

Weddings

THE COLOR OF LOVE



Anne Barge



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By: E.T. Robbins

Like many women, 31-year-old Milton resident Sioux Cronin dreams of her wedding day. But the dream doesn't include the traditional white dress. Cronin wants color.

She says, "On the day I get married, I want to be radiant. White, off-white, and ivory are not flattering colors for my skin tone and don't make me look my best even when I'm tan. I look great in soft greens. They bring out my eyes." While far from typical, Cronin's desire for color isn't as unconventional as you might think.

The History of Color

According to designer Anne Barge's (www.annebarge.com) press materials, wedding attire ran the full color spectrum up until 1840 when the "ultimate trend-setter," Queen Victoria, created a fashion movement when she opted for a pure white gown on her big day.

While white is still the popular choice today, it's no longer the only choice. Color has made a comeback, and hot designers like Anne Barge and Kenneth Pool for Amsale (www.kennethpool.com) are embracing the trend. But the question still remains -- is color a hard sell for brides? Pool says the challenge is getting women to try on colorful wedding dresses. "Once they put them on, they feel so special. And they realize it's not scary...and it also makes them feel like it doesn't look like anything that any of their friends have worn. So little by little, the color is sneaking into the mainstream, which is great."

Karen Fenaroli (www.fenaroli.com), a leading designer and manufacturer of couture bridal accessories who owns her own fashion bridal boutique called Isabella (www.isabellafashions.com) in Framingham, says it's all about the attitude of today's bride. "Because the bride is an older

bride, she's developed a fashion sensibility that sometimes isn't there when you're 22-years-old...The older that you become the more fashion savvy and confident you are with how you dress." Barge agrees. "Most of them don't want to look like cookie-cutter brides...And they don't want to look weird. They want to look different in a good way, and I think that's why the color is just asserting itself. And I think they're ready for it."

Fenaroli, who also has her own design studio in Boston and boutiques in New York and Chicago, says Hollywood has helped the color cause. "I don't know what Jennifer [Lopez] would have worn [had she married Ben], but I bet it would have been something pink on her body because she loves pink."

Married in blue, you will always be true So what are some of the more popular shades? Fenaroli says, "Some of the most beautiful wedding dresses right now are in a cocoa color, which is what I would call a rich crème brûlée color. It's almost like a bronze."

Pool, who was the Creative Design Director at Reem Acra and one of the first designers to incorporate gold and silver beading in gowns, says his color palette is varied. "We've introduced a couple of pale-colored satins. We sold ice greens this past collection, and I sold ice pinks also. I had a little harder time with the taupes and the platinums, but I'm not going to give up on them." Barge mentions "opposite" looks for bridal parties. "A lot of them will do, say, the bride in pink and the bridesmaids in white or ivory with pink flowers or a pink sash...It's kind of a reverse."

Local designers are getting more requests for color, too. Roseanna Martino, owner of The Altered Bride (www.alteredbride.com) in Boston, says, "I actually had a bride that was in a couple of days ago. She ordered a gown from us, and she wants me to order a celery green silk that she wants to put on her gown. And she has her bridesmaids in the same color. We're going to put a band on her upper hip."

Colors to Consider

When choosing a gown, consider your skin tone. White doesn't work on everyone, but many designers agree that pink or blush is a safe color. Barge says pink is an "uplifting color" and "flattering" to the face. Pink is one of Pool's favorite colors to work with "because it's so feminine and it works on everybody. If you're blonde, if you have dark hair, whatever." Consider your favorite colors. You're more apt to look happy when wearing something you love. Consider the season. Deeper reds and burgundies work well in the fall. Bring on the gold, silver, and platinum for winter. Pastels and sherbets are a perfect choice for spring and summer. And remember, your dress isn't the only place for color.

Colorful Accents and a Little Bling-Bling

Not ready to do your whole dress in green or purple? There are many ways to incorporate the allure of color without deviating too far from tradition. Of course, off-white and ivory dresses have been around for a while. This slight variation on white might be just enough color to make you feel special. Look for hints of color in lace, beading, and veils. The same is true for jewelry. David Kaster and Myra Lee Kaster, are the owners of Allysya Blake & Kaster, Inc. in Framingham. Kaster says, "Every bride can wear white, but you start to put in color, and people are going to remember that." From rose pearls to brilliant sapphires (which come in a variety of colors), your jewelry may give you just the right amount of color.

Is your favorite color blue? Try a light blue veil. Do you have an Irish complexion? Add delicate pale-green lace around your hem or a sash around your waist. Want to be dramatic, yet still bathed in white? Consider long gloves in a different color like lavender. Add sparkle with a tiara or colorful, beaded headpiece. Of course, don't forget your feet -- shoes are another great place to show your true colors. Remember, if a wedding



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gown in pink or green is going to make you happiest, go for it. It's your day. As Cronin says, "Instead of walking down the aisle all washed out in white, I'll come down the aisle knowing I look my best in a color that flatters me." Sounds like a look we could all say 'I do' to.



Kenneth Pool



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