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# BRIDES

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# IN WITH THE NEW

**BRING YOUR BIG DAY BANG UP TO DATE WITH THIS YEAR'S 15 HOTTEST TRENDS, SAYS HELEN CROCKETT**

## 1 SPACE HOP

'Reveals' were the hot reception news in 2010. 'This year it's about creating "pockets" within your event, such as sleek chill-out rooms and wow-factor smoking sections,' says Liz Taylor of Taylor Lyn Corporation ([tlc-ltd.co.uk](http://tlc-ltd.co.uk)). 'An area that can be transformed from daytime to evening simply through changing the colour of the lighting or swapping the fabrics and cushions, for example, works well.'



MARCHESA

## 2 SHORT & SWEET

The bridal catwalks were awash with mini dresses and high-high styles. Look to Reem Acra ([reemacra.com](http://reemacra.com)) and Marchesa ([marchesa.com](http://marchesa.com)) - from Browns Bride ([brownsbride.com](http://brownsbride.com)).

## 3 LAID-BACK LUXE

Move with the times. 'The traditional hotel-and-three-course-meal wedding is on the way out,' says Liz. The showstopping event is where it's at now. 'Chicer and smaller celebrations are big for 2011, with more attention to the details, such as an offbeat venue or unusual location,' she says. 'Great John Street hotel in Manchester is gorgeous ([greatjohnstreet.co.uk](http://greatjohnstreet.co.uk)), while anywhere in the desert around Marrakech would be amazing. Right now, I'm doing lots of events in Istanbul - check out the terrace of the A'jia hotel ([ajiahotel.com](http://ajiahotel.com)) which overlooks the Bosphorus.' Dining is going informal too; canapés, bowl food and contemporary concepts such as sushi bars and food stations will be key this year. 'When it comes to food, I see a less pretentious and more playful ambience,' says US celebrity wedding planner and bridal fashion designer David Tutera ([davidtutera.com](http://davidtutera.com)).

## 4 SHAPE UP

Forget uniform dining tables. Now anything goes. Mix and match shapes and sizes: long rectangular designs, short square styles and round tables. It's fun and flexible. Hire tables from [greathire.co.uk](http://greathire.co.uk).

## 5 WALL OF FAME

Love the idea of a photo booth, but want to go one better? The US is trailblazing the trend for having a photo area complete with props. But forget about printing the snaps. 'The images get instantly flashed up around the room using giant projectors,' says Sarah Ivens, author of *The Bride's Guide to Unique Weddings*\*. 'They rotate all night with photos added as more are taken.' Book your big-day slide show through [sayfromage.co.uk](http://sayfromage.co.uk).



## 6 FLORAL FANTASIA

Woodland-themed weddings and ethereal style are in vogue this year. 'Real birch trees decorated with crystal droplets and placed throughout the venue creates a striking effect,' says florist Jamie Aston ([jamieaston.com](http://jamieaston.com)). 'Flower garlands suspended from the ceiling or draped around candelabra will add to the magic.' And for little bridesmaids, traditional poses and pomanders are out; garland headdresses of oversized blooms are in. Think: boho chic meets *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

## 7 GUESS HUE

Peach takes centre stage in 2011. 'Teamed with lemon, sage or lavender, it's perfect for a vintage or country celebration,' says wedding planner Helen Carter ([helencarterweddings.co.uk](http://helencarterweddings.co.uk)). Want to go for bold instead? Combine black and yellow, or lime and purple. →

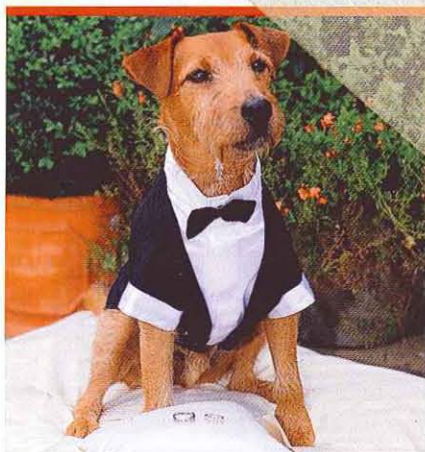
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## 8 PRINTS CHARMING

Initials were big news last year. In 2011, 'having monograms *everywhere* is out', says US celebrity wedding coordinator Sasha Souza ([sashasouzaevents.com](http://sashasouzaevents.com)). It's all about you, yes, but while putting your own stamp on your day is fine, a personal branding campaign is not. Graphic prints are now the hottest way to customise your day. Use them to add impact to everything from the decor to the stationery. Photo-walls create a striking focal point – retro flock wallpaper covered in vintage-style picture frames (try [zarahome.com](http://zarahome.com)) filled with old photos looks chic – while fabric-panel backdrops will transform your space in an instant. For inspiration, visit [printedspace.com](http://printedspace.com) and [createwallart.com](http://createwallart.com).

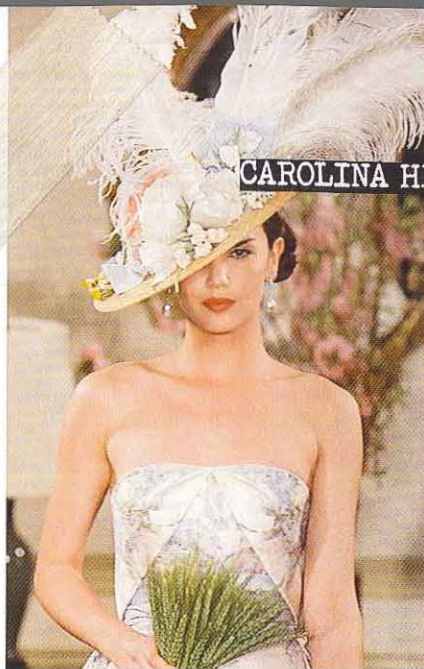
## 9 LOVE SONGS

The bespoke song was 2010's music trend *du jour*. This year will see traditional musicians playing offbeat numbers, says Sasha: 'A percussionist playing the xylophone to the theme tune from *Moulin Rouge!* or violinists playing a song by American rock band Journey.'



## 10 A DOG'S LIFE

Are traditional bridesmaids' days numbered? Dogs look set to be the supporting cast of choice for this year's on-trend brides. Recently, Robbie Williams, Carrie Underwood and Gisele Bündchen all got hitched with their four-legged friends in tow. Barking mad? Well, just think: there'll be no temper tantrums, the outfits will cost less (pick up a doggy tuxedo, *above*, from £15.99 at [canineconcepts.co.uk](http://canineconcepts.co.uk)) and cute photo opps are guaranteed.



CAROLINA HERRERA

## 11 TIME WARP

This year it's all about golden-age glamour – with a modern edge, of course. For dresses that pay homage to the likes of Grace Kelly and Edith Piaf, visit [carolinaherrera.com](http://carolinaherrera.com). Look, too, at [johanna-hehir.com](http://johanna-hehir.com) and [ritvawesteni.com](http://ritvawesteni.com) for a glam, new take on old-school chic.

## 12 COCKTAIL DRAMA

Forget molecular gastronomy. Molecular mixology is where the fun's at now. Call in the experts at Fluid Movement ([fluid-movement.com](http://fluid-movement.com)) to bring a touch of high-style drinks drama to your bash. The liquid caterers will rock up to your venue with a mobile bar replete with all manner of weird, wonderful and colourful concoctions featuring the likes of foams, fruit caviar and dry ice for a wow-factor effect. For maximum impact, ask the guys to create a 'smoking' signature cocktail to impress your guests. To see the mixologists in action, check out their new bar, Purl in London's Marylebone ([purl-london.com](http://purl-london.com)).

## 13 RAISE THE GAME

Reception decor goes sky high with dramatic flowers and adornments suspended above guests. 'Hang a wire from the ceiling to the table and have ivy and roses intertwined all the way up to the roof,' says wedding planner Marie Haverly of Isabella Weddings ([isabellaweddings.co.uk](http://isabellaweddings.co.uk)). 'And for an eye-catching, quirky look, suspend colour-coordinating spirals – made from large circles of material or card – above each table and hang fortunes or favours from each of them for guests to pick off and enjoy.'

## 14 VINTAGE BOUQUETS

Thought bridal's love affair with vintage was over? Then think again. This year, antique chic hits a whole new level as bouquets get the vintage-glam treatment. Expect frothy feathers and glittering crystals in place of flowers (the bouquet toss is out!). 'It's a beautiful accessory that the bride can keep long after the wedding day,' says wedding planner Louise Angus at Bow Occasions ([bow-occasions.co.uk](http://bow-occasions.co.uk)). Vintage Magpie ([vintagemagpie.co.uk](http://vintagemagpie.co.uk)) is leading the way with styles that range from cascading crescent bouquets festooned with ivory gems to dramatic feather-adorned confections. We've fallen for this hand-tied crystal and pearl-bead bouquet, from £295, *above*.

## 15 GET SET GLOW

Forget saving the best till last: set the tone for your celebration with flair and dazzle right from the word go. 'Escort arrangements are taking on a new twist,' says celebrity florist and event planner Preston Bailey ([prestonbailey.com](http://prestonbailey.com)), whose clients include Oprah Winfrey, Donald Trump and Uma Thurman. 'This table is the first thing guests see, so it's a great place to make a design statement. Think: boughs of pearls and crystals, with place cards floating in mid-air held only by gossamer ribbon.'



Preston Bailey's idea for a dazzling escort card display