



Left, The Natalie Dress  
Right, The Eva Dress

## How to Find the Perfect Party Dress...

### Katie Fong Style!

by *Cindy Clarke*

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**E'VE ALL BEEN THERE.** We receive that coveted invitation to the party event of the year; we look at the dresses hanging in our closet and lament that we don't have a thing to wear! Out we go, invitation in mind, to stores from the mall to main street and still return home empty handed and sadly un-dressed. Now the panic *really* sets in! What's a woman to do?

Enter Katie Fong, a Greenwich, Connecticut native who apprenticed with fashion icon Oscar de la Renta for three years, gifted, gorgeous and exceptionally enterprising. As she tells it, she too found herself in that dilemma one time too many. Despite endless trips to the best department stores and boutiques in New York City and along tony Greenwich Avenue for that simple, elegant dress she hoped to wear to a very special gala black tie event, it eluded her. She looked online, in-depth, without much success. There were surprisingly few dresses that she actually liked that were appropriate for her important party, but those were well beyond her generous budget. Even after she tried those dresses on, she felt that she was "settling" for a comprised choice. Sound familiar?

Happily for us, her story had a happy, ultimately form-fitting ending.

Katie did eventually find the perfect designer dress – on sale! – and turned heads at the gala. She also turned her career path in a new direction, founding her own fashion design company, Katie Fong, in 2012, to indulge her passion for dresses that are "simply beautiful".

In one short year, Katie has continued to turn heads with two stunning seasonal collections, as well as growing her own specialized custom design business. Katie's collections encompass a thoughtful range of dresses, gowns, separates and coats for special events, including weddings, each meticulously made from the finest luxe materials. Her favorite fabrics to work with are four ply silk crepe and silk faille – "they feel exquisite on a person's skin" – and "they flow down and drape a woman's body, flattering all the right places." Lace appliques, threaded embroidery and silk covered buttons add that touch of understated elegance that simply makes the dress stand out from any others.

She has also made headway down the runways of some of the most respected stores from coast to coast, partnering with the Connecticut-based



From left to right:  
 1. The Savannah Top and paired with the Aria Skirt  
 2. The Lucy Dress  
 3. The Avery Dress  
 4. The Alexa Blouse paired with the Harper Skirt  
 5. The Camila Gown  
 6. The Mia Gown  
 7. Custom Wedding Gown

Katie embraces a more mature and worldly viewpoint of designing investment pieces that are timeless by nature and that can be enjoyed and worn without hesitation for many years.

Mitchells Family of Stores – first at Richards, their Greenwich Avenue flagship store in the fall of 2012, and more recently to Wilkes Bashford, the premier destination for San Francisco’s most elite luxury-seeking consumers.

Says Linda Mitchell, Vice President of Women’s Merchandise for Mitchells Family of Stores, “We are delighted to have a partnership with Katie Fong to provide custom design services for our clients. Katie provides an environment where client’s vision come to life. She has a sophisticated, elegant sensibility executed with couture workmanship. Katie makes women feel beautiful.”

Katie Fong’s custom design and made to measure business is part of an increasingly important trend in the high-end women’s apparel market. Heretofore, bespoke clothing was more generally associated with men’s apparel. Recent popularization of custom clothing by entertainment, business and political figures, technology advances and a highly competitive and moderately growing market that is continually striving for new unique products and the highest level of customer service for the most affluent customers are all factors responsible for the trend. In fact, the trend is the driving force in Saks Fifth Avenue’s current makeover by its new CEO, Marigay McKee.

The secret to Katie’s remarkable early success is a design philosophy that is understood and appreciated by the most discerning woman. Pairing her youthful exuberance with an innate sense of fashion know-how, Katie embraces a more mature and worldly viewpoint of designing investment pieces that are timeless by nature and that can be enjoyed and worn without hesitation for many years. Katie’s magic is that she is able to subtly marry the notion of classic with a sense of surprise and fun that make her customers feel appropriate yet incredibly attractive. She instinctively understands how a woman wants to feel when she is dressing well. She knows how important that it is to feel beautiful and confident, effortlessly. Thoughtfully crafted, Katie Fong’s dresses conquer any challenging situation with ease and grace, whether it is getting in and out of a car, sitting prettily, gliding across the dance floor or dining demurely!

Adds the always well-dressed Director of Marketing for Saks Fifth Avenue in Greenwich, Geri Corrigan, who sits on the Advisory Board of the Luxury Marketing Council of Connecticut and Hudson Valley – and who wears Katie Fong couture to all her important social and business events, “I was first introduced to Katie last summer by a mutual friend in Greenwich. I was immediately impressed by her maturity, personality and poise, as well as her passion to support and give back to the community she grew up in. Shortly thereafter, Katie invited me to a showing of her new collection. I immediately fell in love with her design aesthetic – from the delicacy of the lace and intricate beading, to the beautiful tailoring and femininity.”

By all accounts, Katie is a designer to keep your eyes on, and as any lucky lady who has worn her fashions will tell you, people will also keep their eyes on you when you arrive wearing one of her dresses! □

To put your eyes on her collection, visit [www.katiefong.com](http://www.katiefong.com).