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27 clever
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DIY I DO!

Creating your dream wedding is just a few crafts away. See how to personalize your event with vintage flair.

By Jackie Torres
 Photography by Bret Gum
 Styled by Sylvia Asmussen and Jackie Torres



STAGE A PHOTO STATION
 To make the evening a dynamic affair, create a special spot for people to have fun with photos. "The trend in photography is to not just having your bridal party shot in the venue. It's all about styled shoots at the wedding," says event stylist Sylvia Asmussen. "Create a fun photo op for your bridal party or the bride and groom."

LOOK
 These thrift-store chairs are event-ready after a coat of paint in the wedding's color palette. Reupholster the seats for extra charm—remove the seat and recover with a thrift-store suit jacket for the groom and a wedding dress for the bride!

Looking to put the sweet in your sweetheart table? These adorable crafts not only add personal charm to any event, they're destined to be keepers. "I always advise couples to think about what memory or feeling they want to leave with their guests," says wedding and event stylist Sylvia Asmusen. "Then we pick special vintage elements to complement that vision."

As proprietress of Madam Palooza, a vintage prop rental company that specializes in creating special settings for one-of-a-kind gatherings, she's an expert at using vintage showpieces to create "wow" moments. "Pinterest can sometimes be overwhelming, so I talk it out with them to see why they like a particular style, see how we can make it fit their personality."

MARRY OLD AND NEW

This setting we created at the Madam Palooza warehouse combines a fresh modern feel with the charm and nostalgia of vintage elements. "Vintage represents our pasts and what better way to celebrate the union of two people than bringing meaningful elements from each of their lives that they can create together?" Sylvia says.

DIY projects not only help with the budget—they get everyone involved. Sylvia's top tip for brides is to encourage grooms to participate, make choices and create. "Get your fiancé involved in your décor. It's important to involve both people," she says. "Don't make it one-sided—make it fun, go to a flea market together to find cool chairs or toasting glasses. It's rewarding to know that you spent the afternoon shopping and working because at the end, you can say, 'Look what we made!'"



Make a Coffee-Filter Garland

Use a combination of white and unbleached coffee filters for a one-of-a-kind ruffled look. Dye a few white filters with your wedding colors, using a spray bottle filled with water and a few drops of food coloring. Once dry, string them all together using an embroidery needle and embroidery floss—just pierce a hole through the center of the garland and alternate colors for a fun look. Bunch a few together for a pom-pom look; you can keep them in place with a knot of ribbon or a tab of washi tape.



LEAVE YOUR COFFEE FILTER garland ungrouped for a lush and elegant look.

SIGNATURE SWEETS. Vintage styling is a trend on the menu, too. Kim Mayne, the owner of Sweet Layers Cakes & Pastries designed our wedding cake inspired by fun retro modern charm. "Ombre has been around for a while, as well as the rosette look, but I wanted to tweak the effect by creating a nostalgic geometric-retro feel to the texture."

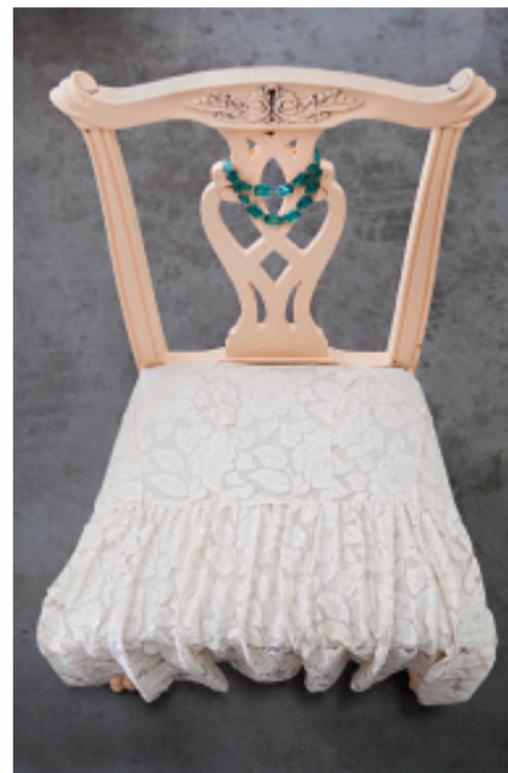
TOP TREND: THE SWEETHEART TABLE

If the head-table is not quite your style, try something more intimate and special: the sweetheart table—a small spot reserved simply for the new husband and wife. "Sweetheart tables are starting to be a highlight because you are the center of attention from the moment you sit down to the moment you cut the cake, all eyes are on you—just as your guests like it," Sylvia says. "It's also all about highlighting your event and putting something individual into your décor."



TOP TREND: MULTIPLE CAKES

"We are starting to see a lot of DIY couples opting for a bakery to do small one or two tier cakes for photos," Kim says. "Simple designs embellished with fresh flowers are big. Cupcake liners or wraps have added a level of panache. Also, the families getting together to do the extra deserts is a great trend—incorporating nostalgia with a fun family get-together to create new memories. This works for a smaller wedding, but for larger weddings we strongly advise outsourcing the desserts to your trusted baker!"



Get a Cake with Personality!

Don't forget to carry your theme into your cake. As a cake artist, Kim works the event's theme into the cake décor by asking for inspiration boards. "This way we get the tones, colors, and styles already choreographed by the customer," she says. "We also like to choose key pieces from a theme that will tie it all together. Here are her expert tips for making sure you bake up something memorable."

- 1 DESCRIBE YOURSELF!** I always start with a list of questions to get to know my couples. Where they met, favorite hobbies, etc. By the time they get to the cake designing, they pretty much have their style figured out.
- 2 COLOR YOUR WAY TO VINTAGE.** Color is always the key to a vintage look. Foliage, flowers, lace, and metals all tie in lovely with the vintage style.
- 3 MAKE IT MEANINGFUL.** I love to incorporate traditional family favorites for a vintage throwback, such as cookies, lemon bars, and pound cakes, then make them mini like an appetizer.

RETRO TREATS

Kim says it's fun to get nostalgic with the wedding sweets. "Childhood memories, brought on by certain flavors and desserts, are fascinating to us," she says. "Here I did spice cake with a maple frosting, but think carrot cake with a cream cheese frosting, and a traditional yellow cake with coconut pecan topping."

