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THE 21ST CENTURY BRIDE: CREATING NEW WEDDING TRADITIONS

Chicago, March 18, 2010 – Today's brides are creating new wedding traditions that allow them to showcase their individual style and preferences, create a less formal and more intimate wedding experience for guests, and embrace today's eco-friendly trends.

"While it's important for some bridal couples to adhere to the more formal wedding customs and traditions, we're seeing an increasing number of our brides incorporate fun, non-traditional aspects into their wedding ceremony and reception," says Lori Stephenson, co-founder and senior event consultant with LOLA Event Productions. Here are just a few examples of what are sure to become "new traditions" for the 21st century bride:

ATTIRE:

- Most brides are not observing the tradition of wearing their mother or grandmothers carefully preserved wedding gown. So, why not have some fun and trash the dress! Consider a post-wedding photo shoot where the dress gets muddy and ripped. Or, better still, take it to a local resale shop – make some money and help another bride in the process.
- The tradition of a bride wearing white doesn't actually stem from the idea of "purity" as much as it was a sign of wealth and privilege in earlier centuries to be able to afford a gown that was considered impractical and not for long-term use. These days, brides are choosing colorful shoes as a great way to incorporate "something blue" or just add a punch of fun to the traditional white bridal ensemble. More daring brides can choose a "non-white" gown in a shade that is more reflective of their personality, age or complementary to their coloring – they should just be sure to choose something that will create a "stand-out" look from guests – with hem length, accessories or fullness.
- Black is no longer a "no-no" for weddings, with black linens and bridesmaid dresses a steadfast new tradition. Says Stephenson, "it's probably every bridesmaid's dream to have a great black dress she can actually wear again."
- Today's brides are often forgoing a long and cumbersome veil and instead choosing a unique flower, feather, bauble or clip. "This alleviates the concern of ruining a bride's hairstyle once the veil comes off, or covering up the groom's face in photographs," says Stephenson.

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ADD ONE: THE 21ST CENTURY BRIDE: CREATING NEW WEDDING TRADITIONS

- Bridesmaids are NOT clones! “We love when bridesmaids are allowed to choose their own gown, accessories and hairstyle creating a cohesive look within parameters of style, fabric choices or color set forth by the bride in advance,” says Stephenson. “Grooms can do the same thing with tuxedos or suits and set the tone of coordination with the shirts and ties.”

RECEPTION:

- While traditional wedding halls and hotels will always be an option, the 21st century bride is getting married in loft spaces, old factories and warehouses, museums, or antique stores – locations that reflect their unique styles and interests.
- The tradition of a “big exit” from the reception is long outdated. Bridal couples want to be at their reception, celebrating with family and friends until the very end. If a couple wants to create a special moment as the reception winds down, they should consider a farewell with sparklers or depart in a fun vehicle like a bike trolley.
- Today’s bride is often looking for more than just a wedding cake, and desserts that are quickly becoming wedding traditions include cupcakes, pies, tarts, imported pastries, and interactive dessert stations. “The menu should be a reflection of a bride’s personal tastes, so if the bride’s favorite dessert is a brownie – run with it.” says Stephenson. “We’ve also done ice cream sundae bars and create your own shortcakes.”
- Many bridal couples are choosing to make it legal before the big day. There are a variety of reasons to handle the courthouse and paperwork prior to the wedding, including destination weddings in other countries or states that make it difficult to obtain a legal marriage license. “Differing religions for the bride and groom also make it challenging to coordinate a Church or religious ceremony, so the couple may choose a friend to “officiate” the ceremony,” says Stephenson. “And the best part is that no one ever has to know!”

GOING GREEN:

- Today’s brides are eco-conscious in their lives and this often includes decisions related to the wedding as well. To save paper and minimize enclosures, brides are incorporating more wedding details and even RSVP options on their personalized wedding websites. According to Stephenson, “they may also consider providing the RSVP card as a postcard, instead of the traditional note card and envelope.” Other options include using soy ink and recycled paper for invitations that are infused with seeds for planting, or going electronic for everything – invitations, details and RSVP’s.

“Tradition will always play a part in planning a wedding,” said Stephenson. “However, today’s modern brides are creating new traditions that reflect their lifestyles, personal preference and unique interests.”

About LOLA Event Productions

LOLA Event Productions, a Chicago-based event and wedding design firm, specializes in creating meaningful and memorable events that reflect the individual personality and style of clients. LOLA’s senior-level consultants work with Chicago’s top event vendors, and offer in depth experience with design, décor, planning, logistics and budgets. For more information, visit www.LOLAeventproductions.com.