



Finding Your Vision

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the art of FASHION

Each and every one of us is an artist. Artists are creators, who take their talents and put them out there for a group of people to experience, analyze, criticize and... oftentimes take absolutely no notice of. A friend of mine recently said in an interview that "Fashion is the most basic, essential and everyday form of creative expression" and I would have to agree. Every single day, each of us

expresses how we're feeling through our fashion. We put on our power suit when the deal needs to get done, and we cuddle and recoil in our warmest sweaters and comfiest socks when we need to be held. Every morning, whether it's conscious or subconscious, we get up with a vision, we dress up (or dress down) and we tell the world how we want them to perceive us. This is especially true on your wedding day.

color your WORLD

Needless to say, getting the colour of your wedding outfit spot-on is a very big deal! Figuring out the right colour should be an active part in the process of developing your vision.

We come from such rich cultures. Being in the business of South Asian bridal wear, I often sit and think about the epic processions that must have taken place hundreds of years ago, as one dynasty would pack up and head out on a 30 day voyage, trekking across an endless desert, for the sole purpose of marrying their daughter into another beautiful and royal family. That is our heritage. That is where our traditions stem from. Some of those traditions, however, include restrictions on colour.

We find it very useful to speak candidly with both families as well as the religious leader who is performing your wedding ceremony, to ensure that your vision takes into accounts what you can and cannot wear at your ceremony. In some cultures white is a sign of purity, in other cultures, white is a sign of Widowhood. It is definitely important to pay attention to these details when developing your vision.

Speaking on tradition and South Asian culture, it is a given that we need to talk about the colour red. Some brides love the idea of getting married in a traditional red saree or lehenga, while others wish to veer away from the traditional in hopes of being a bit different. It is important for both sides of this equation to remember that "red" is a big word that embodies a spectrum of options. From traditional deep burgundies and cherry reds, there is also a movement towards using baby pinks as the accenting colour on green or purple outfits, just to ensure that there is a member of the "red family" at the ceremony. What this is meant to say is that there are lots of options to ensure that you are executing on your vision, even if it feels like you are restricted by tradition

Your reception is a space where you really get to step out and be creative when it comes to colour. Your décor, your make-up, your family's outfits and so many more details all depend on your reception outfit. When you are developing your vision for your reception, try to ensure that you and your outfit cut-through the décor, as opposed to blending right in and being lost in your backdrop.

In addition to blending in to your backdrop, ensure that your outfit pops on your skin, as opposed to blending in or washing you out. There has been an increase in the popularity of gold metallic fabrics coming from India and Pakistan. These outfits have the potential of looking absolutely stunning, but gold metallic with our skin tones does not always work out. If your vision includes working within the gold family, be sure to try on your outfit, while your hair and make-up are done, to ensure that your vision works with your skin tone.



make your vision TANGIBLE

No matter how much we try to ignore it, the fact remains that being well researched helps us make fantastic decisions. You should always trust your instincts, but the more you know, the sharper those instincts are. When it comes down to shopping for your perfect wedding outfit, it's essential to research what exists in terms of designers, fabrics, trends and embroidery styles just to start the list. The first step, however, is researching yourself and transforming your vision from a poof of energy, into a tangible checklist.

Words are funny. We have clients come in all the time asking for the most beautiful purple outfit. But "beautiful purple" isn't really a thing. It doesn't exist. It is an intangible idea that comes from our individual experiences with the colour purple. It's important to bring your vision to the table when you're looking for your quintessential wedding outfit

When defining your vision, words are just a starting point, but they are good starting point nonetheless. Before you start leafing through catalogues and attending trade shows and workshops, filling your mind-space with endless images of outfits, a good first step is making a strong list of words that describe the look you are trying to create. Are you going for Traditional? Modern? Funky? Then, within "traditional",

are you trying to emulate an Empress? Queen? Princess? A traditional queen and a traditional princess are both beautiful, but they are very different. Start drilling down to help develop a distinct vision.

Now that you have a list of words that help describe your vision, it is time to start gathering content that reflects those words. If you are going for a funky, princess vibe, start taking a look at funky outfits and lots of princesses and the things that define them. Words are a good starting point and pictures are a very necessary next step. Some people make vision or inspiration boards, others just create a folder on their desktop so that they can easily right-click, save-as and keep re-visiting images that really speak to them and their vision. Pictures are a lot more tangible than words, and they will be of critical importance when you are looking through outfits, or telling your best friends about the ideas you have for your wedding outfit.

At CTC West, we are big fans of female role models. They are the ultimate inspiration, and yet, they get such little shine! From our mothers to Anna Wintour to Indira Gandhi to Tina Fey, we are in awe of the power, drive, wit and class that our female role models embody. When you are developing and cultivating your vision for your wedding outfit, take some time to think about who your role models are, and how they would look on their wedding day. You might end up hopping on this train of thought, and drawing some very valuable inspiration from your heroes.

stick to your VISION

Your vision needs to include so many things. Not just your traditions, or your role models or the colours that you really love, but also how you want to feel. Being practical is so hard with bridalwear (and most other aspects of your wedding day!), but if you want to be dancing at your reception, a lighter net outfit is likely a better choice than a heavy brocade piece. A comfortable bride is a beautiful bride. I am still waiting for a bride to kick up her lehnga to reveal the comfiest pair of high-top Nike's peeking out from underneath her crinoline.

Ultimately, developing your vision and sticking to it is entirely about you feeling confident on your wedding day. You can buy the most lavish lehenga, but if you do not feel fantastic from within, your pictures are not going to tell a happy story. Start by looking inside, before worrying about what people see on the outside. Wear what feels good, be the person you want to be, and please remember that you look your absolute best when you are smiling in your comfiest sweater. Real smiles win. Always.



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