

MODERN LUXURY

# BRIDES

CHICAGO

59

GLAMOROUS  
CHICAGO  
WEDDINGS

FROM  
THIS DAY  
FORWARD

FROM BLUSH BRIDAL  
GOWNS TO DAZZLING  
DIAMONDS, THE TOP  
TRENDS IN WEDDINGWEAR

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Refined Details

TASTEFUL TOUCHES  
ON CAKES, DECOR,  
INVITES & MORE

## *IN PERFECT HARMONY*

ETHEREAL ELEGANCE SETS THE TONE  
FOR THIS SEASON'S BRIDAL LOOKS

*PLUS*

Honeymoon Dreaming in the Maldives  
Dapper Bespoke Styles for Grooms

THE ESSENTIAL RESOURCE FOR STYLISH COUPLES



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### ON THE COVER

Photography: Helena Palazzi  
Styling: James Aguiar  
Hair: Damian Monzillo using ECRU New York for Celestine Agency  
Makeup: Kim Weber using Diorskin Nude  
Model: Lyoka Tyagnereva with Women/360



Pia gown, price upon request, and Nina cover up, \$2,500, both by Reem Acra at Dimtra's Bridal Couture, 312.787.0920; Earrings featuring 8.72-carats of diamonds set in 18kt white gold, price upon request, and Ring featuring 11.38-carats of diamonds set in 18kt white gold, price upon request, both by Chopard at Neiman Marcus, 213.642.5900.

INVITATIONS PHOTO BY JESSICA PERKHOFF, STYLING BY USA GOMBERT, CATERING BY NICO OSTERIA PHOTO BY SANDY FOTO



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# 194





#### DO'S

Staying open-minded, doing what makes you happy, bringing your future mother-in-law dress shopping ("They get so excited!")

#### DON'TS

Going over your budget ("It will stress you out"), listening to everyone's opinion, bringing friends shopping who don't support you

## GOWN GURU

With a decade under her belt, custom bridal gown designer Victoria Sdoukos is looking forward to shaking things up.

*By Sarah Ryan  
Photography by T. Harrison Hillman*

Victoria Sdoukos, owner of the West Loop's Victoria Sdoukos Couture, has always been ahead of the curve. When she graduated from the Illinois Institute of Art in 2002, her instructors told her that her design—a one-shoulder mermaid-cut gown with Swarovski accents that won first-place honors—was gorgeous, but not bridal. "Back then, it was all ballgowns, box pleats, beaded bodices and sweetheart necklines," she says. "And I said, 'Just wait. In a few years, everything is going to be fitted.' And now it is even more so than I imagined." That's not to say her foresight went unnoticed: Celebrated bridal designer Lazaro, an alumnus of the school, stopped Sdoukos that night to say she had found her calling.

Now, 10 years into owning her shop, Sdoukos is only getting more creative with her one-of-a-kind gowns. "I feel like now is the time that I've dressed enough people that I want to be more artistic," she says. "I am going to be a lot bolder with texture and colors." Her next design will work

with laser-cut lace, and she recently partnered with a manufacturer to custom-make her beaded trims (all designed with her preferred Swarovski crystals).

It is the perfect time to think out of the box, she notes. "People are willing to be a little risky, maybe wear a gold gown or a pink dress. Brides today are not afraid to express who they are." And that's exactly what Sdoukos captures when making her fully custom gowns. "I am not just making a dress," she says. "I am gathering a bride's personality at the same time."

As Sdoukos continues to evolve as a designer, she says to expect the unexpected, except in one area: Quality will always take first priority. "Five years old, I told my mom I wanted Versace sunglasses," she remembers, laughing. "It was because I knew the quality... the art, the detail. I was always paying attention to those things." We must say, it definitely shows. 924 W. Madison St., 312.226.9880, [victoriasdoukoscouture.com](http://victoriasdoukoscouture.com)