is a reaction to the iconoclastic '70s when it was fashionable for young people to write their own ceremonies, wear Indian gauze and get married on water skis."

Ruth Seligson of Alvin's in Birmingham sees romance on the rise.

"Today's young people are beginning to realize that marriage is the link between the past and the future. The traditional wedding, which lost face somewhat during the '60s and early '70s is back full force in the '80s.

"And, while informal at-home weddings complete with garden parties are gaining in favor, locally the traditional "Get me to the church on time" wedding is still the favorite."

Sue Gordon, who has her own salon in Birmingham, joins the chorus, predicting that the bride of the coming decade "will continue in that pattern which was bent but remains unbroken."

"That is the classic wedding in the less formal sanctuary of a church or synagogue. Or the less formal warmth of the home, garden or country club setting."

**PLACING** the idea in perspective is Robert Rudofker, president of After Six Formals:

"What is most important is establishing the mood which should prevail through the ceremony and festivities," he said at a recent showing of what the well-dressed bridegroom and groomsman will wear.

"So many couples today share an intimacy that was not discussed decades ago. Exchanging their vows before family and peers becomes the final step in formalizing their relationship."

Rudofker said couples more and more "want all the trappings to make the day more meaningful."

"We see developing a trend for weddings that are formal in every aspect, including a request to guests to opt for black tie dress. When this happens, the stage is set for a gala event, a truly memorable occasion."

**SPRING 1980** fashions for the bride provide a choice of gowns ranging from simple elegance to the most formal, flowing creation.

Bridal fashion experts agree that figures are in and silhouettes are varied. The Scarlett O'Hara gown with nipped-in waist will be the choice of the very romantic bride.

Fabrics vary from organza and chiffon to opulent lace, sometimes re-embroidered with floral motifs.

But lightweight sheers are favored by many.

"The bride who seems to float effortlessly down the aisle," said Atkins, "is doing just that, thanks to today's beautiful lightweight fabrics."

For attendants and the mothers in the wedding party, the favorite choices are those designs which can do double duty, going from the traditional ceremony to a disco-type reception.

Pale pastel colors are favorites, and look for small floral prints in flowing jersey.

With opulence, elegance and Victorian romanticism prevailing for the bride and her attendants, it's only reasonable that the bridegroom and his men should contrast handsomely in formal wear designs stripped of fashion trickery.

Gone are the big, floppy bows for men in the wedding party. Gone are the gobs and gobs of satin and velvet. Gone are the bright colors.

Lucky friends and relatives invited to a black tie wedding will choose their most flattering gowns and black tuxedos.

During the dog days of summer, the men may well pick the classic white dinner jacket teamed with black formal trousers.

So once the inevitable "Will you marry me?" has been answered with a resounding "Yes," the days and weeks and months become filled with myriad questions and decisions that only two people in love can possibly survive.

And the betting is that in answering those questions, most brides of the '80s will go back to the time-honored traditions that have served well for the many generations before them.

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*—Robert Rudofker  
president of After Six Formals*



Traditional and romantic is the bride of the new decade. This one fits the description perfectly in a gown of white featuring a Queen Ann neckline highlighted with beaded and sequined English netting that sets off the bodice of alençon lace. The gown is in the price range of \$795 and was designed by Illissa. (Staff photo by Santa Fabio)