

Clothing TIPS

Renting a tux isn't the only option for the wedding group and may actually be waning popularity in some parts of the upper Midwest.

That's according to Michael Halberstadt, manager of the Sioux Falls store for Halberstadt's Men's Clothiers.

It is a company that used to rent suits and tuxedos for weddings, but got away from it because it wasn't what the market was demanding. Many of their customers wanted to own the suit, Halderstadt said — and that has changed the company's practice.

"The demand just wasn't there so we stopped renting. The way we approach these things now is, 'Why rent when you can own?'"

Halberstadt's now offers a package deal that allows the groom and any of his party to buy a suit or tuxedo in a choice of about 10 different color, plus a coordinating shirt and tie, for \$129.

"It's a really nice package. At \$129, that's often cheaper than the cost of renting a tux," Halberstadt said. "Plus, you own it. A lot of these young guys need a suit. Our wedding business has grown tremendously from word of

mouth."

For central South Dakota, Halberstadt's Men's Clothiers is ideally placed. It has eight stores in four states, including stories in the Rushmore Mall in Rapid City and the Empire Mall in Sioux Falls that serve wedding parties.

Halberstadt said most of the people taking the offer tend to prefer to buy suits rather than tuxedos, but they do go for both.

Here are other tips for the groom's party to keep in mind:

If possible, Halberstadt's, probably like most men's wear stores that handle weddings, prefers to measure the guys in the wedding party themselves. But in a situation where one of the men happens to be several states away, it's possible to just hand off the measurements.

Have the names and contact information of all the men in the groom's party handy when you visit with the men's clothier, especially if some of them are in other states and the arrangements have to be made at a distance.

Allow enough time for the clothier to get the men outfitted. "Ideally we'd like a couple of months at least," Halberstadt said. "But we can make it work. We can do it in less time if we have to."

For matching colors and fabrics, try to have samples of the fabric the bride's party will be wearing when you visit with the men's wear provider. "That always works best. But if they can't, then at least have a picture. We want to make it super easy for the bride and groom."

Remember the fathers of the bride and groom. Halberstadt notes that especially with the kind of deals that are now available for those opting to buy a suit for the wedding, it's becoming very common for the fathers to buy a new matching suit for the wedding. ♦

AND TRENDS

Several wedding gown trends are bringing new shapes, colors and designs into the 2013 bridal fashion scene.

Kathy Dickinson, a bridal consultant for Jean's Bridal & Formal Wear in Wilmot, S.D., said that regardless of a bride's price range, different versions of popular trends can be found at most price points.

Dickinson said that so far in 2013, lace has been very popular, along with drop waist, slim style, and vintage gowns. She has also noticed that Jean's has been selling a lot of ivory dresses in addition to the traditional white this year.

Bridal Fashion Week 2012 showcased several new trends for 2013, including:

Illusion Necklines: Buttons, jewels and lace detailing seem to float on sheer fabric. This is a great option for spring and summer brides wanting lightweight coverage or the feel of a strapless dress.

Long Sleeves: This look was first made popular by royal bride Kate Middleton and is still very prevalent, whether the style is sleek or billowy.

Bold Headpieces: range from oversized flowers and bows to over-the-top veils

All-Over Sequins: Designers this season were fond of top-to-bottom sequins designs.

Hints of Color: Colors are still present but more subtle this season, and include hues like blush pink, olive green and baby blue.

Lace Overlays: Also thanks to Kate Middleton's wedding gown, lace is still going strong. It's being laid over other fabrics, creating volume and dimension.

According to the editors at **Bridal Guide Magazine**, wedding gown trends for the spring and summer of 2013 include:

Jeweled Details: on sleeves, bodices and all over

Keyhole Backs: featured by many designers, some circled with lace detailing

Cascading Peplum: Compared to a structured peplum gown, this style is looser and flattering for a variety of body types.

Lace and Tulle: Chantilly lace is very popular this season, especially paired with billowing tulle.

Bold Floral: fantastical floral appliques and silhouettes resembling strewn petals

Whimsy: Bohemian brides can enjoy gowns with butterflies, scattered leaves and embroidery. ♦