

Home-made and custom-designed prom dresses offer alternatives

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FERRIS

self from searching all over for that certain design that I want and never finding it, I make it. This way it's what I want, and it will have my own unique personality sewn into the design."

Prom is a celebration and tradition, so why not stand out from the rest of the class in an outfit that screams personality? Girls, you know how much that "perfect" dress at the store costs. A home-made dress is personalized for you and, in most cases, significantly less pricey.

"I would say that my homecoming dress cost me about \$40 all together," Diedesch said. "The quality of the dress was above store standards."

A little extra cash for accessories and a hair appointment never hurt anyone.

So what exactly does it take to design your own formal dress? Andrea stresses a key point: having enough time.

"People don't realize how hard it is when you're just starting to sew and don't understand everything," she said.

She also understands common pitfalls of dressmaking.

"My dress was a relatively easy dress to make, but because I had little experience sewing, there was a lot of frustration involved," Diedesch said. "Sometimes the instructions were hard to follow or sometimes you just make dumb little mistakes and have to seam-rip, which is not a fun experience."

Andrea cautions that creating a dress from scratch is time-consuming.

"All in all, I would say that it was not that hard to do, but you really have to make sure that you leave enough time to complete the dress. Not just anyone could design a dress; it takes practice and skill," she said.

If designing your own dress for the big dance sounds like your forte, here is some basic advice to keep in mind:

1. Always design according to your vision, but make sure your design is something you

can really accomplish.

2. Leave yourself LOTS of time to finish it.

3. Make sure you can finish what you start. No one wants to waste their money!

Andrea now plans to design her dress for prom this year.

"I went through ups and downs with that dress; I loved it at times and it was so fun to make, but I hated it at times and wanted to give up," she said.

For those of you that like the idea of a self-designed dress, but are not exactly gifted with a sewing machine, these Web sites can give you hand at giving your gown your own flair. Sorry to say, the same price cut of homemade dresses doesn't apply at these sites!

• **Coco Myles**

<http://www.cocomyles.com/>

This site lets you match classic dress tops with a variety of skirts. Choose your design, color, fabric, and beading!

• **Promgirl.com**

<http://www.promgirl.com>

At Promgirl.com, you can send in any picture of a celebrity's dress, or a sketch of your own. Just tell them your measurements and exactly what you want for a custom-made dress!

• **Peachberserk.com**

www.peachberserk.com

This designer store from Toronto, Canada is perfect if you've got a funky and unique sense of style! Choose from a variety of colors and crazy hip prints! Definitely for the individuals out there.

Picture your prom: the most exciting and glamorous night of your teenage life. First the fancy dinner and the limo, then walking into the beautifully decorated venue, ready to make an entrance with that fine piece of arm candy hanging all over you ...

And then there is that snot from fifth period - and she has your prom dress on. Evening: ruined.

Never fear girls. Read this and you will never have to live that nightmare!

With the limited and overpriced dress selection found at the mainstream malls, the trend of creating your own unique prom dress design is growing more and more popular each year. Andrea Diedesch, a senior at Ferris High School, decided to design her own homecoming dress this year.

"I am one of those people who goes to the mall with a certain design in my mind, and when I don't find it, I get mad," Diedesch said. "So, to save my-

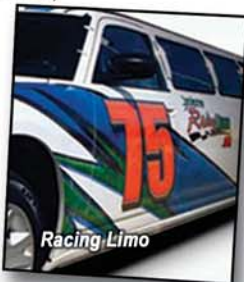


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