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Brides can soon say 'I do' like a princess

Christopher Boyd | Sentinel Staff Writer Posted February 23, 2007

If your nuptial dreams include a fairy-tale wedding, Walt Disney Co. might have the perfect solution.

The company is using its stable of imaginary princesses as inspiration for a new line of wedding gowns. Disney and bridal designer Kirstie Kelly have developed a line of ethereal gowns that pay homage to Cinderella, Jasmine, Snow White, Ariel and Sleeping Beauty.

"They will be high-fashion and very modern," said Paulette Cleghorn, president of Designer Loft Productions, a New York public-relations firm representing Kelly. "We are modernizing the princess concept. There is a difference between a girl who is inspired by Snow White and one who wants to dress like Snow White."

Cleghorn said women who buy from Disney's Fairy Tale Wedding collection are definitely in the inspired category. The gowns, she said, will only vaguely resemble the costumes made famous in Walt Disney movies and storybooks.

The gowns, which will retail from \$1,100 to \$2,900, initially will be sold at one location in Central Florida. Solutions Bridal in Winter Park will carry the line.

"It was a little bit of a surprise that we were chosen for this, but a wonderful surprise," Solutions Bridal Manager Monique Scollin said. "We have many brides who are married on Disney property, and I assume they will be our main customers for this line."

Disney will initially offer 34 gowns, a line that will be expanded to include bridesmaid dresses, flower-girl dresses and jewelry in October.

"The brand extensions will be inspired by the princesses as well," Cleghorn said. "Bridesmaid dresses will be called maidens and accessories will be called jewels."

Princess clothing and accessories have been a huge hit with girls ages 3 to 6. Disney has sold billions of dollars in costumes, dolls and related paraphernalia, and items adorned with Cinderella and her peers.

Disney is betting that the allure will extend to considerably older females who find the princesses' mystique intriguing.

The princesses collection will be displayed in New York in April and will go on sale in Orlando and Southern California in June, Cleghorn said. Later, the line will be available at bridal boutiques elsewhere in North America and Japan.

"This is not a collection that will be available at every store around the corner," she said. "But we are expecting a number of local retailing partners."

The release coincides with Disney's 2007 theme. "This naturally ties into the Year of a Million Dreams," she said. "Think of it as one of those dreams."

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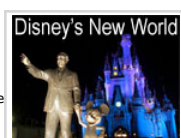
Snow White fashion (WALT DISNEY CO. (LEFT) DESIGNER LOFT PRODUCTIONS)

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