

**T**he peaceful Tuscan landscape is primarily rolling hills, with vineyards, olive groves, cypress trees and hilltop villages all bathed in a soft, amber light. To many it seems familiar, and rightly so: during the Renaissance it was often used as the backdrop for the paintings of the masters. The rustic Tuscan farmhouse, made of local stone and set atop a hill flanked by lines of cypress trees, is a sight unique to Tuscany. Silent medieval hill towns, with their fortified castle walls and church steeples visible in the distance, are a part of the landscape: Tuscany's olive groves yield some of Italy's finest extra virgin olive oil, but the heart of the region is in its vineyards, particularly the Chianti Classico, where you can visit fattorie (wine estates), to sample and purchase their wines.

It was here Paige and David decided to crown their love and to say "I do" in March of 2008. A whole year of intense emailing went by before we first met, which may sound like a lot, but is actually the average. Through email, we create relationships with our couples, one that is more than purely business.

Paige and David are from Kansas City, Missouri where they met, became engaged, and currently live. Upon their arrival in Italy, we first met them at the charming Castle, where their wedding was held and where their 40 guests, from the US and UK stayed for a week. Paige and David could not believe their eyes. The Tuscan landscape, with the narrow country roads leading through lush vineyards and olive groves was simply enchanting. During their nuptial week, we organized interesting tours around Tuscany, and wine tasting in traditional regional vineyards. Paige and David were excited, and their guests were even more so.

The couple decided to have their civil wedding in the US, but the main celebration, the religious ceremony, was held in the Castle's beautiful little ancient chapel.

#### **The Wedding day. Monday the 17th March 2008**

We set up the celebration area, the chapel, with a variety of flowers. Each pew had a small floral composition tied together with ribbon. The many candles on the altar and the petals



along the aisle created a romantic setting. Paige was beautiful in her dress. She was wearing a long romantic dress, with a beautiful embroidering of little pearls. Her hair was



down, with ringlets, which framed her radiant face perfectly. The make up was delicate and highlighted her wonderful green eyes.

At 4 pm all the guests were inside the church waiting for the bride's entrance. David was at the altar awaiting her arrival. Paige arrived treading lightly on a carpet of rose petals thrown by the little page boy and flower girl, while a violinist and trumpet player marked her pace to the altar with the notes of Purcell.

The ceremony was simple and sweet. Some guests shed a tear or two, many were moved, but everyone commented on its beauty. Aperitifs were served at the bar of the Castle as the couple took a few more pictures in the stunning garden of the Castle.

Dinner was served in the restaurant of the castle. The notes of the guitar and the violin accompanied a joyful but relaxed atmosphere. Excellent dishes were served, accompanied by the best Chianti wines. The flowers and the candles on the tables fit perfectly with the medieval atmosphere. Comfortable beds and spacious rooms welcomed the tired merry-makers and, after the fact, Weddings in Tuscany knew they had made another couple very happy. ■

# Effortless Escape: First Class

**T**hese days travel and weddings go hand in hand. Whether your guests are traveling from afar to be at your wedding, you're joining the growing percentage of couples that now opt for a destination wedding, or you're honeymooning to an exotic escape, travel is somehow involved. To ensure you and your loved ones travel plans pan out, Bridal Fantasy sought the advice from knowledgeable travel professionals and destination wedding specialists.

## General Travel Tips

Use your maiden name. Unless you are taking a delayed honeymoon, there will not be enough time to change the name on your passport. To avoid confusion, extra hassle and potential delay, purchase your airline tickets and visas in your maiden name so they match your driver's licence and official documents. – Marlin Travel

Photocopy all identification documents such as your passport, credit cards, birth certificate and drivers' license. Pack these in your luggage, just in case your carry-on bag gets stolen. – Uniglobe Geo Travel

In case of temporary lost luggage, pack a few essentials in your carry-on so that you can be poolside enjoying a tropical drink in your bathing suit while you're waiting for the airline to bring your bags. A toothbrush and toothpaste are also recommended so that you can freshen up upon arrival. – Marlin Travel

## Honeymoon Travel Tips

Include a honeymoon gift registry card in your wedding invitations. This will allow you to off-set

the costs of your honeymoon; receive tours, excursions, fancy dinners, spending money and airline/hotel upgrades. You'll never forget the torch lit candle light dinner on the beach that you shared with your new husband all thanks to your favourite Aunt. – Uniglobe Geo Travel

If possible, try to avoid leaving for your honeymoon the same day as or morning after your wedding. Taking a day or two after the festivities to pack and tie up loose ends will allow you to embark on your honeymoon feeling relaxed. – Marlin Travel

Tell the world that you are honeymooners! Tell everyone – airlines, hotels, cruise lines and restaurants. Enjoy special treatment and complimentary gifts. – Marlin Travel

## Destination Weddings

Sunset weddings are beautiful; however, in many tropical destinations the mosquitoes are heaviest at this time. Mosquito repellent is recommended for the bridal party and the guests. – Marlin Travel

Pack your wedding dress and important accessories in a carry-on luggage item that will keep your dress wrinkle free and safe; this also ensures it arrives with you; on time and ready to wear. – Uniglobe Geo Travel

Plan your destination wedding with a local destination wedding specialist. They can ensure that enough space at the resort is pre-booked to accommodate your guest list, coordinate travel for all of your guests (this can be challenging), and be your advocate with the resorts ensuring promises made are kept. If an emergency should arise, your destination wedding specialist will be available to help resolve the issues. In the event that your wedding needs to be rescheduled due to flight cancellations or delays, they will be responsible for contacting guests and your resort. – Uniglobe Geo Travel

Fans are a great way to keep your guests cooler during the ceremony. – Marlin Travel ■



Let us paint your wedding with this wonderful landscape



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