Special Valentine's Day 2009 Bridal Edition

An inside look at walking down the aisle

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Front Page Credits

Photo by Shanna Taylor, cartoon by Claire Taylor, design by Charly Edsitty

Wedding day tales and myths

By Caley Carmichael Reporter

First comes love, then comes marriage, but along with it comes infinite precautions and superstition of the wedding day. Nuptials abound with legends and old wives tales that still play a role in modern weddings.

No bride wants rain on her wedding day, and for good reason. According to "Wedding Day Customs and Folklore" by Margaret Baker, a wedding-day thunderstorm symbolically condemns the couple to infertility, and rain foreshadows future tears. Snowfall during the marriage service suggests an overflow of riches for the newlyweds. A solar eclipse on your wedding night is an omen of dark fortunes to come.

The old Proverb, "Happy Is the Bride the Sun Shines On," rings true for Van senior and newlywed, Anna Waldrop. She has vivid recollections of her wedding day forecast.

"It was December and supposed to be rainy and cloudy, but it was perfect outside. We were blessed to have such a beautiful day," Waldrop said.

There are also many old tales about a bride's wedding dress. According to the book, the French believe the number of buttons on a bride's wedding dress indicates life's longevity. Newlyweds should refrain from selling, dying or remodeling a wedding dress, lest they jeopardize marriage happiness.

Most people in the Western world know that white wedding dresses represent purity.

But other colors in wedding dresses also have meanings. "During the Revolution, American brides favored red, the color of defiance," Baker said in her book.

Green is known to be an unlucky color to wear. "It implies light morals with a predilection for outdoor lovemaking and a grass-stained gown as a natural outcome," according to the book.

Wedding rings bear eternal meaning to those that possess one. "It is a symbol to me that I am really loved and that my husband is committed to me for life," Waldrop said.

But what happens if the ring ever falls off? According to author Ethan L. Urlin, the rigid consequence is the heralded death of one member of the couple. Ancient theories explain the significance of the ring finger.

"The wedding ring is worn on the fourth finger of the left hand because a small artery runs from this finger to the heart," according to Urlin's book "A Short History of Marriage."

Lively beliefs of wedding fortunes surround a bride's wedding veil. Baker's book explains that it is bad luck to put on the veil before the wedding day. This action could result in an unhappy marriage, abandonment of the bride, or even death before the wedding. "Nor should a bride allow a friend to try on the wedding veil, or the friend may run off with the newly-made husband," the book said.

In decades to come, it will be our turn to come up with exaggerations and unverified claims to tell the younger generation. Until then, try to refrain from wearing green on your wedding day.

Perfect proposal should complement relationship

By Buddy Steele Reporter

I walked through the door to my house and the ring was already in my pocket. My girlfriend, Whitney Schaefer, a Spring Valley senior, was standing in the bathroom putting on makeup. I was shaking from nervousness and I kept fidgeting with my pocket.

I had told her that I was going to meet with a professor, but in fact I had gone to Boozer's Jewelry, located on Valley Mills, to pick up the engagement ring that I had left there two weeks before to be cleaned and sized.

It was a two-carat diamond solitaire in a platinum setting which had belonged to my great-grandmother.

I wanted to be so smooth when proposing. I wanted it to be romantic and beautiful and amazing. I didn't really know where or how I would propose but it had to be perfect.

As luck would have it, it was not done on a beautiful beach or at an amazing surprise party or even at a fancy dinner; it was in the bathroom. She figured out that I had the ring, mostly due to the fact that I was shaking, sweating and couldn't provide any details concerning the fake meeting with my professor.

Oh, and she felt my pocket and said, "Oh my God, you have it! Do it right now! Ask me now!"

This was followed by her shouting, "Yes" and giggling several times before I even dropped to one knee and asked her. I'm sorry; did I say dropped to one knee? Because what I meant to say was two knees. That's right. Instead of romantically proposing on one knee, I used both knees, which made me look kind of like a dwarf or a little kid begging for candy.

I finally popped the question and we were engaged.

Later that night, I told her that I wished it would have been more romantic and spontaneous and she said back to me, "That wouldn't really be our style." She was right. We aren't the typical couple, especially not the typical "Baylor couple."

When it comes to popping the question, it shouldn't matter how it's done or how spectacular and grandiose it is.

What is important is making sure it fits

you. This is true with all aspects of relationships. I've had friends that have proposed at concerts in front of thousands of people and I've had friends that just decided that they would get married and then went to pick out a ring together.

There's no foolproof way to make a proposal perfect. It just has to come from the



 Buddy Steele/Courtesy photo
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 Fiancees Buddy Steele and Whitney Schaefer
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 show of her engagement ring after she said
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 "yes."
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heart. If you do what fits you both best, it will still be beautiful and romantic.

However, there are some things to consider when embarking on the road to engagement.

•When shopping for a diamond, always consider the four C's: cut, color, clarity, and carat weight.

•Make sure you know her ring size. You don't want to slide the ring on and have it stop halfway. Also, if this does happen, don't look at her and shout, "Whoa, sausage fingers!"

•The generally accepted rule is that a man is supposed to spend three months' salary on the ring. Since most people reading this are students with limited incomes, you might want to consider one of those plastic spider Halloween rings ... affordable, colorful and classy.

•When proposing, do it in a way that fits you both. If she considers herself a little princess, don't propose at a death metal concert.

Getting a ring and proposing is one of the most stressful things you will ever do, but it will also be one of your happiest moments. Good luck to all future husbands and wives.



Photo Illustration by Shanna Taylor/Lariat Staff

Loyal bridesmaids tend to support their brides, no matter how awful their picks for bridesmaid dresses are. Fort Worth senior Lori Cotton is wearing an overdone dress, an example of what some bridesmaids have to endure.

Avoid bridesmaid dress blunders

Megan Duron Reporter

More than two million couples will tie the knot this year, according to U.S. wedding statistics found on the Bridal Association of America's Web site. With wedding season approaching, there's a good chance you will be included in that number at some point in the near future.

If you're lucky enough to be a bridesmaid or a groomsman, it is your responsibility to cater to the bride or groom's every need, comfort them when they get cold feet and reinforce their every decision, even if that means sporting the most hideous bridesmaids' dress you have ever laid eyes on.

It is a notorious dread of every bridesmaid: the dress. As a loyal bridesmaid, you want to support whatever your bride-to-be chooses for you to wear. But that means you may be forced to wear a dress that flirts with the line between somewhat appropriate and repugnant.

Chicago junior Lucy Wenk remembers her experience as a bridesmaid.

"I've only been a bridesmaid once, but the one time I was, the dress was full of ruffles and made me look like a cake," Wenk said. "When I'm a bride, I'm going to make sure my bridesmaids go with me to pick out their dresses."

No matter how unsightly you feel wearing the dress, it is your duty to display it proudly. Flower Mound junior Anna Ligon is a great example of how to show proper bridesmaid etiquette.

"The first time I was a bridesmaid was at my sister's wedding in 2002. Our dresses were floor length and evergreen, with sleeves and shoulder pads. I felt like a Christmas tree, but I knew it was her day, so I didn't want to complain," she said.

Flower Mound junior Jessica Trigsted has seen bridesmaid attire that was so bad, it was distracting.

"I attended a Renaissance-themed wedding for my friend Catherine where the bridesmaids were forced to wear gigantic dresses," Trigsted said. "The dresses were so big the bridesmaids were really spaced apart. The whole wedding I couldn't pay attention to the bride."

So, ladies, as future brides, what should you avoid when picking out your bridesmaid dresses? Shiny, glossy, metallic material is never a hit. Steer clear of ruffles and bows unless your bridesmaids are still in kindergarten. Avoid head wear. As crazy as every girl is for Sarah Jessica Parker's style, making your bridesmaids wear a giant hat like she did in "Sex and the City" will be sure to collect some complaints. Avoid sheer flimsy materials like chiffon; let's face it, the ethereal effect isn't what it used to be.

In the end, it's better to let your bridesmaids' dresses reflect the same intricate deliberation you put into your own dress. A happy bridesmaid means a happy bride. Plus, you never know when you will be called to make an appearance in their weddings and you know you would want the

Getting cold feet? Marriage tips

"The best advice I got was if I feel like not doing something, I probably should do it. Like if I don't feel like doing the dishes, I probably should do them. The worst was probably anything that talked about the guy's role being a dominating one. It's really more of a partnership." -Joey Armstrong, seminary student graduate student

"Since I married a man from South Dakota someone gave me a pair of red long johns so I wouldn't get cold." -Jean Ryther, exit checker at Moody Memorial Library

"The best advice anyone can give you is to follow your heart and listen to your mother because moms are usually right." -**Jimmie Sauer, circulation** assistant at Moody Memorial Library

"Wait, wait, wait, wait! Don't settle. I married at the age of 53 for the first time." -Dr. Linda Walker-Kennedy, associate professor of the English department

"My father told me to never let my wife know how much money I had, but I've never followed it."-**Dr. Maurice Hunt,** research professor in the English department

"My grandmother told me, 'It's good if you don't both argue all the time,' and I just thought that was really funny, but I guess there's some truth to it. If you both have to win every argument that wouldn't work out very well."- **Dr. Clay Butler, linguistics professo**r

"Take 15 minutes every day to sit and talk-no radio, no TV, no nothing, just sit and talk with each other. We're still doing that almost every day. It is distinctly the best advice I have ever gotten." -**Dr. Tom Hanks, English professor**



More than dress

"Fredricka" by Maggie Sottero. Available at Georgio's Bridal Salon in Waco.

By Lynn Ngo **Opinion Editor**

Saying yes to the dress can be a pretty tough ordeal.

It's no secret, the wedding dress is probably the most important dress a woman will ever slip on. Obviously, because what woman doesn't want to

feel beautiful on her wedding day? What most guys don't understand is that there's more to a wedding dress than what meets the

More important than the color, cut and fit of a wedding dress is the significance, the meaning it

holds for every woman. As four brides-to-be tried on wedding dresses, we learned what it means to them, why it's more than just a dress.

"I work with older adults and this happens a lot. Even though they've forgotten so many other memories, they still want to look at their wedding pictures. There's this one lady that I go to see and every time either she points at her wedding picture or looks at my ring. She wants to think about her wedding even though she has little memory of so many other things. The wed-ding is still important to her even after all these years, to look back at her dress."

Houston senior Laura Wilgus Wedding date: July 13, 2009 Pictured left.

you have these dreams about getting married. You envision the perfect wedding and you envision your wedding dress. You want it to embody the same kind of vision that you had when you were younger."

Houston senior Emily Baker Wedding date: May 23, 2009 Pictured right.



'Fresa" by La Sposa. Available at Georgio's Bridal Salon in Waco. Sarah Morris/Contributor

"There is only one happiness in life – to love and to be loved." — George Sand

Shanna Taylor/Lariat Staff

"From being a little girl,

"Allison Marie" by Maggie Sottero. Available at Georgio's Bridal Salon in Waco.





"It was the first time I felt like I was getting married. It was the fourth dress I tried on. I think you just know. Same thing about marriage. People say that about finding the perfect person. It's the same with the dress - you feel vour best."

'T8792" by David's Bridal Collection. Available at David's Bridal in Waco.

Fort Worth senior Lauren Cremeens Wedding date: June 13, 2009 Pictured above.

Sarah Morris/Contribute

"I mean I would like to feel beautiful of course. This is what I'm going to be wearing when I take on a new role, when my family gives me away to someone else. It means so much more than being beautiful."

Houston senior Cecilly Williamson Wedding Date: December 2010. Pictured right.

"Blu: 4163 Taffeta" by Mori Lee. Available at Georgio's Bridal Salon in Waco.

"Evita" by Maggie Sottero. Available at Georgio's Bridal Salon in Waco.



Special thanks to David's Bridal and Georgio's Bridal Salon for providing the dresses.

Go Dutch

Study abroad students discover differences in cultural love, marriage

By Claire Moncla and Rachel Rutledge Reporters

Valentine's Day is a very important holiday to many college students. With the barrage of commercials advertising chocolates, flowers and happy couples, it is easy to become self absorbed. However, foreign views on dating and weddings may put Valentine's Day in perspective.

Relationships in The Netherlands differ from the United States in theory and practice. In the United States, especially among college students, casual dating is becoming an accepted practice. But it is not common in Dutch culture.

"Dating is more conservative here," Casey O'Dell, a Baylor alumna who now works for the University of Maastricht, said. "It's serial dating, not casual dating."

O'Dell came to The Netherlands in January 2004 as a graduate assistant in the Baylor in Maastricht program. Her introduction to Dutch dating was startling when she realized that after one date, a couple was considered to be boyfriend and girlfriend. She eventually warmed to the idea after meeting Jerome Spronken, a Dutch student, and married him in June 2005.

A reverse example of O'Dell and Spronken, is the relationship between Atticus Mullikin, an American, and Nathalie Ummels, his Dutch wife, who both work at the University of Maastricht. Mullikin surprised Ummels by proposing after three weeks of knowing her. Mullikin broke the social norm by asking Ummels to marry him before properly meeting the family, which is normally a necessity in Dutch culture.

The Dutch also have different views on

marriage. Weddings in America are grand occasions that require months, if not a year of planning and large amounts of money to celebrate the union.

In The Netherlands, weddings are a visual expression of the legal formality of marriage.

"It's not as romanticized," O'Dell said.

Because of this view, couples usually live together for several years to confirm compatibility in all areas of life before marrying each other.

"People do everything you do when you're married before they get married," Mullikin said.

This may include having children and buying a house.

The actual ceremony of marriage in The Netherlands is unlike the American ceremony as well because they have two of them.

"Civil and religious ceremonies are equally important here," Mullikin said.

Most couples sign a prenuptial agreement stating intentions while married and

if separated.

"It's a very Dutch thing to cover all of your bases," Ummels said.

Though the Dutch do have receptions, the American practice of having lavish receptions with numerous guests and expensive cuisine would not be found in The Netherlands.

"Debt is not an issue here, especially not for weddings," O'Dell said.

Couples save money for their wedding, which is why many wait until they are in their 30s to marry.

Insight into the practicality of Dutch relationships and weddings puts Valentine's Day into a less superficial perspective.

"There is more room to have a closeknit relationship here; you can really enjoy being together," Mullikin said.

American couples can learn important lessons from Dutch culture. The most important aspect of Valentine's Day is not fancy cards, flowers, lavish receptions and expensive dresses; it is relationships, no matter the country

or custom.

Southerners spare no expense

Southern brides hold nothing back, despite the economy

By Julie Sessions Reporter

When it comes to weddings, the South has their own way of doing things.

"Southern culture tends to be more ceremonial in general, and a wedding is the epitome of ceremony and tradition," Tyler senior Lindsey Templeton said. "Southern brides do tend to think big when it comes to their weddings."

In a recent survey from theWeddingReport.com, the average bride today spends anywhere from \$28,732 to \$29,614 for a wedding of 100-200 guests. In Texas and other parts of the South, however, that number is increased by about 10 percent. In fact, brides in Houston, Dallas and other major Texas metropolitans spend as much as \$32,000 on their ultra-personalized events. From the dress to the flowers to the cake, there are a lot of things to consider when planning for the big day, and many that brides in the South traditionally don't mind paying a little extra for.

"I think most girls at Baylor would love to get married right out of college and have a huge wedding," Katy junior Carla Theilig said. "They want their wedding to be a dream come true."

But with recent changes in the economy, it's no secret that many Americans have begun to cut back on luxury items and devote their financial resources to more "practical" uses.

According to the Wedding Report, many parts of the U.S. have cut back on wedding spending in recent years because of changes in the economy. Nationally, newly-engaged couples were spending five percent less on their weddings in 2008 as they had in 2007.

"Some vendors are giving out little specials here and there on things like flowers, cakes and other services, and I think that's great," Houston sophomore Alyssa Savana said. "They are trying to make it easier on those brides that are taking things into consideration like the economy."

Yet, with parts of the country cutting back as much as \$2,000 on their wedding budgets last year, the South seemed set on not compromising on the geographically cultured and time-honored tradition of the

(Baylor women) want their wedding to be a dream come true.

Carla Theilig Katy junior

big, fairy tale wedding.

And a unique statistic in the average marriage age is certainly something that the South sets its own trend in. According to a 2009 national survey from the Wedding Report, the average bride nationally is approximately 26 years old at the time of her wedding and the average groom is 28. The average marriage age of a bride or groom in southe r n states, however, tends to be two to four y e a r s younger. W hile there's no lling what

telling what new fads in gowns, wedding colors and arrangements will

floral take the

take the country by storm when "wedding season" officially strikes up in June, one thing is deemed certain for this year's upcoming bridal forecast: these southern belles and their fabulous big days will continue to give root to the phrase "go big or go home."

"You're only as limited as you're creativity," Templeton said. "If you really do your research, you can find a way to make your dream wedding work."

Favors last on list, first in flavor

By Sean Doerre Reporter

Cake, check. Flowers, check. Dress, check. Wedding Favors, Uh-Oh.

The small trinkets known as wedding favors are often the last item on any couple's to-do list before a wedding date. There are many simple and cheap options that will please any wed-

ding guest. 'I think it is more

about the people's personality, if it is something they have taken the time to infuse into the entire day, I feel like they want to send their guests home with something to remember that day by," said Lauren

Kelly, owner and creative director of Lauren Kelly Events, a Waco weddingplanning company. "So I think it is really going to be based on the personality of the couple."

Just as there is a wedding style to fit every taste, there is a wedding favor to fit each one of those styles. The feature that brings all of these styles together is the fact that most of today's wedding favors are customizable.

The thing I have seen most recently are the M&Ms (Chocolate Candy) that you can special order color and they will also print dates and they will also put your picture on it," said Lois Ferguson, a wedding day consultant in Waco.

Other companies have begun to offer special ordering for the big day. There

are customizable water bottles, key chains and pens made to fit an individual's specific wedding.

In contrast with all of the customizable options, Ferguson said that homemade items beat store-bought every time

"I loved the wedding where the bride's older sister had made cookies," Ferguson said. "She had made their five favorite cookies and they were served in a cookie jar and people could help themselves to cookies.3

The homemade option not only allows guests to see that the bride and groom put some effort into the wedding favor, it also

cuts out the hassle of dealing with a company and reduces the cost of the wedding.

"I always say homemade is better," Kelly said. "Give them something to remember you by that no one else is going to have."

Other consumable options such as mints, gum balls, hot chocolate mix, jelly beans and muffin mixes present a chance for budget cutting as well.

"If you put the thought into it, even if it is not very expensive, it can still be something really special," Kelly said

Another inexpensive but neat alternative is having seed packet wedding favors. Using flower seeds as a wedding favor can suggest new growth, just like a wedding marks a new beginning in the couple's life.

From customizable to cost-cutting to just the plain weird, wedding favors can take many forms. With items like bandages, coasters and heart-shaped measuring

spoons, the choice is not always easy. "I went to one where each person had colored glass, but they (the bride and а groom) didn't have their name or date on the glass," Ferguson said. "I just thought that was a little strange."

In today's technology-based society, there are Web sites that cater to individuals looking for help on wedding favors. Myweddingfavors.com and beau-coup. c o m offer databases of information for wedding favor ideas. T h sites' sug-

candles, bottle corks, soaps and bookmarks to help guests

gestions

include

scented

Photo Illustration by Stephen Green/Lariat Staff

remember the special day.

Another option is to provide each guest with a personalized disposable camera, which allows the guest to capture their moments from the wedding and then later share them with the bride and groom.

"I really like it when couples do wedding favors that are donations to their favorite charity in the guests name," Kelly said. "That they would honor their guests like that is pretty special."

Inexpensive centerpieces promote unique style

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By Dache Johnson Reporter

Your wedding day is arguably the most important day of your life. So it goes to follow that the amount of money you spend should reflect that, right?

Not necessarily. Centerpieces are one do-it-yourself aspect of the reception that can be pulled off with a little skill, a small price tag and a few tips. Here are some suggestions to help you save money without sacrificing style on your special day.

1. Table numbers can make beautiful and functional centerpieces. You can hang a decorative number from a small display, frame a designed number, display it on a vase or incorporate it into you flower arrangements.

2. Beach weddings are a great opportunity to incorporate natural beauty into your wedding. Glass vases of varying shapes and sizes filled with sand, shells, pebbles and starfish are beautiful and simple to arrange. Adding white tea candles gives it a romantic atmosphere.

3. Floating candles whether by themselves or with flowers serves as lighting and decoration. Tall cylinder vases filled with flowers and candles floating on the top, or wide-rimmed glass bowls with

mixtures of candles and flowers offer an aesthetically appealing height contrast.

4. If you love the idea of elaborate flower arrangements but can't afford to go all out, table variations are very in. Alternating tables with flower arrangements and candle clusters looks creative and chic while saving money on a florist.

5. To dress up the candle look, dif-

ferent styles of lanterns add a touch. classy Arranging flowers and petals around the base of the lantern completes the look.

6. Fruit is a fresh and colorful way to save money. Citrus fruits like

> oranges, lemons, and limes can float in a water filled vase or be arranged in a bowl by themselves. Slices of limes, lemons, and kiwi can bring life to a flower arrangement by filling the bottom of the vase. Fresh apples can double as place card holders or a tray filled with green apples and candles. Also, sprigs of berries add a punch of color to a flower arrangement.

7. Beautifully framed black-and-white

photos surrounded by candles is a way to make your center pieces personal. Current photos of the newlyweds, married siblings and cousins, and older photos of your parents, aunts and uncles and grandparents, are sentimental and display the love and commitment of the couples wed before you.

8. Clustering and contrast can make

any vase look well put-together. You can vary the heights, colors, shapes and sizes as well as the type, color and number of flowers used. Depending on the shape of the table you can use groupings of small vases each holding a single flower, or three

vases of different heights. Using three different but similar shades of flowers can be very pretty, as well as using different color glass vases. You can also use rod iron, porcelain, metal and wooden boxes and vases. Generally keep your groupings in odd numbers like three and five.

10. Using branches in a simple container is a great way to incorporate the height contrast. Hanging small tee candles from votives or draping jeweled rope on the branches is romantic. Another option is to use them as a way to display table numbers and name cards. If your favors are small enough (personalized ornaments, mini frames, or candy items), you can hang them from the branches for your guests to take as they leave.

11. Non-traditional vases like candleholders and candelabras are unique ways to display flower bunches. You can use watering cans, flowerpots, or antique mason jars filled with sunflowers, gerber daisies and mums. Baskets, platters, antiques and tin pails can all be used to display flowers in a creative way. Antique birdhouses, mailboxes, or window boxes can also be used.

12. Keep the vases and flowers simple, but use repetition. The geometry of the arrangement is pleasing to the eye without being overdone.

13. Miniature terrariums filled with moss, ferns, fiddleheads and sweet peas is a natural look that is simple and elegant.

14. If you are looking for something fun and out of the ordinary, goldfish displayed in bowls on the center of the table is a great conversation starter and entertaining for guests.

15. Using peacock feathers is a new trend that is an elegant addition to any arrangement.





Voted one of the seven most romantic getaways in Austin, La Villa Vista Resort on Lake Travis outside of Austin is an ideal Texas honeymoon destination.

Texas honeymoons save money

By Jenna Williamson Reporter

The term "honeymoon" can stir up images of Tahitian beaches and Italian villas, but when newlyweds are pinching pennies, elaborate foreign honeymoons aren't always a viable option.

For honeymooners looking to save on travel costs, Texas offers an array of serene, romantic getaways.

At first thought, a bed and breakfast might sound like the ideal getaway for, say, your grandmother. But among the hundreds of bed and breakfasts in the Lone Star State, there are a number that offer a romantic setting with unique accommodations and scrumptious homemade meals. Just to name a couple, Chequered Shade is nestled on Lake Travis, near Austin and The Inn at Pearl Street is located in downtown Austin.

For those who would rather escape the city, renting a cabin or campsite can

be affordable and romantic just think of looking up each night at a clear Texas sky covered in stars.

Chisos Mountain Lodge in Big Bend National Park and Indian Lodge in Davis Mountains State Park are popular accommodations, perfect for adventurous souls or just those looking for beauty and solitude.

Outside of Texas, nature lovers may consider renting a cabin in the gorgeous Ozark Mountains of Arkansas and Missouri. If a cooler getaway sounds more appealing, ski resorts in New Mexico are popular spots for honeymooners.

To the east, New Orleans also has much to offer. The Big Easy offers great nightlife, phenomenal food and distinctive Cajun culture – you might just think you're in a foreign country. Two great lodgings are Le Richelieu Hotel and Maison Orleans, both located in the French Quarter.

Do these options pale in comparison to a tropical honeymoon? Still can't shake off that dream of a Mediterranean cruise? Think about posting part of your honeymoon on your wedding registry. Granted, Great Aunt Mildred might be dead-set on buying that set of china, but if a few friends pitch in and defray the cost of plane tickets, it might make a big difference.

Also, consider delaying the honeymoon.

Some newlyweds book a stay at a nice hotel for the wedding night, then begin moving into their new home. After getting settled, the couple takes a longer trip. Waiting opens the possibility of snagging a great off-season deal on a honeymoon trip. Moreover, couples are likely to be more at ease when they return to a home that has already been settled.

Your honeymoon doesn't have to be an expensive vacation. There are plenty of nearby locales that offer the same relaxing time with your new bride or groom without the price tag.

European romance perfect for newlyweds

By Lynn Ngo Opinion Editor

Some cities should come with a warning, such as "May cause depression if single" or "Best if entering city while in love." For newlyweds, this shouldn't be a problem.

But even for the most love-intoxicated couples, the honeymoon destinations below should be approached with caution because, even then, the heavy dose of romance can be too much to handle.



Venice, Italy Take a gondola ride and discover the romance of this city built on water.



Blarney, Ireland Take a tour of Blarney Castle and gardens and get lost in the natural beauty of Ireland.

Photos by Lynn Ngo



Santorini, Greece Famous for its sunsets and whitewashed houses this island on the Greek Isle is for couples looking to soak up the sun.