

A photograph of a bride and groom walking through a park in autumn. The bride is in a white wedding dress with a full skirt, and the groom is in a dark tuxedo. They are walking away from the camera, with the bride's dress flowing behind her. The background is filled with trees with autumn-colored leaves.

Spring Brides

Bold First Impressions

Wedding invitations do more than share the details of a ceremony; they set the tone for the entire celebration.

In 2026, couples are embracing invitations that feel like works of art, showcasing bold design choices and luxurious details that stand out long before guests arrive.

According to Kim Forrest at The Knot, wedding invitation "suites" include the invitation, an RSVP card, a details card, the outer envelope, and an addressed/stamped RSVP card envelope. She said optional items can include weekend events card, a wax seal, separate accommodations card, directions card, an envelope liner and a separate reception card.

MIXING METALS FOR SHINE

Metallic accents are trending, but this year it's less about picking one finish and more about blending them. Mixed metals — such as pairing gold foil with silver embossing or adding touches of copper and rose gold — bring depth and sophistication to invitations. These details catch the light and elevate the look, making even simple designs feel glamorous.

Couples are also using metallics beyond the paper itself. Wax seals, metallic thread and foil-lined envelopes add a tactile element that enhances the unboxing experience.

BOLD COLORS AND SHAPES

Pastels and neutrals will

always have a place in wedding stationery, but 2026 is leaning into more daring palettes. Deep jewel tones, vibrant oranges and unexpected color pairings are making statements in invitation design. These bold hues work especially well for couples planning modern or unconventional weddings.

Shape is another area where couples are breaking tradition. Invitations cut into arches, circles, half-moons or layered geometric forms are drawing attention. Statement shapes add visual intrigue and make the suite feel custom-made, often doubling as keepsakes for guests.

DESIGNER TYPOGRAPHY AS ART

Typography has become more than just a way to deliver information. It's a design centerpiece. Dramatic serif fonts, hand-lettered scripts and bold modern typefaces are dominating invitation suites. Some couples are working with designers to create custom lettering that reflects their personalities or cultural heritage.

Oversized lettering and creative layouts, such as text running vertically or wrapping around shapes, are also popular. When paired with rich paper textures, typography becomes part of the art rather than just text on a page.



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MAKING IT PERSONAL

Beyond aesthetics, personalization remains a driving force. Couples are incorporating monograms, custom illustrations and venue sketches into their suites. Invitation designers are offering

interactive elements, like vellum overlays, layered inserts and QR codes linking to wedding websites.

The end result is invitations that do more than announce a date. They capture the essence of the couple and the celebra-

tion ahead.

As wedding styles evolve, so do the details that introduce them. In 2026, invitations are bold, creative and unapologetically personal, proving that first impressions are meant to dazzle.

Art Meets Flavor

Wedding menus have always been a way to impress guests, but in 2026, food is stepping fully into the spotlight as both cuisine and performance.

Couples are looking for ways to surprise, delight and tell their story through edible art. According to trend reports from TheWed.com, this year's biggest food ideas push the boundaries of creativity and presentation.

CAKES AS SCULPTURES

Wedding cakes are no longer just multi-tiered confections. They're becoming sculptural showpieces. Pastry chefs are experimenting with dramatic, architectural designs that resemble works of modern art. Expect to see angular tiers, asymmetrical stacking and innovative textures that make cakes look like stone, fabric or even floating structures. These cakes are as much a visual centerpiece as they are a dessert.

For couples hosting a themed wedding (another trend still growing in 2026), the cake can reflect that theme; sculpted in the shape of a dragon, a soccer ball, a castle or a passport.

PERSONALIZED PLATES

Personalization is taking center stage, with monogrammed food appearing across receptions. From initials dusted on macarons to embossed logos on chocolates, edible branding allows couples to weave their story into every bite. Monogrammed cocktails, complete with custom stencils and foams, are adding to the fun. It's a trend that lets couples quite literally put their name on the menu.



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DINING AS THEATER

Culinary theater is transforming receptions into interactive experiences. Think chefs preparing flambé dishes tableside, mixologists crafting cocktails with smoke and vapor, or servers presenting surprise elements hidden under domes. The dining experience is no longer just about taste; it's about performance and memory-making. Guests are invited to watch, interact and enjoy food as a form of entertainment.

EDIBLE LACE AND CROCHET

Another delicate trend for 2026 is edible lace and crochet. Pastry chefs are creating intricate, lace-like designs from sugar and chocolate that mimic embroidery or crochet patterns.

These delicate accents can be draped over cakes, desserts or even savory dishes for a romantic and whimsical touch. It's a way to blend traditional textile artistry with modern culinary technique.

A FEAST FOR THE SENSES

Together, these trends reflect a larger shift: weddings are becoming immersive, sensory experiences. Couples want food that sparks conversation and wonder. The goal is to leave guests with flavors and images they won't soon forget.

With artistry and creativity leading the way, 2026's food trends prove that wedding dining is about more than just the meal. It's about telling a story one unforgettable bite at a time.

When to Book Appointments

When it comes to weddings, timing is everything and that applies to beauty prep as much as planning the ceremony.

From hair trials to nail polish, a carefully thought-out beauty timeline helps ensure brides feel confident and radiant on the big day.

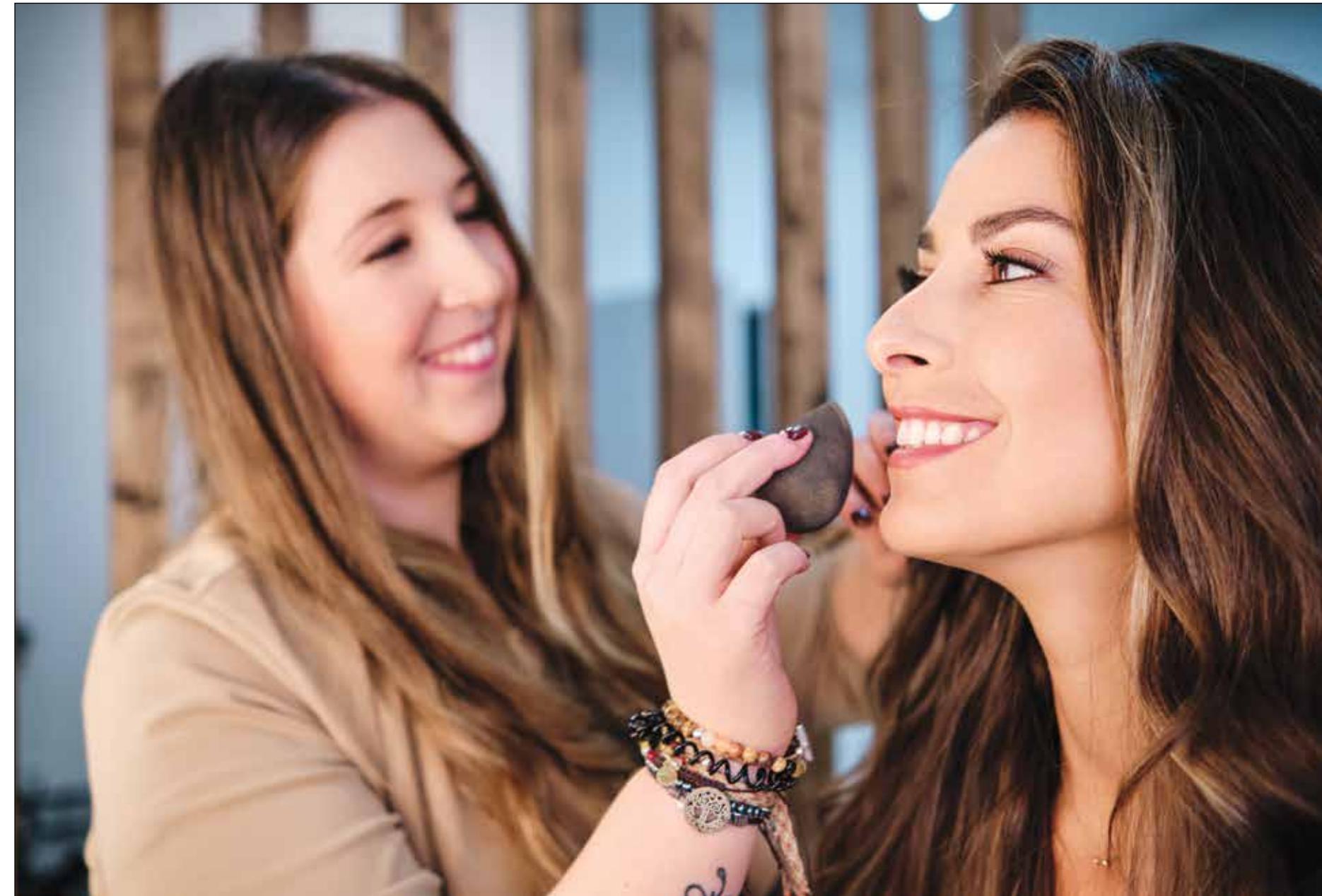
SIX MONTHS TO GO: BUILD YOUR FOUNDATION

The first step is establishing a healthy routine. Brides-to-be should schedule an initial consultation with a hairstylist and makeup artist to discuss ideas and expectations. This is the time to commit to a consistent skincare regimen, ideally guided by a dermatologist or esthetician. If professional facials are part of the plan, schedule them every four to six weeks to keep skin clear and glowing.

Hair health matters too. If a bride plans to grow out her hair, now's the time to talk trims, treatments or color goals. For those considering a spray tan, a trial run a few months out ensures the right shade and application method.

THREE MONTHS TO TWO WEEKS: PERFECTING THE LOOK

Around the three-month



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mark, book a hair and makeup trial. Bring inspiration photos, accessories and even your veil if you have one. This is the chance to test curls vs. updos, natural vs. glam makeup, and make adjustments before the wedding week.

Continue with regular facials but stop anything too aggressive like peels or extractions at least a month before the wedding.

If you're planning cosmetic treatments such as teeth whitening or injectables, this window gives enough time for results to settle.

Two weeks out is the best time for a final hair trim and color touch-up, so roots and split ends don't distract from the overall look.

Brides opting for a spray tan should do a trial one week before the big day to confirm the shade.

ONE WEEK TO THE BIG DAY: THE FINISHING TOUCHES

During the final week, less is more. Keep skincare simple and hydrate to avoid irritation. Book manicure and pedicure appointments two to three days before the wedding so polish stays fresh. Classic shades, French tips or subtle sparkle remain popular choices.

If a spray tan is part of your look, schedule it two to three

days before the wedding to allow color to settle naturally. Waxing should also happen at least three days prior to reduce the risk of redness.

Finally, pack a small day-of beauty kit: lipstick, blotting papers, setting spray, and bobby pins. The best bridal beauty timeline balances preparation with peace of mind, letting every bride shine with confidence from the aisle to the last dance.

Luxe Looks Without the Price Tag

For those not wanting to break the bank on their wedding, the rule of thumb may turn to “something borrowed, something thrifited.”

With a little creativity and resourcefulness, couples can transform their venues using thrifited finds, DIY touches and borrowed treasures. A thoughtful approach to decor can give a wedding a one-of-a-kind personality.

THRIFT, BORROW AND REIMAGINE

The old rhyme “something borrowed” can extend well beyond a handkerchief or piece of jewelry. Friends and family are often happy to lend vases, candleholders or decorative items that can be repurposed for centerpieces and accent tables. Some couples even borrow vintage rugs to define their ceremony space or cozy up a lounge area.

Secondhand sources are another gold mine. Thrift stores, flea markets and Facebook Marketplace often carry unique finds like mismatched vintage plates, ornate frames and gently used linens. Collecting items in complementary colors or styles can create a charming, eclectic look without the cost of renting high-end decor. You can even turn thrifting into a



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date afternoon where the couple finds things together.

FLOWERS ON A BUDGET

Fresh flowers can quickly eat into a wedding budget but sourcing them creatively keeps costs in check. Local farmers markets often sell seasonal blooms at a fraction of florist prices, and buying in bulk lets couples or their helpers assemble simple arrangements. A mix of small bud vases with single stems can be just as striking as large, elaborate bouquets.

For couples who prefer less

stress on the day of, blending purchased flowers with greenery from a backyard or nearby field creates a natural, organic look. Dried flowers, which can be gathered months in advance, are another trend offering both affordability and a long-lasting keepsake. Some couples are now turning to places like Trader Joes or Costco to get their flowers.

DIY TOUCHES WITH IMPACT

Simple do-it-yourself projects can elevate the atmosphere. Painted wine

bottles or mason jars double as candleholders or vases, while string lights and fabric draping instantly warm up a space. Chalkboards or repurposed mirrors make stylish signage for menus or seating charts.

Even table settings can make an impression without big expenses. Cloth napkins in bold colors, thrifited chargers or vintage glassware can dress up simple tables. Layering textures — like burlap runners with lace accents — creates a polished yet approachable style.

PERSONAL STYLE OVER PRICE TAG

Budget-friendly decor doesn't mean sacrificing elegance. In fact, these choices often make weddings feel more personal and memorable. A mix of borrowed treasures, thrifited gems and handmade touches tells the story of a couple's creativity and community support.

Guests will remember the warmth and thoughtfulness more than the cost of the decor. With smart planning, couples can create a stylish, meaningful celebration that feels rich in every sense except the price tag.



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Fresh Flavors in Every Sip

Signature cocktails have become a staple at modern weddings, giving couples the chance to add personality to their reception menu.

For spring 2026, fresh fruits, fragrant herbs and colorful presentations are defining the season's drink trends. A creative cocktail doesn't just taste good; it becomes part of the celebration's story.

SEASONAL FRUITS SHINE

Spring is the perfect time to take advantage of fresh, ripe produce. Strawberries, blood oranges and cherries add vibrant color and natural sweetness to cocktails. A strawberry-basil mojito, for example, blends muddled berries with rum, mint, basil and a splash of soda for a refreshing twist on a classic.

STRAWBERRY-BASIL MOJITO

Serves 1

Ingredients

3 fresh strawberries, hulled and sliced
4-5 fresh basil leaves
2 fresh mint leaves
1 teaspoon sugar (or simple syrup)

2 ounces white rum
1 ounce fresh lime juice
Club soda to top
Ice

Directions

1. In a tall glass, muddle the strawberries, basil, mint and sugar until the berries release their juices and the herbs are fragrant.
2. Add the rum and lime juice. Stir to combine.
3. Fill the glass with ice and top with club soda.
4. Garnish with a whole strawberry and a sprig of basil for a bright spring look.

Citrus fruits are also in demand, with Meyer lemons and blood oranges bringing tangy brightness. Couples might choose a blood orange margarita for its striking hue and zesty flavor, or a sparkling lemonade spritz for a lighter, lower-alcohol option that pairs well with spring menus.

HERBS AND FLORALS FOR A FRESH TOUCH

Fresh herbs and edible flowers are elevating wedding cocktails this year, adding flavor and visual flair. Lavender-infused gin spritzers have a fragrant aroma that feels perfect for garden receptions. Rosemary sprigs bring a savory balance to gin and tonics or grapefruit-based drinks, while thyme pairs beautifully

with honey and lemon.

Edible blossoms, such as pansies, violets or nasturtiums, make cocktails feel special and seasonally appropriate. Floating a single flower in a coupe glass or freezing petals into ice cubes adds a touch of elegance guests won't forget.

COLORFUL PRESENTATIONS AND MOCKTAIL OPTIONS

Spring cocktails are as much about looks as they are about taste. Bright garnishes, pastel hues and creative glassware set the tone. A cherry blossom martini, tinted soft pink, can become a signature photo-worthy drink, while cucumber-mint coolers served in tall glasses make a crisp choice for outdoor weddings.

Mocktails are also an essential part of today's cocktail program. Couples are offering non-alcoholic versions of their signature drinks so every guest feels included. A peach-basil spritzer or lavender lemonade can be just as festive without the alcohol.

MAKING IT PERSONAL

Many couples name their cocktails after shared memories, favorite travel destinations or even beloved pets. A couple who got engaged in Italy might serve a limoncello spritz, while dog owners could playfully dub their drink "The Bella" or "The Max" after their pup.

Unplugged Weddings

The sight of guests holding phones aloft has become almost as common as bouquets and boutonnieres at modern weddings.

But a growing number of couples are choosing “unplugged weddings,” asking guests to put away their devices and experience the day without screens. The trend is as much about atmosphere as it is about etiquette.

WHY COUPLES GO UNPLUGGED

For many, the decision comes down to presence. Couples want their guests focused on the ceremony, not distracted by capturing the perfect photo. Phones and tablets can also interfere with professional photography, blocking sightlines or casting unwanted light.

Wedding couples who have invested in a photographer to capture memories often don’t want a sea of cell phones in the background of their first kiss.

Others simply want to preserve intimacy. By limiting photos and social media posts, couples can control how and when their wedding images are shared. This helps create a more private, meaningful experience.

SETTING THE TONE GRACEFULLY

Asking guests to go phone-free can be delicate, but there



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are many ways to communicate the request with warmth. Ceremony programs often include a note such as, “We invite you to be fully present with us. Please turn off your phones and put away cameras.” Couples can have officiants or ushers make a brief announcement before the ceremony begins.

Signage is another popular option. Chalkboards or

decorative signs at the entrance can politely reinforce the message. Some couples even phrase it playfully: “We promise to share the photos. Please put away your phones and enjoy the show.”

For receptions, rules are often relaxed, with phones welcome once the formalities are complete. This balance allows couples to maintain

focus during their vows while still giving guests a chance to snap fun, candid shots later.

STRIKING THE RIGHT BALANCE

Not every guest may understand the request, so offering reassurance is important. Couples can let guests know they’ll have access to professional photos after the event. Providing a shared online gallery is a

thoughtful way to include everyone while keeping the ceremony distraction-free.

Ultimately, unplugged weddings are about prioritizing connection over documentation. By asking guests to set aside devices, couples ensure that the most important moments are witnessed with eyes, not screens — creating memories that feel more vivid and heartfelt.

Playful Details, Bold Statements

Brides walking down the aisle in 2026 are embracing a mix of nostalgia, romance and modern flair.

Designers are delivering playful embellishments, innovative fabrics and bold silhouettes that allow every bride to showcase her personal style. From dramatic bows to bubble skirts, this season's bridal fashion is anything but ordinary.

STATEMENT DETAILS TAKE CENTER STAGE

Oversized bows are making a big return, either draped across the back of a gown, cinched at the waist or perched on a shoulder. These eye-catching accents add a touch of whimsy and drama, perfect for brides who want a memorable entrance.

Unique lace is also trending, with designers experimenting beyond traditional floral patterns. Expect geometric motifs, abstract designs and even metallic threads woven into lace overlays, offering fresh takes on a timeless fabric.

Another revival is the Juliet cap, a romantic headpiece (think Romeo's sweetheart) that recalls vintage bridal styles. Often paired with a sheer veil, the cap frames the face with delicate embroidery or beading, striking the right balance between old-world charm and contemporary sophistication.



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MODERN SILHOUETTES WITH MOVEMENT

For brides seeking a fashion-forward edge, draped silhouettes are a standout. Soft folds of fabric create elegant shapes that flatter without feeling overly structured. These gowns flow gracefully with movement, offering comfort as well as style. Basque waists — which dip into a V-shape below the natural waistline — are also reappearing on runways. This detail elongates the torso and adds a regal air to ballgowns and fit-

ted dresses alike.

Bubble skirts are bringing volume back in a playful way. Gathered hemlines create rounded shapes that feel youthful and daring, particularly in shorter styles designed for receptions or after-parties. For brides who want versatility, removable sleeves are one of the most practical trends of the year. They allow a gown to transform from a romantic, long-sleeved ceremony look into a strapless or off-the-shoulder style better suited for dancing.

COLOR AND CUSTOMIZATION

While white will always remain a classic, 2026 is seeing more brides step into color. Pale blues, blush pinks, champagne tones and even soft lavender are finding their way into bridal collections. These hues add personality without straying too far from tradition.

Customization is key, whether through detachable details, bold accessories or mixing unexpected elements. A bride might pair a sleek

gown with a bubble skirt overskirt for the reception, or layer a Juliet cap over a colorful veil.

This year's fashion is about flexibility and storytelling, creating a look that reflects who the bride is and how she wants to be remembered.

In 2026, bridal fashion celebrates both heritage and individuality.

With so many options, brides can feel free to be bold, romantic or playful and sometimes all three in one unforgettable ensemble.