The magazine dedicated to women who have chosen to make Nevada their home!

REVADA

Beautif handso honeymoons

War Bride wedding in Italy planned for Sept. 11, 2001

Wedding Bell Blues A view at weddings ge

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Plus: Girl Talk, Street of Dreams, The Dressing Room and Roberto Cavalli, and two books about coping with our partners, ourselves

ginia and Mark planned their perfect wedding for over a year. It would be unforgetle: They would be married in Italy, surrounded by family and friends, and it would take ce on September 11, 2001.



War Bride

by Ginger Tafoya Photography by Audrey Dempsey

Virginia watches Mark down in the courtyard

as Vegans Virginia Thompson and Mark Martino had been a couple for 15 years, and when they decided to marry, it had to be special. As co-founders

of Odyssey: A elebration of Wine and Food, ey knew that they wanted fine ine and gourmet food to play a le. And with Mark being Italian, e wine country in Italy was the atural choice for them.

ext came the date. August ould be the month and Mark's vorite number is 11, so August , 2001 was what they settled 1. But in researching, they found at Italy essentially closes down ring that month. Their second oice was settled on: September , 2001.

ey were given the name of stello (Castle) di Spessa and ark found Alberto Ciani via the eb site who helped plan the de-ils. Family and friends made ans to go to Italy to witness rginia and Mark's wedding: maon of honor Rose Thompson; st man Eric Martino; Sue and e Martino; and Audrey and Bob empsey.

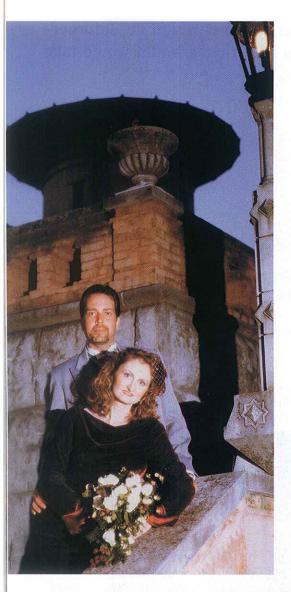
ior to leaving for Italy, as luck buld have it, Mark and Virginia experienced delays in securing the proper paperwork between the Italian and the U.S. embassies. The week before they left, they elected to move it forward one day in order to assure all

documents were finalized.

Once in Italy, on the 11th, Virginia remembers, "We were selecting our menu with chef Vlade Puzzer at Tavernetta al Castello when her daughter came running into the dining room breathlessly saying, "Your trade center no more - gone!" Mark's first thought was that there was an earthquake in Manhattan and part of the towers collapsed. They both ran into the lobby just in time to see the television rerun of the plane hitting the second tower. "The whole thing seemed surreal. Everyone was scared, and we didn't know what to expect," remembers Mark. "Our immediate thoughts went back to all of our friends and family in America praying nothing else would happen."

On watching the Trade Center attack, Virginia turned to Mark and said,





"This is the reason why we weren't meant to be married today. Someone was watching over us."

On September 12, 2001, Virginia and Mark became the first Americans to be married by Mayor Attilio Vuga of Cividale del Friuli. "The mayor started our ceremony with the tragedy of New York and what that meant to the entire world," says Virginia. "He expressed to us the importance of family and friends and said in light of what had happened to our beautiful country, we could not let it affect our wedding on this cherished day."

Following the ceremony, La Taverna di Bacco hosted a three-course luncheon, paired with wines from the Friuli region. Later that evening Virginia, Mark and the wedding party had a seven-course wedding celebration dinner in the formal private dinning room (used daily by the family of Castello di Spessa and had never been available for outside guests), paired with the finest wines of Castello di Spessa's own collection. The gourmet food was prepared by chefs Vlade and Stane Puzzer of Tavernetta al Castello.

The next day, as were so many others, the guests were stranded. Virginia and Mark were going to honeymoon in Italy, so their plans were not compromised. Each party had flown in on sep-

arate airlines and had to find a way back via London and Paris. Rose and Eric could not leave because they flew into Venice and they were not allowing anyone to go to the airport. "So, they both went with us on our honeymoon to Rimini where we stayed until September 20," says Mark, "when we were able to return to the United States."

Looking back on the good and bad events

of September for the Martinos, Virginia remains positive. "To be married in Italy was significant for us. Weddings and family are sacred there and important to the Italian culture, and we wanted to make that a part of our marriage," she says.

Friendship also is significant to the Martinos. Alberto Ciani, who helped with the wedding, showed them the countryside and attended their wedding. They now count him as one of their friends.







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