

## Make Room for the Groom

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Traditionally, a wedding centers around the bride. The fiancé proposes and then doesn't normally see his wife -to-be again until the rehearsal. There may be occasional glimpses of her as she asks, "Which silver set do you like better", but that's about all.

According to tradition, this is supposed to be HER "dream day". The flowers, dress, food, everything has a focus on the bride. But many couples are now taking a "we" approach to weddings. Including both the bride and groom - and rightfully so. But where do you start? We've all been brainwashed that wedding planning and preparation is a "girl" thing.

Being married for 8 years, I can immediately think of several ways to include things the groom would be interested in and enjoy. Let me share them with you.

### Gift Registry

Lots of stores now offer "couple" registries or "groom" registries in addition to the "bridal" registry. Make a special effort to add some items your honey will like. Yes, he will use the towels and potholders, too but he won't be excited about receiving them no matter how nice they are.

If I had it to do all over again, these are just a few of the things I would include on the registry for my husband: rod and reel, tackle box, grill, grilling tools, cooler, outdoor sleeping bags (do you get the feeling he likes the great outdoors!) and sports store gift certificates. Your special man might have other interests - maybe computers, music, etc. Regardless of what they are, be sure to include ideas for gifts especially for him.

### Couple Showers or Couple Parties

Again... this is a tradition focusing solely on the bride. Ladies all dressed in their Sunday best, eating little bites of cake and drinking green punch is not a fella's idea of a good time. When you are approached by several people offering to give a shower, make the suggestion that one or two of them be "couple" parties.

You could hold a barbecue or fish fry. Plan the menu with the guys in mind, and the setting where both men and ladies will have fun.

### The Groomsman's Gifts

I was astonished to find that most brides pick out the gift the groom will give to his groomsmen. Now granted, in general men hate shopping, but leave this task to your future mate. Rather than a silver-plated shaving cream cup, allow him to choose the gift his friends will receive. Above all, don't criticize his decision. Give him the freedom to participate.

There are many ways to create a wedding that will fully include you both. Take every opportunity to make the months of planning and partying an experience you both will enjoy and remember.