

## Finishing Touches

### Accessories Add Meaning

A quinceañera girl's accessories not only add to her glamorous look, they also sometimes play a ceremonial part in the day's festivities. The glittery tiara or corona that makes a quince girl resemble a fairy-tale heroine can be used for a ritual crowning when she is presented at her reception.

Sometimes a jeweled scepter—a regal, traditional emblem of authority—is also presented to the quinceañera. In some Latin American cultures—Mexican, Puerto Rican, Dominican and Honduran for example—the honoree walks into her fiesta wearing girlish flat shoes.

Her father or mother will then help her change into a pair of high heels, a symbol of her newfound maturity. “It’s a very emotional thing,” says Mary Jane Flores, a San Antonio, Texas quinceañera planner. “You see these big, strapping daddies just break down when they do it.”

### All that glitters

If the quinceañera includes a mass, the girl often sports a headpiece made of real or fake flowers. “And sometimes, I see a traditional mantilla at the mass,” says Flores. The girl then changes into a glitzy tiara at the fiesta either when she arrives or when she is officially presented.

“Having something sparkling in your hair always produces a special feeling,” says Minnesota tiara designer Christina Garcia. “I’m selling lots of tiaras with colored stones now,” says Sylvia Solheim of Quinceañera-Boutique.com, who says her site also does well with tiaras that have the No. 15 worked into their design.

Silvertone metals inset with rhinestones, pearls or other faux gems are also popular, but, says Garcia, “We’re seeing an increase in demand for gold or for antique-look metal.”

### Fancy feet

Quinceañera shoe trends tend to follow mainstream fashion. “Girls usually wear something that strikes their fancy, something glamorous,” says Solheim. “But they should remember they’re going to be spending the evening dancing and traipsing around. At her fiesta, my daughter took off her heels and put on tennis shoes!”

So it doesn’t seem surprising that quinceañeras often buy shoes with one- or two-inch heels. “Typically, for the quince markets, the clients like open-toed, strappy sandals with a lower heel,” says Ed Rene, president of Touch Ups shoes of Barrington, N.H. “We’re also carrying some new, youthful wedges that I think may be popular.” Materials of choice include satin and metallic leather.

David’s Bridal often sells quince clients its “Nina” style, a mule with a see-through plastic top that can be threaded with ribbons in their choice of colors like green, pink and purple. “They sometimes have their damas wear the same style and also do a matching ribbon there,” says Cindi Freeburn, vice president of public relations. “The shoe ceremony is such an important part of the day.”

Jennifer Barger is a Washington, D.C.-based fashion and travel writer. Her work has appeared in The Washington Post, National Geographic Traveler, Playbill and Country Home. She is a senior editor at Where Washington Magazine.