



Fresh

gifting concepts

So, your dream wedding is on its way to completion. The venue is booked, the menu approved and the dress is shaping up nicely. Still, "There must be something we're forgetting?", you might be asking yourself. Quite possibly the answer to this question may be your gift registry!

WORDS BY: ELNA COETZER PICTURES SUPPLIED

This part of the planning process usually features low on the list of priorities, mainly because until recently having a gift registry was often seen as impolite and even cheeky. And historically, the experience of actually setting up a gift list has been more of a hassle than anything else. Many couples find themselves in a rut because, like most 'already co-habiting' modern couples, we already have everything we need for the home such as towels, crockery and appliances. There is also the looming dread that trying to agree on a wish list of household items with your future beau may lead to your first major argument!

So, is there a demand here in South Africa for gift registry services, what are some tips to keep in mind, how do you go about setting up a registry, and where do you go?

Well, times have certainly changed and the practice has now become so popular with both bridal couples and their guests that there is no

longer any stigma attached to holding a gift list or registry. After all, it's a win-win situation for everyone: as Fiona Hilton of award-winning online registry The Wedding Gift List says: "The bridal couple are ensured of receiving gifts that they genuinely want or need, and for the guests it's quick, easy and hassle-free."

Overseas, and especially in European countries, the practice of holding wedding gift lists is now so widespread that you'd be hard pushed to find a bridal couple that does not set one up. Here in South Africa we are still catching up with the concept, but it is becoming an increasingly popular, acceptable and important part of the wedding planning process. After all, if stores such as @home have over 3000 recorded gift registries on their books, it shows that perceptions have definitely changed.

You should register as soon as you get engaged as some of your guests might want to



purchase something for your engagement party, brunches or any other pre-wedding celebrations. When and if you do register after your engagement, be sure to update your registry 2-3 months prior to the wedding, since most guests will purchase their gift for you within that time period.

These days couples have the choice of either going with a specialist online registry, where you can do the whole thing online from the comfort of your own home, choosing from a wide variety of brands, or of setting up a registry in one of the high street stores where you go into the store to choose your items and create your list.

Either way, it is important to include your partner in the gift registry set-up, since together you'll find gifts you can both enjoy. Make a mutual decision on what you need and what you don't, as well as how you would like your new home to look. If you are at odds on making a decision, entrust him with choosing the electronics and outdoor items, and you can choose the linen and towels. Finally, include as many items as you wish but in varying price ranges; this will allow for guests to pick and choose and also allow them greater variety within their budget.

In terms of letting your guests know about your registry, most services provide complimentary inserts that can be included in your invitations to inform your guests on how to access it.

With most gift registry services you are able

to track what has been purchased on your list and you are also able to see who purchased what - making your life a lot easier when sending out thank you cards after your honeymoon. You can update your registry list online, day or night. However, be warned that not all registry services offer an online purchasing system for guests, which makes it difficult for overseas people wanting to buy for you. If you have a lot of overseas friends and family, you should definitely choose a specialist online service.

Style guru Fiona reveals what's on The Wedding Gift List's trendiest current gift lists: "These days, because many couples already have all the basics, the trend in gift lists has been to 'upgrade' to more grown-up things and finally get some of the funky, designer house wares that you always loved but didn't think to buy yourself. And for those who feel they have everything, a few big gifts (and the request for guests to contribute towards them) has become more common; think outdoor furniture, large appliances, or even weekends away. The latest in-things is the honeymoon registry, where guests make donations to the cost of the honeymoon." ❧

THE FOLLOWING OFFER GREAT WEDDING
REGISTRY SERVICES:

@Home

Woolworths

www.sagiftregistry.co.za

www.underwraps.co.za

The Wedding Gift List www.weddinggiftlist.co.za

Boardmans

Mr Price Home

www.thewineregistry.co.za