

When a woman gets engaged, one of the first things that pops into her mind is what to wear when she walks down the aisle. But picking the perfect gown and accessories can be a daunting task even for the most organized, focused bride.

Shaping The Stylish Bride

Julie Sabatino took nearly four months and spent time in more than a hundred dressing rooms before she found the gown she wanted, only to realize that she still had to find accessories like a veil, tiara, necklace, earrings, bracelet, and shoes. An exhausted Sabatino found herself wishing for a personal bridal consultant who could guide her through the crucial fashion decisions leading up to the most important day of her life. In that moment, *The Stylish Bride* was born.

Within months of her wedding, Sabatino had left her prestigious job on Wall Street and enrolled in the Fashion Institute of Technology. After a stint at couture designer Amsale assisting brides as a personal shopper, she went out on her own to found *The Stylish Bride*, a New York-based bridal fashion and style consulting service.

"I've loved fashion since I was a child," says Sabatino, reminiscing about dressing paper dolls and playing with sewing machines. "My love for the bridal industry came through my own experience as a bride."

Committed to making the bridal experience "fun and stress-free," Sabatino offers brides an unrivaled, inside-the-industry expertise in choosing the idyllic gown, accessories, and undergarments, all with an eye on overall wedding-day theme and presentation. She will even outfit the bridal party, mother-of-the-bride, groomsmen, and groom.

Sabatino starts by evaluating her clients' personal style, asking questions about their favorite designers, what they would wear to various events, and what parts of their body they consider assets and flaws. Next, she determines which designers complement

the bride's (or couple's) style and schedules back-to-back appointments at bridal salons, department stores, boutiques, and sample sales.

Accompanying the bride, Sabatino chooses and critiques each look, many times bringing along pre-selected accessories that allow the bride to visualize her appearance as a whole. A limo and lunch can be arranged for the out-of-town bride or a client looking to make their consultation a luxury shopping experience.

"What surprised me most about the entire experience of having Julie as a bridal stylist was how unbelievably helpful she was," says Anne Carbonara, a *Stylish Bride* client. "Her experience meant that I was able to get a much better dress, within my budget, than I would have [been able to] purchase otherwise."

"The fashion world in New York is huge, complicated, intimidating, and confusing for brides," adds Carbonara. "What takes [Julie] 10 minutes to figure out may take a bride weeks of running around."

Many brides will find their top-three gown picks in one day of appointments; the frills tend to follow soon thereafter. On the wedding day, Sabatino will show up at the bride's house with a promise that the dress will be wrinkle-free, intact, bustled, and ready for the walk down the aisle.

Being invited to be part of such an intimate day, assisting brides in their hours of nuptial anxieties preceding the wedding is "one of the most gratifying experiences," notes Sabatino. "I love what I do... It feels good to be able to take some of [the bride's] stress away."

Written by Jessica Latimer



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Julie Sabatino, *The Stylish Bride*
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