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# Modern Bride

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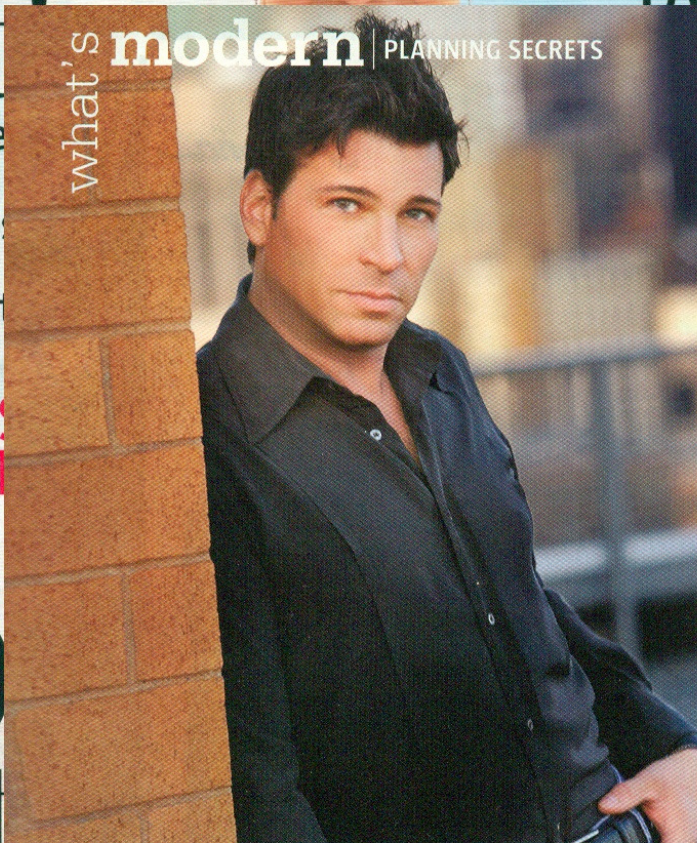
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EVENT PRODUCER

## David Tutera

This innovative party planner, known for wedding design that's wildly creative and exceptionally chic, shares his top tips for a one-of-a-kind celebration

### How do you give a wedding a unique feel?

By changing up the formula and giving the party as much movement as possible. I like to play with the placement of expected moments. For example, I won't schedule the ceremony first. When guests arrive, there'll be a cocktail hour, a sit-down dinner—and then the ceremony. We'll serve dessert and dance after. This captures your guests' attention.

### How can you make the first dance memorable?

Hold it during the middle of the cocktail hour. The music can change suddenly, and as you and your groom walk forward, the floor will open up. It's refreshing, and people are taken aback at the unexpectedness of this. It's exciting for

them to discover this isn't going to be like every other wedding they've been to.

### What are the hottest reception colors?

Chocolate brown will be with us a little longer. I'm using it with lavender; it's big in the fashion scene. Another good bet is Hermès orange and crisp white. It's a stunning combination, especially for fall or winter weddings.

### Do you have a hard-and-fast party rule?

Yes: Something different has to happen every 30 minutes. Food courses should last no longer than this. You can change the lights in the room, introduce a cool new cocktail or segue the style of music from Sinatra to salsa. Every time you switch things up, you'll touch certain people and get them involved in the party.

### What's missing from most weddings?

I want to hear a toast from the bride and groom. Most don't do this. Think about it from the guests' perspective: They're surrounded by people they may not know, and then they never hear from the people they're celebrating. You want them to feel glad they're there for you.

### What are some ways to please guests?

Make sure everything is figured out for them. Give them welcome gifts with weekend itineraries, and provide transportation. Mic or amplify the ceremony, and instead of serving one giant cake, have a smaller one brought to each table. This way, everyone participates.

### Tell us about some of your other ventures.

I'm working on a novel and a book about how to make the wedding really yours. I've also started The David Tutera Couture Wedding Collection at Walt Disney World: Couples can choose from four different lines that include invitations, ceremony decor, the food, the cake, flowers, favors and more. I'm launching retail floral shops at Trump properties, called Stem by David Tutera. And this fall I'm introducing a new line of dinnerware, flatware, candles, vases and other products being manufactured by Zrike. They're bold and exciting, with various patterns and lots of color.

### Any final advice for the bride and groom?

During the reception, don't leave each other's side. This is the first time you're together as husband and wife; I think it's the oddest thing to see you split up the whole night, or even part of it, just so you can make sure you talk to all of your guests. Stay together, and they'll come to you. This sends a great energy throughout the room.

—Betsy Goldberg

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