

PELICAN HILL®

ON THE COAST *of* NEWPORT BEACH



WEDDING TRENDS

THE MAKING OF PELICAN HILL

A CONVERSATION *with* WING LAM



WHAT'S **HOT IN** *Spring* **THE KNOT**

By Debbie Lavdas



Inspired by social media and pop culture, today's brides hashtag their weddings, brainstorm on Pinterest, don multiple dresses and request custom-designed dance floors. Elaborate menus include gluten-free fare, bridesmaids dresses no longer need to match and couples are ready to splurge on their walk down the aisle.

These white-hot wedding trends are generating some of the most lavish and out-of-the-box marriage ceremonies and celebrations seen in years, according to three of Southern California's top event planners.

"Spending is indeed trending in weddings again," said Colin Cowie, the popular lifestyle guru of glamour and elegance. "It's great to see—a sign that the markets are stronger and people are spending with more confidence."

Today's brides, armed with social-media savvy and generous budgets, don't want to be told what to do and how to do it. They aren't afraid to tweak longstanding traditions, and adorn their bouquets with trinkets and jewelry, wear several dresses throughout their big day and allow their bridesmaids to pick their own dress styles.

"Brides simply pick a color and the women (bridesmaids) get to shop for themselves," said Yifat Oren, a renowned event producer based in Los Angeles. "It adds more character."

Other new trends include brides requesting vintage cocktails, especially those infused with specialty tequila, and flower arrangements that feature only a single color or flower, Oren said.

Cowie, who has planned weddings for celebrities and other high-profile clients, said, "Five to 10 years ago, brides wanted to work with professionals for a wedding formula of how to do things. Today, she wants to be well informed and looks to us to guide her intelligently, so she can make the decisions. With the advent of Pinterest and places such as ColinCowieWeddings.com and other inspiration-finders, brides wholeheartedly embrace the details. These weddings are the Olympics of details."

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— Jeannie Savage



Photos by John & Joseph Photography and Caroline Tran for Jeannie Savage

Wedding and event planner Jeannie Savage agrees that social media has changed the wedding process.

“Brides find the most absurd, funky photos on Pinterest and say, ‘I want this!’ Social media is strongly influencing all things wedding, including



Photos from Colin Cowie Enterprises

iPad docking stations with photo booth companies. People want that instant social-media gratification,” said Savage, who owns Details Details in Irvine, California.

Pop culture is also responsible for the late-night food trends, many inspired by *Food Network* shows and the popular food truck wars.

“Unique, fun and mini is the key—from mini Korean BBQ tacos in lime cut-outs to pizza shaped into pinwheels,” Savage said.

Modern couples also are mindfully foodie-accommodating—going out of their way to cater

to the growing number of vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free guests. “My brides are very conscious of others. I have one bride who served two cakes: one was traditional, the other was completely gluten-free, as 10 percent of her guests were gluten-free. This is across the board, too, from corn tortilla appetizers (versus flour) to entire dessert bars that are gluten-free,” said Savage.

With the abundance of special requests, chefs and catering teams are required to also be more accommodating.

“Pelican Hill® and their catering staff are perfect for these kinds of special requests,” Savage said. “Not all hotels can accommodate these requests. Pelican Hill takes it seriously.”

Cowie concurred that modern “superfood” is in, noting that healthy kale trumps truffle oil these days. “We’re most certainly seeing more and more wedding couples and culinary teams working harder together to accommodate guests these days. Current brides are embracing local, organic and farm-to-table.”

Brides are also entertaining less customary dining. “Formal weddings aren’t doing sit-down dinners as much. People don’t want to sit down as long,” said Oren.

Oren affirmed the special-request value of having a wedding at the Resort, due to the culinary team’s devotion to details and passion to accommodate each and every directive. “Pelican Hill is at the top of their

game for luxury and service; the sky’s the limit for specific requests, from menu options to room design.”

Oren called out another prevalent trend: transforming a space. Planners get many

requests to drape off rooms, cover art and to add grand chandelier treatments. Custom dance floors are also everywhere you turn.

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Photos from Amy & Stuart Photography
for Yifat Oren

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“There is a growing appreciation to move beyond the cookie-cutter, and the transforming of space allows brides to personalize the wedding experience based on their preferences and tastes,” Oren said. “Our team is comprised of extraordinary artisans, fabric makers and set designers that can create just about anything someone may dream up.”

Cowie added: “There are amazing, amazing finishes and contact adhesives out there now, almost like a wallpaper, but created for a dance floor, so they’re very heavy duty for high traffic. You can have a glamorous look of diamonds, where the dancers become the focal point of the room.”

Both Savage and Oren have indulged many brides at The Resort at Pelican Hill®, where privacy is so important for wedding couples.

“Pelican Hill® is so lovely and ideal with the ceremony and reception site positioned away from the hotel, so there aren’t onlookers,”

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Oren said. “Pelican Hill affords its guests a transported experience, where each turn reveals something new and inviting, taking them to a place they have not yet seen. A wedding celebrates love and union, and space plays a critical role in capturing that. Pelican Hill provides the ideal canvas to create the ultimate wedding celebration.”

Cowie is awaiting the perfect opportunity to plan an event at the Resort; saying it is “high, high, high” on his wedding radar.

“The property is spectacularly done,” noted Cowie. “It’s designed from a guest’s point of view, as well as from a party planner’s point of view. There’s a unique sense of arrival, spectacular options and views, the space was really well thought out. My favorite wedding is always my next wedding—perhaps it will be at Pelican Hill.” 🌟

