

Tuxedos top formal wear list

By DEB PEDERSON

The traditional tuxedo, black with tails, is the leading look in men's formal wear this spring, Ben Simon's fashion coordinator Allen Barret said.

Charcoal gray, a new color in tuxedos this spring, also is popular, Barret said.

"Gray and black Bill Blass' and black Pierre Cardin's are the two big ones," Max I. Walker Assistant Manager Mark Volenec said.

A tuxedo style comprises several elements, including coat design, color, shirt design and accessories.

New this spring in coat design is the double-breasted coat, Barret said. The left side of the coat is lapped over the right and buttoned inside the left side. This design is for tailcoats or standard coats rather than cutaways.

Coat design encompasses tails, cutaways or the standard design. Tailcoats are waist-length in the front and have two long skirts in the back. Cutaways have skirts tapering from the front to form tails at the back.

"Tailcoats are more popular than cutaways," Volenec said.

The collar on the coat is changing from a wide width to a medium-sized width. Satin collars also are gaining popularity, Volenec said.

Tuxedos are available in a wide range of colors. New this spring are charcoal-gray, pink and lavender. Other colors include brown, dusty pink, lilac, apricot, peach, mint and blue. Navy blue is on the way out, Barret said.

Gray and black tuxedos are the preference for formal occasions, Barret said.

Pastel colors and brown are worn mainly to proms.

Wedding attendants wear the standard tuxedo in the wedding colors or in gray or black.

For the bridegroom, a white tuxedo with tails is preferred for formal weddings. Gray cutaways also are popular.

Concerning shirts, he said, pleats are in higher demand than ruffles.

"The ruffles are for proms," Barret said. "They're considered too colory or showy for a wedding."

The pleated shirts come in pink, gray, lavender and white, with white pleats.

"Wing collars are preferred over the traditional collar," Volenec said.

Bow ties and cummerbunds are the most popular accessories, he said. Ascots are worn with cutaways or tails and a vest can be worn instead of a cummerbund.

During May, June and July, it is a good idea to reserve a rented tuxedo a month in advance, Barret said, because of many weddings during that time.

If a number of tuxedos are being rented for a wedding, reserving them well in advance will help in coordinating colors and style. It also will help in getting the proper sizes.

Rental costs anywhere from \$36 to \$54. This includes coat, pants, shirt and some accessories. Some rentals also include shoes.

The cost of buying a tuxedo is \$215 to \$535, Volenec said.

"There seems to be a trend toward buying tuxedos," Barret said. "It makes more sense to buy it if you use a tuxedo four or five times in one year."

Another advantage of owning a tuxedo is a proper fit, Barret said.

Formal wear shops in Lincoln include Ben Simon's Inc., Brandeis, Holway Rent-A-Tux and Max I. Walker Formal Wear.

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