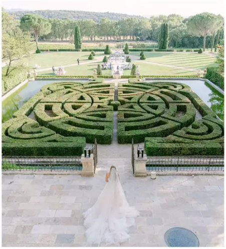

EXCLUSIVE

REAL WEDDINGS

An Ombré-Themed Wedding at a Château in Aix-En-Provence, France

Planned by White Eden Weddings.

By Sara Dickinson | Published on 07/20/22

Stephanie and Jason met on Hinge in March 2018. Jason was living in Los Angeles and Stephanie was in Orange County. After a week of messaging back and forth, Jason braved the LA traffic to drive down and meet Stephanie for brunch in Newport Beach. Learning Jason played baseball at Dartmouth and Stephanie played volleyball at UCLA and Minnesota, the couple bonded over their college athlete backgrounds and love of travel. After the first date, Jason committed to taking Stephanie out every Wednesday evening after work, and eventually, he moved to be closer to her.

On August 23, 2020, Jason brought Stephanie to a friend's floral shop and surprised her with an intimate proposal with candles, flowers, and of course a champagne toast!

As soon as the couple saw pictures of the French gardens at Château de la Gaude in Aix en Provence, France, they decided to have their destination wedding there; a first for the venue. "While our expectations of the venue were high and we also took the risk of being the first couple to be married there, once we arrived at the property, we were completely blown away," the couple says. They invited 41 guests to enjoy the entire venue in the days surrounding their September 1, 2021 wedding day. "The property was constantly buzzing with excitement, and we were able to enjoy authentic and thoughtful time together with our guests in one of the most magical settings," the couple says.

PHOTO BY KT MERRY

Stephanie and Jason chose a pastel ombré color palette with a focus on ice blue. "We decided on this specific blue as the main color in the wedding because it was my grandmother's favorite color. While she is no longer with us, I wanted to pay homage to her," Stephanie says. Planners from White Eden Weddings coordinated the destination wedding and photographer KT Merry captured all the ombré design elements and sentimental moments.

The couple's invitation suite, from Crème de Papier, included a watercolor illustration of the venue and an ice blue envelope. The invitations featured a gold frame and gold fonts, matching the gold wax seal.

PHOTO BY KT MERRY

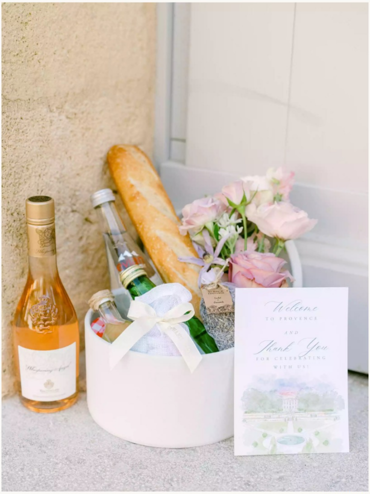

PHOTO BY KT MERRY

For Stephanie and Jason's wedding, guests were invited to Château de la Gaude in Aix-en-Provence, France; a recently renovated eighteen-room grand villa in the French countryside surrounded by vineyards and lavender fields. The couple gave guests welcome baskets filled with items like lavender, wine, bottled water, a baguette, and jam. They included thank you cards featuring the watercolor illustration.

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Stephanie initially had four bridesmaids, but two had to cancel at the last minute, so she got ready for the day with her family and two bridesmaids. She wore a beaded Gaia Lahav gown with a fitted corset and hand-embroidered blush flowers. Four months before the wedding, Stephanie still hadn't found her dress, so she went to the Gaia Lahav flagship store in LA looking for a dress that felt like something she would pick out but also felt grand. "It was grand yet ethereal at the same time. What solidified it was when I left Galia I could finally stop scrolling Instagram looking for the "perfect" gown," she says. She paired the gown with satin Jimmy Choo pumps with ombre embellishments as a nod to the decor theme. She also wore Jason's grandmother's pearl earrings with diamond details. Her hair and makeup artist, Trine Juel, gave Stephanie her signature long soft curls and a light foundation look using Tom Ford Skin Illuminating Powder Duo to give her a soft glow.

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PHOTO BY KT MERRY

She held a round bouquet including three varieties of roses in shades of cream and light pink as a nod to the blush embellishments on her gown. She also had small charms with pictures of her grandmothers and uncle attached to her bouquet.

PHOTO BY KT MERRY

> “It was definitely a moment I will forever cherish, seeing a tear come to his eye while admiring the woman I had become."

PHOTO BY KT MERRY

Even though Stephanie and Jason decided to see each other for the first time at the ceremony, Stephanie had a first look with her dad. “It was definitely a moment I will forever cherish, seeing a tear come to his eye while admiring the woman I had become and relieving the milestones we had passed together,” she says.

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PHOTO BY KT MERRY

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Jason wore a black tux designed at b.Spoke in Costa Mesa, California that included a special message written by Stephanie under the collar. He also wore custom cufflinks that had a picture of the couple's dachshunds on one and a picture of Stephanie with their dogs on the other. As for the watch, "I wore a first edition Rolex submariner known as The Kermit that was a college graduation gift from my parents," Jason says. He finished his look with Gucci shoes and Hermes Voyage as his fragrance on the wedding day.

PHOTO BY KT MERRY

Each of the groomsmen had their own tuxedos custom-made for the wedding following a set of guidelines Stephanie and Jason shared with them. They went with a one-button black jacket, black pants, peaked lapels, and black socks.

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The couple's ceremony and cocktail hour took place in one of the venue's gardens surrounded by vineyards. They chose white Medallion chairs and set them up on a curve for the ceremony. The florals incorporated the couple's ombré theme, with arrangements in tall white urns at the aisle's entrance and floor arrangements down the sides of the aisle progressively shifting from blue to purple to pink to white. The focal point of the ceremony was the three floral arches, also in ombré hues, at the altar, with a garden fountain behind it.

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A string trio and a pianist played "Beauty and the Beast" as guests found their seats at the ceremony. The couple's photographer, KT Merry, walked her to the chateau's terrace overlooking the wedding ceremony. "It was a private moment I had all to myself in the middle of the commotion of the day and right before I walked down the aisle to marry the man of my dreams," she says, "It was a moment of serenity and excitement all at the same time, giving me chills from veil to Jimmy Choo!"

PHOTO BY KT MERRY

PHOTO BY KT MERRY

Stephanie walked down the aisle with her dad by her side as the string trio played “Can’t Help Falling In Love.” Stephanie kept the song choice a surprise for Jason until that very moment.

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PHOTO BY KT MERRY

> “It felt as though the whole world stopped, nothing else mattered, and the three of us were in our own moment in time."

PHOTO BY KT MERRY

Stephanie and Jason asked their friend, Justin, to officiate their ceremony. They asked Stephanie's aunt Sue, who was Stephanie's guardian for some of her time in high school, to read "Union" by Robert Fulgum. The couple exchanged intimate vows that gave their guests a glimpse into their private relationship. "The ceremony for us was a moment for Jason, Justin, and I," Stephanie says, "It felt as though the whole world stopped, nothing else mattered, and the three of us were in our own moment in time."

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PHOTO BY KT MERRY

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Once the couple was pronounced husband and wife, the string trio played “The Wedding March.”

PHOTO BY KT MERRY

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After the ceremony, the couple stepped away with their photographer for some portraits, a walk through the garden, and a glass of champagne.

signature
COCKTAILS
bar
MENU

PHOTO BY KT MERRY

PHOTO BY KT MERRY

The couple served two signature cocktails named after their two dachshunds at home. The “Pennies from Heaven” was a pink gin, white wine cocktail with fresh lime, chartreuse elixir, and rose lemonade. The “Woody’s Roundup” was a passion fruit tequila cocktail with chili pepper, lime, and grapefruit. Guests were also served passed canapes, including prawns tartar, local artichoke served with caviar, and a foie gras live cooking station.

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The escort cards were displayed on a round table on the lawn decorated with small bud vases and an oversized floral arrangement in a glass vase.

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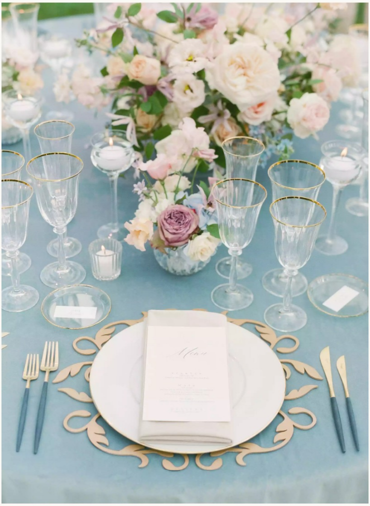

PHOTO BY KT MERRY

Round and rectangular tables with velvet linens were set up throughout the outdoor reception area. The place settings included gold rimmed glassware and custom laser-cut chargers.

PHOTO BY KT MERRY

The flower centerpieces included the couple's ombré color scheme, and similarly designed arrangements decorated the band's stage and the bar. "This created a consistent visual perspective from the ceremony to the reception," Stephanie says.

PHOTO BY KT MERRY

Stephanie and Jason took a moment to take some photos with their wedding party. Stephanie wanted her bridesmaids to wear a simple yet elegant gown, so she chose an a-line Hayley Paige Occasions dress in a pastel blue.

PHOTO BY KT MERRY

PHOTO BY KT MERRY

A 13-foot white structure with ice blue moldings framed the dinner space, creating a cozy area in the venue's grandiose gardens. Stephanie and Jason made their grand entrance into the reception through a pathway marked with votive candles.

PHOTO BY KT MERRY

PHOTO BY KT MERRY

The couple shared their first dance to “You” by Jason Cassidy. Stephanie then danced with her father to “You’ll Always Be My Baby” by Alan Jackson, and Jason shared a mother-son dance to “My Wish” by Rascal Flatts.

Both Stephanie and Jason have special relationships with each of their grandparents. “It was very important for us to incorporate them in our day somehow,” Stephanie says. “We cleared the dance floor and danced with each of our grandparents to “Young at Heart” by Frank Sinatra and it is a moment in time we will never forget.”

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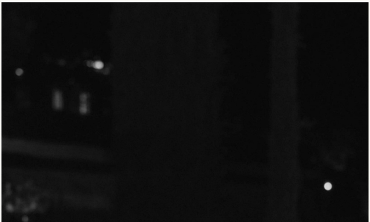

PHOTO BY KT MERRY

PHOTO BY KT MERRY

Jason is a foodie, so he was thrilled when he found out that the venue would be closing down its Michelin restaurant so that the team of chefs could prepare their wedding dinner. The starter was lobster cooked with verbena and citrus and served with a splash of rose wine sorbet. Guests chose between smoked racks of lamb and turbot for their main course.

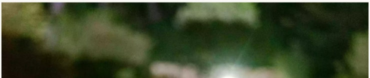

PHOTO BY KT MERRY

PHOTO BY KT MERRY

Stephanie and Jason cut into a white three-tiered lemon wedding cake embellished with flowers from top to bottom. A sparkler added some flair to the tradition.

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PHOTO BY KT MERRY

The couple's band kept guests energized all night. They even learned a few songs the couple requested before their wedding, including John Denver's "Take Me Home, Country Roads." Jason's second look included a dress shirt, bow tie, and emerald green velvet dinner jacket from b.Spoke. Stephanie changed into a high-neck halter custom gown with a low cowl back and cross-over straps.

PHOTO BY KT MERRY

The couple spent some time in Greece after their wedding and are planning an official honeymoon in the Maldives. Stephanie and Jason share some advice to other couples about to tie the knot. "Find vendors that you connect with who are truly excited and passionate about participating in your wedding," they say. "Take calculated risks; you won't be disappointed because the details that haven't been done before truly set your wedding apart and make it once in a lifetime."

WEDDING TEAM

VENUE	Chateau de la Gaude
PLANNER	White Eden Weddings
BRIDAL GOWN DESIGNER	Galia Lahav
VEIL	Galia Lahav
BRIDE'S SHOES	Jimmy Choo
BRIDE'S HAIR & MAKEUP	Trine Juel
BRIDESMAIDS' DRESSES	Hayley Paige Occasions
GROOM'S ATTIRE	b.Spoke
FLORAL DESIGN	Miss Rose by Perrine
INVITATIONS	Crème de Papier
WELCOME BASKETS	Une Princée de Provence
GUEST BOOK	Elmo Paper Stories
MUSIC	Incanto Music; Four Kicks
CATERING	Chateau de la Gaude
CAKE	Made in Cake
RENTALS	Maison Options; Decoflamme; Nuage Designs; Phos Events; Martel Events
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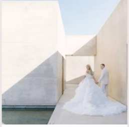
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