

IRELAND

IRISH BLESSING

Having visions of a quaint wedding in the Irish countryside but don't want to lose all the bells and whistles of a five-star resort? The **LODGE AT DOONBEG**, an oceanfront retreat on the dunes of rural County Clare, has made that possible. Play a round of golf on the pristine Greg Norman-designed course overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, and then unwind at the White Horses Spa; customizable bridal packages are available for the girls, and the guys can relax with gentlemen's facials. Hold your rehearsal dinner at Darby's, where traditional Irish fare — including beef from a neighboring farm and fresh seafood — is served with a side of ocean views. Then throw the main event outdoors under a white-draped tent (pictured right), where you won't miss a minute of the vista — crashing waves, moody skies and a spectacular sunset. *Rooms from \$240; wedding packages from \$95 per person. — Lauren Clark*





FLORIDA

BOCA FOR BRIDES

Since the 1920s, BOCA RATON RESORT, THE WALDORF ASTORIA COLLECTION, has attracted a long list of high-society guests. So it's only fitting that the swanky hotel would have the means to create equally over-the-top weddings. The secret? Boca by Design, the resort's in-house event-planning company that boasts a staff of 27 wedding pros. (Take floral designer extraordinaire Carlos Marquez, whose custom creations can include floating candles, precious jewels and even live fish.) Let your wedding coordinator steer you to the perfect venue — more than a dozen locations are scattered throughout the property's 356 acres. And invite as many guests as you please, as this Mediterranean-style stunner holds more than 1,000 newly refurbished guest rooms, including a bridal suite with French doors. Ooh la la! *Rooms from \$289; wedding packages from \$12,500 for 50 guests.* — Jennifer Leslie Kramer



HOT FASHION

designer i do

You've searched the world to find your perfect venue; now you need a fashion-forward dress to match. Might we introduce you to **DESIGNER BRIDE INC.** — a new collection of designer gowns at surprisingly affordable prices. Choose a budget-conscious frock from the Angel by Angel Sanchez collection (including the Audrey, pictured) or a style from first-ever bridal lines by fashion gurus like David Meister, Carmen Marc Valvo and resort-wear icon Lilly Pulitzer. "Today's bride is older, more sophisticated, more brand-savvy and more price-conscious," says CEO Sever Garcia. To wit, the gowns range from \$1,200 to \$4,000 — a steal for dresses from names like these. Find yours at designerbrideinc.com or select salons nationwide beginning Dec. 1. — Melissa G. Lamkin

MEXICO

feeling karismatic

EL DORADO SPA RESORTS & HOTELS and AZUL HOTELS BY KARISMA already stand out for their Gourmet Inclusive concept: all-inclusive service at a luxury level (beach butlers, nightly turndown, 24-hour room service). Now these Riviera Maya resort brands offer weddings to match. The new, free Sweet wedding package (yes, we said *free*) offers a lengthy list of complimentary amenities: a wedding website, registry and onsite coordinator, plus day-of services like a personal in-room attendant for the bride and beverages with gourmet snacks for the groom. Choose one of five resorts for your oceanfront ceremony, and come day's end, a rose-petal-strewn candlelit suite awaits you and your beau. (The next morning, you even get breakfast in bed.) Upgrade to the Silver or Gold wedding package (from \$2,500) for extras like a mani, a sunset dinner cruise, a wedding cake for two and — get this — a photo-ready vintage-style dress form to display your gown while you prep. *Rooms from \$177 per person, all-inclusive; Sweet wedding package free (minimum requirements apply).* — Sarah Larson



BOCA RATON RESORT: THOMAS HART SHELLEY (2); SURVIVAL KIT: DIANE RICE



CALIFORNIA

L.A. HIGH LIFE

When the L.A. LIVE entertainment complex opened in 2008, the once-seedy downtown area began attracting a new crowd: tourists. Now it's luring destination brides, thanks to the spring 2010 unveiling of swank sister hotels **JW MARRIOTT LOS ANGELES AT L.A. LIVE** and **THE RITZ-CARLTON, LOS ANGELES**. Prep at the Ritz's uber-chic spa (pictured top), then celebrate in a private dining room (seats 30) at WP24 by Wolfgang Puck, located

on the 24th floor. For big bashes, three ballrooms are blank canvases ready to be dressed up to suit your vision. At the JW Marriott, say I do before a wall of windows in the Mixing Room lounge (seats 200), then toast on the adjacent terrace. Party the night away in a ballroom, or go for glam on the hotel's rooftop pool deck. L.A. LIVE's restaurants, concert venues and sports arena are all a short stroll away. *JW rooms from \$179; Ritz rooms from \$279; wedding packages from \$195 per person.* — Libby Platus



FUN IDEA

TO THE RESCUE

Having a bridal emergency kit on hand at your wedding is a good idea — especially if that wedding is happening in some remote place with (gasp!) no Target nearby. But when said emergency kit is downright adorable — now that's a must! Created by veteran wedding planner Jackie James, the **MOJUBA BRIDE** wedding-survival kit is filled with carefully chosen, trustworthy essentials like bandages, stain remover, fashion tape, nail files, bobby pins, tissues, breath freshener, straws and pain reliever, plus fun extras like L'Occitane hand cream and a disposable camera. Everything is neatly packaged in a crave-worthy hanging toiletry bag made of posh ivory vinyl. There's even a groom kit (shaving cream, shoeshine, playing cards) enclosed in a slick charcoal messenger bag. We'll take two! *Kits \$165 each.* — Erika Hueneke





ST. LUCIA

SEE THE LIGHT

Question: What Caribbean lighthouse is the second highest in the world and doubles as an exclusive wedding location? Answer: the circa-1912 Cape Moule a Chique, located on the rocky southernmost tip of St. Lucia, 745 feet above sea level. Only guests of **COCONUT BAY BEACH RESORT & SPA** have access to the venue, recently refurbished — and trimmed with a new wedding gazebo, pictured — with support from the resort. Say the word, and the hotel's staff will arrange a luxury sedan to whisk the bridal party to the site, a 15-minute drive away. Exchange vows overlooking the joining of the Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean Sea, and linger to toast your union with cocktails. *Rooms from \$224, all-inclusive; deluxe wedding package free (minimum requirements apply).* — *Ivette Manners*

REGAL VENUES

ROYAL TREATMENT

Nothing says *fairy-tale wedding* like



AMBERLEY CASTLE
WEST SUSSEX, ENGLAND
Behind a 60-foot-high curtain wall sits this 10th-century castle, first inhabited by Henry I. With two restaurants, a croquet lawn and only 19 rooms and suites, the hotel is prime for buyouts. On the big day, set up a marquee on the lawn or in the gardens swathed with camellias, magnolias, roses and koi ponds. *Rooms from \$300; wedding packages from \$23,500.*



ASHFORD CASTLE
CONG, COUNTY MAYO, IRELAND
Once won in battle by English Lord Bingham, this 13th-century castle later served as the Guinness family home. Now the 350-acre estate is a coveted hotel with 83 guest rooms. Marry in one of two onsite churches, then dine at George V restaurant, complete with Waterford-crystal chandeliers and river views. *Rooms from \$290; wedding packages from \$96 per person.*



CASTELLO ORSINI
NEROLA, ITALY
Likely the only 10th-century castle with a Nintendo Wii arcade, this *bella* estate just outside Rome comprises 51 suites, a heated pool and a spa. Weddings take place anywhere you choose, from the *ristorante* (which still holds ancient ovens from the original kitchen) to the gardens to the grand Hall of Knights. *Rooms from \$260; wedding packages from \$170 per person.*



CHÂTEAU DE CASTEL-NOVEL
CORREZE, FRANCE
French writer Colette wrote several novels in the Louis XIV room at this 13th-century castle. Today it holds 27 rooms and suites, plus 10 cottage rooms and two banquet halls — the Orangerie (with wood beams and a pink-stone fireplace) and Biscaye (with a bay window opening to the pool). *Rooms from \$124; wedding packages from \$80 per person.*

COCONUT BAY: FLORENT GROUP; WHISTLET & BOOK: JON WHITTLE; CASTELLO ORSINI: LUCA ZAMBENI; CHÂTEAU DE CASTEL-NOVEL: GÉRARD GLOMIEU

COOL TREND

BESPOKE BRIDAL PARTY

Up the ante at your wedding away by tricking out your 'maids and 'men in neck-to-toe custom creations. — *Liz Ozaist*



For the Ladies

Dress: **OLIVIA LUCA** A click of the mouse lets you select every detail, from the style to a fabric shade matched to your 'maids' skin tones. The studio even stocks sustainable materials like organic cotton sateen and hemp-silk charmeuse. *From \$250.*

Shoes: **TUCCIA DI CAPRI** This Miami sandal shop crafts its kicks from the sole up, just like it's been done in Capri, Italy, for decades. In store or online, pick the soles, straps and jewels, which are then cobbled together to fit each lady's foot. *From \$135.*

Handbag: **1154 LILL STUDIO** Use the design-your-own feature online for bridal favorites like the Erinn clutch and Grace wristlet (pictured). *From \$59.*



For the Gents

Suit: **INDOCHINO** These made-to-measure suits, hand-chalked and -cut by a master tailor in Shanghai, are delivered within two weeks. Attendants can individualize their threads online with pick-stitching, monograms and more. *From \$300.*

Shirt: **INDITAILORED.COM** He'll love the smart custom accents, including tab collars and barrel cuffs. Best of all, shipping's free — along with any adjustments. *From \$90.*

Tie: **PIERREPONT HICKS** The guys will wear these mod made-to-order neckties and bow ties (pictured) long after the big day is through. Delivery takes about eight weeks, and cotton micro-cord swatches are available at \$8 per square. *From \$62.*

tying the knot in a real European castle turned hotel. — *Nora Zelevansky*



DALHOUSIE CASTLE
MIDLOTHIAN, SCOTLAND
Kilts are optional at this 13th-century fortress, where the 36 rooms (including seven in the 100-year-old private lodge) front the River Esk. Relax at Scotland's first hydro spa before marrying under the cedar tree on the castle's wooded grounds. Then revel in the turret-housed Brechin room. *Rooms from \$155; site fees from \$5,420; food and beverage from \$125 per person.*



HOTEL SCHLOSS WALDECK
HESSE, GERMANY
This 11th-century castle, once home to the counts of Waldeck, was later used as a penitentiary. Poised in a prime spot 700 feet above Lake Edersee, today it features 40 newly refurbished rooms. Arrive by carriage amid a dove release, and tie the knot in the intimate Registry. Then party under antique chandeliers in the wood-paneled Knights' Hall. *Rooms from \$113; weddings custom.*



PARADOR DE CIUDAD RODRIGO
CIUDAD RODRIGO, SPAIN
Marry overlooking the Agueda river valley at this 14th-century castle, now a heritage site with 35 unique rooms. Whether you celebrate with sangria beside a suit of armor in the Rio Agueda banquet hall or outside on the grounds, Salamanca cuisine (Iberian hams, local sausages) takes center stage. *Rooms from \$210; weddings custom.*



GET THIS

LOVE STORY

Your story doesn't start the day you say I do — which is why Los Angeles-based photojournalists Natasha Chornesky and Chris Cozzone dreamed up **WRITESHOT**, a personalized wedding book that captures not only the events surrounding your big day (Chornesky and Cozzone accompany you to your destination) but also your entire romantic history. After conducting a series of interviews covering the day you met through your wedding day, the WriteShot team creates a narrative memoir that weaves blundered dates, inside jokes and faraway I do's with magazine-quality photography of your entire event. The result is a Taschen-style book sure to become a family heirloom. *Three-day commissions from \$6,500, including three books.* — *SL*