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

by Claire Coleman

HEN it comes to capturing precious memories of her wedding day, traditionally a bride has turned to photographs and films. But are 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 Orthe Côte d’Azur Eau de Parfum (£65, space nk.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 (£100, illuminum.co.uk). The 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, 30, who married Vee, 54, on the Isles of Scilly, wore a perfume created for her by designer Janette Hammond of New Forest Aromatics (newforest aromatics.co.uk), who offers consultations from £50. 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 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 Isles of Scilly, 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.”

Amidst the newlyweds 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 triggering 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, who gave you what gift, scent will take you back that day in olfactory technicolour.”

Michelle Trotter, 30, a potter based in Windsor, who married husband, Jonathan, 32, a software engineer in 2011, was thrilled with the scent masterclass her sister-in-law organised for her hen-do, enabling her to create her own wedding perfume.

She says: “I had a lot of floral notes reflecting 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.”

Of course, if you’re marrying 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 Maidenhed. “That 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 who is 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.

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