

FIELD NOTES

Italian Destination Weddings Are Having a Moment — Again

Lauren Sánchez and Jeff Bezos' upcoming nuptials in Venice spotlight Italy's timeless appeal, as other Italian cities continue to grow in popularity for U.S. weddings abroad.



An increasing number of American couples are hosting destination weddings in Italy. Emanuela Giangreco, a wedding planner in Venice, planned a wedding at Villa Valentini Bonaparte in Umbria, Italy. Credit...Hunter Ryan Photo



By [Tammy LaGorce](#)

June 25, 2025

Emanuela Giangreco, a wedding planner, tells clients her home city of Venice is “delicate,” a description that fits uneasily into accounts of how the wedding of Jeff Bezos and Lauren Sánchez is expected to unfold there this week.

In March, Ms. Sánchez’ brother, Paul Sanchez, [told TMZ](#) the wedding, with about 200 guests expected to attend, would rival the pageantry of [Princess Diana’s nuptials](#) at St. Paul’s Cathedral in London. (The London firm [Lanza & Baucina](#), known for its discretion, is planning the event.)

Speculation about its cost has soared to the multiple millions, according to tabloid reports. [People magazine has declared](#) the couple are planning “the wedding of the century.” And Mr. Bezos, whose arrival has [spurred protests](#), is [expected to dock his \\$500 million superyacht](#), Koru, in the Venice lagoon.

The spectacle has prompted Ms. Giangreco, a wedding planner who once planned weddings exclusively in Venice, including her own, to reflect on how her business has expanded across Italy in the last decade.

When she launched Ema Giangreco Weddings in 2015, she organized about eight American weddings in Venice each year. Now, she works with U.S. couples throughout Italy, where requests for ceremonies in Tuscany and the Amalfi Coast have tripled.

Image





Lake Como has become a popular destination for luxury destination weddings. Credit...Lucy Munoz

Convention Bureau Italia, a private national authority that promotes tourism, documented a double-digit surge in American weddings in 2024, which also recently found that 30 percent of all weddings held in the country are now American. The trend is also supported by data from the Virginia-based travel agency Journeys Inc., whose president, Kim Goldstein, said that Italy consistently ranks among the top five countries for U.S. weddings abroad.

“Since the pandemic, we’ve seen a 10 percent increase in American couples choosing Italy as their destination wedding location,” Ms. Goldstein said.

Though Venice remains a picturesque location for weddings, with more than 600 weddings each year, according to city hall officials, Ms. Giangreco said that she has noticed a shift to other parts of Italy that satisfy American couples’ desire for novelty.

“What’s happening now, what’s changing, is that 10 years ago, every other inquiry we were getting was about Lake Como,” said Lynn Easton, owner of [Easton Events LLC](#), a Charleston, S.C., luxury destination wedding planning company.

Image

Diana Sorensen, the owner and creative director of Sugokuii Events in Rome, said that many couples are looking for “a location that has no noise limitations and offers ultra privacy,” she said. Credit...Aaron Delesire for Sugokuii Events

Image



A wedding planned by Ms. Sorensen in Positano, Italy. Credit...Aaron Delesire for Sugokuii Events

John Legend and Chrissy Teigen got married in Lake Como in 2013; George Clooney's wedding to Amal Alamuddin took place in Venice in 2014. "Now, like anything else in life, people are looking for new ideas," Ms. Easton said.

A current client is scouting the Dolomites, a mountain range in northeastern Italy, with her help. [Sicily](#) and [Puglia](#) have also been booming.

“Nobody wants things to be farther and harder to get to,” Ms. Easton said. But “what they do want is ‘unique’ and ‘different.’” For her, the search for little-known Italian palazzos and villas is ongoing.

“We as an industry are constantly pushing the boundaries,” she said. In Italy, that means “more and more regions are being explored.”

Diana Sorensen, the owner and creative director of [Sugokuii Events](#), an event design and production company in Rome that takes on only two \$5 million-plus weddings per year, said American couples who can spend that amount are seeking not just exclusivity but seclusion.

“They may want a tiny island somewhere, or a location that has no noise limitations and offers ultra privacy,” she said.

Image



Credit...Andrea Gallucci

American weddings in Italy are a huge industry for locals, who benefit from the larger celebrations and budgets, according to wedding planners.



Her background — she was born in New York but has lived in Rome most of her life — reassures clients she knows where to look, she said. “We can pinpoint some of the places that haven’t been used before,” she said, adding that she can get access to these venues, which owners and preservation boards only open up to a few individuals. “That’s attractive to a certain clientele.”

So are bragging rights to experiences that can’t be duplicated in other parts of the world, like picking olives in Puglia, Ms. Easton said, or taking a helicopter over Mount Etna, Ms. Sorensen said.

The desire to explore new locations does not always add up to trampling local charm, or Americans wearing out their benvenuti in Italy, planners say.

According to several planners, Americans tend to favor three-day events that consist of a welcome party, the wedding and a farewell brunch on the final day. Residents in many regions now count on foreign extravaganzas, with their influx of visitors and dollars.

“It’s a huge industry that has such importance for locals,” said Marianna Di Paolo, an owner of [La Calla Events](#) on the Amalfi Coast, a current hot spot for weddings. When La

Calla started orchestrating weddings for foreigners 25 years ago, most of its clients were British and Australian couples who were booking intimate events. Now, 80 percent are Americans who lift local economies with larger celebrations.

“People are very happy when they see American weddings here,” Ms. Di Paolo said.

Ms. Goldstein, of Journeys, said American couples spend an average of \$50,000 on an Italian wedding for 50 guests, depending on the setting, elaborateness and guest count.

Kim Goldstein, the president of the Virginia-based travel agency Journeys Inc., said American couples spend an average of \$50,000 on an Italian wedding for 50 guests. Credit...Aaron Delesire for Sugokuii Events

Image



Suita Carrano, the founder of the Italian planning company Prestige & Luxury Weddings, said Italy's allure is “all about the wine and the food.” Credit...Aaron Delesire for Sugokuii Events

Suita Carrano, the president of the International Wedding Planners and Travel Agents Association and founder of the Italian planning company [Prestige & Luxury Weddings](#), pointed out that destination weddings often allow for spending more per guest, because head counts tend to be lower.

“If you live in New York and invite 500 people to Italy, 250 won’t be able to come,” she said.

It is likely they will want to attend, though. Americans flock to Italy to marry for reasons that extend beyond the old-world charm and romantic ambience, planners say.