

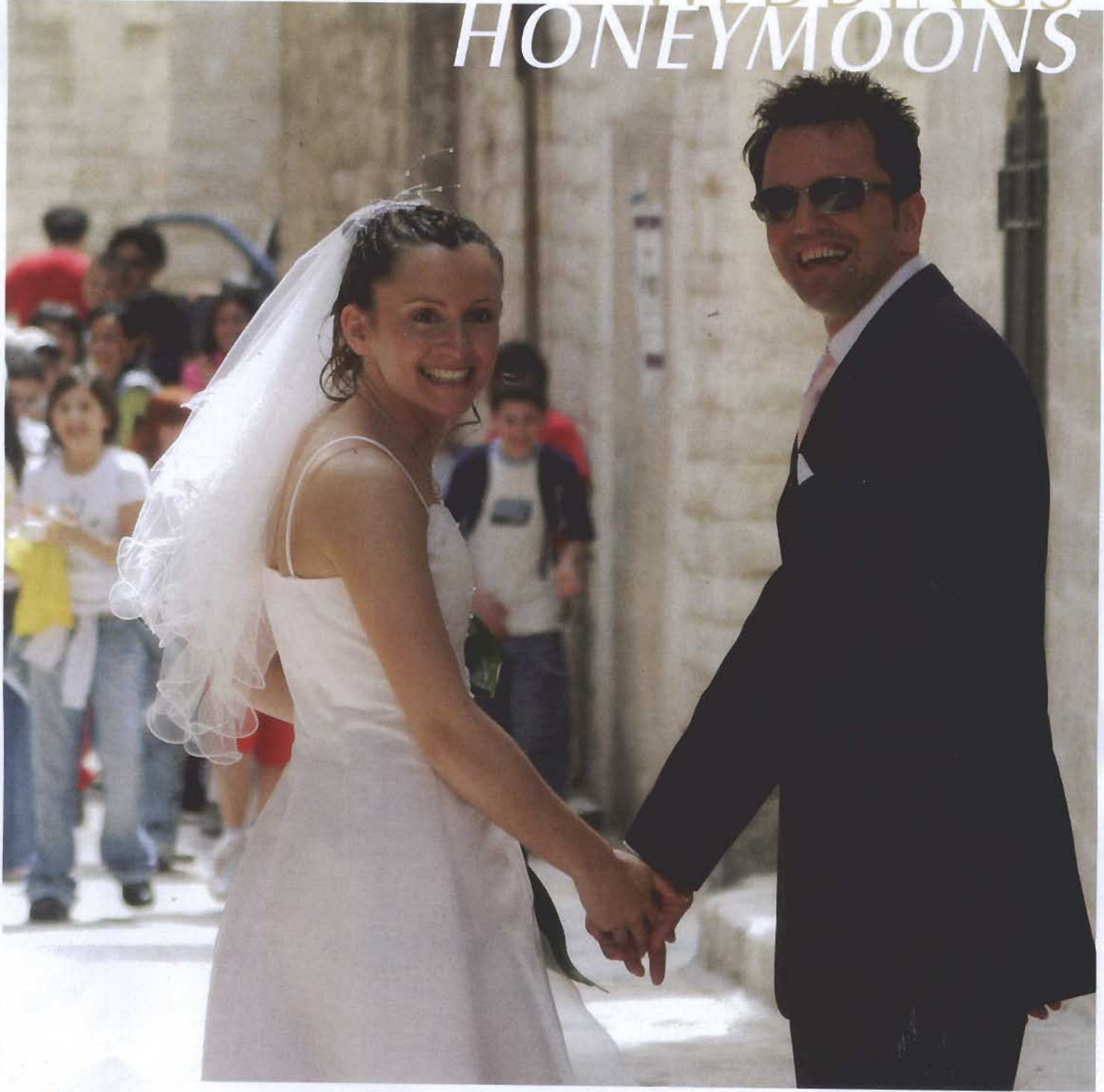
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WEDDINGS & HONEYMOONS



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“SONO LA SPOSA!” “SONO LA SPOSA!” “I’m the bride.” With those words, I greeted a hotel housekeeper in the hallway. She smiled and hugged me tightly. It was the day before my wedding and I couldn’t contain my emotions while waiting for guests to arrive.

Relais La Suvera, a villa in the heart of Tuscany, which belonged to Pope Julius II. Gazing at the pictures of the cozy chapel, grand spaces and tall cypress trees, I knew it would be the perfect setting and it was.

Planning a destination wedding seemed at first a daunting task, something everyone warned was too hard to do 5,000 miles away. There were dozens of civil documents, church documents, multiple trips to the consulate, embassy and Italian offices. There were the proper seals and stamps and meetings. None of which would have been possible without Claudine Lechner and Simona Coltellini, the two women managing Relais La Suvera.

My husband to be and I travelled to Pievescola to meet Claudine and Simona 13 months before our wedding. Immediately, their warmth and willingness to help put our minds at ease. They personally and happily arranged the photographer, videographer, cake, food, florist, musicians and hairdresser. They even convinced the local parish priest to allow us to wed at La Suvera’s private chapel, the biggest accomplishment of all.

I’ll never forget the look on our friends’ and family’s faces when their bus pulled up to the hotel. Everyone was in awe. It was a gorgeous May afternoon - the sun shining, birds chirping, the sky as blue as the Mediterranean. Our wedding day was equally spectacular.

That morning, an army of gardeners, maids, and deliverymen scurried around the Renaissance courtyard, attending to every detail while I enjoyed the hotel’s spa with my mother and sister. After getting ready in the Maria Gabriella di Savoia Suite on the villa’s top floor, I made my way to the chapel and took my father’s arm as a string quartet.

Inside, my favorite blue hydrangeas covered the altar and added colour to my bouquet of roses and stephanotis. After the ceremony we dined at one large table in the Sala del Papa. The silver candelabras, rich table linens, arched ceiling and balconies seemed like something out of a fairytale. As the light faded, La Suvera’s own wine began to flow, and with it came joyous toasts and loving stories, the band playing in the background. Looking around the room, all I saw were smiles. Everything had come together perfectly, and I truly felt like a “principessa,” a for a day.

This article was written by Emily Ryan, the bride and journalist from Wedding Magazine UK.

Relais La Suvera

We are a 5 star hotel, part of the group Small Luxury Hotels of the World, in the Trip advisor 2006 prize, we were placed 49 out of 100 Best luxury hotels and second in the 10 best Service Europe hotels.

Open from the 20th April to the 4th November 2007. Individual rates from Euro 385,00 per room to Euro 1.200,00 Suite Maria Gabriella di Savoia

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