

UNVEILED | *inspiration from real weddings*

BRIDAL GOWNS *Stylish Dreams*



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1. "I wanted to incorporate an Indian aesthetic, but felt pressured to settle for a red wedding sari. The owner knew I wasn't thrilled and pulled out a one-of-a-kind sari that matched my style and venue perfectly—I immediately knew it was the one," says Meeta Patel who incorporated two looks on her wedding day. "As an Indian I had not grown up envisioning a white wedding dress. My wedding planner suggested Claire Pettibone and I immediately fell in love. There was something unique and captivating about the pink toile and high-low hem." **MEETA PATEL IN AN ANISH MALHOTRA SARI, FROM SAGAR EXCLUSIVE IN SUNNYVALE AND CLAIRE PETTIBONE'S "AMELIE", FROM BLISS BRIDE IN DEL MAR** 2. "I knew it was the right dress when it took my breath away! My bridesmaids and I went around casually to a few wedding-dress boutiques and they choose the dress for me—it was the first wedding dress I tried on. I felt it mirrored my personality—happy with a bit of mischief." **JENNIE SHIN IN MATTHEW CHRISTOPHER'S "BARDOT", FROM HERE COMES THE BRIDE IN SAN DIEGO** 3. "My look was a bit old Hollywood. Once I tried on the dress a second time, I had an emotional reaction. The way it moved when I walked, the sheen of it in the soft lighting...it was just heaven. It was classic, had personality and a little bit of pizzazz. I couldn't find a headpiece that struck my fancy, so I went out on a limb and went to a craft store. I can barely sew a button, but much to my surprise, it looked good!" **JOANNA DACHS IN REEM ACRA, FROM BRIDAL GALLERIA IN SAN FRANCISCO** —Alex Croell



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DÉCOR DETAILS THE EYES HAVE IT

Grace and Leo Kim met as residents at the Doheny Eye Institute of USC and quickly fell in love. As their ophthalmology profession brought the couple together, it was only fitting that their careers became their inspiration point. Grace approached Uyen Nguyen of Los Angeles-based Sassy Girl Weddings & Events, with the idea of incorporating the Ishihara color blindness test into their wedding décor. Armed with their orange and peacock blue color palette, Uyen set to work designing a monogram of the couple's initials set inside the Ishihara chart, and with the help of Papercake Designs, created a color plate. Quickly, the eye became the theme as Grace and Uyen placed the Ishihara monogram on the invitations, maps, RSVP cards, address labels, programs and even the couple's cake. Cleverly, Uyen and Papercake also incorporated an eye chart into both the save-the-date cards and subtly acknowledged the concept in the escort and name cards by showcasing an oversized letter "E" to represent the top letter on the eye chart. In the end, the wedding was a 20/20 vision of love. —A.C.



Eye-catching details: a monogrammed three-tier cake and an eye-chart-inspired save-the-date



DÉCOR FARM FRESH

Lively hues of aqua, coral and mustard yellow set the scene for high school sweethearts Lauren Redberg and Tom Bernal's nuptials at her parents' property in Paso Robles. Lauren, the bride, wanted the vibe to be casual and comfortable with a homemade elegance. With the dreamy vineyard and open fields providing a natural backdrop, Taryn Ruiz and Laura Robertson of San Luis Obispo's Touch of Style Events added warmth to the scene by building a wedding chapel façade flanked by olive trees through which the guests—and bride—entered. 1 The reception in the family's refurbished barn was a delicate mix of rustic and homey décor blended with touches of glam (think of sequined throw pillows), residential additions like the family's furniture, and bright punches of color. "We hung hand-stitched banners around the barn that the bride made to give it a homespun feel," says Ruiz and Robertson. Guests dined under a sailcloth tent adorned with sky blue Mason jar chandeliers hand-painted by Laurel White of Adornments Flowers & Finery. The tabletops featured floral centerpieces clustered in brightly colored baskets, vintage tins and antique glassware. "The ultimate goal," say the ladies of Touch of Style, "was to create a wedding that was beautiful, unique and inviting for the guests." —Lara M. Burnap

CLOCKWISE, TOP LEFT: Church facade; hay bale couches with bright pillows; Needlepoint escort cards by San Luis Obispo's PaperSky; Vintage tea tins decorate Avila Valley Barn's fresh pies; Clusters of summer flowers

DÉCOR *Lighten Up*

Edison bulbs are no longer reserved for illuminating reception dinners; the old-fashioned lights are taking center stage as altars, banners, logos and more as designers and rental companies expand their inventory. "I think people are using these types of décor pieces to express their personality—and to have a statement piece at their wedding," explains Jeni Maus, owner of Fullerton's Found Vintage Rentals. For Michelle and Charlie Gregg, displaying their marital name in lights was more than just a nod to their Boardwalk Empire-inspired wedding, but also a creative way to transform the awning of their reception venue, the American Legion post in Corona Del Mar. Together with designer Natalie Good of Orange County's A Good Affair Wedding and Event Production, they drew up a design, and the bride's father created the ultimate JUST MARRIED sign. "Couples are beginning to appreciate how important lighting is to the overall look of an event," explains Good of the burgeoning trend. "They want to go beyond up-lighting and create dramatic elements." And it's easy to make it uniquely personal, as rental companies like Town & Country introduce new collections such as its Edison Marquee, which includes letters, numbers and symbols such as hearts, stars and arrows. —L.M.B.



Found Vintage's 7-foot Carmel heart

FARM FRESH: THE CANA FAMILY; LIGHTS: MARIANA SCHULZE

1. NEXT EXIT PHOTOGRAPHY; 2. TAEK PHOTOGRAPHY; 3. CATHERINE HALL STUDIOS; 4. LEO & GRACE; BRANDON KIDD PHOTOGRAPHY AND PAPERCAKE DESIGNS

Bride Ideas



DÉCOR

Nature-inspired Nuptials

Tahoe City-based Merrily Wed looked to Mother Nature when contemplating Katie Witmer and Chris Jones' Ritz-Carlton wedding in Lake Tahoe. Remarkably, the couple was the first to opt for an outdoor reception and tent on the hotel's large plot of land, which features scenic mountain views. "The design goal was to work with their natural surroundings, not compete with it," explains Merrily Rocco, founder and head designer of Merrily Wed. "We wanted to achieve an understated elegance with a touch of organic sophistication." To maintain the Tahoe atmosphere, the team relied on natural materials, such as burlap, birch and bark, being careful not to let it get too heavy-handed. The romantic palette, composed of soft browns and beige, resulted in the perfect backdrop for pops of white and green. Wood lanterns were placed asymmetrically on the escort-card table to set off the angled miniature log holders accessorized with a polka-dot linen tablecloth and lush maidenhair fern. The bark-book centerpieces and birch vases were created with the help of local florist Sara Spurlock. Pinecones, antlers and candles garnished the table runners. According to Rocco, "Using wood and other varying textures in a soft way" was key. The result: a chic but earthy setting debuting a twist on typical rustic décor. —Clara Haneberg



Bark book covers make unique vases. LEFT: Mini tree stump escort cards

FLOWER GIRLS

Tea for Two

Being a flower girl in a wedding is a momentous occasion for a little one. Unfortunately, the overwhelmed bride tends to overlook the starstruck flower girl on the wedding day. Event planner—and mother of a 6-year-old—Sara Holland of Long Beach's At Your Door Events realized that the littlest member of the wedding party needed her own celebration. "I love encouraging brides to have mini celebrations leading up to the wedding day," explains Holland. "Throwing a tea party for flower girls is a way to make them feel special and have time to bond with the bride." Holland designed a gorgeous keepsake invite to the ladylike afternoon by nestling a vintage teacup among yellow rose petals in a personalized jewelry box. To follow a grown-up snack of tea, cake and petits fours, Holland created an adorable hopscotch board so the bride and flower girl could play together. "Girls are always so enamored by the idea of being in the wedding," notes Holland. "And this dainty celebration helps build the excitement and increase their confidence the day of the wedding—all while creating a special memory." —L.M.B.

A tea set with vintage accents and girlish hues; hop-scotch games; dreamy flower girl gowns from BHLDN



NATURE DÉCOR: THE YOUNGRENNS, INC.; FLOWER GIRL PARTY: SARA ALLEN OF ONE LOVE PHOTOGRAPHY

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