

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Old money' aesthetic, intimate ceremonies now biggest trends in luxury weddings

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Social media has gained even more influence over modern luxury weddings than ever before. Image courtesy of Allure Bridals

By EMILY IRIS DEGN

From the effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic to the rise of TikTok, the business of weddings has changed dramatically in the last few years.

Taking on their roles immediately, Raquel Cadourcy and Marco Montenegro have respectively been appointed as chief marketing officer and chief growth officer at U.S. wedding dress manufacturer [Allure Bridals](#). With nearly 60 years of collective industry experience, the duo has seen some major trends take over luxury nuptials, including intimate ceremonies and social media trends like the “old money” aesthetic ([see story](#)).

“Anyone on fashion-facing platforms like TikTok and Instagram has definitely seen the terms quiet luxury’ and old money aesthetic’ voiced by everyone, from vintage wallpaper-obsessed interior designers to get ready with me’ clips from content creators,” said Ms. Cadourcy, New York.

“The emergence of these two separate yet similar sartorial moods has deeply resonated with our industry, spanning bridal gown design, bridal party aesthetic and even menswear,” she said. “Think satin Mikado ballgowns with statement sleeves clean, soft makeup looks and 90s supermodel blowouts cowl neck slip dresses paired with diamond tennis necklaces on bridesmaids velvet tuxedo jackets and dapper suiting on the groom and his party.

“Full-blown glamor is back, but softened.”

In this Q&A, Ms. Cadourcy and Mr. Montenegro shed some light on the changing luxury wedding industry, the trends to watch within it and how they plan to grow the reach of Allure Bridals. Here is the dialogue:



The two appointees will report directly to Allure Bridals CEO, Kelly Crum. Image courtesy of Allure Bridals

What is the biggest change you have seen in luxury weddings in the last five years?

MM: Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic and the global economic conditions, it's fascinating to note how brides have consistently prioritized their desire to look stunning on their special day.

Amidst the shift in wedding dynamics, the significance of the wedding dress never waned. It's a testament to the enduring importance placed on that magical moment when a bride walks down the aisle, regardless of the scale of the celebration.

The emergence of micro-weddings and smaller, intimate ceremonies also became a prevailing trend, reflecting the adaptability of brides in the face of adversity.

Allure Bridals' diverse range of products has played a pivotal role in catering to the unique tastes and preferences of brides from various walks of life. The understanding that every bride is different, and her vision for the perfect dress is unique, ensures that there's something for everyone in the Allure Bridals collection.

What is a characteristic that both large and more intimate weddings share?

RC: Personality is key! Guests want to hear the story behind the couple and visualize the intimacy of the event through special, unique touches.

Whether you're hosting a luxury wedding for 500 or a family-only elopement, let the originality shine.



There are some similarities between Gen Z, Gen X and millennial consumers that marketers can focus on. Image courtesy of Allure Bridals

Are there ways to jointly appeal to Gen Z, millennial and Gen X soon-to-be-weds that are planning luxury ceremonies?

RC: As with most generationally-focused market research, differences in buyer behavior between generational consumers span in effect throughout many industries, and the wedding industry is certainly not immune.

Even the idea of luxury itself is perceived differently by each generation. A recent study by Bain and Company tells us Gen X has slowly backed away from traditional luxury, while Millennial and Gen Z buyers are estimated to account for up to 130 percent of market growth in the next two years, and up to 40 percent of the global personal luxury goods market by 2035.

A 2021 release by Business of Fashion and McKinsey's State of Fashion Report shows up to 90 percent of Gen Z buyers, specifically, shifting into environmental and social values-driven spending.

Gen X can feel more sprawling and harder to market to. This demographic is often typed as "resourceful, independent,

adaptable and skeptical,” with top priorities including a sense of value, family and nostalgia, according to Forbes.

But where we ultimately see definitive overlap with Gen Z and Millennial consumers is an overwhelming desire for authenticity. Authenticity, personality and effortlessly cool vibes are all necessary to capture the attention of these buyers, especially with Gen Z.

What we’re gleaned from these points is that our chief focus, both in product design and marketing strategy, must be honed on the commonalities between our cross-generational customers, with a sensitivity to their unique value systems and priorities.

They want us to be authentic; to infuse the design of wedding wear with personality and strong corporate values.



Luxury brands outside of the wedding realm can profit from the industry. Image courtesy of Allure Bridals

How can luxury brands outside of the industry benefit from the success of this market?

MM: Luxury brand partnerships are an effortless fit in the wedding wear industry. Jewelry, cosmetics, shoes, accessories, florals, scents, curated events the list is nearly endless.

And ultimately it’s about collaborations that can turn the dream into reality for our brides.

Realizing dreams is the goal in every aspect of our industry, and with that focus on the beautiful and the aspirational, it’s only natural that the bridalwear industry seamlessly works alongside the fashion, beauty and hospitality industries.

Smaller luxury brands can pursue short-term partnerships like sponsored giveaways or content creation with larger luxury bridal brands. On a larger scale, they can fully dive in by licensing merch or developing co-branded capsule collections.

Are you seeing luxury brands dip their toes into the wedding market successfully?

RC: Certainly!

The obvious is from a fashion or sartorial perspective. Many couture designers have historically ventured into bridalwear, and more ready-to-wear brands have moved into the wedding wear space, whether through one-time collab drops or permanent collections.

Weddings are treated as a once-in-a-lifetime event, and are generally budgeted as such.

In short, we’ll always see luxury brands wanting to enter the space and capitalize on the market.

But what’s been more interesting to see, in my opinion, is a resurgence of heritage brands. Heritage maximalism, “quiet luxury” and “old money” aesthetics have reopened the cultural zeitgeist for brands such as Tiffany & Co., a brand with a long-established foothold in the bridal space.

With the resurgence of heritage brands comes a refocus on craftsmanship, artisanship and quality. I believe, in a world of fast

fashion and impulse purchases, we're going to see brides double down on those extensions of "quiet luxury" in the wedding space.



Allure Bridals is working with entertainment companies like Disney and Netflix. Image courtesy of Allure Bridals

What changes do you expect to see in luxury weddings in the next five years?

MM: We know luxury and opulence haven't seen their ceiling yet! Bridal maximalism has just gotten started and is only going to increase in the next few seasons.

Although most current trends have a common thread of traditionalism, we foresee heritage maximalism and "old money" luxury aesthetics peaking in 2024 through 2025. While it's gained much more social media traction in the past year, we feel that the subtlety of "quiet luxury" ensures its perennial place in bridal fashion.

Our collections, Madison James, Abella and Allure Couture in particular, reflect the timeless and fluid nature of luxury in all its forms, and how the concept of luxury fundamentally connects to bridalwear.

Do you have any projects that you are most excited to take on at Allure Bridals?

MM: The spectrum of individual collections within our Allure Bridals brand family provides us with a beautifully unique opportunity to craft seasonal collections specifically for distinct bridal styles.

Our long-term goal as a company is to further define the spirit and persona behind each collection aesthetic and to make every Allure Bridals collection appeal deeply to a specific sect of brides. We want to meet that generational desire for authenticity.

RC: We're so thankful for our continued Disney Fairy Tale Weddings collections. Our Disney-obsessed brides should prepare for a truly dramatic reveal this February.

And we're beyond thrilled to debut our latest collaboration this holiday season: The Bridgerton Wedding Collection.

Alongside partners at Netflix and Shondaland, our team has worked tirelessly to capture the romance, magic and period details of the hit show *Bridgerton*, with several homages to the spinoff *Queen Charlotte* series as well! Look out on social for our stunning runway experience.

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