



PLANNING

THE BEST HISTORICAL WEDDING VENUES ON THE EAST COAST

December 18, 2017

With the announcement that Prince Harry and Megan Markle's royal nuptials will take place on May 19th, and binge-watching of the second season of Netflix's *The Crown* in full swing, stately wedding venues, castles, and old English manors have been top of mind lately. While a destination wedding in the Cotswolds may not be the most practical option for your upcoming nuptials, there are in fact a number of enchanting, regal settings that are steeped in history and don't require a trip across the pond. If you crave the grandeur of Buckingham Palace or Berkshire county's Windsor Castle, look no further than our below guide to historical wedding venues on the East Coast. It's bound to have something that fits the bill!

"Castle Hill" of The Crane Estate, Ipswich, Massachusetts

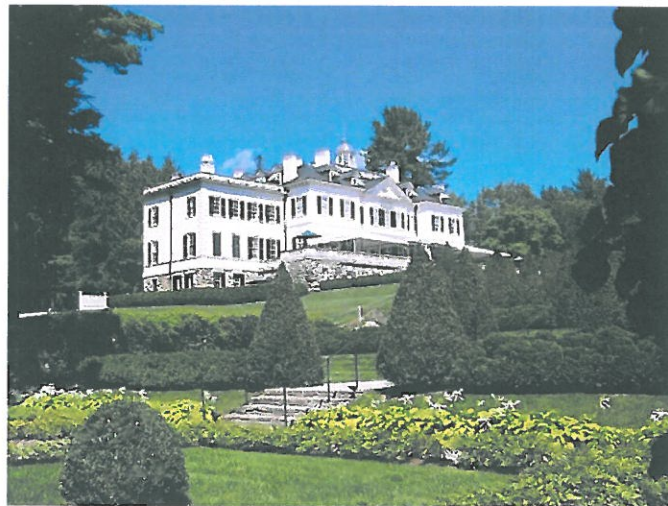
Massachusetts is home to some of the country's oldest estates and architectural gems, and The Crane Estate, particularly its Castle Hill structure, is no exception. Castle Hill is the former summer home of Richard Teller Crane Junior, the president of the iconic stationery and paper mill company, Crane Co., which still a favorite for wedding invitations today. The estate boasts hundreds of acres and two mansions. Castle Hill, is often considered the crowd favorite out of the two homes—designed by legendary architect, David Adler, it boasts formal gardens, ocean views, grand ballrooms, and over 59-rooms—perfect for an over the top, black-tie wedding.



The Crane Estate in Ipswich, MA

Edith Wharton's The Mount, Lenox, MA

The American novelist's preference for stately properties was undeniable—she wrote *The House of Mirth* and *The Age of Innocence*, among many other novels which mainly tell the stories of the well-born. Her most famous home, “The Mount” in Lenox, Massachusetts, will take your breath away upon first sight. Positioned on top of a hill nestled in The Berkshire Mountains, the mansion has a white stucco exterior and well appointed interiors. The house is surrounded by formal gardens, stables, and Japanese zen gardens. Attracting more than 50,000 visitors a year, “The Mount” is a popular wedding destination for couples seeking to live out their silver spoon fantasies. Just make sure you prepare ahead of time as waiting lists are unavoidable.



The Mount in Lenox, MA

The Lincoln Family Home, Hildene, Manchester, VT

Robert Todd Lincoln was the eldest of the four sons of former President Abraham Lincoln and Mary Todd Lincoln, and the only one to survive until adulthood. Though his father famously grew up in a log cabin, Robert preferred the finer things in life. And, while he was the chairman of the Pullman

Company (the largest manufacturing company of the 20th century), “Hildene,” a Georgian Revival mansion in the scenic, but sleepy town of Manchester, Vermont, was his summer home. Up until 1975, it remained a private residence to Lincoln descendants. Now, this beautiful historic setting can be the location for your wedding.



The Lincoln Family Home in Manchester, VT

The Hillwood Mansion in Washington D.C.

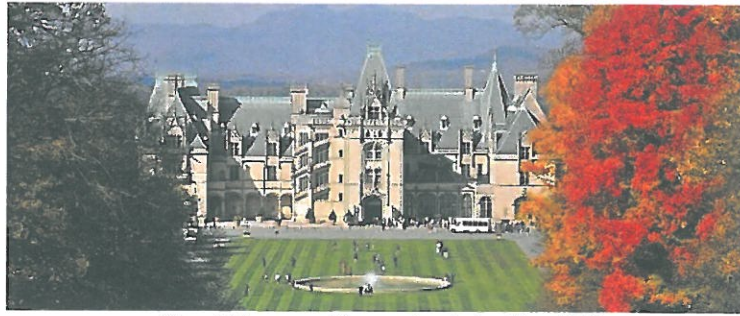
Marjorie Merriweather was a well-known American socialite in the early 1900s and the owner of General Foods, Inc. She also built Mar-a-Lago, which is now infamously owned by Donald Trump. “Hillwood,” the museum that was once her main estate in north west D.C., is much less controversial. The 1920s mansion sits on acres of meticulously maintained gardens and terraces. Inside, guests will find the largest collection of Russian art and Fabergé eggs that exists outside of Russia, accompanied by Louis XVI neoclassical antiques. Hillwood is a sought after wedding venue, to say the least, and typically has a long queue for weddings. The wait however is worth it.



Hillwood Mansion in Washington, D.C.

The Biltmore Estate, Ashville, NC

If you prefer a little Southern charm on your big day, look no further than the artsy, mountainous city of Ashville, North Carolina, which is known for its breweries, art galleries, coffee shops, and one of America's largest private estates: The Biltmore. Built by George Vanderbilt, the home sits on 8,000 acres amidst the stunning backdrop of the Blue Ridge Mountains. From the house and the inn to the conservatory and the wine cellar, the Biltmore's interiors and exteriors offer multiple options for a wedding fit for an unforgettable wedding.



The Biltmore Estate in Ashville, NC

Boone Hall Plantation & Gardens, Charleston, S.C.

Charleston is home to historical treasures, especially when it comes to old Southern plantations, like the famous Boone Hall Plantation and Gardens. You may recognize the sweeping willow trees and moss-draped avenue of oaks from *The Notebook*. To say this is one of the most popular wedding destinations in the U.S. is an understatement, countless couples (like Blake Lively and Ryan Reynolds) flock to Boone Hall each year. If you find yourself wanting to wed here, your best bet is to reserve early.



Boone Hall Plantation

—Meredith Bragg

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