

# General Information

## Scheduling your appointment

At Bella Couture, it is our goal to provide the most meaningful and personal bridal experience to our brides and their families. To ensure this level of service, we recommend appointments especially for Saturdays. With an appointment, you are insured a fitting room and one of our experienced consultants to assist you in searching for your gown.

We can insure seating for 3 additional guests. Once you have selected a few family members and friends, whose opinions you value the most, please call to schedule your appointment to make sure that the time and date that works best for you is available.

## The day of your Appointment

Excitement abounds! It's your day to try on some of the most luxurious gowns available! You will be greeted by one of our knowledgeable consultants that will introduce you to our salon and determine what you are looking for. Our consultants are not on commission which creates a peaceful environment. Any of our consultants can assist you at any time. However, if you prefer that one consultant walk you through the process, we will be happy to assign one consultant to you.

After your initial consultation to discuss your personal style and budget, you and our stylist will select gowns from our extensive collection for you to try on. All of our gowns are on the floor for you to look through. As you select a gown, we do ask that you allow us to pamper you by moving them into a room for you. Your family and friends can sit comfortably in our spacious showroom and watch you try on the beautiful selections you have made. You are welcome to bring champagne or white wine to enjoy during your appointment in the seating area. All colored beverages are prohibited.

Bella couture offers an assortment of strapless bras and half slips for you to wear during your appointment. Please keep in mind that one of our stylists will be in the room with you at all times. Your family has the option of joining you and your stylist in the fitting room as well.

## Finding Your Gown

Our bridal consultants work closely with each bride to find her unique style and preferences. If you have pictures of gowns that you like, bring them to your appointment. We love getting to know our brides and their families and strive to be your advocate throughout the entire process. We look forward to sharing the next few months with you and here are a few things you need to know as you begin your gown search.

## Ordering

Ideally you want your gown to arrive two months prior to your special day. With that in mind, we recommend that you order your gown approximately 7 months prior to your wedding date to allow ample time for alterations and a bridal portrait. Gowns with custom changes as well as certain lace gowns will require 6 to 7 months for deliver and are often not available for rush orders. If you do have a shorter engagement, rush orders are available for most styles. Your consultant will inform you of these details and will check availability of each gown and your accessories.

It is best to know your gown budget as you may find your gown at your first appointment! It becomes more overwhelming and confusing to continue looking, so mark it off your list and celebrate! We also offer perks if you purchase your gown on your first visit. When deciding on your budget for your gown, the rule of thumb is that your gown should be approximately 10% of your total wedding budget. Consider your entire ensemble when creating your budget as well as your alterations cost. Once you select your perfect gown, your consultant will take your measurements and help you select the correct size to order. Please keep in my that all couture bridal runs smaller than street clothes so you will be ordering a larger size than you are use to. You may also choose to order extra beading, lace, ribbon, buttons or other items for your dress at an additional cost that will ensure that your dress is one of a kind.

To order your gown, a 60% deposit is required and the remainder of the balance is due when you pick up your gown or within 30 days of your gown coming in to the store.

## **Gown Arrival**

The exciting day has arrived and your gown is in! You will be contacted and an appointment will be made for you to try on your gown and pick it up. Since we want you to see it pressed just as you will on your wedding day, we do ask that you schedule an appointment for your pick up. Please remember that your final balance is due prior to your gown being taken from the salon or any alterations.

## **Alterations**

Your gown has arrived and it is time for your alterations. We have an excellent team of couture seamstresses that we recommend that have been altering and making bridal and débutante gowns for over 20 years. Owner Colleen Hopwood, also a couture seamstress, is available for a limited number of clients as well. Alterations are a separate cost from your wedding gown and payment will be made payable to your alterations specialist.

Alterations typically run around \$400 to \$600 depending on what needs to be done to your dress. The cost on lace gowns is generally on the higher end due to the amount of hand sewing that is required to achieve the quality of alterations required. If you are adding straps, sleeves or making any significant changes to your gown, alterations will be more. Our seamstresses will work with you to customize and fit your gown to your body. You will be consulted in how you prefer your bustle and any other specifications that you wish.

It is important to have your shoes and undergarments selected when you come to your first alterations fitting to ensure that the dress is altered correctly. After the first fitting you will most likely need to come back for one or two more fittings to achieve the perfect fit. If you have a bridal portrait scheduled, please let your alteration specialist and your consultant know if you want your alterations to be completed before your portrait. Alterations generally take 3 to 4 weeks to complete.

## **Wedding Preparations**

Bella couture will store your wedding gown until your wedding day. We provide you with a premium cloth bridal bag to store your gown until you have it preserved. After we prepare your gown for your wedding, we will put it in a large train bag to keep it as wrinkle free as possible. Please schedule a time in advance to pick up your gown and accessories so that we can make sure everything is perfect and ready to go.