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CONDÉ NAST

Award  
Winning  
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FROM THE  
PUBLISHER OF  
**GLAMOUR**  
AND  
**VOGUE**



# LET'S SHOP!

## OUR TOP 35 *gowns*

- + PRETTY **BOUQUETS**
- + SMART **STATIONERY**
- + **BESPOKE DETAILS**

**50** *planning shortcuts* NO TEARS,  
NO STRESS, NO FEAR!

**THE BRIDES  
BEAUTY  
KNOW-IT-ALL**  
After 10 years in  
the job, our editor  
shares *everything*

## Fabulous EATS

- BOOZY POPCORN
- ORIGAMI DESSERTS
- NEW CAKE POPS
- + **POSH SWEET  
TROLLEYS**

**HOW WEDDING  
EXPERTS  
GET MARRIED**  
*by the florist,  
the designer,  
the stylist*

# *Cakes and Jewels*

Our most **decadent shoot ever!**  
**PLUS** *So long solitaire -*  
**the new engagement rings**



# Little Italy, BIG adventure...

When it comes to romance, Italy has all bases covered – gorgeous countryside, lashings of culture and the food? We're in love...



## **BEST FOR...** all-out glamour

### AMAN CANAL GRANDE, VENICE

For luxe on steroids, there are few places better than this. More of a sensational palace than a hotel, it's all soaring ceilings smothered in original frescos, terrazzo floors, sweeping staircases, gravity-defying chandeliers and gilded mirrors. No wonder George and Amal got married here!

Arriving by private water taxi, cruising down the Grand Canal under the Rialto Bridge before drawing up at the private jetty is unbeatable. Even if your surname isn't as recognisable as the Clooneys', you'll feel like a VIP. The 24 bedrooms, many of which overlook the canal itself, are pinch-me opulent and most are generous in size by Venice standards. Go all-out and book the Alcova Tiepolo suite (below, left), where George and Amal spent their first night, and sleep beneath a spine-tinglingly spectacular fresco by Tiepolo. At dusk, skip on to the rooftop terrace wearing your twinkliest jewellery for a zingy prosecco spritz and some of the best views of Venice's terracotta rooftops. In the morning, you'll no doubt want to go out exploring and you couldn't be in a better spot. Turn right, and you're at the Rialto Bridge in minutes; turn left and you're immediately in the thick of the most romantic of cities. There's no question that this is a spot where lifelong memories will be made.

● A double room costs from £1,072 per night; [aman.com](http://aman.com) →



Forget that Aston Martin – the most romantic way to arrive is by gondola (cute!)



Art on the walls? Just check out your bedroom ceiling...

**BEST FOR... a world-class foodie experience**

**PALAZZO AVINO, RAVELLO**

Most people pick Italy for the food, the wine, the views and the relaxed glamour that seems to waft through the entire country. Palazzo Avino, a five-star hotel in the hilltop village of Ravello, 1,000ft above the Mediterranean, takes all these ingredients – and pushes them skyward to a whole new level of honeymoon luxury.

We could fill this entire review with talk of food, because between the fine dining at Rossellinis, fresh pasta at Terrazza Belvedere, the Clubhouse By The Sea and the Lobster & Martini Bar, you're never more than moments away from a plate of something truly fabulous. Sitting on the terrace at this 12th-century former private villa, overlooking the Amalfi Coast while sipping an Aperol Spritz or chilled glass of bubbles, is an experience you won't forget.

Even the simplest of breakfasts here is something to celebrate. Long before you have thought of stirring from one of the 32 rooms or 11 suites, staff will be loading tables in the main restaurant with freshly baked cakes – all this before you make it to eggs cooked the way you like, a selection of meats and the biggest fresh fruit display you've ever seen.

It will take staff no longer than a couple of hours to commit your name, favourite table and preferred sunlounger to memory so that these things seem to

magically just happen for you without request. Loved the olive oil they served with dinner? A bottle will appear on the table as if by magic, ready for you to take home. Enjoyed the secret-recipe tomato pasta sauce? A jar of those same tomatoes will be waiting in your room that night. Wish to dine at a restaurant when it's fully booked? Just one call from reception and the table is yours. (Incidentally, trattoria Cumpà Cosimo is not to be missed for the formidable 'mama' who visits every table to chat and whose home cooking is renowned throughout the region.)

This is the kind of service many hotels hope to offer, but that Palazzo Avino consistently does. It's no wonder it has just been named Best Honeymoon Hotel In Europe at our inaugural Brides Honeymoon Awards.

• A double room costs from £200 per night; [palazzoavino.com](http://palazzoavino.com)



The palazzo is perched among the breathtaking hills on the Amalfi Coast

The super-chic Clubhouse By The Sea is a beach club with a difference – there's no actual sand...

Savour the sensational food – and those incredible views



Now this is a room – check out the Royal Suite's vaulted gallery



Enjoy a dip among the modern-art sculptures in the extensive grounds

**BEST FOR... art and culture lovers**

**FOUR SEASONS, FLORENCE**

Think 'luxury honeymoon' and a former convent might not spring to mind. But once you clock the frescos and oil paintings on display in this incredible hotel, you'll be convinced otherwise.

Florence is one of the world's great cities of art and you needn't even head outside to check out those treasures – the sightseeing starts in the reception. The main part of the hotel – a 15th-century palazzo where nobles including a Medici pope once lived – is all panelled ceilings, antiques and vaulted galleries. Each of the 72 rooms and 44 suites are exquisite – think silk-lined walls, velvet sofas and marble *everywhere* (plus the biggest claw-footed bathtub we've ever seen).

Just a 15-minute stroll away is the awe-inspiring Duomo, with its breathtaking pink, white and green façade. Be sure to climb to

the top of its huge orange-tiled dome (right). Afterwards, head to gelato parlour *Grom*, just a street away, for the best ice cream you'll taste, before wandering the cobbled lanes and over the city's famous Ponte Vecchio bridge.

And while Florence is full of must-try restaurants, top of the list is Four Seasons' Michelin-starred *Il Palagio*. Run by chef Vito Mollica, its menu is about regional Italian cooking using locally grown produce. Try the onion filled with pheasant parfait, almond and sweet garlic sauce, followed by the chestnut soufflé and rosemary ice cream. Trips don't get any more dreamy...

• A Superior Room costs from £285 per night, while a Junior Suite starts at £635 per night; [fourseasons.com/florence](http://fourseasons.com/florence)



Romantic, decadent and luxurious – this hotel has it all



**BEST FOR... panoramic views**

**CASTELLO DI CASOLE, TUSCANY**

'The golden hour' is how photographers refer to that magical time before sunset, when the light is warm and balmy. That moment seems to last a lot longer in Tuscany. And the ancient Castello di Casole, which opened as a stunning hotel two years ago and overlooks a 4,200-acre estate with cypress trees, olive groves and vineyards, is *the* place to experience it from.

Here, as the sun makes its slow descent, swim in the heated infinity pool. Then later, as the afternoon draws out into evening, sit on the terrace with a bottle of Vernaccia Panizzi, a delicious white wine made on the estate.

Alternatively, try a truffle hunt through flower meadows and bramble-tangled forest paths or visit a local cheese farm for the tastiest pecorino slivers. Castello's pizzeria also offers dough-making lessons and the Tuscan delicacy, *L'orto dello chef*, made with mozzarella and vegetables is a must.

But taste buds aren't the only thing teased here. The old wine cellar is now a spa, and gorgeous treatments such as the honey and oil massage use local produce to leave you feeling peachy-soft. It's *la dolce vita*, indeed.

• *Black Tomato* ([blacktomato.com](http://blacktomato.com)) offers three nights from £980 per person, B&B. Includes flights and transfers



The elegant bedrooms mix old-world Tuscan charm and modern boutique luxury

