

THE ATLANTAN

# Brides

## Wedded BLISS!

RUNWAY REPORT: THE HOTTEST GOWNS FOR 2010  
*Oscar de la Renta Talks Timeless Aisle Style* > REGISTRY MUSTS  
 EAT, DRINK AND BE MARRIED! > *Marvelously Modern Cakes*  
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*and Atlanta's Chicest Ceremonies!*

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2<sup>ND</sup> ANNIVERSARY ISSUE!



Bridal design beauty Annette Thurmon and one of her custom creations.

## Maiden To Order

It's hard to imagine any dress not looking perfect on 26-year-old nurse-cum-fashion designer Annette Thurmon. Nearly six feet tall with model good looks, Thurmon was frustrated with finding her dream dress while planning her wedding three years ago, so she decided to design her own gown—and a business was born. Currently experimenting with convertible designs (a removable strap here, an invisible layered skirt there), her Chaviano Bridal Couture creations give brides the option of changing the length or style of their dress throughout the big day. “I always say there are no rules, only possibilities,” says Thurmon. “I want my brides to look back on their wedding day and say, ‘I loved every aspect of my gown.’” We caught up with the Atlanta transplant about the design process and the wedding dress that started it all.

**Describe your wedding dress.** It was form-fitting with a flare at the bottom and gathering from the bust to the hem. For a personal touch, I had our initials embroidered on my sash, which I fastened with a family heirloom brooch.

**How do you get the creative juices flowing?** I meet with the bride four to six months prior to the wedding. Once we have a design vision, there are three more appointments, beginning with the muslin fitting with our seamstress. The gown is made to fit the bride's body, so there are usually no alterations involved.

**And the price range?** The simplest designs start at \$2,000, with price points as high as \$5,000. I also give my brides a dress box with their original sketch and swatches of the fabrics we used. It's a memory of the design journey that clients can share with their daughters one day.

*Chaviano Bridal Couture is available at The Bridal Bar Atlanta, 4511 Olde Perimeter Way, Suite 600, 770.366.0072, chavianocouture.com. —Alison Miller*

### Picture It!

After months of searching, you found the perfect dress. So what's a bride to do after the big day? For a modern twist on the traditional dress portrait, watercolor sketches and avant-garde photographs will preserve your fashion statement with a work of art that goes beyond the photo album.

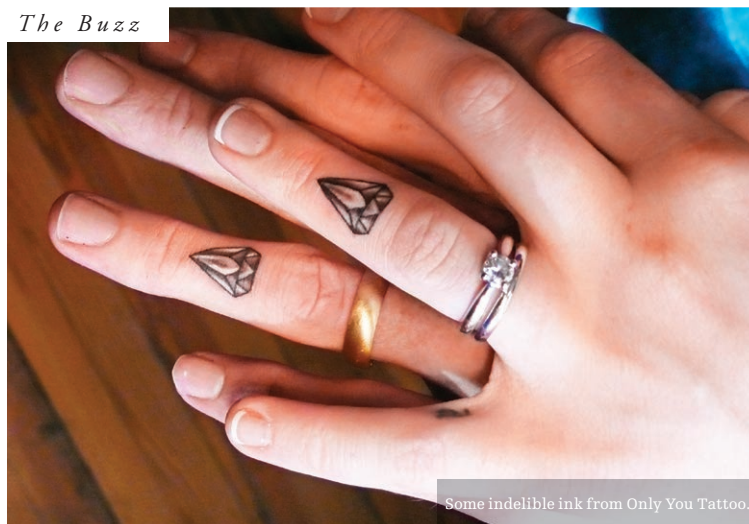


A dress sketch from Kristina Bailey.

**PAINT IT WHITE** Kristina Bailey's gown sketches come across as more haute couture art than typical watercolor. We think it's because she views the wedding dress as a subject of individuality. “The wedding gown is the signature piece that reflects the bride's style,” says Bailey. “It's a self-portrait of who they are on their special day.” 404.432.8641, [kbbailydesigns.com](http://kbbailydesigns.com).

**AWE, SNAP!** Dorothy O'Connor's sometimes haunting, yet stunning photographs of wedding gowns fully capture every inch of tulle and silk after the ceremony. She connects to the dresses on a personal level, explaining: “I feel like the wedding dress itself is so iconic. ...These dresses seem to have their own story.” 404.307.8692, [weddingdressportrait.com](http://weddingdressportrait.com). —Dana Hazels Seith

### The Buzz



Some indelible ink from Only You Tattoo.

## Tattoo You

Marriage is forever (or at least it's supposed to be), so what cooler way to say “I do” than with a tattoo? There isn't, according to the couples frequenting Only You Tattoo in Grant Park. Co-owner Danielle Distefano says the trend in couple tattoos is “a new, more permanent take on showing commitment.” Distefano also notes, “Friends of mine [with matching tattoos] tell me they feel committed to their partners in ways no one could understand.” We're not talking simple wedding bands either. Couples get everything from diamonds to intertwined elephant trunks. Beyoncé and Jay-Z reportedly got “VI” on their ring fingers before their wedding, and each of the Beckhams inked up to commemorate a decade of love—so haute. *Only You Tattoo*, 404.659.4900, [onlyyoutattoo.com](http://onlyyoutattoo.com). —L.N.W.