

THE UK'S NO.1 BEST-SELLING BRIDAL MAGAZINE

CONDÉ NAST

Award  
Winning  
Editor

# BRIDES

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2018

**34** ways  
to marry in  
**CHANEL**

RECEPTION  
DETAILS YOU  
HAVEN'T  
GOOGLED

**3** **VIP**  
weddings  
to inspire  
your day

**THE BRIDE  
WHO...**

Doesn't like  
weddings  
Got engaged on  
the first date  
Vowed to marry  
without... oh!

WANT.  
THAT. **PINK.**  
GOWN.  
*Pretty ways  
to wear it in 2019*

*What a beauty!*

**274** fragrance,  
skincare, treatment  
& make-up hits



# Travel

OOH-LÀ-LUXURY

## Bonjour, PETIT-MOON!

The *Brides* fashion team shot on location at one of the most talked-about, exclusive estates in France. And the best part? It's about to open as a 17-bedroom hotel just for you...

**IN THE MIDDLE OF A SLEEPY FRENCH TOWN IN THE LOIRE VALLEY (THE KIND THAT SHUTS AROUND 11.30AM FOR A FOUR-HOUR LUNCH AND A SIESTA) LIES A HIDDEN GEM.**

Behind mysterious high stone walls and gargantuan iron gates, the Château du Grand-Lucé sits fairytale-like on land that was once the site of a medieval castle. Having survived revolutions, two World Wars and a turn as a military hospital, it served latterly as occasional home to an American interior designer before being bought by its current owner in 2017, and feels as comfortably grand as

only a château can, with the added bonus of a team of charming, friendly staff.

Wandering through its lofty rooms and endless corridors with their macaron plaster-moulded walls (if only they could talk), it's hard not to imagine the generations who have lived within them. There's a comforting sense of home for somewhere this size, with squashy sofas, Persian rugs, piles of books, gilt-framed portraits and endless collections of *objets d'art*. In fact, art buffs will be entirely in their element here; every wall in the Salon Chinois is covered in paintings by the 18th-century French artist Jean-Baptiste Pillement, who famously decorated the Petit Trianon in Versailles for Marie Antoinette. Thankfully, these walls were saved from damage in World War Two by being covered in plain canvas.

Bedrooms range from the light-filled first-floor variety with their glorious casement windows, *Princess And The Pea* canopied beds and chinoiserie (and enormous, if slightly eccentric, bathrooms), to the more modern, refurbished third-floor and outbuilding suites. The revamped spa, with its chandeliered treatment rooms and hi-tech gym equipment, and the round, Slim Aarons-vibe swimming pool (actually a repurposed fountain in a walled garden) offer plenty of exercise options, just in case you tire of the chaise longue, cheese plate and Sancerre existence. With 80 glorious acres of landscaped gardens

filled with roses, lavender bushes and topiary, along with a wilder woodland of white oak trees, a lake and rolling green fields, there's no excuse not to clock up at least 10,000 steps a day without even leaving the grounds... oh, and you'll do it all under the watchful eyes of Rococo statues presented to the original owner, Baron Jacques Pineau de Viennay, as a gift from King Louis XV.

Previously, you could only experience a taste of this wonderful estate if you booked your wedding here. (And you still can, FYI. What. A. Venue.) But, as of June 2019, *everyone* can get in on the action when it becomes a knock-your-socks-off boutique hotel. We'll raise a glass of Sancerre to that... **BOOK IT** Rooms from £890 a night, including breakfast, [chateaugrandluce.com](http://chateaugrandluce.com) **B**



BRIDES 215



WORDS: BEVONY TOOGOOD

