



Wedding planners prepare for requests of royal proportions

Event experts will be watching for details other princess brides will want to emulate

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By Kristen Seymour

More than 2 billion viewers are expected to set their alarms (or, for the less early morning-inclined, their DVRs) for 4 a.m. Friday to settle in with snacks watch the royal wedding unfold, just for fun.

But professional wedding planners are approaching Kate and Will's big day a little differently. They'll be scrutinizing the royal nuptials with as much attention as they would weddings they planned themselves — because they know that other brides and grooms will soon be asking them to fulfill their own royal dreams based on the noble couple's choices.

Aimee Monihan, a planner for Tropical Occasions, Mountain Occasions and Santa Teresa Beach Weddings has not only re-examined Prince Charles and Princess Diana's 1981 ceremony and other royal weddings, but has also followed all this year's pre-wedding coverage. "I'm watching all the shows this week that highlight what has gone into the plans thus far," she said. "I have my TiVo ready to record all the coverage from TLC, The Style Channel, E!, BBC, and all the major U.S. networks. I want to know what each and every one has to say and be prepared for any bride who may reference any one of them."



Dominic Lipinski / EPA

Carriage ride, anyone? Brides will want to know how to incorporate royal touches, like Kate's ride, getting polished here, into their weddings. Planners are ready to respond.



Matthew Schutter

Wedding planner Nilo G. will create an inspiration board based on the royal wedding details that strike her fancy.

In addition to the specifics that won't be revealed until tomorrow, many planners are focusing on bigger trends expected to ripple from these nuptials viewed 'round the world. "The royal wedding brings back elements of tradition and timelessness that can sometimes be forgotten with the modern-day bride," said Nilo G. of **Kapture**, an event and wedding production company in Southern California. One **Kapture** client booked for next year has made it clear she wants her Victorian garden-themed wedding to incorporate details from Will and Kate's big day. **Kapture** has already consulted with top vendors in the area, but will also be closely monitoring the nuptials as they occur, not only for future brides and grooms, but current clients as well.

"We have a couple getting married this weekend who has already told us they'll be watching the royal wedding right before their own wedding!" Nilo G. said.

She plans to not only DVR the event, but also read online coverage to create an inspiration board based on it. But she'll encourage brides and grooms to incorporate their own style, not just play copycat. "A lot of people are going to want to keep things really classic — lots of lace, scrollwork, the floral arrangements — but we'll find a way for them to put their own spin on it," she explained.

Jes Gordon, an event designer who takes pride in her eclecticism, will scrutinize the royal ceremony as it occurs — not only to take note of the details, but also to find ways that William and Kate have expressed themselves within the royal traditions.

"I think there are going to be contemporary aspects in this wedding," Gordon predicted, citing the bride-to-be's unusual sapphire engagement ring as an example of the young couple's distinctive style.

Gordon, who will appear on Bravo's new show "Rocco's Dinner Party" as design mentor, sees the "how" behind it all as the biggest draw for future brides and grooms. "We're in a world of DIY; we're not just obsessed with details, but we're obsessed with how it happened," she said. "How did they choose the centerpieces? The menu? Will Kate do her own makeup?"

But not all planners will be staring at their TVs at 4 a.m., obsessively taking notes. Celebrity party maestro Colin Cowie will be tuned in — but not from his couch.

"I'll be watching the ceremony while sipping champagne on a friend's boat off the coast of Indonesia," he said. "No official 'team' will be scrutinizing, but ... there's sure to be some critiquing going on. Ideas will never be replicated, but they will certainly influence my designs going forward."