

Consultant says brides choose practical tableware for homes

By Micki Haller
Senior Editor

Matrimony is the fulcrum that balances the worlds of youth and adulthood, solitaire and unity, paper plates and fine dining.

Most young couples decide to start out their wedded bliss with a set of new dishes.

Choosing dinnerware for the first time, however, can be a formidable task. Stainless silverware or sterling; hand-cut or machine-cut crystal; a choice between stoneware, fine china or bone china for plates.

For this reason, many stores offer a bridal registry service to help brides choose their dinnerware.

Amber Donahue, bridal consultant at Dillard's Downtown, said there are a lot of styles available.

"You have to get a feel for what the bride likes," she said.

Donahue said many brides are choosing to be practical in their dinnerware. Lots of them are preferring stoneware over china, choosing dishwasher and microwave-safe products, and choosing sets that work for everyday use.

"The trends are going definitely more casual these days," she said. "Brides are getting a little more practical."

Many brides are choosing stainless steel silverware for their tables, Donahue said.

Stainless steel flatware can sell for as low as \$18 per place setting. Sterling silver, however, can range from \$150 to \$500 for a place setting.

Sterling silver can last for many years, but acidic or salty foods can eat away at the natural beauty.

Brides are also going for stoneware when choosing dinner plates.

Donahue said. Stoneware is less expensive and can be used everyday.

The china manufacturing companies are responding with more practical dinnerware, Donahue said. They are making their dinnerware microwave-safe by removing metal bands. Also, the companies are bringing prices down to make their dishes more affordable.

Prices for dishes can range from \$10 to \$350 a place setting, Donahue said.

When putting together a table, the bride has to consider how the flatware, plates and glasses all look together.

Donahue said the two-to-one rule works well when combining dinnerware. Usually, two patterned and one plain element, or two plain and one patterned element work best in a table setting.

For instance, the flatware may be quite elaborate, while the dinnerware and crystal may be quite simple.

Donahue said three patterned elements make a table look too busy, while three plain elements provides no focal point for the table.

Other than that, the rules for combining plates, flatware and glasses are pretty flexible.

"These days, you can put just about anything together," she said.

Donahue said more brides are buying dinnerware, despite the fact that an eight-place setting with serving pieces might run about \$3,000.

"I think that brides are definitely using them (the dishes) more often," she said.

Surprisingly, even grooms are getting into the act.

"We're also seeing a lot of grooms coming in," Donahue said.



Allen Schaben/Daily Nebraskan

Heart and wedding bell ornaments have become a popular replacement for the standard bride and groom cake top. This silk and crystal heart creation was supplied by Mettler Family Bakery of Lincoln for Wedding Fair '89.

Wedding fairs can answer questions

By Laura Smith
Staff Reporter

Bridal fairs can help ease the mind and frazzled nerves of a soon-to-be bride or groom by bringing everything they need to know into one location.

During the past month, couples have had the chance to get ideas for their weddings at two bridal fairs -- the KFOR Bridal Forum and The Wedding Fair '89.

For people who are planning a

wedding, the bridal fair shows them who they need to talk to, said Brad Hartman, KFOR's station manager.

He said many people need to be reminded about different aspects of planning a wedding and bridal fairs make them say, "Oh yeah, I forgot about that."

Glen Thomas, a staff associate at the Lutheran Student Center, said he attended both shows and found them really helpful. He found a florist for his December 30

wedding; he hadn't had one before the shows.

Hartman said that years ago the shows were strictly for the brides and their mothers and girlfriends, but now more men are showing up.

Jeff Brehm, manager of Holway Rent-A-Tux, which was one of the sponsors of The Wedding Fair '89, said their show has always been called The Wedding Fair and not "bridal fair" so that men will attend the show.

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Couples deal with premarital jitters through sessions

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Fact and Feeling Inventory Tests. The fact test is designed to help couples identify and work on disagreements on issues such as children and in-laws. The feelings inventory lists 100 situations with which couples must indicate how much they agree or disagree. They compare their answers to the tests and talk about the results, he said.

Counseling is more beneficial for some than for others, Schmid said. Generally, he said, older people and people who were previously married tend to be surprised less about each other than those who've never been married.

Those who've been married before tend to take the counseling especially seriously because they don't want to experience divorce again, he said.

Schmid said he admires those who decide to try marriage again. "It takes a lot of courage," he said.