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Here Comes the Bride

By **Geha Ng**

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Fairytales can come true, it can happen to you on your wedding day. Walking down the aisle in an enchanting Zuhair Murad bridal dress will make you feel like a princess... and your groom the luckiest prince on earth.

Opulent and sexy. That is how Annie Wijaya, the owner of Belle & Tulle Bridal boutique in Singapore would describe fashion designer Zuhair Murad's wedding couture.

The Beirut-based designer's Spring/Summer 2015 collection has exquisitely sleek bridal ensemble, something that the enchanting royal elfen princess Arwen (played by Liv Tyler) in The Lord of the Rings trilogy film would wear to her nuptials.

"A bride that likes Zuhair Murad is a very confident bride," says Wijaya, whose boutique at Palais Renaissance is the first in Singapore to carry Murad's bridal gowns. "[They] probably really love their body, take care of themselves very well, and would like to show it off."

Murad has long established himself as a red carpet favourite, with celebrities such as Jennifer Lopez, Blake Lively and Kristen Stewart wearing his creations at glitzy affairs. He eventually delved into the bridal world, creating beautiful couture pieces laced with his signature delicate embroidery that stand out from racks of conventional dresses.

No more princess cuts, poofy gowns

Murad must have read the minds of women in Asia. His latest bridal collection features feminine form-fitting cuts, detailed necklines, and detachable blouses and overskirts that transform one dress into several different looks — all of which are styles favoured by soon-to-wed women in the region.



Zuhair Murad's Molly bridal gown from his Spring/Summer 2015 collection. (Photo: Zuhair Murad)



Zuhair Murad's Daisy dress can be worn with or without the overskirt. (Photo: Zuhair Murad)

"The trend now is most of the women are looking for more fashion forward, more slender silhouette type of dresses," says Wijaya, who gets brides-to-be from the region — such as Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam — visiting her boutique.

"So nothing like the princess cuts, the big, big poofy gowns anymore."

Another look that Wijaya noticed was trending on the runway in the past two seasons and is popular here, is the illusion neckline, a translucent fabric — often embellished — that veils the top of a dress.

"Thirdly, which I really love, is sort of the two looks in one, which is the detachable skirts," she adds. Brides can put on the dramatic skirt for the ceremonial walk, and take it off later to reveal an uber chic silhouette at the reception.

Picking the perfect dress



Apart from Zuhair Murad, Belle & Tulle Bridal also carries gowns from designers like Naeem Khan, Romona Keveza, Elle Saab, Amsale Abera, Anne Barge and Lela Rose. (Photo: Siti Nur Mas Lina, Premier)

Should a bride-to-be decide on hair and makeup first before choosing the gown?

Wijaya's answer to that is a resounding no. And there is more to choosing a dress than just deciding the style of the dress.

"When the women come in [to Belle & Tulle] there are two things that we ask them: when's your date and where's your venue. That kind of helps us steer them towards what they should be looking for," Wijaya explains.

For example, if the wedding venue is at a spacious ballroom, the consultants at Belle & Tulle would advise the bride-to-be to go for a dress with a bigger silhouette instead of one that creates a smaller frame.

"You will disappear in the ballroom!" Wijaya exclaims. "Try to visualise yourself walking around, taking pictures with your friends. Your friends will wear something [like a slim-fitting dress]. You'll completely disappear."

If it's a destination wedding at a place like Bali, a smaller dress would be more appropriate.

"Weather is one of the [reasons], and it's probably going to be a smaller venue as well, probably more intimate. Tables are going to be closer, so when you're walking around, when you're maneuvering around, it's much easier with a smaller dress."

If you've dreamt of a fairytales dress for your fairytales wedding, Zuhair Murad is the obvious choice. And petite brides need not worry — your dress can be altered to fit your frame.

As Wijaya puts it, "You should be holding your flowers, grabbing your husband... give a little kick and you should be able to walk."

Just be sure to give about six months of leadtime for your perfect wedding dress to be delivered.

Zuhair Murad Bridal is available in Singapore exclusively at Belle & Tulle

Belle & Tulle Bridal, Palais Renaissance, Unit 03-12, 390 Orchard Road Singapore 238871



Annie Wijaya's advice when it comes to choosing a dress is to visualise how it will look at the wedding venue. (Photo: Siti Nur Mas Lina, Premier)



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