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Monte-Carlo Weddings



Monaco Wedding News

December 2008

Season's Greetings!

Here is a recap of what has been happening at Monte-Carlo Weddings. Each month we will dispense some free advice on the **wedding planning** process, take a look at a different neighboring French village and give you news on our company. Enjoy!

Frank Damgaard



« Happy Holidays! »

Professional Advice on Choosing a Wedding Venue

Often brides ask me "How do I know when a venue is perfect? What should I look for?"

Choosing the venues for the wedding is pretty much right up there with the very first thing couples do once they get engaged (in fact, it comes second, right after the ever-important shopping for the wedding dress!)

My experience is that deciding on a wedding venue really involves a combination of factors. First of all, you start with the basics. You must find out:

- if the venue is available on the date
- if it can comfortably seat all of the guests
- whether or not it suits the theme of your wedding, and the general feel
- whether or not the event can be moved in case of rain (I recommend you definitely NOT tempt fate by choosing a venue which does not have a back-up plan for inclement weather – regardless of what month it is. Let's just say that you want your wedding to be memorable, but for all the right reasons).
- and of course... whether or not it is in your price range.

One way to improve your chances of getting the venue you want during the busiest wedding months (here in the area the busiest months are June, July and September) is to agree to have the wedding on a day other than a Saturday. Quite unconventional, that is certain, but on other hand, it might be worth it to secure the venue of your dreams...

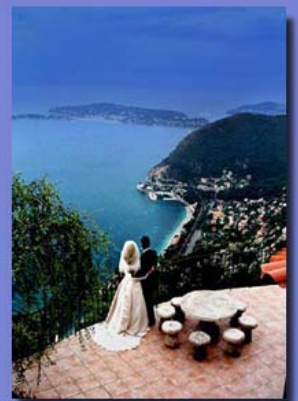
Secondly, you must take into account the potential the venue offers. Can it be transformed? How has it been decorated for previous weddings? Of course, I recommend you always visit the venue in person. It is also a good idea to either have a wedding planner vouch for the venue or get a contact number for a couple who has already rented it.

Thirdly, I think that couples have to remember that guests' ability to get to the venue is important. Is there an airport nearby? Are there a lot of direct flights available that time of year for the out-of-town guests? Are there a lot of hotels in the area, of varying price ranges? For people planning destination weddings, remember that the easier you make it for guests to attend, the more will attend.

Last but not least, remember that facts and figures are just one part of the picture. How you feel when you first walk into a venue does count for a lot. Is it what you have been dreaming of? Can you imagine yourself there on your big day? If this isn't a good time to go with your gut, what is? After all, you are getting married!

Industry Accreditations

As I always say, weddings are different from "regular" events, and as such most



The most romantic place on earth...



Wedded bliss in a field of lavender...



couples look for a specialized wedding planner company as opposed to an event company which “dabbles” in weddings. Fortunately for the consumer, there are three wedding planning associations regulating our industry, and Monte-Carlo Weddings is accredited by all three.

Association of Bridal Consultants—ABC

Their motto is: “The Standard for Wedding Excellence” As the oldest and largest group of wedding professionals in the world, they have been making wedding dreams come true since 1955. ABC offers the most detailed and comprehensive training in the industry.

All ABC members agree to uphold the ABC Code of Ethics and Professional Standards of Membership.

For more information: <http://www.bridalassn.com/>

Association for Wedding Planners International—AfWPI

AFWPI is an international organization dedicated to providing quality service and a central source of information and referrals - for those planning weddings and those who service weddings.

For more information: <http://afwpi.com/>

National Association of Professional Wedding Services—NAPWS

They are known as: “The benchmark of the Discerning Bride.” NAPWS is the UK’s first national wedding association. It represents high caliber businesses that are dedicated to providing an exemplary service. NAPWS demands exceptional professional and ethical standards from its Members in order to inspire client confidence and enhance the reputation and interests of the Association and its Members.

For more info: <http://www.theweddingassociation.co.uk/>

Monte-Carlo Weddings magazine feature

Inside/Out Monaco, an international lifestyle magazine, recently featured MCW in a 4-page spread. This magazine enjoys wide-spread distribution here in Monaco and abroad. Here is the article in its entirety:

There are hundreds of places Monaco residents can travel to on holiday. Before looking into faraway destinations, we decided to start off the very first issue of our magazine focusing on the beauty in our own backyard and one of the most important days in people’s lives: their wedding.

Every year over 5 million people visit Monaco - one of the most breathtaking, exciting and prestigious places in the world - so it’s not surprising that many high-end wedding ceremonies take place in our Principality, known as it is for its glamour and luxurious lifestyle.

Church bells ringing and car horns... honking!

In this part of the world there are two sounds that signal that a wedding has just taken place: church bells and... car horns honking! Around Monaco it is a relatively common sight to see a couple who just tied the knot driving by in a luxurious car decorated with fragrant flowers and lace, with a long line of other cars filled with guests driving right behind, with passersby striving to get a glimpse of the happy couple.

We visited Frank Damgaard of Monte-Carlo Weddings, a local wedding planner, who has been organizing many luxurious weddings in the Principality and the surrounding area, to interview him on the challenges (and perils!) of planning the most important day of people’s lives.

Why do people hire wedding planners? “Let’s put it this way: imagine you have to plan the biggest day of your life, with the largest budget you have ever been in charge of, with, as guests: a couple hundred of your closest friends and family, not to mention that you have to fulfill a whole array of tasks, with no experience, no contacts, and... in some cases... no time – and you want to make sure that it comes out perfect because you have been dreaming of this day like... forever and if it comes out anything less than perfect you would feel absolutely AWFUL.... Would YOU get an expert to come in to ensure success???

Many of our readers have seen the "The Wedding Planner", starring Jennifer Lopez. Is your every day experience like in the film? “I think that the movie did a pretty good job of portraying the challenges (and the fun, of course) of being in charge of someone’s wedding - it is quite a juggling act – you have to help them find the best



THE WEDDING
ASSOCIATION.
BENCHMARK
OF THE DISCERNING
BRIDE.



Magazine interview



« I do! »



The French Riviera

venue, caterer, florist, photographer, hair, make-up, invitations, hotels, transportation, coordinate official papers, keep track of every single last detail and last but not least be there for them and take on all of the responsibility for the wedding, so that they have a stress-free experience.

I think you have a namesake in another Hollywood film? "Yes, I know. People also kid me about being called "Frank", just like the Wedding Franck Eggelhoff, played by Martin Short in the Steve Martin hit "Father of the Bride." Rest assured, I do not resemble "Franck" in any way!"

With Monaco being known as one of the most romantic places in the world, do you get a lot of foreigners contacting you? "We basically cater to two groups of people, the Monaco residents who wish to hold a luxurious wedding here in the Principality, and foreign nationals who get married in the local town hall in their own country first and then travel to Monaco with their guests for a lavish, memorable wedding celebration, which is then called a "destination wedding."

Do you also take care of people's weddings elsewhere on the Riviera? "Yes, of course, we organize weddings outside the Principality. We are truly blessed to live in such a gorgeous part of the world – there are so many venues to choose from: 4 star luxury hotels, old stone churches, modern or Belle Epoque villas with views of the Mediterranean, French country gardens, small villages towering above the landscapes below, medieval fortresses, megayachts..."

Frank, not everyone reading this magazine who is planning on getting married might decide to hire a wedding planner, but most do go on a honeymoon. Do you have any tips for them on how to choose the perfect honeymoon destination?

"Not surprisingly, my first advice is to go see an expert! There are of course many travel agents out there, so I would primarily concentrate on getting advice from a seasoned honeymoon travel agent. I would not suggest you settle on the very first one you come across - I would go and visit more than one and try to find one which you trust and with whom you communicate with easily. As a Wedding Planner, I personally get asked to provide prospective clients with past referrals all the time, so I think that choosing a well-recommended travel agent will help you breathe easier."

This month's "Spotlight on a French Village"

The Breathtaking Hill-top Medieval Town of Eze Village

The area is known for its beautiful settings, that is for sure. However, few villages seem to capture people's imagination more than the tiny French village of Eze, perched on top of its own mountain top, overlooking the Mediterranean. A stone's throw away from the Principality of Monaco, it is popular with tourists and locals alike, who love to wander through its medieval streets, dine in its fancy restaurants, stay in its world-renowned luxury hotels, or simply go for a stroll, to gaze at the magnificent views.

For more on this picturesque village: <http://www.provenceweb.fr/e/alpmarit/eze/eze.htm>. Unfortunately, no website can possibly do it justice. I guess you are going to have to come see for yourself!

Highlighting Your Own Personal Style

As a wedding planner I need to understand how I can serve you best. Every single bride (and every single couple!) is different in personality and in their hopes and expectations for this big event.

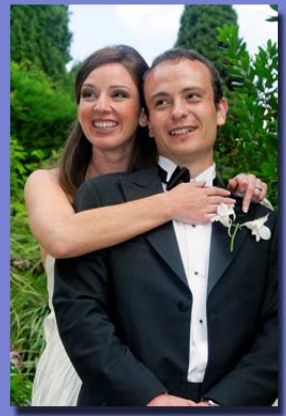
My goal is for me to translate your wishes into reality: for some people a Wedding signifies the future they will have with their spouse-to-be, for some the religious aspect is the most important element, for some it is the realization of their dream of a big wedding with all the trimmings, for some brides it means a chance to feel like a princess in a fairy-tale, and for others it means a day where all of their friends and family converge to celebrate together.

Website News

Our website, www.montecarloweddings.com, can be seen in both [flash](#) and [html](#). What better way to get wedding ideas and find out more about the South of France? (not to mention checking out the various venue possibilities). [The website is also in French.](#)

This month's featured page: [Special Planning Days](#)

- to read this page in flash: http://www.montecarloweddings.com/index_flash.html (and click on Special Planning Days).



Posing for wedding pictures...



Nothing like a church setting.



Famous Eze Village



View from Eze at night



Simplicity & elegance...



MCW Website

- in html: http://www.montecarloweddings.com/html/special_planning.php

Remember: when shopping for a wedding planner...

When shopping for a wedding planner remember to ask them if they take care of ALL the wedding preparations, or if there are some matters which are not included. At Monte-Carlo Weddings we take care of many areas other wedding planners don't cover, such as the often time-consuming task of keeping track of RSVPs (the yeses, the no's, and the maybe's!) booking hotel accommodations for your guests (often in several hotels of different price-categories), and coordinating all extra-curricular activities during the entire wedding week-end (golf, personalized hair appointments, spa rendez-vous, etc.)

This month's [testimonial](#)

"We first met Frank Damgaard from Monte Carlo Weddings in 2007 and following this initial meeting, my husband (then fiancé) and I were confident that Monte-Carlo Weddings would be able create our dream wedding. We live in England but we wanted to have our wedding in the South of France. Monte-Carlo Weddings listened to what kind of venue we wanted and worked out what kind of people we were and found us our perfect venue, a private villa in Valbonne, which we took over for 4 days.

Monte-Carlo Weddings produced the entire wedding for us and sourced every supplier we used on the day. I have to say that each supplier exceeded our expectations, the standard was exceptional. Monte-Carlo Weddings helped to choose bespoke suppliers for us, which "made" the wedding. Our wedding was on 20th June earlier this year and our guests are still raving about the wedding today, many of them saying that it was genuinely the best wedding they have ever been to.

Frank and his team were always available to answer our questions, however minor they may have sounded and were always there for us to give us the support we needed on what can be a very stressful time for a couple. Monte-Carlo Weddings made the wedding planning completely stress free for us, it was actually really enjoyable helping to make the final choices.

I would definitely recommend Monte-Carlo Weddings, without a doubt. They tailored our wedding to suit our individual needs and paid so much attention to detail that the entire day was seamless from start to finish. Monte-Carlo Weddings were faultless and we owe them so much for creating what will always be the most special day of our lives."

Caroline Horwood, UK

DVD: Fairy-Tale Weddings on the French Riviera

If you would like to receive a DVD showcasing some of the weddings I have organized over the past few years, just drop me an e-mail with your postal address. You can watch it either on your computer or on a DVD player.

Our New offices on the Port of Monaco

We are pleased to announced that we have moved! We are now located at "Le Ruscino", 14, quai Antoine 1er, on the Port of Monaco. Actually, we are right next to the Monaco Yacht Club, and have the guilty pleasure of being able to watch all the yachts come in and out of Port Hercule all day long.

Our new premises are more spacious and allow us to act as better hosts to visiting couples, some of which have never had the pleasure of seeing the Principality. If you are in Monaco—give us a call and arrange to stop by!



How about fireworks to mark the occasion?



Posing with Caroline and Julian



Having a chat during the dinner reception...



MCW DVD



« Weddings that come true... »



Panoramic view of the Port of Monaco—by night