

The latest must have for brides, a perfume created specially for you

WHEN it comes to capturing precious memories of her wedding day, traditionally a bride has turned to photographs and films. But more evocative than any visual reminder is surely the power of scent.

Of course, if you're marrying into the Royal Family, you don't want to risk wafting down the aisle wearing the same perfume as one of your guests. Luckily for Meghan Markle, London fragrance house Floris, the only perfumer to have a royal warrant from the Queen, has created a bespoke fragrance for her wedding to Prince Harry.

The perfume is based on a woody citrus scent, which sounds perfect for Meghan, who has expressed a fondness for Oribe Côte d'Azur Eau de Parfum (£65, spacenk.com), a blend of bergamot, jasmine and sandalwood, and the Wild Bluebell and Wood Sage & Sea Salt colognes by Jo Malone (from £45, jomalone.co.uk).

When Kate Middleton married William in 2011, Floris created a fragrance called Wedding Bouquet, but Kate opted for an off-the-shelf scent, White Gardenia Petals by Illuminum (£125, roullierwhite.com). Wedding Bouquet remained in Floris's private collection.

Bespoke scents are no longer a luxury just for royal brides, however.

An increasing number of women believe commissioning a bespoke scent is worth the hefty investment — one perfumer charges £25,000.

Lisa Sharma, 50, who married Vee, 54, on the Isles of Scilly, wore a perfume created for her by Debbie Mulkern of New Forest Aromatics (newforestaromatics.co.uk), who offers consultations from £100. Four years on she still loves her wedding perfume.

She says: 'I only wear it when I'm with my husband — on holidays, and on anniversaries. It's not an everyday perfume, I like to keep it special.'

Lisa, an assistant project manager who lives in Bristol, says: 'It's a blend of jasmine, one of my favourites — I think it



by Claire Coleman

smells Oriental and I spent a lot of time working in Hong Kong, so it reminds me of that. There's citrus, too, a smell I associate with childhood holidays to the Isles of Scilly, and freesia, one of my mum's favourite flowers, and some of the wild flowers from the churchyard where my Dad's ashes are buried.'

Perfume queen Jo Malone says: 'Whenever someone I know gets married, I make them handmade scented confetti — either by choosing the flowers in their wedding bouquet, or by spraying the confetti with their chosen fragrance.'

'As the newlyweds walk past, the guests throw the confetti over them — the moment is captured with the sense of smell evoked in everyone's memories.'

Mark Crames, CEO and chief perfumer at The Library Of Fragrance, explains why scent is so potent when it comes to the triggering of memories.

'Odour is processed in the same part of our brain as memory and emotion.'

'When scented molecules travel up our nostrils, they send a signal for the brain to make sense of.'

'Throughout evolution, the quickest way for our brain to tell us whether the scent of something is good or bad in the context of our immediate survival has been to link it to a pre-experienced memory of that same odour and the emotions associated with that memory.' Perfumer Roja Dove,

who offers a bespoke bridal perfume service, adds: 'Scent evokes memories like nothing else. When you have forgotten who sat next to who, what conversation you had with who, what gift, scent will take you back to that day in olfactory technicolour.'

It takes six to 12 months for Roja to create a bespoke scent, with prices from £25,000.

Floris's bespoke offerings start at £450 for a two to three-hour session, and go up to £4,500 for a six-month process that creates a perfume from scratch, and entitles you to a further five refills of it.

But you don't need to have a royal budget to enjoy a bespoke wedding perfume, as Kathryn Owen discovered last year when she wanted a tailor-made fragrance for her July wedding to Alan Campbell.

'I was getting married later in life so I wanted few frills and probably drove my mother demented with all the things I wasn't bothered about!' says Kathryn, 40, a head of human resources from Maidenhead.

'But I know scent is a great trigger for memory and so a scent that would be very specific to that day was one of the things I really wanted.'

Kathryn knew fragrance designer Janette Hammond (janettehammond.co.uk), who is based in Berkshire, and asked her to create something special. Janette's Uncommon Scents Bespoke Bridal Service starts at £85.

THE result was a perfume which echoed the freesias in her bouquet, as well as 'green' top notes such as cut grass.

Michelle Trotter, 30, a podiatrist from Windsor, who married husband, Jonathan, 32, a software engineer, in April this year, was thrilled with the scent masterclass her sister-in-law organised as a surprise for her hen-do, enabling her to create her own wedding perfume.

She says: 'I had a lot of floral notes echoing the wild flowers that would be in my bouquet, together with musk, which my grandma, who's passed away, used to wear. Having that in my perfume made me feel closer to her.'

Michelle also decided to make a scent for her husband to be.

'I tried to create something I liked, similar to things he's worn. His mum was at the hen-do so when she approved, I thought I'd probably got it right. And he loved it.'

HIGH END

But are the new luxury



MASSIMO DUTTI

Left: Massimo Dutti jacket, £139, and trousers, £79.95. Right: Massimo Dutti Limited, Edition blazer, £179, and wide trousers, £99.95.

CRANKING up a notch the classic style of the main-line range, the Limited Edition suit has a wide-leg trouser and a more structured jacket. It also uses far more luxurious fabrics, yet the price is only a little more expensive. A surprisingly good buy.

BUDGET £218.95

HIGH END £278.95



BUDGET £39.99

HIGH END £119

ZARA

Left: Zara, £39.99. Right: Zara Studio, £119.

The king of the High Street triumphs again with this floaty, folkie dress from its usual range.

The premium version has more patterns, pleats and buttons, but it's still a synthetic mix fabric. For the older woman, it may be appealing simply so she isn't seen in the same dress as every other teenager!