

THE STAR REPORT

From the good to the bad to the downright ugly, an insider's guide to celebrity weddings By Hillary Quinn

Once upon a time, celebrity weddings were all about pomp and circumstance: the grandest gown, the tallest cake, the largest cathedral. But these days, you're just as likely to see your favorite star tying the knot barefoot as watch her marching down a church aisle in Jimmy Choos. Here are dozens of details you'll want to copy—and a few that might make you cringe!

Julia Roberts and Danny Moder

When: July 4, 2002

Where: The bride's 40-acre ranch near Taos, New Mexico

What we loved: The guests, clad in white linen, sat in a semicircle outside a candlelit, 19th-century *morada*—a small adobe religious meeting house that was built specially for the couple's surprise midnight nuptials.

What we didn't: The wedding took place on July 4—Independence Day—reportedly because the bridegroom wanted to symbolize his divorce from his first wife.

What you can steal: Visit a local nursery and register for beautiful plants, then use them to create a wedding garden.

Jessica Simpson and Nick Lachey

When: October 26, 2002

Where: Riverbend Baptist Church, with a reception at the Barton Creek Resort, Austin, Texas

What we loved: The groom—a former member of the boy band 98°—serenaded his bride with “My Everything,” a song he'd written for the occasion.

What we didn't: Things feel just a little too intimate when the ceremony officiant alludes to the bride's virginity, even if she had already discussed it on MTV.

What you can steal: Their five-tiered confection—decorated with 1,000 edible flowers—featured a different cake flavor in each layer. (But not a flake of tuna.)

Russell Crowe and Danielle Spencer

When: April 7, 2003

Where: A private chapel on Crowe's ranch in Australia

What we loved: The ushers, wearing suits emblazoned with the Crowe and Spencer family crests, arrived at the chapel on a fleet of motorcycles—gifts from the groom.

What we didn't: Crowe sported a shaggy ponytail, which didn't quite complement his three-quarter-length Armani tuxedo. We're thinking a trim may have been in order.

What you can steal: To give the ceremony a sense of intimacy, have each set of parents read a prayer—like the Native American blessing that the elder Spencers and Crowes bestowed upon their children.

Arnold Schwarzenegger and Maria Shriver

When: April 26, 1986

Where: St. Francis Xavier Church, with a reception at the Kennedy compound, Hyannisport, Massachusetts

What we loved: Maria re-created the towering, bow-be-decked wedding cake that was served at the 1953 marriage of her parents, Eunice and Sargent Shriver.

What we didn't: Granted, it was the '80s, but the bridesmaids were outfitted in a rainbow of clashing colors...including orange, purple, green, and burgundy.

What you can steal: Build family unity by throwing a rehearsal dinner that celebrates gustatory diversity—the Schwarzeneggers served their guests both Wiener schnitzel and New England clam chowder!

Christy Turlington and Ed Burns

When: June 7, 2003

Where: Saints Peter and Paul Church, with a reception at the Asian Art Museum, San Francisco

What we loved: Many celebrities take a nontraditional route and marry on an exotic beach or at a Hollywood estate. But Burns and Turlington uttered their vows within the solemnity of a Catholic cathedral.

What we didn't: Though we adored that fact that U2's Bono escorted the bride down the (Continued on page 336)

(Continued from page 334)

nuptial aisle, we do wish that, in the name of love, he'd buttoned his shirt first.

What you can steal: Holding your once-in-a-lifetime fete in a museum can give your party a uniquely elegant atmosphere.

Madonna and Guy Ritchie

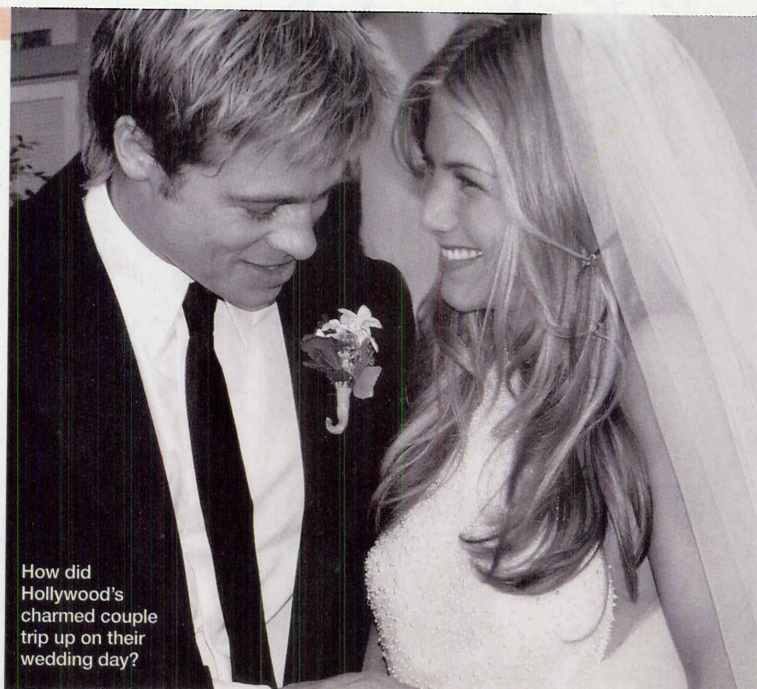
When: December 22, 2000

Where: Skibo Castle, Dornoch, Scotland

What we loved: Filmmaker Ritchie embraced his grandfather's Scottish heritage by wearing a kilt—in his family's plaid, of course.

What we didn't: The reverend who oversaw the ceremony bestowed the newlyweds with two rolls of toilet paper "because they are long and strong, like their marriage will be." Ew.

What you can steal: Give a sartorial nod to your husband's roots—Madonna reportedly accented her dress with a tartan sash.



How did Hollywood's charmed couple trip up on their wedding day?

Sarah Michelle Gellar and Freddie Prinze Jr.

When: September 1, 2002

Where: Costa Careyes Resort, Puerto Vallarta, Mexico

What we loved: When a rainstorm forced the wedding indoors, Gellar, dripping in her Vera Wang gown, traded bridal shoes for a pair of white flip-flops.

What we didn't: The wedding officiant, clearly battling the same storm, dispensed with shoes altogether.

What you can steal: Like Gellar, present your bridesmaids with bouquets just as lovely as yours—in her case, lavish white roses for each attendant.

Jennifer Aniston and Brad Pitt

When: July 29, 2000

Where: TV producer Marcy Carsey's private mansion in Malibu, California

What we loved: Every single one of those 50,000 flowers.

What we didn't: Personalizing your vows is one thing, but publicly declaring that you'll split the difference on the thermostat takes a bit of dignity out of the ceremony.

What you can steal: The groom (we wish). Since he's no longer available, take your style cue from Aniston, who opted to wear her hair loose and flowing—the look she's clearly most comfortable with—rather than choosing an updo.

Denise Richards and Charlie Sheen

When: June 15, 2002

Where: The Brentwood, California, estate of *Spin City* creator Gary David Goldberg

What we loved: Just after the kiss at the altar, a six-person gospel choir began singing "Take Me Out to the Ball Game," Richards's surprise tribute to her baseball-loving husband.

Can't help ourselves! When a celebrity marries, we drink up every detail, every nuance, and (especially) every mistake.

What we didn't: The officiant referred to the couple as Nellie and Pip (their pet nicknames) throughout the ceremony.

What you can steal: If you'd like a sexy look for the reception but want coverage for the ceremony, copy Denise, who topped her sleeveless Armani with a sheer lace jacket.

Will Smith and Jada Pinkett

When: December 31, 1997

Where: The Cloisters, a medieval-style mansion in Baltimore

What we loved: Despite a pregnant shape, Pinkett wore a lean champagne-colored Badgley Mischka silk and velvet gown.

What we didn't: Smith wore a matching suit.

What you can steal: To lend a special note to your ceremony, write letters to each other and read them aloud.

Celine Dion and Rene Angelil

When: January 5, 2000

Where: Caesar's Palace Casino and Hotel, Las Vegas

What we loved: In this lavish vow renewal, guests—seated on floor cushions—were treated to a scene straight out of *A Thousand and One Nights*: tents, camels, jugglers, and a multicourse feast of Moroccan delicacies.

What we didn't: Where to start? Perhaps with the moment when Dion, outfitted in head-to-toe gold, was carried into the ceremony à la the Queen of Sheba.

What you can steal: Skip the camels, but renew your vows—it's a great way to affirm that your hearts will go on. ♪