

W WALDORF ASTORIA MAGAZINE

LA DOLCE
VITA
50 YEARS OF THE
ROME CAVALIERI

A LEGEND REBORN

EDINBURGH'S MAGNIFICENT
CALEDONIAN

DREAM
WEDDINGS
MODERN LOVE,
PURE ROMANCE

TRUE ROMANCE

a wedding at one of the world's
most iconic locations marks the
celebration of a classic love story

BY LISA ARCELLA | PHOTOGRAPHY BY TOM CORBETT





LOCATION:

Bull and Bear restaurant,
Waldorf Astoria New York.

ON HER: Andrew Gn silk
and jet beaded gown,
andrewgn.com; Cellini onyx
and pearl chandelier
earrings, cellinijewelers.com;
Oscar Heyman diamond and
white gold estate bracelet,
212.593.0400.

ON HIM: Hickey Freeman
Mahogany Collection
navy suit, dress shirt,
silk tie, silk pocket square,
hickeyfreeman.com.

FLOWERS: Floralia
Decorators, 212.759.6910.

TABLE SETTING: Baccarat
candelabra and glassware,
baccarat.com.



LOCATION: Starlight Roof,
Waldorf Astoria New York.
ON HER: Yumi Katsura full
ball gown skirt, Chantilly
lace and silk organza gown,
with Swarovski crystal belt,
yumikatsuracouture.com;
Cellini 20.54 carat
diamond chandelier
drop earrings,
cellinijewelers.com;
Robin Rotenier
55 carat blue sapphire
bracelet, rotenier.com.
ON HIM: Ermenegildo
Zegna black wool tuxedo,
cotton shirt, bow tie,
cuff links, and shoes,
zegna.com.

Most girls dream of their wedding, and some dream bigger than others. But for a lucky few, the reality of their big day far exceeds even the grandest of fantasies.

JESSICA was not a girl who grew up expecting some of the most cherished moments of her life to unfold at two of New York City's most iconic landmarks. She had been living with her boyfriend, Zachary Fass, in Westchester County, New York, for three years when Zachary suggested a break in their hectic lives to dine in the city. "He didn't even tell me where we were going," recalls Jessica, who was raised in Pittsburgh.

The location, however, needed no introduction. The couple had reservations at Manhattan's legendary Tavern on the Green restaurant in Central Park, just days before it closed its doors for the last time. Zachary dawdled before they entered, seeming distracted.

Zachary said later he had been hoping to find a horse and carriage in the park. When none appeared, he took Jessica inside the busy restaurant

dining room, and decided to pull out the small box there. Although iconic, the restaurant "was the least intimate place you could be," says Jessica.

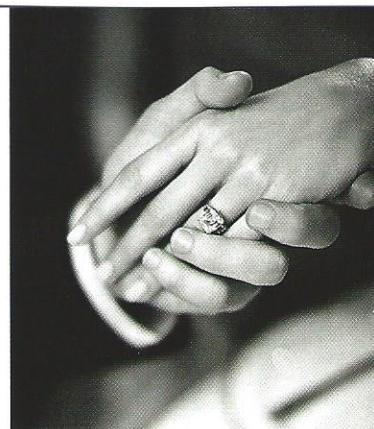
"I had a little bit of a panic attack thinking he was about to propose," Jessica says. "But then he actually put the box back in his pocket and said, 'You can open it later!' I thought he was playing it way too cool for it to be a proposal. So finally we finished and I opened the box. My first thought was, 'Where is the other earring?' And then I realized it was a diamond ring."

With the proposal a success, it was time for the real work of planning their wedding to begin. The couple vaguely tossed around the idea of a beach or garden setting. "And that's when Zachary's mom, Rose, suggested **Waldorf Astoria New York**," says Jessica. The couple looked at other venues in New York City, but "once I walked into the Waldorf Astoria that was it. We knew. It was so romantic. It was just a perfect setting."

Center of Attention

"There are never any cookie-cutter weddings at the Waldorf Astoria," says Alan Shukovsky, director of social catering at Waldorf Astoria New York. "Every event is completely different, and most of my days

Jessica and Zachary exchange vows at Waldorf Astoria New York.



THE PROPOSAL

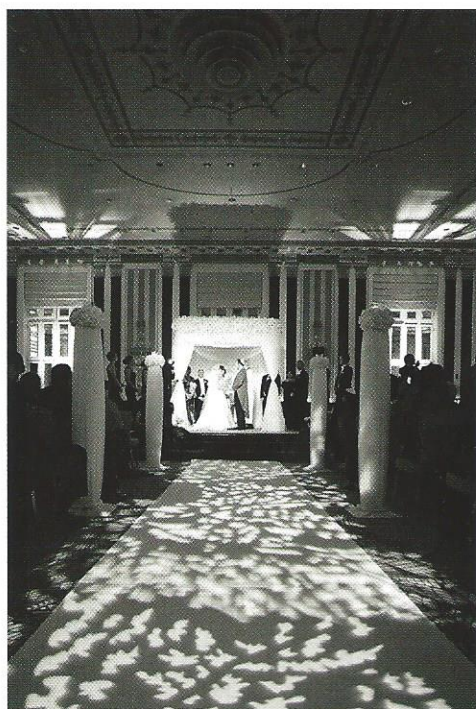
Will you marry me? Four simple, powerful words. A million ways to say them.

At **Waldorf Astoria Orlando**, each engagement dinner is tailored to the couple, and many take on a dramatic flair, as Manny Belete, the general manager of Bull and Bear restaurant, leaves no detail to chance.

Belete often seats couples by a panoramic window at the center of the restaurant, the perfect perch for savoring the meal and looking forward to dessert. But just before the final course, a plate arrives in front of the potential bride-to-be with a single rose attached to an engagement ring with the question and her name written in chocolate.

"We have it very well timed," says Belete. "He proposes, she says yes, and then the fireworks display from Walt Disney World's Epcot next door erupts. It's exciting every time it happens."

For grooms-to-be who envision something even more dramatic than fireworks—or can't stand waiting all the way until dessert—Belete and his team have the perfect solution. The kitchen prepares a dish that appears to be a main course arriving in a dome filled with smoke. The groom-to-be, prepped in advance, can drop to one knee as the smoke begins to dissipate to reveal an engagement ring in full view on the plate. "The restaurant always breaks out in a big round of applause and the woman is always in tears," says Belete. The success rate for grooms using this approach? "One hundred percent."





LOVE ENDURES

It was their wedding night—March 2, 1952—and Isidore and Joan Schwartz wanted to stay someplace special. They decided on Waldorf Astoria New York—even though the \$16.80 room rate was a bit of a splurge for a young couple from the Bronx.

Not only have they shared a lifetime of memories of that classic wedding night in lavish surroundings, but last year, the hotel welcomed them back—and let them pay the same \$16.80 rate they had way back when.

Waldorf Astoria New York has a long-standing practice of offering couples celebrating a milestone wedding anniversary of 50 years or more the same rate they paid on their first night, if they can produce a receipt. That wasn't a problem for Joan. "I found the receipt right away," she says. "I am just a saver. That's how I stayed married 60 years. I hold on to things!"

When the couple returned to the hotel, so did some good memories. "Sixty years ago it was a dream come true to stay at the Waldorf Astoria," says Joan, now 83. "It was the epitome of glamour."

For the return visit, the hotel provided the lavish 5,000-square-foot MacArthur suite. "We got to relive it all again," says Joan, who shared the VIP experience with not only her husband, but also their children and grandchildren. "It was just overwhelming."

are spent planning events that are uniquely crafted from the visions of our brides and grooms. I am like a painter, and the whole process leading up to the event is like putting together a masterpiece."

Shukovsky meets with couples at the glass-enclosed bridal studio off the main lobby, where they get a taste of being the center of attention as he asks them to describe how they envision their wedding day. He manages a carefully vetted list of florists, photographers, designers, and wedding planners. Whether the bride and groom are looking for vendors who can orchestrate a high-society event with discretion or a wedding planner who speaks Russian, Shukovsky has the right fit. For many couples, however, all needs are met—and exceeded—by the Waldorf Astoria team. "We've done this so many times and are more than adept at making everyone fit comfortably here," says Shukovsky. "The Waldorf Astoria is unique in that we don't rattle off a list of features we can provide. We invest ourselves in knowing our client and helping them fit the space to their particular needs. We would never say, 'You need to do things our way.'"

For one recent wedding, the bride, who had a longtime fascination with Monet, dreamed of recreating the artist's famed *Water Lilies* in the Grand Ballroom. "We created a custom screen around the perimeter of the ballroom and projected images of Monet's *Water Lilies* onto it. The tables were glass topped with floating water lilies as the centerpieces. We even put in a new carpet.

It transformed the space into something else altogether," says Shukovsky.

He also recalls once having to remove a large and priceless crystal chandelier when a floral designer suddenly realized that the chuppah (the canopy used during Jewish wedding ceremonies) was not going to fit unless they did so.

Shukovsky has managed Waldorf Astoria weddings for as few as 30 guests and as many as 900, and he prides himself on the ability to create a memorable wedding experience for any couple. He once surprised a bride and groom by having their favorite band, Earth, Wind & Fire, play during their reception.

This customization is part of the approach he brought to Jessica and Zachary's wedding. The other part was anticipating things the couple didn't even know they wanted. When they stepped into Waldorf Astoria's massive kitchen to plan the menu, for instance, the couple was thrilled—but also overwhelmed. Jessica, who had never had foie gras, loved the melt-in-your-mouth flavor and chose it as the appetizer. Shukovsky helped guide them from there. "It happens all the time that maybe a groom wants a lobster bar, shrimp appetizer, and shellfish risotto," he says. "But you have to create a balanced menu." For their main course, Jessica and Zachary chose Chilean sea bass and filet mignon.

As for the cake, "I didn't know how it should look," says Jessica. Shukovsky suggested that she send a few ideas of styles they liked and his team would take care of the rest.



LOCATION:

Park Avenue entrance,
Waldorf Astoria New York.

ON HER: Mimi Plange
five-in-one convertible
lambskin and microfiber
trench coat, mimiplange.com;
Mark Cross cobalt leather
doctor bag, Barneys; Kara
Ackerman lemon quartz/
white topaz and gold earrings,
karaackerman.com; Gianvito
Rossi English green patent
leather pumps,
gianvitorossi.com; Brunello
Cucinelli leather carryall
bag, 212.813.0900
(carried by bellman).

Reception



LOCATION: Lobby,
Waldorf Astoria New York.
ON HER: Barbara Tank
sweetheart box pleated dress,
Bergdorf Goodman; Graziela
gold and green stone ring,
grazielagems.com; Tacori
gold and diamond bracelet,
tacori.com; J Hadley ruby
and diamond bracelet,
jhadleyjewelry.com.
ON HIM: Brunello Cucinelli
navy suit, cotton checkered
shirt, linen/silk/wool tie,
linen pocket square,
212.813.0900; Salvatore
Ferragamo black leather
cap toe dress shoes,
800.628.8916. LUGGAGE:
T. Anthony at 212.750.9797.

Marc Eliot of Floralia, the in-house floral design studio, used Jessica's favorite colors, purple and blue, as inspiration for the decor. Eliot envisioned a jewel-toned palette that would slowly build in intensity as the 150 guests moved from the all-white-toned ceremony in the Vanderbilt Room (with Jessica carrying a purple bouquet) to a cocktail hour with subtle purple up-lighting, then to the reception, where the Empire Room would be bathed in blue and purple.

The Moments

The morning of the wedding, notes were placed under hotel guests' doors to let them know that the iconic Park Avenue lobby would be roped off later in the day. At first, Jessica and Zachary thought something was amiss. "Then we realized it was for us," says Zachary. "We felt like celebrities."

The little moments that make a wedding day unforgettable had arrived. "My sister and cousin stayed with me in the suite the night before," Jessica says. "That morning we had breakfast together in this beautiful room and we had time to talk and relax and just soak it all in."

As the ceremony drew closer, she was to meet Zachary at the famous Waldorf Astoria clock to sign the ketubah, the traditional Jewish marriage agreement. "He had his back to me," she says. "I tapped him on his shoulder. It was the first time he saw me in my dress"—a special moment. Then it was time. As she stood with her father behind closed doors, she knew the man she loved, and the people they loved, were awaiting her arrival. The


doors swung open and Jessica saw in one timeless moment her wedding, about to unfold.

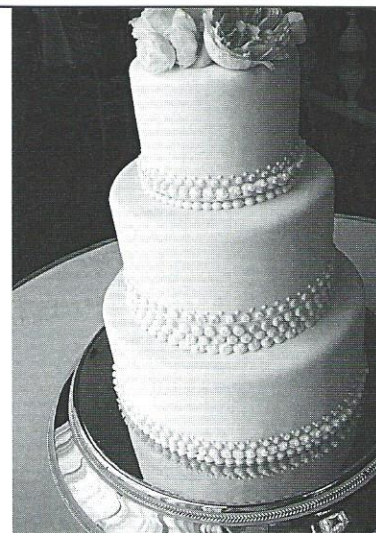
Later, at the reception, the couple saw their inspirations fully transformed into a grand reality. "When we finally went into the ballroom, there was this huge wow factor of the purple and blue," says Jessica. "It was breathtaking and just so smart. Marc had really taken everything to another level." And the cake design that Jessica had left in Shukovsky's hands? "It was so beautiful. Way beyond anything I had envisioned," says Jessica.

The moments marched faster now. Jessica danced with her father, then her husband. The entire room got onto the dance floor for Michael Jackson's "Thriller"—even Zachary's 90-year-old great-aunt was out there.

"Every single thing went exactly according to plan," says Zachary. "For us as a bride and groom it was very important not to have to worry about anything and to be able to enjoy the special evening. We were allowed to simply focus on each other."

After spending their wedding night in the bridal suite, the new Mr. and Mrs. Fass headed off to their European honeymoon. "I felt a little guilty, because people go on honeymoons to de-stress from a wedding," says Jessica. "But for me, the whole planning process was so special and fun. I just wanted to continue living in that moment."

Jessica's description of the wedding takes her back to those girlhood dreams. "We felt like those heads of state that stay at the Waldorf Astoria all the time," she says. "We felt like a king and queen." 



HAVE YOUR CAKE

Deborah Heyd vividly recalls the first cake she ever made from scratch.

"I was a teenager and it was heart shaped, and I piped buttercream stars around the edges," she says.

It was the moment a passion—and a career—was born. Today, Heyd creates beautiful wedding cakes as the pastry chef at **The Roosevelt New Orleans, A Waldorf Astoria Hotel**.

"I love sitting down for the first time with a bride and groom because you get a feel for their personality and how you can make the cake completely unique," says Heyd. "It's such an important day and you want everything to be completely special."

Heyd often asks to see the wedding invitation and bridal gown. She may bring an element of the lace or copy a certain flower—anything that will make it more customized.

It's important to Heyd that her creations taste as good as they look. "I use a Swiss buttercream. It's light, soft, and silky—not super sweet. It's the best recipe for buttercream that I have ever used." And she regularly employs fondant to create a smooth finish on the cake before decorating, often with fragrant fresh flowers.

Heyd makes sure that—despite her capable staff—she is involved from start to finish. "I do everything from the design to baking, and everything is from scratch."

In need of design inspiration for your wedding day?

Visit Waldorf Astoria on Pinterest and let our wedding images spark your imagination. [pinterest.com/waldorfastoria](https://www.pinterest.com/waldorfastoria)





OPPOSITE PAGE:
Location: Starlight Roof,
Waldorf Astoria New York.
ON HER: Monique Lhuillier
re-embroidered lace corset
waist bodice with trumpet
skirt and detachable train
and horsehair sash with lace
detail, moniquelhuillier.com;
Oscar Heyman platinum
and diamond necklace and
sea pearl and diamond
earrings, 212.593.0400.
ON HIM: Paul Stuart wool/silk
three-piece tuxedo, cotton
tuxedo shirt, black silk
bow tie, paulstuart.com.
CAKE: Heather Barranco,
heatherbarranco.com.

THIS PAGE: Location:
The Silver Corridor,
Waldorf Astoria New York.
For fashion credits,
see page 51.

*Wardrobe stylist, Stacey Jones/
Bernstein & Andriulli; prop
stylist, Tara Marino/Bernstein &
Andriulli; hairstylist, Eloise
Chung/Walter Schupfer;
makeup, Brian Duprey for
Chanel Beauté; manicurist,
Rachel Shim/Bernstein &
Andriulli. Models: Jennifer
Massaux, Ford Models; Corey
Wallace, DNA Models.*



To learn more about
Waldorf Astoria weddings,
watch our video on the iPad
version, the Android version, or
waldorfastoriomagazine.com.