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Personalize your wedding from start to finish

Your wedding should be a reflection of you and your spouse-to-be, and for many modern brides, the perfect wedding means one that is personalized and unique. There are many ways to customize your wedding, but it is especially meaningful if you craft some of these special touches yourself.

Before the Wedding

- **Invitations:** Tradition still has its place, but brides have more options than ever before. You can personalize the invitations by choosing an image and wording that have special meaning, such as a photo of the garden where your fiancé proposed. You can match your invitations to the color scheme of your ceremony. If your wedding is small, you may even consider crafting the invitations yourself. Take a cue from scrapbookers and add stitching to your invitations that echoes the embellishments on your dress. Theme weddings are once again gaining in popularity. If your wedding will have a specific theme, make sure your invitations reflect that.

- **Rehearsal Dinner:** It's customary to give gifts to your bridal party at the rehearsal dinner. You can make any gift more meaningful by adding a personal touch.

At the Wedding

- **Program:** This is a great place to include a special touch. You can add poems that are meaningful to you, or that you and your spouse wrote for each other. You can thank friends and family for their support and help in organizing the wedding and being present to celebrate with you. You may wish to repeat some of the motifs from the invitations for continuity, or pick up decorative elements from your wedding gown.

- **Dress:** Your wedding dress is the center of attention at the ceremony. Express yourself by choosing a style



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that fits your personality as well as your body. If you or someone you know is an accomplished sewer, you can custom make your dress.

At the Reception

- **Food and Drink:** Whether you're having a sit-down dinner, offering a buffet or passing hors d'oeuvres, what you serve is important. If you have a theme, try to work the food around that. For example, if you love gardening, incorporate edible flowers into some dishes or on the cake. Or feature ethnic food that reflects the ancestry of you or your spouse. Many companies offer wine with personalized labels. Provide each table with a specially labeled bottle of red and white wine.

- **Decorations:** The decorations you choose set the tone for the day. You'll want to incorporate your wedding colors and, if you have one, your theme. If you add appliqués or beading on your dress, you can echo that design on table runners, or have the appliqué motif printed on your napkins.

- **Favors:** Send your guests home with a special memento. If you've featured ethnic food, prepare a special jar of spices for each guest, along with a treasured family recipe. Or if you have an outdoor wedding, present each guest with a sapling tree to plant in memory of your wedding.