

Florence Wedding by Marisa Holmes Photography + Elysium

January 10th, 2011 by *Emilia Jane* | Filed Under | 76 comments

Buon Giorno! We are starting off this magical Monday with a romantic beauty all the way from Florence, Italy. Marisa Holmes' photographs, which are like little fairytales themselves, are more whimsical than ever with Italy as their dreamy backdrop. The rest of the details pretty much sum up exactly how I imagine an enchanted European wedding to be, in a true life castle no less. The [full gallery](#) is bursting with more elegant and exquisite inspiration!













[Click here for more inspiration in the full wedding gallery!](#)

Just when we were feeling like this whole Italian affair was another one of our wedding fantasies, Elysium dropped in with this gorgeous film to give us a little virtual pinch. Yes, this beauty is a dream come true.



When Mike and I started our wedding planning adventure, the one thing we knew was that we wanted to get married in a location that resembled "us". We wanted a location where we could turn our celebration into a weekend, or even weeklong event. We visited San Francisco, across the bay to Napa Valley, east to Lake Tahoe, and all around home in San Diego, but nothing made us want to sign up. We jokingly started looking into a destination wedding, and to our pleasure, found out it was actually doable and fell in love with the idea of a wedding in Firenze, Italy (aka Florence). Given we both love to travel and his Italian heritage (his last name is Firenze), it only seemed fitting for the Firenzes to get married in Firenze. After many hours of online research and phone interviews with wedding planners in Italy, we chose Sonia Gallina from Wedding Italy to plan our big day (and week of celebration and various wedding events)! We chose the Castello di Vincigliata, a beautiful castle set amidst the hills of Fiesole with spectacular views of Florence, for our wedding location.

Given it was so inconvenient to communicate via phone, our sole mode of communication was email. That being said, I wanted to make sure my ideas and aspirations were communicated correctly. Unfortunately, I am not blessed with a creative eye, so SMP was a huge source of inspiration for the wedding. Since I was not able to communicate my ideas to my wedding planner in person, I created an inspiration book where I cut and paste images and ideas from magazines , Elysium Production's Blog, and many from SMP.

Our vision was to create a Tuscan themed wedding. There were also a variety of elements we wanted to include from my Peruvian heritage, so we served authentic Peruvian cocktails (Pisco Sours) during cocktail hour and filled the welcome bags with Peruvian beer and snacks. Some of my other favorite details were dinner served on long rectangular tables in the courtyard, gold candelabras, doves released during the ceremony (one laid an egg during the ceremony) , personal love letters during the ceremony, honoring our parents during the ceremony with thank you letters, the first dance ending with a fireworks show , cigar bar, and lots of dancing to house music Also, instead of having escort cards, we set place cards at each table setting that duplicated as thank you cards; we handwrote personal messages to all 82 of our guests - thanking them for making the long journey to Italy to be part of our special day. It wouldn't have been the same without each and every one of those guests!

Overall, we couldn't be happier with our decision to proceed with a destination wedding. We had 82 of our closest family and friends joining us for four nights of wedding events, including a welcome party in the famous Piazza Signoria, wine tasting through the hills of Tuscany, rehearsal dinner at a restaurant adjacent to the Ponte Vecchio, and our wedding set in a castle. Wedding Italy went above and beyond their wedding planning duties, which included organizing the entire week of events, hotels/flights, and my husband's bachelor party on the Italian coast. Overall, it was an unforgettable experience.



Wedding Photographer: [Marisa Holmes](#) / Wedding Cinematographer: [Elysium Productions](#) / Wedding Coordinator: [Wedding Italy](#) / Venue: [Castelo di Vincigliata](#) / Catering & Rentals: [Galateo](#) / Hair Stylist: [Din Hair](#) / Make-Up Artist: [Azzurra](#) / Floral Designer: [Floralia](#) / Officiant: [Jim Cascino](#) / Music: [DJ Till](#) / Dress: [Lazaro](#) / Shoes: [Jimmy Choo](#) / Invitations and Paper Goods: [Love at First Invite](#)