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WHEN A PARIS-LOVING PAIR BORROW A PAGE FROM MARIE ANTOINETTE'S PLAYBOOK FOR THEIR OPULENT NEW ENGLAND WEDDING, THERE'S ONLY ONE THING LEFT TO DO: LET THEM EAT CAKE!

PHOTOGRAPHS BY *Aaron Delesie* TEXT BY *Riann Smith*



Opposite: The bride's bouquet of white hydrangeas, ranunculus, rosebuds, and silk velvet poppy pods is tied with a blue jacquard ribbon.
This page: Jillian Parker, in Carolina Herrera, poses with her groom, Paul Blakeslee, who's dressed in Tom Ford.



the grandest sense, New Year's Eve conjures up Champagne kisses and heartfelt proposals. But when the ball dropped on December 31, 2009, so did Jillian Parker's stomach. "I felt a small square box inside Paul's jacket, and my heart started racing," says Jillian. "We met at a New Year's Eve party two years before, so I thought, 'This is it.' But when he reached into his pocket, he pulled out a tape measure!"

Thankfully, the clever Mr. Blakeslee had rigged the whole thing. And before Jillian had time to react, Paul grabbed a 1930s diamond sparkler he'd hidden under the sofa and dropped to one knee. After a teary kiss ushering in 2010 and their future together, they busily began planning their nuptials.

The couple picked The Barn on Walnut Hill, near Cape Elizabeth, Maine, where they live, as their reception site. The 1800s building proved a unique backdrop for their chosen theme: Versailles. "Paul loves Paris, and Sofia Coppola's *Marie Antoinette* is one of my favorite movies," says Jillian. "But we wanted to incorporate the place we call home, too." To bring the two locations together, they set the stage in Maine, and the movie's rich palette of teal, pale pink, and gold played a starring role.

On the afternoon of June 11, 2011, a year and a half after getting engaged, the pair exchanged vows at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Concep-



tion in Portland. "When my Dad was handing me off to Paul, he shook his hand and whispered, 'No returns,'" says Jillian, laughing. "It was the same exact thing my grandfather told him on the day he married my mother."

After the intimate ceremony, the newlyweds and their 65 guests headed to the reception for an unforgettable meal. Paul, a clinical dietitian and culinary school grad, spared no flavor while dreaming up their menu. Oysters, reminiscent of the couple's first date, were followed by greens, dressed with a vinaigrette that showcased his family's maple syrup, and a small cup of gazpacho, a nod to Jillian's Texas roots. The main course, rack of lamb, paid tribute to a Valentine's Day meal he had once prepared for his future bride. "Everything at our wedding had a special meaning, even if our guests didn't know it," says Paul. "There's nothing I would have changed about that day." From the still-giddy tone of the groom's voice, it's crystal clear that there will be no returns, indeed.

Royal Stationery

The couple's monogram appears inside a crest with a coat of arms inspired by Marie Antoinette. Its border was borrowed from a box of Ladurée macarons from Paris, and the teal and gold envelope liner echoes the pattern on the bottle of St-Germain elderflower liqueur, which was used in a signature drink. Each guest also received accommodation information, an itinerary, and a reply card, bound with a matching paper sleeve.



Pretty Prelude

1. Paul's boutonniere features two millinery flowers—one white and one gold—backed by creamy rosebuds and tied with gold twine. 2. An antique Bentley escorts the bride to church in style. 3. The couple at the afternoon ceremony. 4. Bridesmaids wear flowy gowns in Jillian's favorite color, blush pink.



Floral Notes

1. Oval wreaths of gilded smilax leaves with white Majolica roses, fresh gardenias, and satin ribbon adorn the bride's and groom's chairs. 2. Romantic centerpieces of roses and peonies complement the delicate, gold-rimmed table settings. 3. The red velvet wedding cake is topped with an urn holding roses, hydrangeas, and gardenias.



Elegant Ending

1. Guests enjoy dinner at long tables in the candlelit barn. 2. The couple bottled fresh maple syrup from Paul's family's sugarhouse and gave them away as favors. 3. The newlyweds share a sweet kiss before hopping into their getaway car. Next stop: French Polynesia for the honeymoon.

THERE'S LOTS MORE TO SEE
Find additional details at
MARTHASTEWARTWEDDINGS.COM/SPRING2012

SOURCES

LOCATION The Barn on Walnut Hill (thebarnonwalnuthill.com)
EVENT PRODUCTION & DESIGN Lisa Vorce of Oh, How Charming (ohhowcharming.com)
CATERING Kitchen Chicks Catering (kitchenchickscatering.com)
FLORAL AND EVENT DESIGN Mindy Rice Floral Design (mindyrice.com)
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