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edding Dress

Color is the new white. Esther Shih, principal designer of the Far East Living boutique in Palo Alto, has seen an increase in brides adding color to their wedding fabric. "Nowadays women aren't afraid of trying something unconventional and having a little fun with details," she says. For a recent wedding, Shih worked with a client to custom tailor a backless Mermaid Qi Pao dress using different fabrics, colors, and contrasts—producing a unique result. "Sometimes, using a different fabric on the same or similar style can make a big difference," Shih adds, "so have a little fun and make your dress truly your own." www.fareastliving.com

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If the vows don't begin until the PM, surround yourself with your loved ones by scheduling an intimate get-together. When local philanthropist Shellie Fry married Dave Fry of Fry's Electronics, she hosted a bridal brunch prior to the nuptials. "We had a bungalow at Cordevalle where we sipped mimosas, laughed, took pictures, nibbled on brunch, had our hair and makeup done, and gave out lots of hugs" Fry recalls. "When I was ready to walk down the aisle, I felt such a special bond with the women in my life. I was glad I didn't miss the opportunity to spend that time with them before I married the man of my dreams."

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our Day

As the madness of the wedding day mounts, it's always smart to have a wedding planner. They will handle all of the issues, logistics, and concerns that are bound to come up. Suzy Somers and Kim Oliff, of the party-planning company Always r.s.v.p., suggest you have the "to do's" finished before saying your "I do's." "Don't leave yourself with tasks, like writing out placecards, on your wedding day," Oliff says. "This will only lead to a stressful you." They also suggest keeping the wedding party posted on the day's events. "Give them a timeline of when and where they are to be," Somers says. "Don't assume anyone knows what they're supposed to be doing!" www.alwaysrsvp.com

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Last, but definitely not least, relax. Because no matter what happens—i.e., the caterer runs out of chicken or the wedding dress rips on the dance floor—you'll always remember the day as perfection. You may now kiss the bride (or groom)! ■



Do's and Don'ts

Anna Post, granddaughter of Emily Post and author of *Emily Post's Wedding Parties: Smart Ideas for Stylish Parties*, offers a few tips for people participating in or attending a wedding.

For the Brides and Grooms: "Communicate early and often about budget and other wedding issues. Also, stay on top of your Thank-You notes."

For the Bridesmaids and Groomsmen: "You are not responsible for a shower. It is common, but not required."

For the Wedding Guests: "You don't have to buy a gift from the registry list. The choice of wedding gift is up to you based on your relationship with the couple and your budget." Her book is available at www.harpercollins.com.



LIPSTICK JUNGLE

Gentry asked Stila's Sarah Lucero for her Top Five makeup tips.

- Wear your makeup in a classic style versus a trendy look. You will want to look back at your pictures and see a timeless, beautiful photo.
- Avoid too much foundation because it could get cakey and look heavy in the photos. Instead, try Stila's Illuminating Tinted Moisturizer. It will leave your skin looking sexy and touchable. And always powder the "hot spots," like the t-zone, with a blotting paper or Stila's Pressed Powder.
- Always wear a waterproof mascara. I love Stila's Lash Visor in brown because it's a super glossy dark brown that looks natural and enhances the eyes.
- Make sure someone keeps a touch-up kit handy for you to refresh all night.
- And my #1 wedding day tip is to smile and enjoy every second of your day!

