



BOOKED THE CATERER ✓  
 BOOKED THE PHOTOGRAPHER ✓  
 BOOKED THE PLASTIC SURGEON?

## Pre-wedding Plastic Surgery A Virginia Trend

In the not-too-distant future, wedding checklists may have to add a new to-do item:

### 3-6 Months Before Wedding—Consider Plastic Surgery

A growing number of Virginia brides, mothers-of-brides, mothers-of-grooms, and bridesmaids are opting for plastic surgery procedures to look their best for the big event and its lifetime of memories, photographs, and videos. Doctors with Plastic Surgery Services of Fredericksburg report that their “wedding patients” are often people who have been concerned about their appearance for some time and curious about their plastic surgery options, but needed a special event to nudge them into action.

The doctors attribute the rise in wedding patients to increasing acceptance of plastic surgery, television shows and news stories that highlight its benefits, and the emergence of new procedures that have significantly reduced recovery times.

“One recent bride not only scheduled her own tummy tuck and liposuction, but also referred several members of her wedding party,” says Lesi Beamon Mackey, practice administrator for Drs. L. Thomas Albert, Howard Heppe, and Harold Bautista at Plastic Surgery Services of Fredericksburg. “Another bride underwent a mini-facelift within weeks of her remarriage.”



### Real-Life Wedding Patients

Wedding patients also are talking more openly about their plastic surgery than they did in the past. But some still prefer to share their secrets with only a chosen few.

Consider the story of “Janice,” a bride in her early 20s who lives in Spotsylvania County. Janice was concerned about her profile in upcoming wedding pictures and wanted her dress to fit better around the abdomen. She

consulted with her doctor at Plastic Surgery Services of Fredericksburg, who recommended liposuction of her abdomen, chin, and underarms. He performed the procedures less than three months before the wedding.

Janice’s wedding dress was strapless, so including liposuction in her underarm area gave her a better fit at the top of her dress. The bride is very pleased with her results.

Janice’s mother-in-law, “Carol,” is in her mid-40s and also lives in Spotsylvania County. Carol was also inspired to look her best for the wedding. Realizing that she would be greeting family members and friends whom she had not seen for years, Carol wanted to regain a more youthful figure. Her doctor at Plastic Surgery Services of Fredericksburg recommended a tummy tuck, liposuction of the hips, and buttocks augmentation to address Carol’s concerns.

After her procedures three months before the wedding, Carol could consider mother-of-the-groom dress styles she would have shied away from in the past. She chose a form-fitting dress that flattered her flat stomach and waist. Carol also continued using her prescription skin care products, Obagi Nu-Derm, to improve the appearance and texture of her skin. Many friends and family at the wedding complimented Carol’s refreshed appearance.

Another Virginia bride-to-be, Carletta Carter of Fredericksburg, was so encouraged by her own plastic surgery that she referred several members of her wedding party to Plastic Surgery Services of Fredericksburg. The 41-year-old underwent a tummy tuck and liposuction to tighten her upper abdomen in August 2006, three years after her tummy tuck and liposuction to address concerns about her lower abdomen and thighs. Her wedding is scheduled for May 2007.

“I wanted to look great for my fiancé, even though he thought I already looked great,” Carletta says. “And I wanted to look nice in my wedding gown. We are planning a large wedding, and I wanted everything as close to perfect as possible.”

Carletta notes that her decision to pursue plastic surgery was also inspired by confidence in her doctor. “I had been thinking about having more surgery, and I knew my doctor would give me his honest opinion. He agreed that a tummy tuck would help. But when I asked him about liposuction for my thighs this time, he said, ‘No, I wouldn’t recommend it for you.’”

For Judy Grant of Loudoun County, an upcoming remarriage was the catalyst for her plastic surgery. Judy is a long-time patient of Plastic Surgery Services of Fredericksburg who has received BOTOX® treatments to smooth her brow and has used Obagi Nu-Derm products

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to significantly refine her skin. But neither treatment could address her sagging jowls, an inherited condition that aged her considerably.

At age 54, she wanted to look her best before her remarriage Feb. 14, 2006, in St. Lucia. So Judy consulted her plastic surgeon.

“[He] has never pushed a procedure on me. I just told him what I was concerned about with my face, and he offered suggestions,” she explains.

Judy had a mini-facelift and lower eyelid “pinch” surgery within two weeks of the wedding and was back on the job within four days. The result is a dramatic difference in her appearance.

“My 31-year-old daughter thinks it’s great. My husband thinks it’s great, too—though he didn’t put any pressure on me to have it done. I did it for me,” Judy says.

### Plastic Surgery Options

**W**hen it comes to facial enhancements, a full facelift produces the most dramatic results because it tightens skin in the cheeks, chin, jowls, and neck. It is often performed in conjunction with forehead and eyelid surgery.

But partial facial procedures can be undertaken incrementally or in combination to achieve significant yet natural-looking improvements. Partial facial procedures can include mini facelifts (also known as short-scar face lifts, S-lifts, and by various marketing terms); mid-facelifts (cheek lifts); forehead lifts (brow lifts); neck lifts; eyelid surgery; and the Contour ThreadLift, which tightens moderate facial and neck sagging with the help of tiny threads inserted under the skin.

One major advantage of partial facial procedures is their shorter at-home recovery period. Mini-facelift patients can return to work sooner than the one to two weeks required after a full facelift.

Since everyone heals differently, however, the doctors recommend scheduling plastic surgery procedures at least six to eight weeks—or three months optimally—before a special event or professional photo session. The earlier the better to allow plenty of time for healing amid wedding preparations.

Wedding party members with facial concerns who are fast approaching the big day can instead consider shorter-term options such as BOTOX treatments and injectible fillers to smooth wrinkles.

In addition to facial and chin procedures, plastic surgery options that tend to appeal to wedding participants in their 40s, 50s, and 60s include tummy tucks and body “lifts” that help patients regain their youthful figures. Younger brides and wedding party attendants lean toward such procedures as breast augmentation and liposuction to sculpt their bodies. The following is a partial list of procedures that may be

considered when consulting with a plastic surgeon.

- Eyelid lift
- Mini-facelift
- Full facelift
- Nose reshaping
- Chin augmentation
- Neck lift
- Neck liposuction
- Breast augmentation
- Breast reduction
- Breast lift
- Upper arm lift
- Tummy tuck
- Liposuction
- Thigh lift
- BOTOX treatment
- Injectible wrinkle fillers
- Obagi Nu-Derm skin treatment

### Check Credentials

**S**urprisingly, some plastic surgery procedures are also performed by doctors in other medical specialties. To help ensure the best results, it is important to opt for an accredited and experienced plastic surgeon. The American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) recommends that patients ask doctors the following questions:

1. Are you an ASPS Member Surgeon? (This means the doctor is board-certified in plastic surgery and performs surgery only in accredited facilities.)
2. Are you board-certified by The American Board of Plastic Surgery?
3. Do you have hospital privileges to perform this procedure? If so, at which hospitals?
4. Is the surgical facility accredited?
5. How many procedures of this type have you performed?

### A New Start

**W**ith a new marriage comes a new start in life. The months and weeks leading up to a wedding provide the perfect opportunity to improve healthy habits and address physical concerns that may be interfering with one’s self image and enjoyment of life.

To explore plastic surgery options, contact Plastic Surgery Services of Fredericksburg for a complimentary consultation. The practice is located midway between Richmond and Washington, D.C., serving patients in Central and Northern Virginia. For more information, visit the group’s Web site at [www.plasticsurgeryservices.com](http://www.plasticsurgeryservices.com), email [info@plasticsurgeryservices.com](mailto:info@plasticsurgeryservices.com), or call 1-800-793-7730. For general information about plastic surgery, please visit the American Society of Plastic Surgeons’ Web site at [www.plasticsurgery.org](http://www.plasticsurgery.org).

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