## By Leslie Wu

Camilla Parker Bowles are taking the plunge for the second time, it's clear that the last ba rounding former taboos on remarriage are finally crumbling. Buoyed by career aspirations and the increasing options to have children at later ages. many couples are finding that love comes not once but twice in a lifetime

More confident in themselves and in their choices, mature brides are tailoring weddings to suit their own desires and purposes, rather than succumbing to the pressures of a cookie-cutter wedding fantasy. New options and choices in the wedding industry, as well as cultural and sociological changes in our society, ensure that the independent bride can get what she wants, when she wants it. Trailblazing their own paths in the world of flowers, bridal wear and other wedding ments, second-time brides are personaliz-

When even besieged royals Prince Charles and ing their special day in ways that previous generations would envy.

...It's not your mother's wedding

When it comes to second weddings, the myth that the entire celebration must be more subdued has been dispelled. "It certainly holds the same sort of magic and is as important as the first time or even more so," says Mississauga-based wedding planner Joy Moyles. Her business, Encore Events, was originally founded to cater to what Moyles terms "repeat performers" - couples who are celebrating remarriage

Laura Paladino has also noticed a trend towards stomers who are primarily over 30 years old More than 40 percent of clients at Oakville-based Laura Paladino Invitations are couples who as getting remarried.

With added life experiences and broader relationship views, couples remarrying have a more mature and educated outlook. They tend to

approach the wedding experience with a completely different perspective than a first-time pair of 20 year-olds. "Most people who are narrying have been together for at least three to five years," notes Moyles. "They're not starting from scratch, either financially or emotionally, and already have a set pattern to make remarriage more fulfilling. Remarriage is partnership where goals and aspirations are better defined.\*

## Decisions, Decisions, Decisions

Reverend Jim Gill at Oakville's Walton United Memorial Church has married couples for more than 20 years. He explains that secondtime couples want to formally acknowledge what already exists, and tend to adhere less to

will be much more particular about details." want. They don't want to see a bunch of sam ples. They always pay for their own weddings and it's definitely



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Page 23: For second marriages, price tends to take a backseat to individual vishes. Invitations are still based on the classics, and while remaining personal, rings are incorporating designs such as those made by fingerprints.

Mature brides often use practicality as a guide to select flowers that photograph well.

Details such as place cards and cakes tend to be more sophisticated and streamlined.



es this authority can be due to the exp rience people have gained through their job. "I find that more mature people tend to make decisions lot faster because their career is further along, and they're used to considering options quickly," says Paladino. "They know more about themselves and can identify with a particular invitation."

Remarrying couples don't change their mind lot," notes Carly Viehl, a floral designer at Toronto's Bloom the Flower Company. "There's no need to hold their hand like a first time bride."

This decisiveness may stem from the fact that

an older couple may have been considering the ospect of marriage for some time, which may aid in their decision-making process, according to Lynn Harlow of Burlington-based dress boutiqu Promises and Lace.

Armed with experience and knowledge, repeat brides will have a well-defined game plan as to their vision of the day. "These brides tend to be less involved in the planning process," notes Moyles. They usually have very high expectations, yet the majority of them have their expectations all set, and they're not as influenced by images of media."

They're not going after what Martha St wants or what media throws at them. They have their own idea of what a wedding entails," agrees Viehl

With second-time couples, the entire planning process also tends to be shorter, depending on how long the couple has been together. "Second timers make decisions quicker than first, since they've determined what they want already," says Moyles. "There's a whole pre-planning process that doesn't happen with first-timers."

For many of these couples, price is no object. Since many older or remarrying couples tend to be more affluent than a first-time couple with a strict budget, cost is secondary to getting what they want, according to Paladino. "They tend to go for something really nice, that's more of a reflection of

Their price point is certainly higher. They're ing to spend a bit more and they're in a posi tion that they can afford to spend more as mature people doing well in the workforce," says Harlov

Although the couple's discretionary income may be higher, couples still exercise caution when it comes to wedding expenses. "The weddings tend to be much higher-end. Repeat performers don't want anything middle-of-the-road," Moyles declares. "They're much more rational about the rocess, however, and will sit down together and determine a budget

## It's My Party

For the savvy bride, it's truly a buyers' market when it comes to wedding options. Never before has the independent bride been offered such selection in flowers, bridal wear and other wedding

Although every bride approaches her weddin day in a different way, the personal preferences of repeat brides are often determined by their previ-

ous experiences. "How their first wedding went plays a large part of how they want to have these weddings," says Reverend Gill. The weddings are either small, intimate affairs with less than 10 guests and no photographer or flowers, or skew in the opposite direction with enormous and lavish

fronically, some weddings blossom to larger tes more reminiscent of a first-time wedding, due to the fact the couple is older. If couples are more established in their careers, the likelihood of wanting a huge event to impress their busine associates, is bigger. "It's all about the "wow" factor, and adding drama through height in centrept or arrangements," explains Viehl. Large candelabras, or vases shaped like giant martini glasses that stand two feet high are visually striking options to stop guests in their tracks. Forget tulle and backdrops, says Moyles, who has overseen the decoration of many intimate second-time wedding celebrations. Repeat performers prefer custom linens, chair covers, organza overlays, and expensive

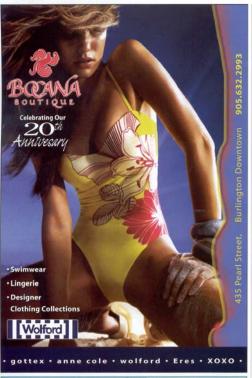
When it comes to bridal wear, the idea of the restrained or subdued second bridal gown is out. Second-time brides are just as likely to gravitate towards trendy strapless gowns, and accentuate their look with interesting neckpieces, such as a choker in Austrian crystal, with touches of pearl and sparkle, plus matching crystal, dropped earrings, explains Harlow. "Nine out of 10 times, they're not going for white, but will wear it if it

Some second-time brides, especially those going to a destination wedding, want lighter fabrics, such as silk and chiffon. They will favour a play ful look, even adding toe rings for a bit of sparkle through their sandals, according to Harlow

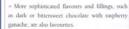
Cakes are another area where anything goes, according to Debbie Olson at Simply Chocolate in Oakville. They tend towards classic elegance, since they can afford to have their wedding in a venue that warrants that kind of cake." Options abound, from petit fours and cupcakes to elaborate truffle trees decorated with flowers coordinating to he wedding colours. Second-time couples usually eschew white for more sophisticated shades such as ivory with gold and silver accents, or paler hues In addition, expensive gum-paste flowers rather than fresh flowers might be used to cover the cake in order to ensure every piece is edible. "It's less important for the cake to be white than for the cake to be delicious," Olson advises.











When selecting their flowers, many brides stay vay from the traditional white wedding choices, and unlike younger brides, their first thought isn't necessarily roses, according to Drumonde. They're much more practical and looking for sor that will photograph well, approaching their flow er selection with that in mind. Often more expensive flowers, such as hydrangeas and orchids in vibrant hues, will find favour with discriminatin brides. Lilies are also an elegant option, prized for their fragrance.

Viehl sees sleek and modern looks, clean lines and an architectural look, with plenty of squares and rectangular shapes in vases. There's less of the romantic, lush, rounded lines, minimal use of greens and more use of flowers that have a clean stem like calla lilies or gerberas. "Bold and beautiful colours are very favourable, as older brides tend to go crazy with colours such as oranges and pinks," says Viehl.

Centrepieces are opportunities for riotous colours while brides will stay with more restrained colours for themselves, such as bouquets ranging from pale chartreuse to deep hunter green with semi-precious gems and rhinestones. Simpler arrangements in a series of vases rather than a large, lush centrepiece are popular.

In terms of invitations, modern interpr of classics, using cream or silver colours as a base and adding flourishes such as pockets or varied shapes, are favoured. As the bride and groom are typically the hosts, it will be their names on the invitation, rather than their parents. A further reflection of the added sense of identity of the couple is the use of first names or monograms on the invitations instead of full names, as many brides are choosing to keep their own names.

"What immediately comes to mind with the second-time bride is that they're much more sophisticated, and looking for a more streamlined. less elaborate version of what someone in their early 20's would want," says Paladino. Second-time brides will choose something with texture and character, such as linen, shimmer or subtle patterns with seals or classic monograms. "They want something elegant that's not too loud."

For favours, remarrying couples tend to choose high-end items that can be consumed immediately. uch as personalized truffles. "They've already "



The most important memento of the wedding day - the wedding ring - tends to be intensely personal for second marriages. Along with the exchange of rings between the bride and groom. the pair will often give rings to their children in order to symbolize the union of families. Some couples will even go the extra step to incorporate parts of themselves into their wedding. literally Today, couples are joining not just hands, but also thumbs, says Thomas Keogh of Toronto's McK Design. Using computer-aided design, couples can incorporate their fingerprints and that of their children in platinum, yellow or white gold and silver to create an individual pattern in the surface

Apart from lavish accessories and luxe but restrained décor, by far the most prevalent trend with second weddings is the involvement of their children as part of the ceremony. Whether they sign as witnesses, stand up for their parents as best man or maid of honour, or give the happy couple away, children play an integral role in the day's proceedings. "The key is successful integration of the families and inclusion of the children, whether they're 10 or 30," says Reverend Gill.

Moyles is also a big believer in incorpo children into the marriage. "If you've both been married before and both have children, there's no such thing as just two people in that marriage rmony keeps that marriage grounded." Many brides appreciate the acceptance of their children

"Marriage is the highest state of friendship British novelist Samuel Richardson once wrote. "If happy, it lessens our cares by dividing them, at the ame time that it doubles our pleasures by mutual participation." Ultimately, the priorities for a second wedding are exactly the same as the first: to join two people who love each other, despite an minor issues or inconveniences that may occur After all, sometimes even prince charmings have to deal with disapproving in-laws and last-minut venue changes. The crucial aspect of a remarriag according to Harlow, is enjoying the uniquenes and magic of the moment: "I tell all my reper brides that although they may have gotten marrie before, they've never been married to this m before... so it's going to be special and right." 📆





Ten ways to enjoy a

and celebration.

· White is alright.

never stop dating each other

Courtesy of wedding planner Joy Moyles, Encore Wedding Design.

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Ask for help if needed.

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