



Gotham Gala

New York City shines in a sophisticated celebration for a pair from across the pond

MARISSA and SEAN
New York City

MARISSA DENT AND SEAN DELEHANTY's relationship started in close quarters. Both were working at an investment bank on 9/11, after which their company was temporarily relocated to a hotel. But then came the silver lining: The desks were arranged alphabetically, and the pair ended up side by side. They soon fell in love, and five years later, Sean proposed. The couple now live in London, but they agreed NYC, with its personal significance, was the perfect place to marry.

On April 26, 2008, at a private social club overlooking Central Park, 200 friends and family members feted the couple. Event planner Emily Lester helped Marissa and Sean evoke a subtle 1930s Hollywood vibe at the reception, which suited the bride's silk charmeuse sheath and vintage stole. Golden uplighting and elaborate centerpieces of dendrobium orchids, golden willow branches and large palm leaves enhanced the sense of glamour. But down-to-earth touches, such as framed photos of the newlyweds' parents and grandparents, balanced the dramatic displays. The gilded historic club was a fitting counterpart to the old-world elegance of Grace Church, where the couple held their Episcopal ceremony.

During the cocktail hour, guests enjoyed a fajita bar (a nod to California native Sean's love of Mexican food) while a pianist played jazz hits. The DJ took over when the couple entered, to "City of Blinding Lights," by U2. "It fit with how New York is so glittery," Marissa says. After dining on filet mignon, sea bass or wild mushroom ravioli, followed by cake, guests indulged in mini ice-cream sandwiches from a dessert table. And when they needed a pick-me-up, they sipped lattes or cappuccinos prepared by a barista from Little Italy—adding local flair from the city that brought the couple together. —*Laurel Leicht*



Opposite: A vintage Bentley awaits the newlyweds beneath the Gothic spires of NYC's Grace Church. This page, clockwise from top: Stained glass windows provide an elegant backdrop for the vows. Marissa carries mini cymbidium orchids and ivy wrapped in gold satin, by Marc-Antoine Dupont. The bridal party's bouquets accent the wedding cake, by Danbury, CT-based Cake Haven. The couple laugh as they leave the church.





This page, above: Marissa, in a Luci DiBella dress, and Sean, in a custom tuxedo by Jasper Conran, share their first dance as family and friends look on. Right: Amid lush arrangements of crabapple branches, guests enjoy prosciutto, dates and mascarpone on walnut raisin crisps and other hors d'oeuvres at cocktail hour. Opposite: Dramatic lighting by Bentley Meeker and sculptural centerpieces of dendrobium orchids and exotic leaves add to the old-Hollywood ambience.





Learn from Marissa and Sean

MAKE YOUR SERVICE SENTIMENTAL. To give their ceremony a familiar feel, Marissa asked a pastor from her hometown parish, whom she's known since childhood, to officiate along with one from Grace Church.

DON DANCING SHOES. Marissa wore ballroom dancing heels at the reception. "They're much lighter and more comfortable than regular shoes," she says—and they coordinated with her retro look.

HAVE GUESTS SIGN WITH STYLE. Instead of displaying a traditional guest book, Marissa and Sean asked friends and family to write on the pages of a book of historical photographs of New York City's iconic architecture. It now resides on a coffee table in the newlyweds' London home.

