

A personal touch

Color, vintage items are trending in bridal accessories

JULIE A. JACOB
For Racine County Bride

As every bride-to-be knows, the gown is only one piece of her bridal wardrobe. While her gown, of course, is the most important item that she will buy for her special day, the right accessories—jewelry, shoes and hair pieces—are needed to complete her wedding day look.

When it comes to bridal accessories for 2016, think color, vintage, romantic embellishment and, most of all, the personal touch. For 2016, color is popping up everywhere from jewelry to shoes to the groom's socks. Colored gemstones are becoming an

FINDING BRIDAL ACCESSORIES

These Racine County businesses are among those at which you can find bridal accessories:

■ **Images of Racine**, 6222 Washington Ave., Racine; 262-886-3400; www.imagesofracine.com

■ **Northern Lights Gallery**, 423 Main St., Racine; 262-635-0580; www.thenorthernlightsgallery.com

■ **Rasmussen Diamonds**, 6220 Washington Ave., Racine; 262-884-9474; www.rasmussendiamonds.com

increasingly popular choice for engagement rings and bridal jewelry, said Rebecca Wandrey, a Rasmussen Diamonds sales associate. For example, many brides-to-be are choosing an engagement



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Hair combs—such as these, found at Images of Racine, 6222 Washington Ave., Racine—are one way brides can add a personal touch with accessories.

ring with a colored gemstone accented by small diamonds. Colored gemstones are also in vogue for earrings, necklaces and bracelets. A peach-colored stone called morganite is becoming popular, said Wandrey, noting that the warm wash of color

compliments every skin tone.

After years in which white gold and platinum ruled, yellow gold and two-tone jewelry are making a comeback for engagement rings and bridal jewelry.

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Color is not limited to jewelry. Many brides are foregoing white shoes and, instead, are dying their shoes for a pop of color to match their bridesmaids' dresses, said Connie Poffenberger, owner of Images of Racine. Grooms and the groomsmen are also joining the color party with brightly colored vests, suspenders and socks.

Vintage look

The vintage look continues to be strong, said Pam Viroglio, co-owner of Northern Lights Gallery. A popular and moderately priced jewelry line in her store is La Vie Parisienne. The designs are based on molds from the 1900s to

the 1930s that are combined with designer Catherine Popesco's modern flair. The collection features Swarovski crystals, enameled pendants and filigree metalwork. The pieces are fashioned from copper overlaid with sterling silver or 14k gold, which makes it a good choice for women with nickel allergies, she said.

The vintage look is also popular for bridal veils, with some brides choosing The Great Gatsby-inspired 1920s-style cap veils, said Images' Poffenberger.

Many brides-to-be also like a vintage look for their engagement ring.

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JULIE A. JACOB, For Racine
A display of some of the La Vie Parisienne jewelry for Northern Lights Gallery, 423 Main St., Racine.

PERSONAL/Touches

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For example, many brides are picking a Victorian-inspired style of a large round stone set in a slender band, which may be etched or embellished with small diamonds, explained Wandrey.



JULIE A. JACOB, For Racine County Bride

This peach-colored stone called morganite is gaining popularity among brides, according to Rebecca Wandrey, a sales associated at Rasmussen Diamonds, 6220 Washington Ave., Racine.

Floral and lace

For years, many brides chose a sleek, simple style for their wedding gown and accessories, but now many brides are opting for romantic embellishments such as lace and beading on their gowns and veils. The floral motif is also popular, and some brides are buying headbands and combs adorned with artificial flowers to accent their hair, said Poffenberger. A more dramatic look is coming into style for veils, too, with many brides choosing floor-length cathedral veils.

Sparkly beaded belts to accent a gown are also popular with some brides, she added.

A personal touch

Yet whatever the current trends may be, brides increasingly are choosing accessories that make a personal statement.

For example, some brides-to-be shopping at Northern Lights Gallery are skipping the traditional silver and gold jewelry and, instead,

are purchasing bold rings, necklaces and bracelets made from wood, aluminum, stainless steel, tungsten or recycled materials that reflect their own tastes, said Viroglio.

Other brides are playfully showing their fan loyalty with team garters, such as Packers or University of Wisconsin garters, said Poffenberger. Some brides are expressing their feelings with decals that stick on the soles of their shoes that state "I do!" or other sentiments.

Yet, no matter the trend, what's most important, Poffenberger, Wandrey and Viroglio emphasized, is that the bride picks the jewelry, veil and shoes that she likes and which let her own personality shine through.

DID YOU KNOW?

Including children in the ceremony

Engaged couples often ask their closest friends and family members to be part of their wedding ceremonies. Children often participate in weddings and can add joviality to this special occasion.

However, it's important to consider a child's age and maturity before having him or her be part of the wedding. Some houses of worship

restrict child participation to kids of a certain age, so it's best to check with clergy regarding their rules before including kids in the wedding party.

If children need to be coaxed down the aisle or are prone to disruptive behavior, it may be best to give them another role, such as handing out bubbles or birdseed after the wedding.

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