

Gift Registry 101: Register For A Delicious Future

Each year, more than 2 million engaged couples face the exhilarating, and often times daunting task of choosing gifts for their bridal registry.

Over the past decade, cookware has topped china as the No. 1 gift on bridal registries, indicating a major shift in focus from the dining room to the kitchen.

That's not surprising given that young adults today have come of age watching the Food Network where cooking is center-stage 24/7, as well as reality television series where professional and amateur chefs compete in the kitchen.

A yearning to learn how to cook has sparked the launch of new food magazines and cookbooks, as well as a seemingly endless supply of Web sites and Internet chat rooms devoted to food.

In this milieu of heightened awareness of all things culinary, it makes perfect sense that cookware reigns supreme on the minds of couples contemplating their bridal registry list.

However, given the enormous amount of cookware options available, many couples approach registering with trepidation.

To help guide brides and their fiances through the process, Janice Rassin, National Bridal Director at Meyer Corporation, U.S. — the largest cookware company in the U.S. with top-named brands, such as Anolon(R), Circulon(R), KitchenAid Cookware(R) and Farberware(R) — offers the following tips:

* Do a little soul-searching to discover your cooking style: Everyone has their own food style, including preferences for types of cuisines and cooking methods.

If you both love Italian food and know that you'll be making pasta dishes regularly, register for a large stockpot, to not only boil the water, but make a generous amount of fresh, homemade pasta sauce to enjoy that week, and store a portion in the freezer for future use.

Infinite Circulon offers a cleverly designed 7-quart stockpot with a built-in straining lid that locks into position for draining liquids. This eliminates the need to use and clean a colander.

And don't forget to register for a few basic tools and gadgets, such as a garlic press, box grater (to grate cheese), pasta fork, and solid spoon for stirring the sauce.

Prefer simply grilled burgers, chicken and fish? Register for a stovetop grill pan.

Most pans are made for use on a single burner and come in round and square shapes. Some pans also include one or two-sided pouring spouts to easily drain drippings and

fat that's accumulated at the bottom after cooking.

Larger rectangular shaped grill pans can be placed over two burners to accommodate six or more steaks, chicken breasts and other foods — perfect for entertaining.

A few of the double-burner grill pans are reversible with a flat griddle on the other side to prepare pancakes, sausages and bacon — terrific for hosting weekend brunch for your new in-laws or neighbors.

Whichever shape pan you choose, make sure it has professional heft and spreads heat evenly.

In addition to traditional cast iron, consider easier to maintain grill pans made of durable, hard-anodized aluminum with nonstick coating.

The nonstick coating helps make clean up a breeze. Check the grooves on the pan to be sure they are well defined, a must for appealing grill marks.

* Remember the holidays: Getting married often means starting to host family gatherings for the holidays.

Give some thought to what equipment you will need to create favorite family recipes and traditional dishes.

A generously sized roasting pan is essential for cooking turkey, ham or a standing rib roast. Family size

5-quart saute pans and larger size saucier pans are practical for making vegetable side dishes, risotto and casseroles for a full table of guests.

Well-established cookware brands, such as Anolon Advanced offer an extensive range of large open stock pots and pans to build a collection that's tailor made for entertaining.

One of the most versatile items offered is the Ultimate 12-inch Covered Pan, featuring sloped high sides that allow for fast rotating or stirring of a copious amount of ingredients.

Don't forget dessert! The holidays wouldn't be the same without festive cookies, pies, cakes and sweet breads made from recipes passed down from generation to generation.

Register for full and half cookie sheets, jelly roll pans, round and square cake pans, rectangular bakers, and loaf pans.

If you're a traditionalist, choose light-colored metal pans that you can use greased or covered with a stick-resistant silicone pad or parchment paper.

For the ultimate in convenience, choose heavy-gauge pans coated with high quality nonstick coatings to easily release foods every time. Supplement your bakeware choices with complementary gadgets and

tools, such as an apple corer, cone strainer, flat and balloon whisks, and icing knife.

* Who's doing the dishes? Most likely, cleaning up after dinner is not high on the list of things you love to do.

If getting out of the kitchen as fast as possible is a priority, select cookware that's completely dishwasher safe, such as Infinite Circulon.

This is the first hard-anodized nonstick cookware that is both dishwasher-safe and compatible

with all types of cooktops, including glass and energy-efficient induction ranges.

Keep in mind that cookware featuring an exterior of stainless steel, brushed aluminum or nonstick is sometimes dishwasher-safe, too. Check with your bridal consultant or the manufacturer's Web site to be sure.

* Quality cookware leads to years of culinary bliss: Now is the perfect time to make a commitment to each other that cooking will play a major role in your married life.

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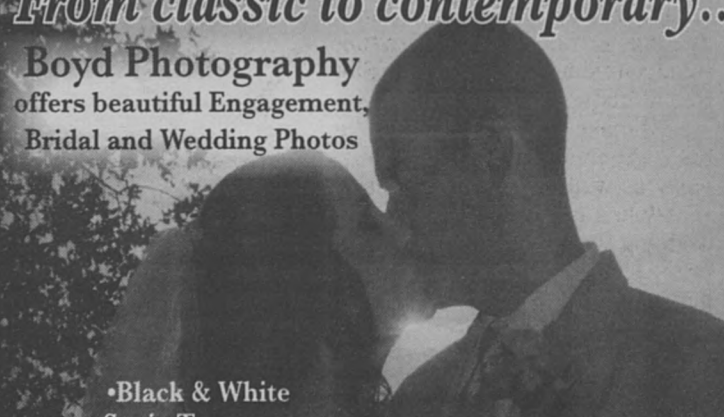
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