



Customization Demand and In-House Alterations Shape Southeast Michigan Bridal Shopping as Mimi's Bridal Boutique Marks 25 Years in Ann Arbor

May 15, 2026

ANN ARBOR, MI - May 15, 2026 - PRESSADVANTAGE -

The Knot's 2026 Real Weddings Study points to an evolving bridal market focused on personalization and fit ? a shift the Ann Arbor, Michigan boutique has built its business around since opening in 2000.

Bridal salons across Southeast Michigan are reporting a shift in how brides are approaching gown selection heading into the 2026 wedding season: fewer off-the-rack purchases, more requests for made-to-measure alterations, silhouette adjustments, and personalized design work completed on-site. The pattern reflects national bridal industry trends documented by The Knot and WeddingWire and is reshaping the role independent, alterations-equipped boutiques play in regional wedding markets.

Mimi's Bridal Boutique, a family-owned and woman-owned bridal shop at 3366 Washtenaw Avenue in Ann Arbor, marks 25 years in operation this year against that backdrop. According to The Knot Worldwide's 2026 Real Weddings Study, released February 18, 2026, the average U.S. wedding cost reached \$34,200 in 2025,

with couples spending an average of \$292 per guest across the roughly two million weddings held nationwide. The study, drawn from responses by 10,474 couples married in 2025, also found that 85 percent of couples reported the economy influenced their planning ? yet 77 percent of those who adjusted their budgets actually increased spending in specific categories rather than reducing overall investment. Customization, fit work, and individualized service are among the categories where that spending is concentrating.

"Brides are arriving with more specific visions than they had even three or four years ago," said Yvette Mikho, founder and owner of Mimi's Bridal Boutique. "They've spent months collecting references on Pinterest, TikTok, and Instagram ? a neckline from one gown, a sleeve from another, a back detail they saw on a photographer's feed. Our work now starts with helping them translate all of that into a single, wearable dress that fits them and works for their venue."

The customization trend lines up with regional wedding-season timing. Industry tracking from the National Bridal Retailers Association points to a sizeable share of couples planning ceremonies within twelve months of engagement, and the Southeast Michigan ceremony window between May and October concentrates demand for alteration and fitting capacity during the spring and early summer months. For brides marrying at the region's lakefront venues, country clubs, barn properties, and Ann Arbor and Detroit metro ballrooms, the practical question of where alterations will be performed has become a meaningful factor in gown-shopping decisions, alongside designer selection.

Mimi's Bridal Boutique stocks more than 250 designer wedding gowns from Allure Bridals, Allure Couture, Allure Limited, Abella, Chic Nostalgia, Madison James, Maggie Sottero, Rebecca Ingram, Sottero and Midgley, and Wilderly, and handles all alterations on-site through an in-house team. The boutique's services include wedding dresses, plus-size wedding gowns stocked on the boutique floor in sample sizes, in-house alterations, wedding dress preservation, bridal accessories, veils, and fine wedding jewelry ? many pieces designed by Mikho, who built her early career as a jewelry designer in Baghdad, Iraq before immigrating to the United States in 1990. The boutique also operates Mimi's Rack, a dedicated section of off-the-rack and sample-sale designer gowns for brides on shorter timelines.

The 2026 market shift also reflects a broader inclusivity expansion in the bridal industry. Plus-size and size-inclusive sample availability ? gowns that can be tried on at the bride's actual size rather than estimated from a smaller sample ? has become an expected baseline for full-service boutiques. Industry observers note that brides increasingly evaluate boutiques on the depth and visibility of plus-size sample inventory in addition to designer roster.

"The fundamentals don't change," Mikho said. "Brides want to feel taken care of, they want time to make the decision, and they want to know who is going to be working on their dress. The way we operate the boutique

is built around those things ? a 90-minute appointment with a dedicated stylist, in-house alterations, and a team that has been doing this work in Ann Arbor for decades."

Mimi's Bridal Boutique opened in 2000 and has been continuously owned and operated by Mikho since its founding. Before launching the boutique, Mikho operated an Ann Arbor tailoring shop that specialized in wedding gown alterations, an experience that shaped the boutique's customization-first operational model. The boutique serves brides across Washtenaw County and the broader Southeast Michigan and Northwest Ohio regions, including communities in Ypsilanti, Whitmore Lake, Brighton, Novi, Toledo, Jackson, Troy, Commerce Township, and South Lyon.

The boutique's regional draw reflects the geographic distribution of Southeast Michigan's wedding market. The Knot's 2026 Real Weddings Study, which captured data from couples across the country, found that location remains one of the largest single drivers of wedding cost variation ? a factor that influences gown decisions alongside guest count, season, and venue selection. For Southeast Michigan brides, the regional supplier base and on-site service capacity have become as relevant as designer label.

Mimi's Bridal Boutique operates by appointment, Tuesday through Thursday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Friday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The boutique is closed Sunday and Monday. Appointments can be scheduled online or by calling (734) 623-0890.

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For more information about Mimi's Bridal Boutique, contact the company here: Mimi's Bridal Boutique Yvette Mikho 734-623-0890 info@mimisbridalboutique.com 3366 Washtenaw Ave, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Mimi's Bridal Boutique

Mimi's Bridal Boutique offers elegant wedding dresses, bridal gowns, veils, and accessories for brides seeking timeless style and personalized service.

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