

**BEFORE THE BIG DAY:
HOW TO GET WHAT YOU WANT
FROM WEDDING PRESENTS**

Let's be honest: sometimes, the wedding presents you receive are a tad bit disappointing and, heaven forbid, redundant. Who amongst us hasn't nosed through the wedding present pile of various friends and family members under the pretext of being helpful, only to unwrap one photo frame after another? Don't forget the dozen or so coffee mugs with corny inspirational quotes on them either.

According to Leticia Hsu, president of The Association of Wedding Professionals, Malaysia and wedding planner at Elysium Weddings, household items, though well-intentioned, are tricky items to get as wedding presents. Due to changing lifestyles and evolving demographics such as couples setting up homes before marriage or already living together prior to tying the knot, they may exchange nuptial vows without actually requiring household items. Citing that cash in the form of *angpau* (red envelopes) remain a popular gift alternative in Malaysia, Leticia explains that the funds gathered can be used to foot wedding costs or purchase additional home products too.

Another way of reducing the chances of ending up with a deluge of unwanted items is simply by communicating about what you and your spouse actually need for the home. Although unconventional, creating a wish list—or at the very least announcing that you are both saving up for a specific item (eg a new refrigerator)—through social media sites like Facebook may help direct well-wishers in anticipation of your big day.

Even though the trend of wedding registries has yet to pick up in Malaysia, the digitally inclined will be hearted to know that there are some homegrown initiatives such as My Chocolate Mousse (www.mychocolatemousse.com).