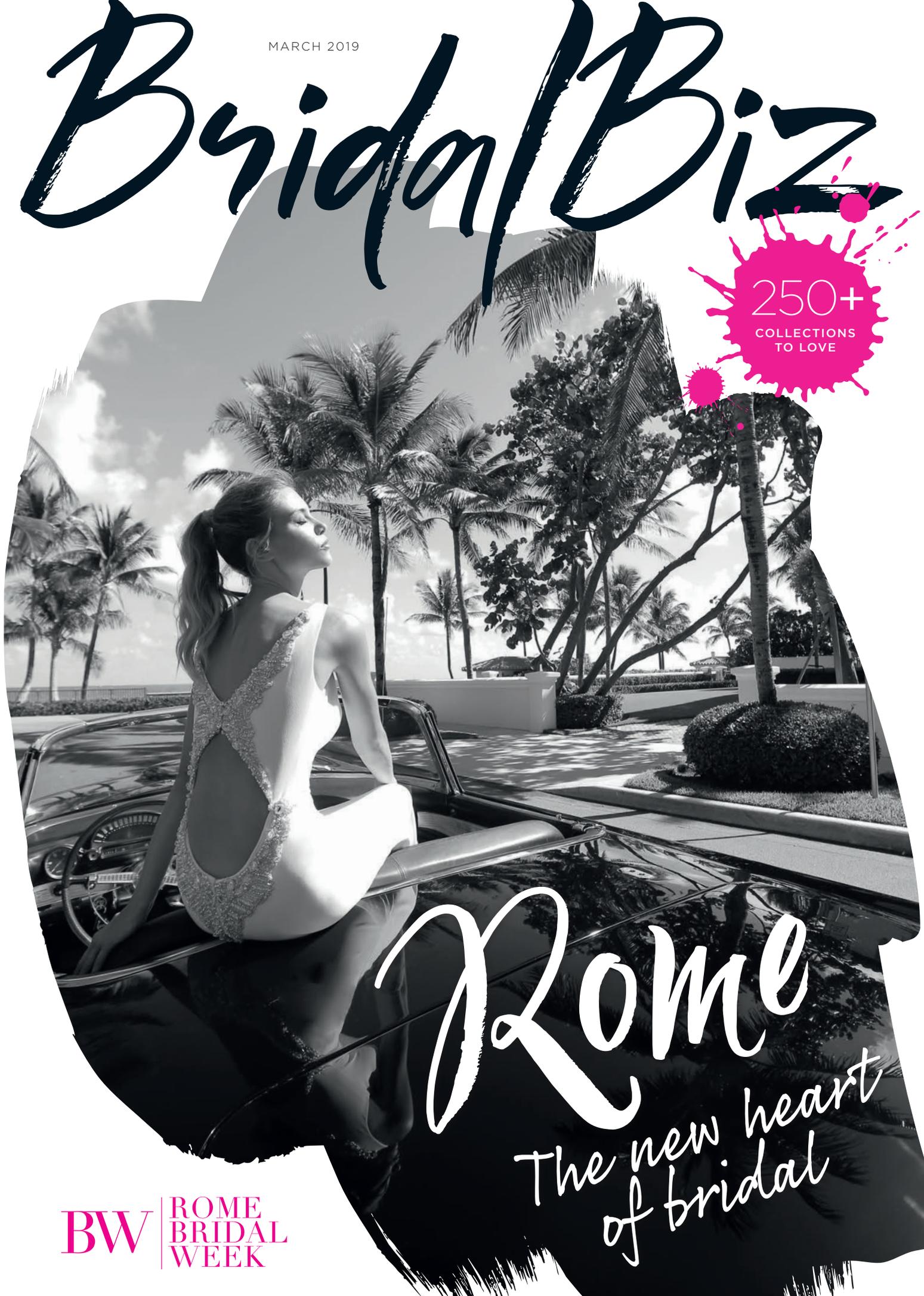


MARCH 2019

Bridal Biz

250+
COLLECTIONS
TO LOVE



Rome

The new heart
of bridal

BW | ROME
BRIDAL
WEEK

Luisa
SPOSA



Story Lines

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Cover: Randy Fenoli Silver Springs Collection



romebridalweek.com



facebook.com/romebridalweek/



instagram.com/romebridalweek/

Editor: Susi Rogol susi@rogol-goodkind.com **Art Director:** Kim Colley

the big names

Rome Bridal Week, coming up for its second edition, is already widely regarded as an essential on the discerning retailer's calendar. This intimate, elegant show in Italy's great capital, is not to be missed

BRIDALWEAR

AF COUTURE
ALLEGRESSE
AMELIA CASABLANCA
ANNA BELLA
ANNA SPOSA
ANTOPA COUTURE
ANTOPA SPOSA
ATELIER MARIE CLAIRE
AURORA BY NICOLE FASHION GROUP
BELOVED BY CASABLANCA
BIANCO EVENTO
BLU BY MORILEE
CAPRI SPOSA
CASABLANCA BRIDAL
CELESTE
COUTURE BY MY BRIDE BRAND
CRYSTALLINE
CURVY BY THE SPOSA GROUP
DOMINISS
DONNA SALADO
ELEGANCE BY JARICE
EVER SPOSA
FABBIAN SPOSA BY DONATO LAURO
GABBIANO
GLAMOUR BY JARICE
GRUPO NOIVA
HELOISE
IMPERO COUTURE

JARICE
JULIETTA BY MORILEE
LA VENERE DI ANTOPA
LE PAPILLON BY MODECA
LIBELLE
LINA BECKER
LISIANTHUS
LUISA SPOSA
MAGNOLIA
MARK LESLEY
MGNY BY MORILEE
MISS KELLY - THE SPOSA GROUP
MISS PARIS
MODECA COLLECTION
MORILEE
MUSA BRIDAL
NADIA ORLANDO
NICOLE SPOSE
OLYMPIA SPOSA
PRONOVIAS
RANDY FENOLI SILVER SPRINGS COLLECTION
SUSANNA RIVIERI SPOSA
TOI COUTURE
TOI SPOSE
TRINCHERA SPOSE
VENUS BRIDAL
VOYAGE BY MORILEE
YOUR BRIDAL LOOK

ACCESSORIES

ANTOPA ACCESSORI
BIANCO EVENTO

OCCASIONWEAR

ANTOPA CERIMONIA
CAPRI SPOSA
IMPERO COUTURE
YOUNG BY IMPERO
MARK LESLEY BRIDESMAIDS
MARK LESLEY EVENINGWEAR
MODEST PROM BY VENUS
VENUS

MENSWEAR

BLACK SUIT BY DONATO LAURO
LUCCIANO RIVIERI

BABIES AND CHILDREN'S WEAR

BABY BY MY BRIDE BRAND
JUNIOR BY MY BRIDE BRAND

Bianco Evento

Libelle

Ever Sposa

Randy Fenoli Silver Springs Collection

Modeca



Jarice



Amelia Casablanca

Made in Italy

www.ameliacasablanca.com

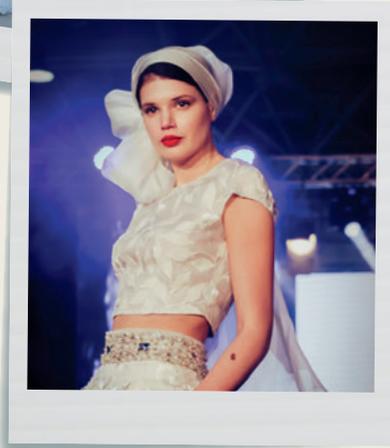
SHOW GUIDE



Rome Bridal Week
Saturday 23 - Monday 25 March

2019





Open for business

Saturday 23	09.30-18.00
Sunday 24	09.30-18.00
Monday 25	09.30-15.00



On the catwalk...

Throughout the three days of Rome Bridal Week there will be a series of vibrant catwalk performances with leading brands taking to the stage to show off their latest collections. In addition, many companies will run their own fashion shows on their stands.

Essential info

There is a Prosecco and canapé lounge in the centre of the exhibition area.... Enjoy!



Accommodation

You'll want a great night's sleep after a hectic day at Rome Bridal Week and a wonderful meal in one of the city's fine eateries. We have negotiated some special prices at leading hotels close to the showgrounds at Fiera di Roma. The city and surrounding areas get busy in late March, so do book your accommodation as early as possible and mention Rome Bridal Week to secure the agreed rates. For the range of hotels partnering with the exhibition, visit romebridalweek.com

SHERATON PARCO DE' MEDICI ROME HOTEL

sheratonparcodemediciorome.com

Surrounded by landscaped gardens, this conveniently-located hotel features a 27-hole golf course, an outdoor pool and a first-class gym. It is 10km from Fiumicino Airport and five minutes' drive from Rome's A90 ring road. Eight restaurants and bars serve international cuisine and cocktails.

And getting around



Cab drivers expect at least a 10% tip. Fares within the city start at €2.80 from 07.00 to 22.00, but go up on Sundays, starting at €4, and at night at €5.80. To get an official Rome Taxi, call +39 06 0609 or +39 06 3570, or send an SMS to +39 366 673 0000. Authorised taxis are white with a 'TAXI' sign on the roof. The licence number is on the doors, the back and inside.

If a taxi is free, the light on the Taxi sign will be turned on. If the light is off, it means they are occupied or are on their way to pick up a passenger. The best way to grab a cab is either to go to a taxi stand or to call for a cab.

There are several taxi stands in Rome - at Termini Station, Piazza della Repubblica; Piazza Venezia; Largo Argentina; Piazza delle Cinque Lune (near Piazza Navona); Piazza Barberini; and Via Boncompagni (near Via Veneto).

Cab-takers should make sure that the meter reads Tariffa 1. Tariffa 2 moves at a much faster rate and should only be applied when exiting Rome's highway or the Grande Raccordo Anulare. If the Tariffa 2 rate is applied, the taxi driver is legally obliged to notify his passengers each time he is about to change the meter.

During Rome Bridal Week, there will be regular dedicated shuttle-bus services to and from the airport and between the exhibition halls and the hotels contracted to La Sposa Couture. Check romebridalweek.com for more details before you set off.



Getting there

Fiumicino Airport services more than 100 airlines from across the globe and boasts superb facilities and connections into the city, and to the Fiera di Roma exhibition complex, which is closer, via train, bus or taxi.

From the airport, you can reach Fiera Roma by train - the FR 1. The journey takes around six minutes and costs €8. Alternatively, you can hop on a bus or take a cab for around €25.

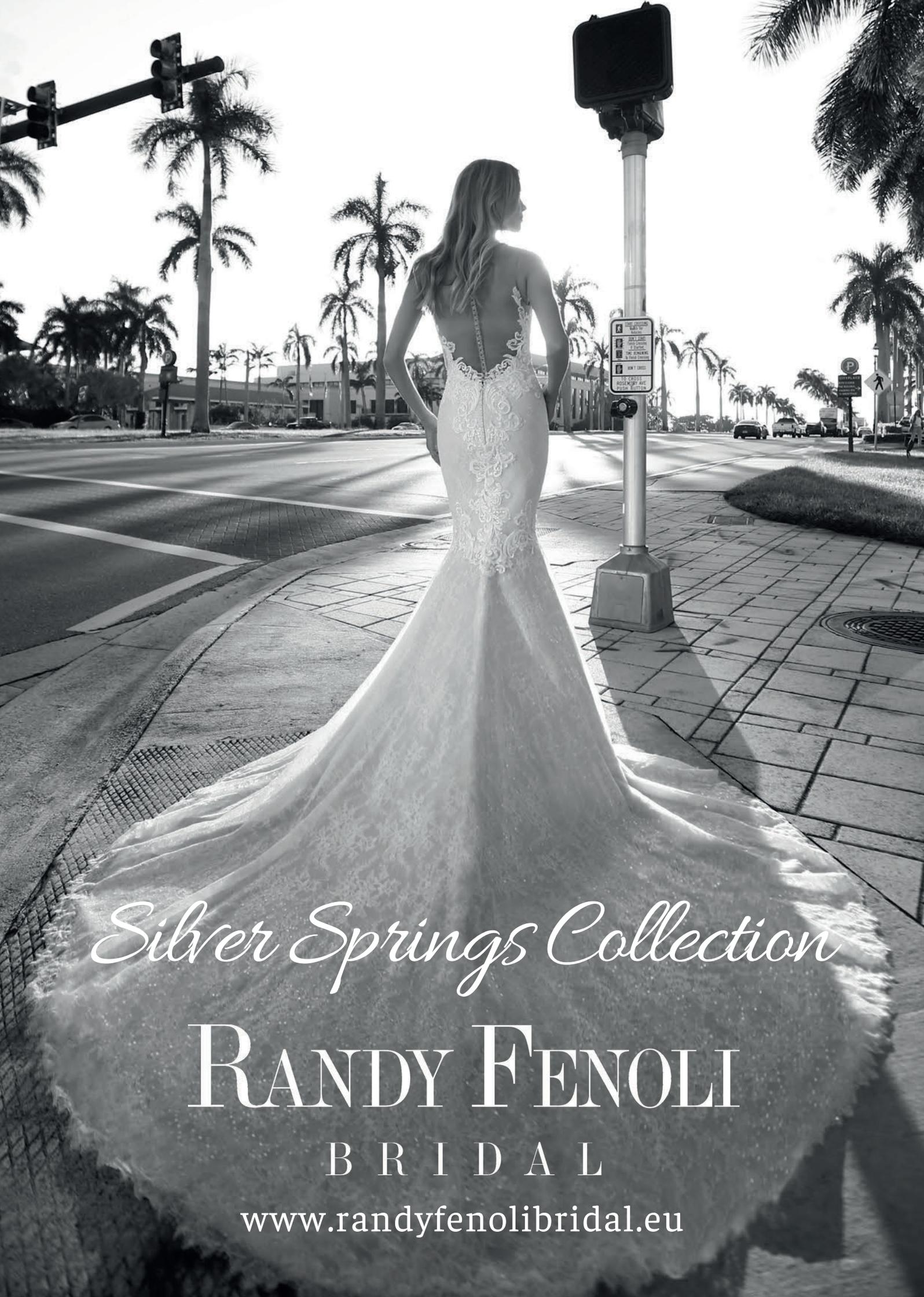
If you are in the city, you can take the underground to the halls. From Tuscolana, Tiburtina, and Ostiense train stations, which are connected to the A and B lines of the underground (Metropolitana), take the train FR 1 toward Fiumicino and get off at Fiera Roma stop. This is a fast and well-priced option at €1.50.

Rent a car

Offices are located at the Domestic and International Arrival Halls. Hertz, Avis, Sixt, Eurocar are represented, as well as Budget and Maggiore.

Airline Lounges

If your ticket does not entitle you to free use of one of the airport lounges, it is worth going online and checking the cost of a one-day pass. Free drinks and eats, TV, newspapers and comfortable seating make it well worthwhile, particularly when priced against the restaurants and bars in the main airport. Passes bought online in advance are cheaper than those purchased at the airport on your day of travel.



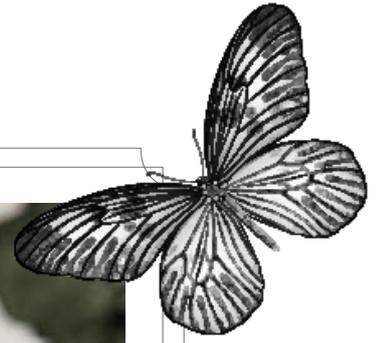
Silver Springs Collection

RANDY FENOLI

BRIDAL

www.randyfenolibridal.eu

DIRECTIONS



Setting The Trends
Rome Bridal Week will
showcase some of the most
beautiful bridal collections.
23 - 25 March 2019

Donato Lauro



Directions Setting the trends

Modeca

The 2020 Modeca Collection has been inspired by a dreamy and passionate spirit, capturing the true soul of Dutch Design. Created for the feminine bride looking for romantic and boho designs for her perfect wedding dress, this collection scores with stunning A-lines, royal ballgowns and figure-hugging fishtails. There are gowns with shine, and ethereal looks as well as silhouettes of cosmopolitan simplicity.
modeca.com



CRYSTALLINE

Xclusiv will be launched for the first time at Rome Bridal Week - expect heavily embroidered, hand-stitched gowns, figure-hugging, seductive and flattering.
crystallinebridals.com



JARICE

The palest of blush tones features in the three labels from Jarice, Elegance, Glamour and Pure. This pretty-as-a-picture back-laced dress is Samantha from the new Elegance range
jarice.com



Lina Becker

The focus here is on fulfilling a bride's dreams, whatever her taste, her personality or her shape.
lina-becker.com

Amelia Casablanca



This is bridal dressing at its grandest. Plush, lush and opulent, with detail layered over detail and fabrics mixed and matched to create special effects that add both volume and texture. Every dress in this extraordinary range is something of a masterpiece, marrying art, crafts and technology, to be loved and appreciated always.
ameliacasablanca.com

Nicole Spose

The stunning Aurora collection fuses the timeless elegance of the past with the easy chic of the present. Soft lines in tulle and chiffon, volumes in mikado, laces and embroidery.
nicolespose.it

Bianco Evento



With its tenth anniversary coming up, this important German brand has seen a decade of huge growth. A force within the bridal industry, it produces some of the very best accessories, and a huge range of options in headdresses and jewellery to meet every taste and budget. Combs, hairvines, clips - they have it all and not just in metallics with pearls and crystals, but also lace.
bianco-evento.com

EVER SPOSA

Glamorous and chic, this 50-piece collection in tulle, organza, satin, mikado and lace includes perfectly shaped A-lines, sleek body-hugging red-carpet mermaids, and beautiful big-skirted ballgowns.
giellefashion.com



ANNA SPOSA

Designed and made in the Ukraine, and sold across the world, the gowns from the Anna Sposa Group have a distinct personality. It is grown up, glossy, and glamorous - the perfect combination for the perfect wedding dress.
anna-sposa.eu.com



MARK LESLEY

Designer Donna Salado has captured everything that bridal today is about, introducing bold detailing, intricate beadwork, and a range of gentle sun-washed colours. Her fabrics are soft and her back and sleeve features are remarkable.
marklesley.co.uk



La Petra

*The highest-quality fabrics for the softest touch and most luxurious look, with hand-embroidered laces a special feature. The colour palette is muted, ivory, pink, nude and soft rose.
anna-sposa.eu.com*

ALLEGRESSE

The Anna Sposa Group has a number of deliciously different labels. This one, Allegresse, is uber-stylish with dramatic features like waterfall sleeves that cascade to the ground.
anna-sposa.eu.com

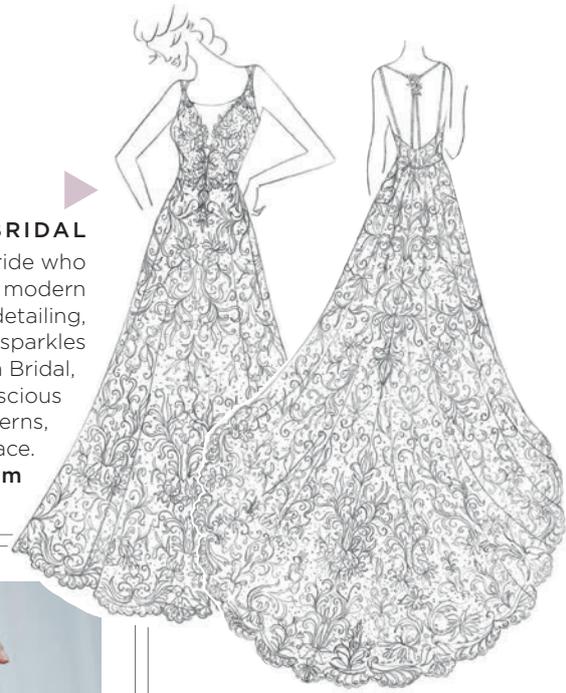


Directions Setting the trends

IT'S SHOWTIME

CASABLANCA BRIDAL

Casablanca Bridal, for the bride who wants a classic gown but with modern twists, will introduce feather detailing, intricate beading, sequins and sparkles while Beloved by Casablanca Bridal, which is priced for the budget-conscious bride, will include bold lace patterns, detached-sleeves and black lace. casablancabridal.com



MY BRIDE

As well as creating magnificent bridal gowns for a discerning audience, My Bride has carved its own niche in the market with ravishing dresses for babes, tots and little fairytale princesses. But these are no ordinary dresses... they are replicas of what the bride will be wearing, down to fabric and the smallest of detail. mybride.it



*Miss Kelly
From The Sposa Group,
the perfect fit in gorgeous fabrics.
misskelly.fr*

GABBIANO

Light dusty pink is a best seller here along with light cappuccino, milk, and shades of blue-grey. Embroideries and sequins highlight tulle, crepe, chiffon, satin and cotton lace. More than 140 styles include some stunning plus-size pieces. gabbiano.de



Randy Fenoli



The Silver Springs Collection from this seasoned design talent is a perfect example of what can be achieved by focusing on what brides themselves want. In this line up of beautiful gowns, there are wonderful silhouettes, immaculate detailing and an adventurous choice of the best best and most modern of fabrics. randyfenolibridal.eu



MUSA BRIDAL

This exclusive Made in Italy designer collection features the finest fabrics and remarkable silhouettes where every detail is important. Plunging illusion backs and transparent sleeves with lace motifs are a special feature of the new collection – feminine, sensual and wonderfully stylish. musabridal.it



2020 Collection

aurora

— nicole —

The Collection will be presented at THE ROME BRIDAL WEEK Stand 65 | 23RD - 25TH MARCH 2019

Flagship Store in MILAN Viale Beatrice D'Este 7 and in the best stores in the world...

IMPERO

SPOSA

Giorgio Armani

FLAGSHIP STORE in TEVEROLA Via Roma 264 and in the best stores in Italy and in the Europe

www.imperocouture.com







where
elegance
reigns
supreme

Dreamy, romantic and utterly feminine, this is the signature from this fine Italian house, where design innovation is key to its success







While many brands in bridal focus on design generalities, there is one Italian label that is dedicated to refined luxury where every detail is brilliantly conceived, every fabric is the finest and every gown is one-of-a-kind; Amelia Casablanca is on a level of its own. See its latest masterpiece of a collection at Rome Bridal Week, 23-25 March, at Fiera di Roma.

For more than 60 years, Sicilian atelier Amelia Casablanca has set standards that few design houses could hope to achieve but that all brides dream of. Here every detail is important, every feature vital – from the choice of embellishments to the precision of structure. And it is the way fabrics are used, too, that make a difference; layered together, sculpted to form shape, manipulated to create volume and an unforgettably beautiful profile. Whether an elaborate full-skirted ballgown, or a slender trumpet line, every dress is a reflection of love, quality and individuality.

Sumptuous laces and extraordinary embroideries are used with passion to tell a story of individuality and regal elegance... and that passion is evident throughout every collection from this highly specialised house where meticulous work by skilled craftspeople turn dreams into reality.

AMELIA CASABLANCA

+39 0942 794552

INFO@AMELIACASABLANCA.COM

◆ AMELIACASABLANCA.COM



Musa

BRIDAL COUTURE

www.musabridal.it



LUISA SPOSA
IN THE
SPOTLIGHT
AT ROME
BRIDAL WEEK

Event organisers, exhibitors and retailers alike are delighted that one of Italy's great names has chosen to unveil its new collection at this vibrant show

Celebrating its 30th anniversary in bridal this year - as well as the 40th wedding anniversary of founders Luisa Lotti and Vito Lacovelli - Luisa Sposa is a name that commands respect from the fashion cognoscenti, admiration from its stockists across the world and grateful thanks over the years from its legions of well-dressed brides.

It is the passion for perfection and the demand for the finest details that have ensured this house maintains its position as a market leader and a setter of style trends. There are no compromises here: every garment has a distinct feature - in both cut and embellishment - that lends a unique personality to the collection. The range is designed and made in the company's headquarters in Puglia and the fabrics are hand picked with quality being a priority. ➤➤





Corporate decisions are shared; this is very much a family business, with Luisa as the creative influence, older son Gianni taking charge of the commercial side, his brother Francesco leading the administration team with father Vito and, it is hoped that sister Rosella, currently studying History of Art and Entertainment, will take up a design role and continue driving the label forward on the international stage.

At Rome Bridal Week 2019, Luisa Sposa will command attention with its stunning variety of looks - all elegant, all glamorous, all special. From romantic gowns with cascades of ruffles and softly billowing skirts to narrow cropped lace trousers with layered overskirts, tailored jackets, separates, and sleeky fishtails with amazing fabric treatments.

This is adventurous, confident design that crosses conventional boundaries. And why this label, after three decades, remains at the top.

LUISA SPOSA
+39 080 4053065
INFO@LUISASPOSA.IT
◆ LUISASPOSA.COM

SECRET

by

DYLAN PARIENTY

THE SPOSA GROUP COLLECTION

ROMA BRIDAL WEEK

23 - 25 MARCH



THE SPOSA GROUP

PER ITALIA : GRUPPO ISERNIA +39 08 65 26 125

GRUPPOISERNIA@ALICE.IT



MODECA

DUTCH DESIGN

2020 COLLECTION

www.modeca.com



RANDY FENOLI HAS years of experience dealing directly with brides, and as one of the most trusted sources in the industry, few designers are better placed to know what makes a girl say yes to a particular dress. The recipient of two DEBI Awards, and the President's Award for Creative Excellence from the prestigious Fashion Institute of Technology, Randy Fenoli was Fashion Director of New York's famous Kleinfelds store from 2007 to 2012 where he consulted with nearly 15,000 brides a year. He is passionate about finding the perfect dress for every bride and his new, meticulously-designed and crafted collection will make many dreams come true.

The Silver Springs Collection includes luxurious fabrics, tonal beading, soft layering and touches of glamour. The choice of fabrics is paramount, he says. "I have to make sure that the quality of every material and the drape, weight, weave and finish are of the highest standards."

For this stylish collection that introduces twists on the classics as well as a cool and contemporary sense of chic, he has used gloriously smooth satins, organza, crepe, tulle, lace, taffeta, and some stunning trend-setting novelty fabrics that introduce a new and very special look to the design equation.

RANDY FENOLI
SILVER SPRINGS COLLECTION
INFO@RANDYFENOLIBRIDAL.EU
◆ RANDYFENOLIBRIDAL.EU



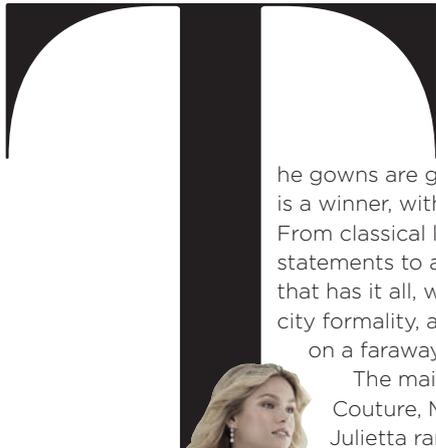
SAY YES TO RANDY FENOLI

Randy Fenoli is something of a celebrity and the original star of the big US TV hit, *Say Yes to the Dress*. He is heading for Rome Bridal Week with his Silver Springs collection

COVERING THE OPTIONS

Morilee is one of the best-known names in bridal, with a huge international following and an offering to retailers that is backed by ongoing support





he gowns are gorgeous – every one of the Morilee collections is a winner, with its own personality and sense of high style. From classical looks to couture finishes, fashion-forward statements to a celebration of laid-back boho, this is a brand that has it all, whether the wedding in question is all about big city formality, a simple family affair, or sun and sand nuptials on a faraway beach.

The main Morilee label, along with Blu, Voyage, AF Couture, MGNV and the perfectly-structured plus-size Julietta range, have one thing in common and that is the passion of the design force behind the brand, Madeline Gardner. Her vision is extraordinary, her fit immaculate and, as you would expect, her choice of fabrics and embellishments is exemplary. To Madeline, every detail is important and that's what makes Morilee stand out from the crowd.

Stunning photography results in display material that stockists find helps them sell and the company's vibrant presence across the social media platforms spreads the word to brides themselves.

Add to that the promise of eight-week deliveries on best-selling gowns, a size range that goes up to Italian 64, and a colour choice that includes those essential nudes and pale pinks, and you can see why Morilee will be a big attraction at Rome Bridal Week, 23-25 March at Fiera di Roma.



MORILEE
0800 723 67 91
INFO@MORILEE.EU
◆ MORILEE.EU

IN
CONVERSATION
WITH

Ma rta

Do not miss out on this collection of collections, each one offering something special. BridalBiz talked to owner Mark Lesley about the collections he is bringing to Rome Bridal Week

LESLEY

K



You are regarded as one of the great British brands - what makes you stand out from the crowd? We have definitely developed in every sense since we entered the European market and today we serve many different countries. We know that their buying patterns, design choices, general requirements and price structure are frequently different, and the influence of this diversity has become core to our ethos. ➡





with sweeping trains. Detail will include beautifully-detailed spaghetti straps incorporated into open backs. Soft fabrications are key.

What about bridesmaids, what fabrics and colours are coming in? This is a vibrant sector and today, more than ever before, it is vital that every maid in the wedding party can pick a style that suits her personality and body shape. We offer a huge selection here, not just in designs but in colours, too – more than 100 of them – in soft shimmering stretch fabrics, chiffons, crepes and satins with colour-coded laces and stunning embroidery.

In this climate of online research and shopping, what are you doing to reach brides and bridesmaids to get them into your stockists? We invest heavily in marketing, promotion and brand awareness, online communication to advise consumers where to buy, a great website and activity on all the social media platforms. And to support our stockists further we hold stock of best-selling designs to cater for last-minute weddings, and we are available 24/7 by phone or email to advise and help our retailers. This is key to our ongoing success.

MARKLESLEY
+39 06 9021 4688
IACCARINISHOWROOM@GMAIL.COM
◆MARKLESLEY.CO.UK

What labels will go on show at Rome in March? Mark Lesley Bridal, Mark Lesley Bridesmaids and Eveningwear with 100 pieces in the new collection and our designer collection, Donna Salado, with 30 new styles.

Tell us about your brand personality. We have earned a reputation for delivering modern design, visually striking detail, classic and sexy necklines and back detailing, intricate lace and beading patterning.

And the fabrics we can expect to see at Rome Bridal Week? For the new season we are working with beautiful crepes, stretch satins, soft tulle, silk dupion, plain and embroidered mikado, crepes and satin with striking beading patterning, fine-quality beaded and plain lace, sparkling tulle and in various shades of ivory, blush and Champagne.

Which silhouettes are you tipping as the new bestsellers? Brides are looking for more diversity, and the ability to opt for minimal customisation, so that they can input into their dream dress. In demand will be sexy figure-hugging gowns that show off the curves, fit-and-flare silhouettes and, ballgowns

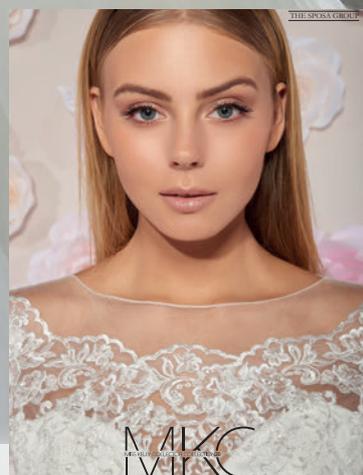
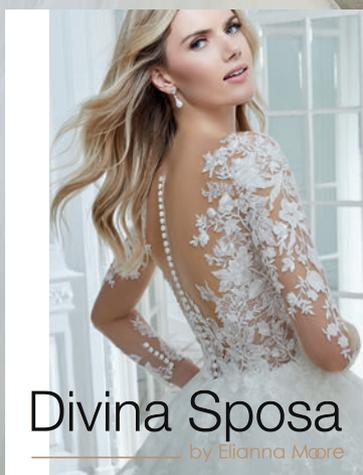




SUSANNA RIVIERI
—
SPOSA

THE SPOSA GROUP

NEW COLLECTIONS 2020



BRIDAL FAIRS 2019

ROMA 23 - 25 MARCH / ESSEN 30 - 01 APRIL / PARIS 13 - 15 APRIL /
BARCELONA 26 - 28 APRIL / INTERBRIDE DÜSSELDORF 04 - 06 MAY
THESPOSAGROUP.COM / HQ PARIS CONTACT : MICHEL@BRIDARLING.COM



WHAT MAKES A WINNER?

Maria Musgrove-Wethey weighs up the importance of instinct, intuition, experience and hanger appeal when it comes to making buying decisions



What do Manhattan, Mayfair, Madrid and Mercedes have in common? What's the connection between Michelle and Julie? And the same question for Ingrid, Gabrielle, Jessica, Emma, Scarlett and Gracie? And what about Esme and Papillon?

The answers have nothing to do with famous places or cars, Beatles' songs or favourite girls' names but everything to do with my best-selling dresses over the past 22 years.

So what's the secret of a best seller? Do we trust our instinct, our sales agent/designer, our fellow retailers, the basic shape and cut, the campaign photography or a simple throw of the dice?

I know that over the years I have missed out on several best sellers because in previous seasons a certain style hasn't worked for me and is still on my sale rail and, as a result, any design that is vaguely similar gets a big NO from me. That was the wrong thing to do. I missed out on one of the best-selling gowns of all time because it was strapless and I hadn't sold any strapless dresses in the past couple of seasons.

HERE'S MY THINKING

There are some evergreen dresses that will be 'anywhere, any place, any time' best sellers. A classic example of

this was when we took on one particular American label and were advised on the two best sellers of all time, one a classical strapless A-line, the other a fairytale gown with a sweetheart neckline, crystal encrusted bodice and gathered tulle skirt. Three years on and we're still selling both dresses across all sizes. A great pattern block and great price point make these gowns winners. And Atelier Pronovias Vicenta was recommended as a retro buy and went on to represent more than half of all of my Pronovias sales in 2018.

I asked the members of my Business Owners group what they considered to be the criteria for a best seller. Anneliese Ward of Chameleon in Bournemouth said:

"a full dress with a corset back that gives everyone a fabulous figure and has no fixed waist so it is great on all proportions." Another retailer, Kristy Wynack from Embrace in Geelong, Australia, added: "a dress that fits more than one body type, and that my staff love. If they love it, they will sell it."



CAMPAIGN PHOTOGRAPHY

Two of my gowns owe their popularity initially to a marketing campaign with fabulous imagery. Rewind back to 2011 when we were just coming out of recession and my strategy was to keep my pricepoint below a certain level. Both gowns were well over that so I allowed my head to rule my heart and passed on them. As soon as the designer's campaign went live, the phone was hot with enquiries so I did a retro buy and never looked back. I had brides flying in from Norway, Iraq and Dubai. Without question, a gown that the designer has gone to town on with heavy advertising and more styled photography will attract more attention and get more interest. If this is combined with a gown that is well structured with a defined waistline then it will become a great bread and butter winner.

Join Maria's Facebook group - Bridal Business Owners.
For details of mentoring and training
visit bridalsalestraining.com

WHEN IN ROME...

In a city rich in treasures and the embodiment of culture there is so much to see and do. Our favourite guide shows us around



DON'T MISS Elyssa Bernard of romewise.com takes us on a tour of her favourite restaurants in the capital - six of the best little gems away from the tourist zones

SAPORI DI CASA

This little spot near the Sapienza University is where the locals go for inexpensive, authentic Cucina Romana. You will find some of the best simple Roman cuisine, from divine pizza to skate soup to tripe and delicious amatriciana, carbonara and all the rest.

T: +36 06 5538 9096

MOLTO

This restaurant in Parioli is where to go for ambiance, great food, and a sense of living as the locals do. But not just any locals. If you want to see how the other half lives, this will give you a taste.

T: +39 06 808 2900

LA GATTABUIA

Located in a 17th century tavern, complete with arches, vaults and packed with antique furniture, La Gattabuia is a bit off the beaten path but well worth discovering. It's on the quiet side of Trastevere, on a quiet street. And it's one of my favorite places to eat in the area for its authentic Roman cuisine.

T: +39 06 584813

ROBERTO E LORETTA

Roberto e Loretta has everything you could want in a Rome restaurant: a warm cosy atmosphere, kind and caring owners who play host at every meal, spectacular dishes of authentic Roman cuisine, a very complete wine list, and reasonable prices.

It's also a 'slow food' restaurant, and one of the few eateries recommended by Romanesco, a Rome Chamber of Commerce entity that promotes the use of locally-produced products. This is the place to sample dishes like carciofi alla romana and fiori di zucca.

T: +39 06 7720 1037

LO SCOPETTARO

At the far edge of Testaccio, Rome's working class neighbourhood, you will find one of the most traditional Roman restaurants, Lo Scopettaro ('The Sweeper'). Enter this bustling hive full of chattering Roman friends and families, and tuck into hearty, satisfying Roman dishes like chicken cacciatora (without tomato), cacio e pepe, and fried artichoke. All cooked to perfection.

T: +39 06 575 7912

OSTERIA FERNANDA

Head to the outer edges of Trastevere, past the little cobblestone streets and hidden churches, and you wind up in a less-touristy, more local kind of Roman neighborhood. Here you will find the refined Osteria Fernanda, where you can enjoy Michelin-quality food at affordable prices. Chef Davide Del Duca delights in using unusual natural ingredients like roots and peels that make his dishes special. The 'quick lunch' menus are great.

T: +39 328 384 7924



DO VISIT When you are ready to soak up the sights of Italy's marvellous capital, Elyssa recommends a round of some of the city's most beautiful churches. Here's why...

SANTA MARIA IN TRASTEVERE

One of the oldest churches in Rome (from the early 4th century CE), this basilica will stun you with its gold mosaics on the outside but even more so on the inside. Note the columns, most of varying height, base, and material. They were recycled from the ancient baths of Caracalla.

SANTI QUATTRO CORONATI

This church looks more like a fortress because that's what it used to be in the early middle ages. Today home of Augustinian nuns, it houses all kinds of hidden secrets, like its medieval cloister and gorgeously frescoed Saint Sylvester chapel.

SANT'AGOSTINO

Unassuming, and therefore a wonderful surprise, this Renaissance-era church houses one of the most mesmerising Caravaggio paintings, the Madonna di Loreto. There is also a small Raphael fresco on one of the columns.

SANTI COSMA E DAMIANO

Easy to miss, the church along the via dei Fori Imperiali actually sits on top of a temple inside the Roman Forum. You can see the temple from above, at the back of the church. The apse contains Byzantine mosaics from the 8th century CE.

SANTA MARIA MAGGIORE

One of four papal basilicas, this is the largest of 26 churches in Rome dedicated to the Virgin Mary. The wooden ceiling, covered in gold-leaf, said to be a gift of the King and Queen of Spain, Ferdinand and Isabella in the early 1500s, is one of only two in Rome that is still original.

SANTA SABINA

This quiet, ancient basilica on the Aventine Hill is beautiful inside, but it has some special things to see on the outside, too - a 5th-century wooden carved door that is said to be the first depiction of the crucifixion, and an orange tree, said to be from the 1200s, when Saint Dominic planted it here. It is supposed to be the orange tree from which all the other orange trees have propagated on the Aventine Hill.

Want to know more, visit Elyssa's website, romewise.com, for invaluable information on everything from sightseeing to shopping to food and drink.



Top left, clockwise: Santa Sabina; Santa Maria Maggiore; the Madonna di Loreto in Sant'Agostino; Santi Cosma e Damiano; Santa Maria in Trastevere; Santi Quattro Coronati

ALL THE ADVANTAGES

"I FOUND THAT MAKING AN APPOINTMENT IN ADVANCE OF THE SHOW LAST YEAR, PARTICULARLY WITH BRANDS THAT ARE NEW TO ME, WAS REALLY BENEFICIAL. THEY KNEW MY NAME AND WERE EXPECTING ME, WHICH IS A GREAT WAY TO START A RELATIONSHIP. MY DIARY IS GETTING SORTED FOR THIS YEAR'S SHOW NOW."

"To find carefully-selected labels that focus on style and quality first, rather than a mass collection of ranges that have little in common, puts a whole new light on the annual buying experience. It makes buying more pleasurable and the atmosphere more exclusive."

"Special-priced accommodation close by the show grounds makes a big difference, to my budget, and also to the amount of time I can spend at Rome Bridal Week."

"When it comes to creative innovation, Italy is unquestionably a world leader, and knowing that many of the finest labels will be showing together at Rome Bridal Week and within a dedicated area, makes the whole proposition even more inviting. It will be an irresistible pull."

"I must say, I like the idea of an elegant, intimate show. It means we can really focus on the collections we want to do business with and have time to talk to friends and colleagues. There is far less pressure than at the huge events."

"What could be better than a few days in Rome, seeing gorgeous gowns and then heading into the city for some sightseeing and a wonderful meal?"

"I loved last year's show and am looking forward to the March one this year. I am hoping I will be able to do my key selection there again in just three days, which will simplify the buying season for me and give me more time in the shop."

*Rome Bridal Week,
23 - 25 March, at Fiera di Roma.
For more information visit
romebridalweek.com*

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