



## BEST Dressed

*Bijou bridal hotspots with an eye for eclectic and exclusive gowns.*

**1** Exclusive stockists of David Fielden and Ines Di Santo, Myrtle Ivory is the hotspot for fashion-forward brides-to-be. Myrtle Ivory, 3 Anne's Lane, Dublin 2, 01 675 3519; [www.myrtleivory.com](http://www.myrtleivory.com).

**2** For super-swoon-worthy dresses from luxurious fashion houses and big-name designers like Oscar de la Renta, Karl Lagerfeld, Marchesa and Christian Lacroix, head north to Willow Moon, Unit 8, The Dye House, The Linen Green, Co Tyrone, 048 8772 9249; [www.willowmoon.com](http://www.willowmoon.com).

**3** If Jenny Packham and Amanda Wakeley dresses make your heart beat faster, then Sharon Hoey is the place for you. Get ready to squeal. Sharon Hoey Bridal, 19 Upper Mount Street, Dublin 2, 01 676 2772; [www.sharonhoey.com](http://www.sharonhoey.com).

**4** Perfectly located in the middle of the island, The White Room is the hub that almost every soon-to-be bride visits. Top collections include the covetable Pronovias range as well as Jesus Peiro and Paloma Blanca. The White Room, 23 Lough Sheever Corporate Park, Robinstown, Mullingar, Co Westmeath, 044 934 7661; [www.thewhiteroom.com](http://www.thewhiteroom.com).

**5** After some retro style? The Goddess Room is a vintage haven that stocks the hottest selection of wedding dresses, from the 1920s to the 1980s (think vintage Chanel from the 1980s or Mary McFadden 1970s couture). The Goddess Room, Meridian Point, Greystones, Co Wicklow, 01 201 6591; [www.thegoddessroom.net](http://www.thegoddessroom.net).

**6** Fans of Louise Kennedy's elegant designs will swoon over her recently launched bespoke bridal collection, with lots of Art Deco and 1930s-inspired influences. Louise Kennedy, 56 Merrion Square, Dublin 2, 01 662 0056; [www.louisekennedy.com](http://www.louisekennedy.com).



## WHAT LIES BENEATH

✓ Pauline has been running the show at Intimate Lingerie for 15 years and has a trick up her sleeve for every underwear dilemma imaginable. Intimate Lingerie, College Close, Tara Street, Dublin 2, 01 677 1010; [www.intimate-lingerie.ie](http://www.intimate-lingerie.ie).

✓ For seductive silks and beautiful lace pieces, Susan Hunter has the best selection in town. Susan Hunter, Westbury Mall, Dublin 2, 01 679 1271; [www.susanhunter.ie](http://www.susanhunter.ie).

✓ For well-priced shapewear and the best bosom-enhancing bras around, you can't beat the collection at La Senza, also available to order online at [www.lasenza.ie](http://www.lasenza.ie).

## THE BESPOKE ROUTE

It would have been easier to track down the Holy Grail than source my wedding dress. Despite months traipsing around bridal showrooms and endless hours online, The One still eluded me. Then, backstage at Milan Fashion Week, a vision (pictured above), wafted past me in a white silk Pucci evening gown and my infatuation began. It swiftly ended, however, when I flew to London to try it on, only to discover it was rather poufy when not worn by a size six model and, moreover, that it came with a €7,000 price tag. Hence, I gathered as many images of my fantasy gown as possible and called into our neighbours at IMAGE Towers, Roisin Cross Silks, and beseeched them "to make me something like this". Fortunately, couturier Ann Flavin, right, had recently joined the team and, despite the complicated design and the nightmare client in question, she stepped up to the plate. Once we sourced the perfect silk from Japan, Ann set to work on creating a pattern inspired by the original concept but tailored to better flatter my figure. With just eight weeks to D-day, it was a huge leap of faith, but three fittings later, and having put her own stamp on the design, Ann had pulled off a miracle. The finished creation surpassed all my expectations and was a lot more graceful on me than the original, not to mention about 80 per cent cheaper. Moral of the story? Try to think outside the box. If you're getting nowhere with traditional bridal stores, look to the catwalks and eveningwear collections for inspiration and don't let budgetary restraints hold you back - there's a plethora of skilled local couturiers out there only dying for exciting commissions. Just be explicit about your wishes and the dress of your dreams is yours for the taking. Ann Flavin can be contacted at Roisin Cross Silks, 22 Crofton Road, Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin, 01 284 6282; [www.silks.ie](http://www.silks.ie).

