

Preparing for a PERFECT PROM

By Lorraine Payette



Stardust and moonbeams, gorgeous gowns, black tuxedos, great music and a chance to dance forever with your perfect date for the evening – nothing is more magical than these memories of the prom. Even while the committee is making designs and setting up the hall, young people throughout the region are seeking for all the accessories they'll need to make this evening one of a kind.

"Prom can be the most romantic night of a person's life," says Natasha Lux of Magnolia Flowers in Gananoque. "Having the right accessories can really enhance that experience."

What do you need to make your prom the best it can be? You've started by asking the ideal date to come with you, but there are so many other things to consider.

Prom etiquette may seem a bit overwhelming, but help can be found at www.promworks.com/. The site walks you through the array of things you need to know, from invitations and costs through flowers, clothes, transportation and photographs. A well planned evening is going to be far more fun than one where you aren't sure what to do next.

First, find out what kind of prom you'll be attending. It makes a huge difference to know whether it will be formal, semi-formal or themed, and what kind of attire is needed for each. Try to make sure that your outfits go together in a harmonious way – black tuxedos are good for formal proms and go with

any colour combination your date might be wearing. Semi-formal proms will require suit jackets, button down shirts and ties that go well with the shorter dresses worn by your date. Fully themed proms may require you to dress like a character from a book or movie, with a lot of chances to use your imagination.

Shannon at Steel Style Garage in Gananoque says that they sell casual wear, but have occasional pieces that might go well for an informal prom. Mostly, she sends customers to Isis in Brockville. Isis specializes in formal wear for all special occasions, and can help you find the perfect clothing for that once in a lifetime evening.

Shoes, bags, and jewellery all need to be considered. Savvy is described as a footwear boutique for women. Located in Brockville, they have a knowledgeable staff and good selection of high quality fashion footwear, handbags and jewellery to suit the most discriminating tastes.

Flowers are an important part of every prom, not just for her, but for him as well.

"We're moving away from tradition into something new with flowers," says Lux. "Girls are looking more at the keepsake bracelet. We're creating more natural, more masculine boutonnieres for the boys."

By blending flowers with jewellery, the freshness of prom is retained. When everything is over, flowers can be removed and the bracelets can be worn at any special occasion.

Marilyn Gill at Colonial Flowers in Brockville has also noted the change.

"Our clients are looking for things that aren't run of the mill," she says. "Berries, grasses, natural materials – all of these are popular now. We can dye flowers to match the outfits, and we try to personalize each order to match the client's wishes."

The florists enjoy prom season and working with the imaginations of the younger clients. It is preferred that you make your decision and place your orders at least 24-hours in advance, so to ensure you get what you want, with a week being the optimum. Expect to pay between \$13.50 - \$25.00 and up, depending on the exact thing you are looking for.

"If we know a week ahead, we can place special orders and make sure you have exactly the flowers and accessories you want," says Gill. "We can make sure they are at their peak of perfection and that everything is exactly the way you want it to be."

To crown a perfect outfit, you need perfect hair. Your favourite stylist can help both boys and girls get that ideal look.

"Prom is a huge part of our market," says Michelle Hicks of Rapunzel Studio of Hair Design in Gananoque. "Everyone wants to look their best for prom." Rapunzel's offers not only hair dressing and styling for prom, but make-up as well. For additional fees, you can get your nails done, a full Mani Pedi or even the entire spa treatment. Hair and make-up average about \$68 for a girl, depending on the length of her hair and complexity of style.

Transportation is also important. There are few places that will rent vehicles for prom, so try to get the use of a reliable vehicle for the evening. Be sure to have a designated driver in order to guarantee a safe arrival both to the prom and home again.

MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) says that prom is one of the most dangerous evenings of the year. Too many people are drinking and getting out of control, increasing accidents and deaths on the highways. This can be minimized by following the rules established for your prom, standing up to peer pressure and refusing to drink alcohol or indulge in drugs over the course of the evening. MADD provides a list compiled by the LCBO to help deal with safety at the prom. (http://madd.ca/media/docs/madd_canada_safe_prom.pdf).

They also have a downloadable pamphlet with more information available at www.canadadrugfree.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/madd_handbook_email1.pdf.

Now that you have an idea of what you need, go out and get ready for the most romantic evening of your life. Nothing will ever match the memories you make at prom. **LH**