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Wedding plans

Big \$\$\$\$\$\$\$ nuptial

How to have the most flamboyant, lavish wedding this side of Vegas

By Lise Olsen
Senior Reporter

ful flowers at Gaga's Greenery are "Rubrum Lillies," with huge pink, white and burgundy glooms.

Gaga's Greenery would build me a bouquet that "goes clear to the floor" with Rubrum lillies, orchids, roses, hawaiian and tropical flowers for about \$500. Suitably inferior, but impressive bouquets for the maids would be about \$100 each using Rubrum lillies. Boutonnieres run about \$10 each with the lillies.

Max I. Walker, unfortunately for my spendthrift soul, has a sale on tuxedo rentals. I could snatch the groom's Pierre Cardin grey suit with pin stripes (regularly \$52) for free and pay only \$25 each for a wedding party of five groomsmen and two ushers.

But why not add \$18 each for top hats and \$6 each for gloves? Live a little.

Now forget the frock and consider the feast.

The Cornhusker chef will supply me with lots of expensive food I can't pronounce like "chaud-froide," (whole fish, leg of lamb or whole ham showpieces) for a mere \$100 to \$400 per item.

Also throw in some impressive watermelon baskets cut in the shape of birds and imported cheeses (like brie, camambert and gruyere).

But what's a wedding without a little sax? Johnny Reno and the Sax Maniacs will make the trip up from Texas for \$3,500 on a weekend night.

And let's not forget the drinks. Six cases of Dom Perignon costing \$99.95 a bottle should be a quality toast for

the bride. A bargain at \$7,200.

And to make sure the reception is enjoyably forgettable, why not sponsor the bar and serve premium liquors like Chivas Regal and Johnny Walker Red?

A two-hour-long reception where each of 500 guests drank about four drinks would cost dad about \$5,000.

Food figured at about \$12 per person for all the best would be about \$6,000.

Crystal china, candelabras, champagne fountains, fancy table cloths and room rental would be on the house at the Cornhusker. Don't forget a 16 percent gratuity and 5 percent tax. And just for the heck of it, throw in two ice sculptures at \$200 each.

I always have liked fig trees. Large ones cost about \$200 each at Gaga's. Why not buy 50 and give them away as party favors?

Finally, picture a four-tier cake with fountains on two sides and the top decorated with crystal figurines. Top it all off with about two dozen Rubrum lillies at \$240.

A cake like that could serve 1,000 people at a rough cost of \$250 plus \$30 for fountain rental and \$100 for the cake top, at Cake and Ceramic Factory.

I was advised to use my imagination with the cake, so for a final touch I decided to throw a couple of live lovebirds in a cage on top of the cake, \$90 a pair at Pet Ark. Hopefully they won't get nasty, but just in case, I think I'll line the cage with a couple of extra wedding issues.

The wedding my father could never afford:

My dad is a professor at UNL. His salary, like the salaries of other professors here at this budget-cut riddled institution, is not spectacular.

So when I get married, (if I ever do) it'll probably be in a rent-free park. I'll be wearing a hand-me-down wedding dress. The big money will be spent on the reception at Sandy's.

But, just for the moment, let's forget the sensibilities and the dollars and cents.

Let's think about sensation. What if my dad was NU President Ronald Rosken, or Gov. Bob Kerrey or someone really loaded.

What could I buy in Lincoln to create a monstrous matrimonial masterpiece to rival Princess Di's?

Here is my version of the \$41,109 wedding.

Let's start with a simple frock — a wedding gown, in white (of course) with thousands of hand-sewn sequins and beads. Add an 8-foot train and a cathedral length veil with lace appliques.

That expensive ensemble costs about \$2,200 at J'Maries Bridal Shop.

I could pick up five chic, satin brides maids dresses for about \$250 apiece.

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