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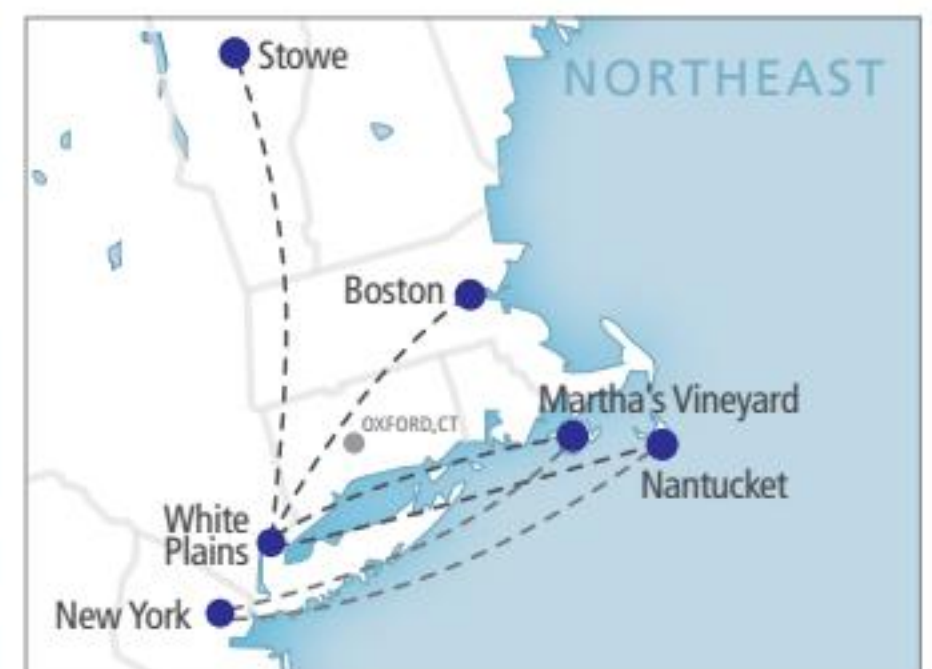
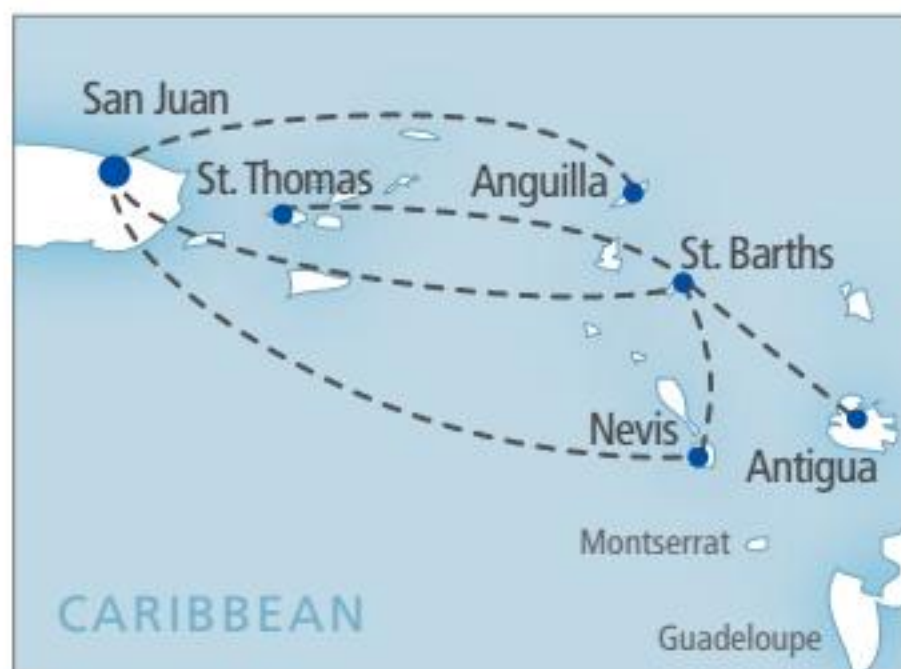
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Terms & Conditions: †Free Wedding Package is based on a total combined booking of 35 room nights. Other conditions apply.

EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED

- 22 Gateway Canyons, Colorado** – Here, snowcapped Rockies make way for the red rock Palisades.
- 24 Los Angeles, California** – Discover a Mediterranean-style retreat just minutes outside the city.
- 26 Laguna Beach, California** – This canyon location will make beach bums rethink the norm.
- 28 Charleston, North Carolina** – See what happens when French funk meets Southern hospitality.

CROSS COUNTRY CHIC

- 33 Outer Banks, North Carolina** – Celebrate in this seaside location like locals have for centuries.
- 34 Bachelor Gulch, Colorado** – Look no further for the ultimate in mountain lodge luxury.
- 37 Chicago, Illinois** – This North American staple provides an idyllic backdrop for a destination wedding.
- 38 Fort Lauderdale, Florida** – Don't underestimate the suite life and stunning sunsets of this spot.

40 THE NEXT GENERATION OF CRUISING

Cruising is no longer just for families and senior citizens. Discover a fresh spin on hitting the open water in Costa Rica (pg. 40), Greece (pg. 42) and on the Mekong River (pg. 44).

54 MEXICO

Explore one of the most romantic countries on earth with a boutique all-inclusive in Puerto Vallarta (pg. 54), historic charm in San Miguel de Allende (pg. 56) and the ultimate in white-glove service in Los Cabos (pg. 58).

66 RELAX TWO WAYS

Whether you're a traditionalist who wants to hit the hot tub in St. Lucia (pg. 69) or an adventurer who prefers hot springs in Costa Rica (pg. 66), you're guaranteed a rejuvenating trip of a lifetime.

71 MARRY HERE, HONEYMOON THERE – London & Venice

This European dynamic duo makes a delightful combination for destination wedding couples. Host a wedding worthy of royalty in London (pg. 71) before exploring the Grand Canal and quaint alleyways of Venice (pg. 74).

76 THE HONEYMOONIST – Secrets of Cambodia

The Honeymoonist is back to recommend a whirl-wind adventure through Cambodia. Discover the must-see spots in Siem Reap, Phnom Penh and Koh Rong.

HONEYMOON HIDEAWAYS

- 82 Bali** – In addition to discovering why this destination is such a romantic charmer, don't be surprised if you also discover your spiritual side.
- 84 Czech Republic, Austria & Hungary** – Each of these European countries takes a page out of a fairy tale, so don't forget to pack your tiara.
- 86 Fiji** – Find your own Fijian paradise with one of these three luxurious, high-end island resorts.

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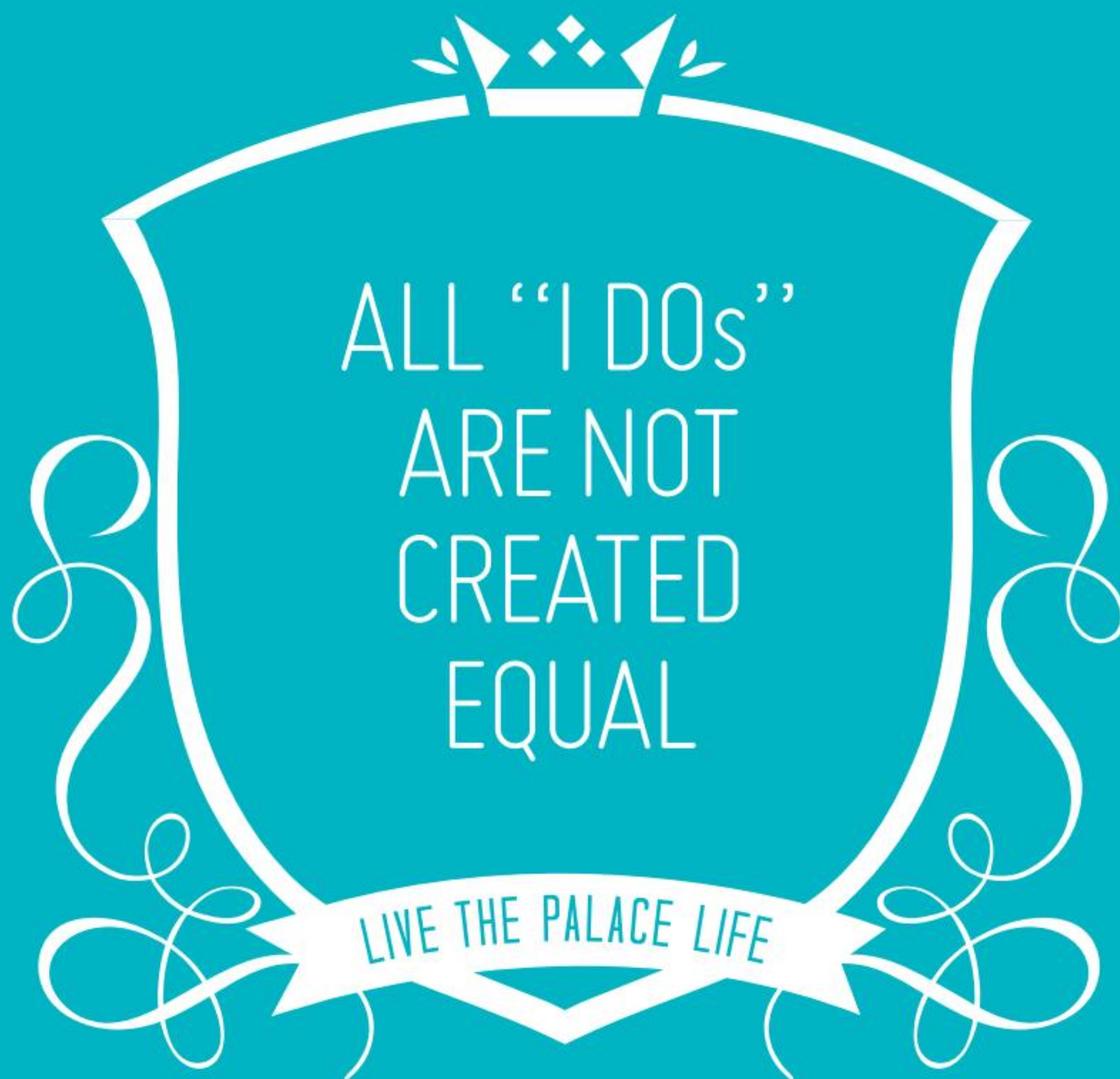


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14 EDITOR'S LETTER

16 WEDDED WISDOM

Get the inside scoop and helpful insights on the wedding world.

18 INSIDER TRAVELING

No matter your destination, here are some helpful travel tips and must-know info.

20 ON THE HORIZON

Stay up-to-speed on wedding and travel trends as well as recent hotel happenings.

46 FASHION FORWARD – Modern Meets Tropical: A Marriage Made in Malibu

Hosting your event in a warm weather destination doesn't have to mean nautical shades of blue and white and sand dollar details. We're showcasing a modern color palette and putting a minimalistic spin on tropical florals.

60 ASK THE EXPERT – Treats, Traditions & Trends

Let them eat cake...or pie...or churros? The choices of W-Day sweet treats are virtually endless, but the wedding cake still holds a soft spot in our hearts. This issue's expert, Melissa Samuels with Melissa's Fine Pastries, weighs-in on wedding treat trends and traditions.

64 ADVENTURES IN ETIQUETTE – Guidelines for Gifting

A wedding is a time for celebration and, more often than not, presents. We're here to help you navigate the ins-and-outs of registries, doing a little gifting of your own and making sure your guests don't walk away nonplussed.

88 THE GUEST BOOK – Rock Out Your Rehearsal Dinner and Other Ideas for Pre and Post-Wedding Events

Destination weddings are still on the rise, so it's no surprise couples are going bigger and better than ever before. Think beyond W-Day and create a wedding weekend chock-full of customized events.

92 TO HAVE & TO HOLD – Perfect Your Imperfections

Putting in extra time at the gym is one way to see improvement in time to walk down the aisle, but here are some other, more high-tech recommendations.


94 REAL-LIFE WEDDINGS

Are you on the hunt for décor inspiration or simply feel like getting sentimental? This issue's real-life weddings will certainly do the trick. In this issue you will find a Cabo wedding set in a seaside villa, a Lake Tahoe white-hued wedding, a Maui marriage heavy on the details, a rural French soirée, European-inspired nuptials in Miami, a touching tale in Antigua & Barbuda and a Maui event with an olive twist.



Visit our blog, destinationido.com/blog, to get frequent updates on products perfect for weddings away, places our traveling editors visit, beauty tips and tricks, gorgeous destination wedding dresses and all things travel, romance or wedding related! Need even more inspiration beyond what graces our gorgeous pages? Discover our oh-so-lovely social media community: @Destinationido.





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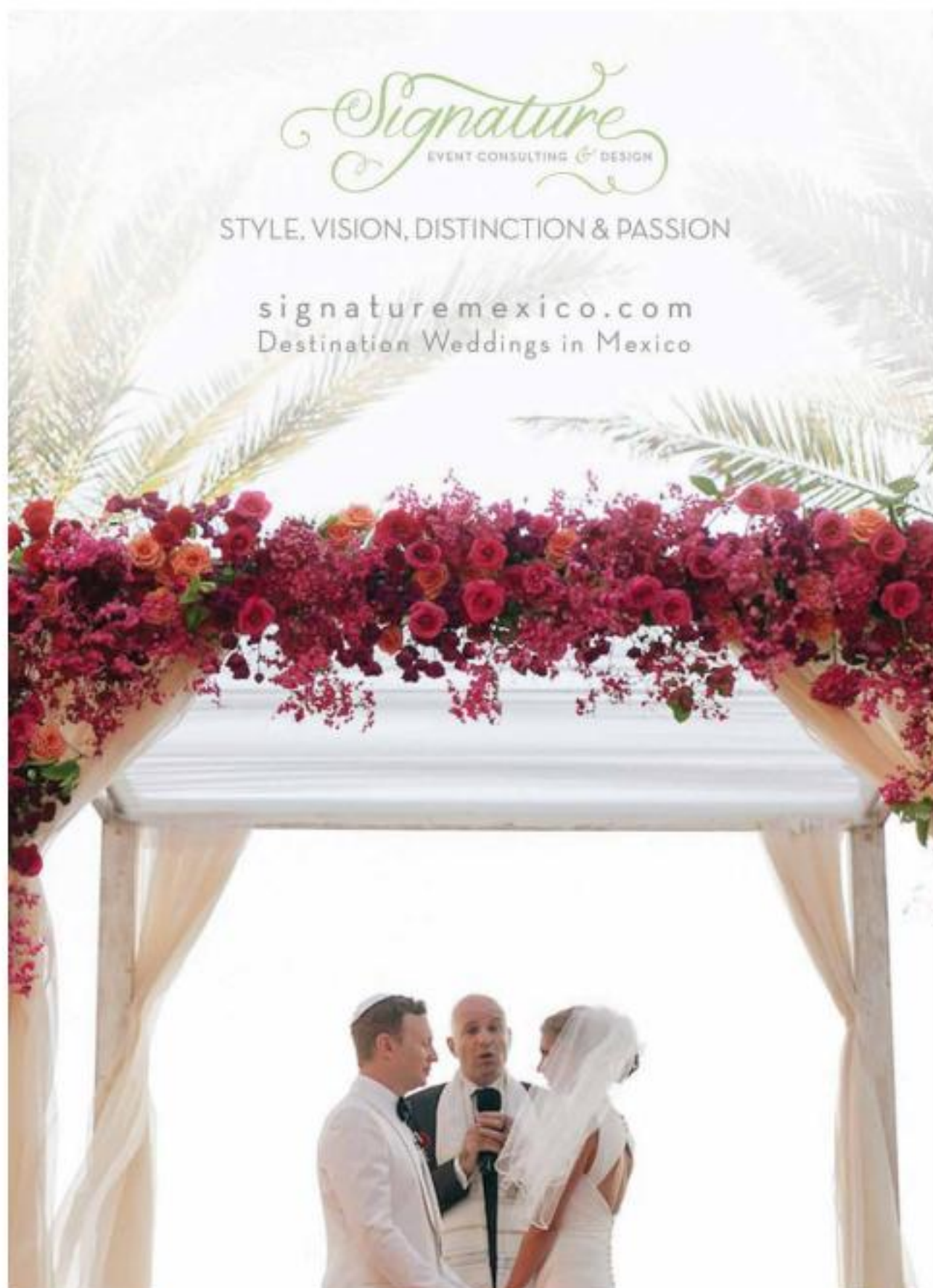
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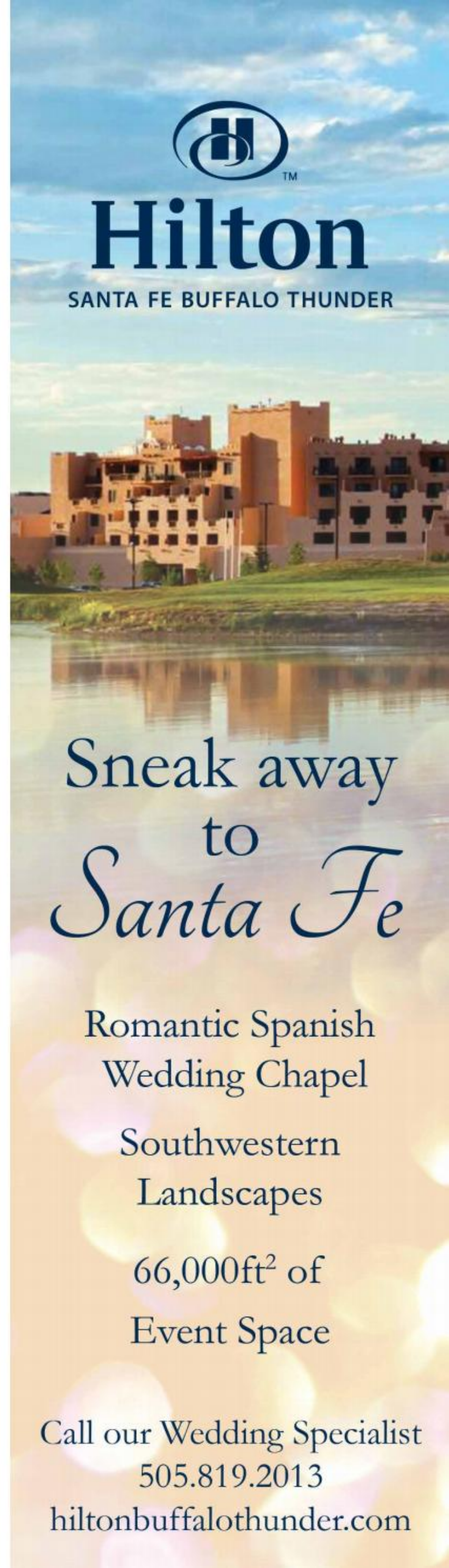
ON THE COVER



SPRING 2017: Our Spring 2017 cover features a shot from the Fashion Forward feature, "Modern Meets Tropical: A Marriage Made in Malibu." Our bride and her sunny California setting are a match made in photoshoot heaven. She's ready for "I do" in the "Kimberly Long" dress by Joanna August, "Margot" veil by Elisha Caplan and "Fringed Crescent Earrings" by Noonday Collection. Her updo and ethereal makeup is by Mobile Bridal Salon. Her W-Day look is complete with a minimalistic, tropical bouquet by Flower Duet. See the full photoshoot on pg. 46. Image captured by Sanaz Photography. Special thanks to GATHER Events and Be Inspired PR.



SUMMER 2017: For this photoshoot, the talented vendor team was inspired by the romantic feel of Old San Juan, Puerto Rico. Shot on location in the city's Colonial District, the bride's sheer, lace dress by Backgarden is right on-trend. Classic romance is given a modern update with an oversized floral lei by Lorraine's Flowers. Her elegant hair and makeup, courtesy of Color Touch by Ana, is elevated with a striking headpiece courtesy of Eva Guadalupe. See the full photoshoot, "Romantic Inspiration in Old San Juan" on our blog at destinationido.com/blog. Image captured by Vanessa Velez Photography.



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Relax

AND ENJOY THE RIDE

Nancy Novogrod once wrote in an issue of *Travel + Leisure*, "Between sometimes jarringly fast transitions, travel offers delectable opportunities to take a deep breath and bask in where you are."

I feel this is true of weddings as well. Unfortunately, many couples don't take the time to do any basking or take deep breaths in the course of their engagement. I think this is partly the fault of the wedding industry. The minute we find out you're engaged, we bombard you with lists of what to do, when to do it, what you'll need to buy and when, in order to pull off the perfect event. That's unfair to you. What we should say first is, "So glad you're engaged, enjoy it for a moment and we're here when you need us." Whether you've decided on a long engagement or a short one, it's the journey you should be enjoying rather than being a slave to the to-do list and deadlines associated with it.

Wedding planning should be fun. I'll say it again.
Wedding planning should be *fun*.

It is an opportunity for you and your betrothed to work together as you discover the perfect destination, honeymoon locale, invitation designs and such. What you're planning is a party to celebrate your union. Yes, it's a milestone. Yes, it's important. But it shouldn't feel like work, or worse – stress you out.

Of course it helps to be organized and have all the details in place in order to have the flawless wedding day you envision, but as you plan, take a moment and remember you're only engaged for a short time. Therefore, your preparations should be fun and exciting.

Being in the wedding industry, I look at weddings differently than other people. Yes, interesting details and décor are

important and the destination can really add to the experience, but the best weddings I've ever attended had nothing to do with the "pomp and circumstance." They were the most enjoyable namely because of how the couples' attitudes set the tone for the celebration. A positive approach and a "don't sweat the small stuff" outlook can be contagious.

So, if there is one piece of advice I'd give you, it is to relax and enjoy yourself. The finer details are things only you will notice. What others will remember is how you carried yourself and treated your guests.



Yours truly,
Jennifer Stein

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WEDDED WISDOM



CASE station

Personalization is a key element in pulling off a one-of-a-kind destination wedding, so why not keep this in mind when it comes to gifting? Whether you're shopping for your bridesmaids or spouse-to-be, everyone has a cell phone. Case Station offers funky artist collaborations and featured collections that highlight the latest style trends. The level to which you can customize your case is almost overwhelming – from layering different patterns or uploading a photo, to adding monograms and text, there are seemingly endless combinations. Select from a variety of case types available for iPhone, Google and Samsung phones, starting at \$34.99. casestation.com

wise bride TIPS

“When having a destination wedding, it's very important to keep your guests informed. Have a detailed website...so you can just refer guests to your site, instead of telling everyone individually. You're busy enough!”

— Jessica, Cabo San Lucas destination wedding bride

“Remember, this day is supposed to be a representation of the love you share, and a promise you're both making to each other. Everything and everyone else is secondary.”

— Lauren, Costa Rica destination wedding bride (shown)

travel SAFE

Traveling for your destination wedding or honeymoon will be one of the most exciting times of your life. However, just because you're on cloud nine doesn't mean you shouldn't take active steps toward safety. Don't solely rely on media sources, as they can use speculation rather than up-to-date facts. Below, please find key safety and travel resources that are all worth a visit prior to leaving home.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Why it's helpful: Enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP).

- Register upcoming trips with the appropriate U.S. Embassy and get travel alerts for your destination.
- You will also find information like a comprehensive traveler's checklist and what to do in case of lost or stolen travel documents. travel.state.gov

U.S. CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

Why it's helpful: Know your destination's potential health risks and what steps to take toward being protected.

- In the Travelers' Health section, research by destination, view current travel notices around the globe and find a nearby clinic for any necessary vaccines.
- Educate yourself by checking out the CDC's disease directory to get the latest news on potential dangers like the Zika virus. cdc.gov

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Why it's helpful: Learn the basic essentials on how to stay safe and be prepared for travel around the world.

- This is the place to go for the most up-to-date travel advisories. You can also search document requirements by country.
- Discover helpful tips for various emergency situations you might encounter while traveling. For example, how to prepare for a natural disaster. dhs.gov

In addition to the above-mentioned sites, also visit your chosen country's ministry of tourism website.



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The I-1 starts at \$299.
impossible-project.com



high-tech LUGGAGE

Your honeymoon is the perfect opportunity to invest in high-quality luggage. Luckily, thanks to Away, high-quality luggage and high prices are no longer mutually inclusive. In fact, Away's carry-on was reviewed as the "perfect carry-on for under \$250" by *Vogue*. The brand developed their luggage with frequent travelers in mind and for people with an average budget. Its pieces feature unbreakable shells, TSA-approved locks, nylon laundry bags, built-in USB chargers and each piece is guaranteed for life. Away also offers a 100-day trial and custom monogramming. Pieces range from \$225 to \$295. awaytravel.com



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ENTAMANU NGORONGORO

Northern Tanzania

Nomad Tanzania's newest safari camp opened in August 2016 with an emphasis on being as low-impact on its African surroundings as possible. The camp is completely removable, while still offering comfort worthy of a honeymoon. Strategically located between the Ngorongoro Crater and the Serengeti Plains, the area has one of the highest mammal concentrations in Africa – virtually guaranteeing the safari experience of a lifetime. Rates start at \$655 per person/per night.

nomad-tanzania.com



MILAI DHOO ISLAND MALDIVES

Milaidhoo Island, Maldives

This new, 5-star island resort opened in November 2016 with 50 beach and over-water villas, three restaurants and a spa. All villas include swimming pools and an "island host" to attend to your every need. Milaidhoo was designed specifically with couples in mind and offers exclusive, luxury activities for its guests. Located in a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in the Baa Atoll, spend your honeymoon amongst the reef with whale sharks and manta rays. Rates start at \$1,475 per night.

milaidhoo.com



BEACH ENCLAVE NORTH SHORE

Providenciales, Turks & Caicos

The first of three residential projects on the beaches of Turks & Caicos, Beach Enclave North Shore's nine ultra-luxe private villas can be reserved for stays of any length. The villas are ideal for couples looking for privacy, but who don't want to give up resort conveniences like a private chef and concierge services. Each four or five-room villa offers over 7,000 square-feet of private space, its own infinity pool, multiple terraces and a secluded beach area. Rates start at \$2,500 per night.

beachenclave.com



PULITZER AMSTERDAM

Amsterdam, The Netherlands

An ideal example of Amsterdam's history and contemporary Dutch design, the hotel completed extensive renovations in the fall of 2016. Set within 25 interlocked 17th and 18th century canal houses, the hotel introduced 225 refreshed rooms and suites, a transformed lobby and the new, park-like hideaway, Pulitzer Garden. Considering the clever interiors and that no two rooms are alike, the Pulitzer Amsterdam seems like the perfect place to lay your head in this hip destination. Rates start at \$295 per night.

pultzeramsterdam.com



THE FRANKLIN HOTEL

Knightsbridge, London

Set in the heart of Kensington in Central London, The Franklin Hotel is reopening after being acquired in 2014 by the Florence-based Starhotels. The 35-room boutique hotel is back and better than ever thanks to Bond-girl-turned-interior-designer Anouska Hempel. Set in a Victorian building created from three adjoining town houses, the hotel's style combines the romance of an English country house with the atmosphere of an Italian Palazzo. Opening rates start at £350 per night.

thefranklinlondon.com



THE ROXY HOTEL

New York City, New York

As cool as its location on the border between NYC's SoHo and TriBeCa neighborhoods, The Roxy Hotel recently introduced 201 transformed guest rooms and a myriad of new event venues, all with a Mid-Century mod vibe. Formerly the TriBeCa Grand Hotel, it's the perfect spot for hip, music-minded couples to say "I do." New venues include underground Jazz club, The Django and the 1920s on-site movie theater perfect for screening your wedding video. Opening rates start at \$309 per night.

roxyhotelnyc.com





DRESS delivery

Shopping for your wedding dress is meant to be a highlight of the planning experience, but it can also be stressful and, frankly, expensive! Launched in November 2016, Floravere is changing the face of gown shopping with the first direct-to-consumer luxury bridal brand. It streamlines the process by allowing you to shop online, select styles to try on at home and then receive your custom, made-to-order gown within 10-15 weeks. After browsing, select up to three different styles to be shipped directly to your door – a complimentary service with any purchase. Floravere's collection includes exclusive pieces created by a team of artisans formerly from ateliers like Monique Lhuillier, Dior, Zac Posen and Reem Acra. Because every gown is made to order, there is an assortment of customization options including train length, sleeve length, waistlines and monogramming. All gowns start under \$4,000. floravere.com

sentimental DIAMONDS

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EXPECT THE Unexpected



Photos courtesy of: Gateway Canyons Resort & Spa



None of the featured locations within this “Expect the Unexpected” section are new to the romance marketplace. In fact, Charleston, Los Angeles, Colorado and Laguna Beach are all longstanding staples. What makes these stories unique is that each resort brings something unexpected to the already established wedding scene. Hopefully, after reading these articles, you’ll reimagine what hosting your destination wedding event in one of these places could mean.

Gateway Canyons: CRAZY IN LOVE

WORDS BY SHANA KINNERUP

The perfect destination wedding does not have to include waves or sand between your toes. As a matter of fact, it doesn’t even have to be the quintessential combination of sunsets and relaxation. For many couples, there’s good reason to get a little crazy in love.





At the junction of five canyons in the red rock mountains of Colorado, sits a picturesque town built up and around the Gateway Canyons Resort and Spa. The beauty of the land is indescribable and the resort encourages you to explore it in any way possible. Built by Discovery Channel founder John Hendricks, this property challenges its guests to discover their curiosities and explore. Here are the top 10 ways to get crazy in love at Gateway Canyons Resort.

- 1 An all-day Jeep tour is sure to satisfy, but why not grab your crew and head out four-wheeling on UTV's? You'll head up the mountains, on top of the canyons and even alongside running creeks for an up-close look at the richness of the land.
- 2 Don't forget some drinks by the pool, because, after all, you're there in celebration!
- 3 Head out for a scenic drive, top down in your Bentley. Not your cup of tea? No worries, the garage is big...and it's deep. You are sure to find the luxury vehicle of your choice to borrow for the day through Driven Experiences right on property.
- 4 The adventure is bound to catch up with you, so decompress at the full-service spa. As expected, no corners are cut here.
- 5 Sign up for an air tour from the on-site helipad and you'll be aboard one of the most luxurious choppers you'll likely ever come across. Looking for the perfect place to pop the question? Let Gateway Canyons provide a setting in the clouds – literally.
- 6 With rapids nearby, hit the river to take in a bit of adrenaline-fueled adventure!
- 7 Treat your guests to a private horseback ride they'll never forget. Arrange to return to live banjo music, an open-pit BBQ and an evening under the stars. Leave the beans and franks at the door, as you'll be dining five-star style. If you're looking for a once-in-a-lifetime rehearsal dinner – this is it!
- 8 Fossil tours are available for the historian in all of us. A quick, guided tour will take you to some local spots where an escort who is privy to the area's history will keep you captivated.
- 9 Fly fishing is an option if you'd prefer to stay dry while still experiencing the beauty of the river.
- 10 Blow off some steam on the skeet range! They provide everything you need to have an afternoon packed with fun.

Photo courtesy of: Gateway Canyons Resort & Spa



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Los Angeles:

A SEASIDE MEDITERRANEAN RETREAT

WORDS BY CAROLYN STEERE

Situated on a magnificent coastal bluff conveniently located only minutes from the hustle and bustle of downtown L.A. is the picturesque Terranea Resort, a Destination Hotel. This Mediterranean-inspired 102-acre estate, surrounded on three sides by the Pacific Ocean, has it all...135,000 square-feet of indoor and outdoor wedding space, four inviting swimming pools, a full-service spa, an award-winning golf course and eight unique dining options. Guest accommodations range from beautifully appointed resort rooms with amazing ocean views to fully equipped villas and casitas where family and friends can gather and stay together.

The wedding professionals at Terranea take pride in understanding the vision of their couples. They then add their expertise and creative touch with the result being destination wedding dreams coming to life. Details are key, from the exquisite floral designs to Pastry Chef Mark Clear's "bride and groom" chocolate-dipped strawberries delivered to your room.

The culinary experience at Terranea is amazing from your first bite of breakfast at catalina kitchen and lunch overlooking the ocean at Nelson's to experiencing the contemporary Asian flavors at bashi or the fresh California cuisine at mar'sel. Executive Chef Bernard Ibarra takes "farm-to-table" very seriously with the ever expanding garden that ensures the freshest ingredients wind up on the dining table.





Your wedding guests will never say “bored” with the array of activities on-site including stunning coastal hikes, a unique falconry experience, exploring tide pools, a Yo-Chi fitness class or just relaxing poolside under a cabana seaside at Cielo Point. Take relaxation up a notch and visit the spa to be indulged with one of their signature rituals, but be sure to allow for some serious downtime in the spa’s serene environment enjoying the sea breezes and listening to the ocean waves.

In our travels to discover the best places for hosting a destination wedding, we are always excited to find venues that truly have the flexibility to provide intimate settings for small weddings and the grandeur of a ballroom for a large, elegant event. Terranea has mastered the entire range and does so with excellence.

Photos courtesy of: Terranea Resort



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GET UNIQUE IN *Laguna Beach*

WORDS BY JENNIFER STEIN



Laguna Beach is known for gorgeous oceanfront dining, high-end properties, a thriving art scene and the ultimate authentic Southern California experience. It's also an idyllic place to say "I do." There are countless vendors in the area to ensure a seamless, stress-free wedding planning adventure.

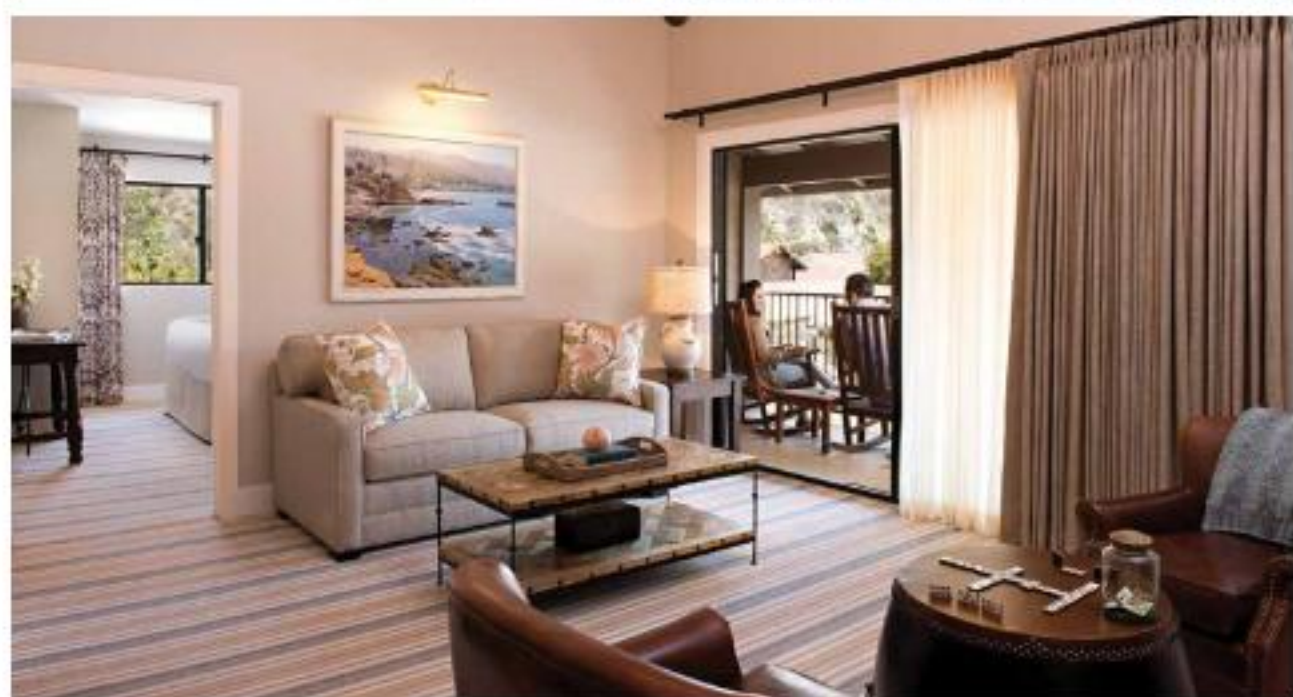
If you want all of the aforementioned along with a little "cool" thrown in the mix, The Ranch at Laguna Beach more than delivers.

When I visited in September, it was just as peak season was coming to a close, but the weather was perfect and a visit to the area couldn't have been better timed. The recently revamped and completely renovated property offers a bit of the unexpected. Tucked into Aliso Canyon and away from the hustle of the PCH (yet, still within walking distance to the beach), you'll find a sprawling property that meanders the canyon floor and takes advantage of the gorgeous views from every vantage point. The rooms and cottages are impressive with a "coastal ranch chic" charm and interesting furniture pieces, which give that "found" feeling – a far cry from the ordinary corporate hotel chain. The bathrooms are so cool they might just make you want to take a sledgehammer to your own when you return home.

The cuisine alone is worth a visit. Executive Chef Charles Imbelli has created a menu that offers extreme indulgence (the bacon bourbon cinnamon roll at breakfast, for example), as well as a modern, healthy spin on classics. All of the menus are seasonal, which reflects the freshness found in every dish.

When it comes to celebrating with your loved ones when you tie the knot, you'll be well cared for as The Ranch at Laguna Beach can accommodate just about anything. Their expert staff has been around the wedding block more than a few times, so they've seen it all. According to Jim Tolbert, Director of Sales and Marketing, they can create magic. "When couples are looking for that 'Pinterest wedding,' this is it," says Jim. And with only one wedding a day, the focus is entirely on you.

For a truly unexpected romantic getaway or destination wedding in the heart of Southern California, The Ranch at Laguna Beach is a sublime marriage between eclectic and classic.



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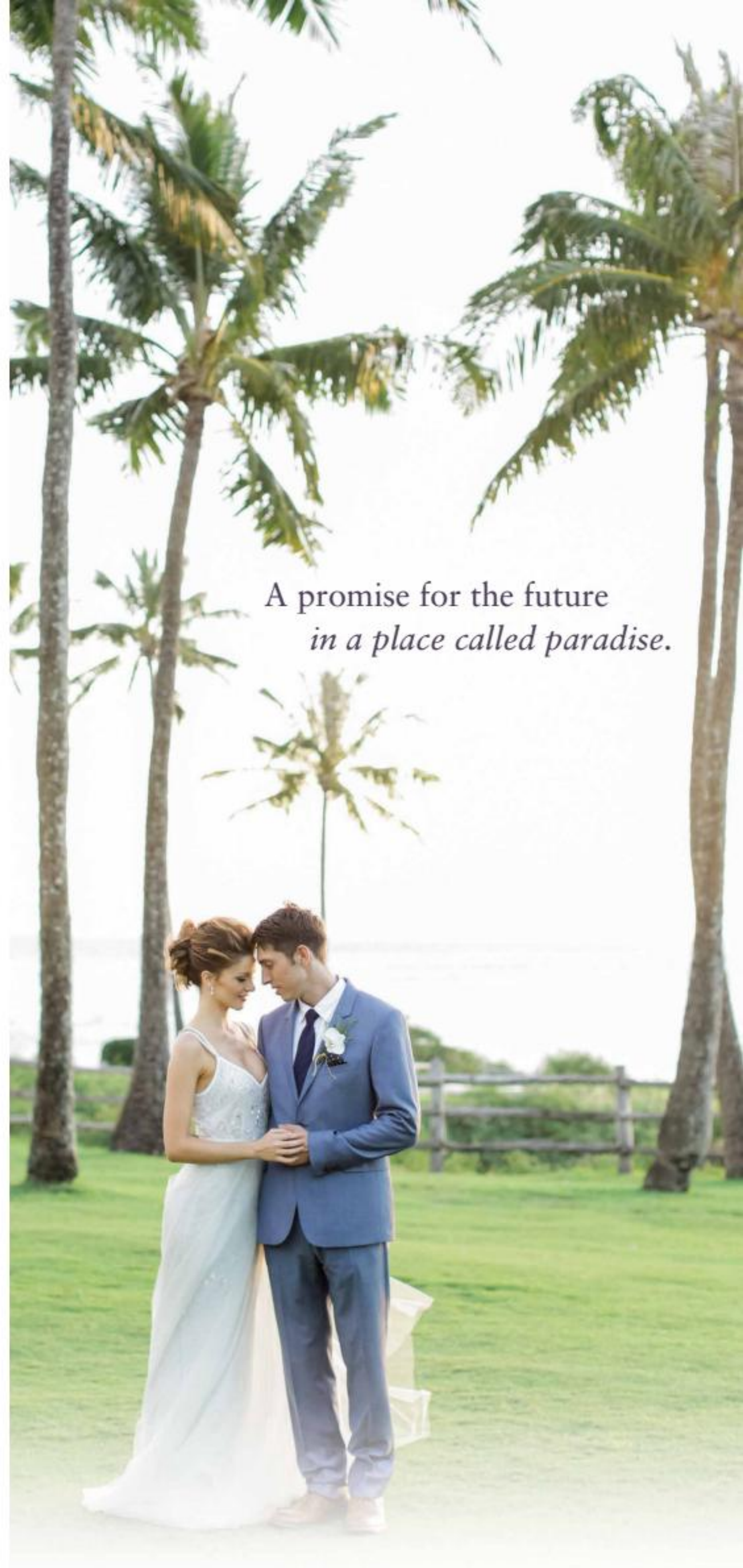
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HISTORICALLY HIP *Charleston*

WORDS BY COURTNEY COX

Charleston is one of the United States' top wedding destinations and it's easy to see why. The quintessentially Southern city has all of the Lowcountry charm you would expect – genteel locals, Colonial Era mansions and balmy coastal breezes – plus, a thriving culinary and arts scene. If it's timeless appeal you're wanting for the location of your wedding away, then the city's Historic District is an ideal choice. Conveniently located in the middle of it all, and only steps away from the City Market, is the Grand Bohemian Hotel Charleston.

This luxury, boutique hotel boasts 50 rooms and its French-inspired interiors are a far cry from the Historic District's languid lifestyle. Despite having to meet the district's strict building restrictions, the Grand Bohemian's modest exterior gives way to a hip rooftop bar and rooms featuring crushed-velvet headboards and funky, local artwork. The hotel's chic ballroom and chill outdoor terraces offer 2,400 square-feet of event space for modestly-sized weddings.

For pre-wedding to-do's, consider hosting a welcome cocktail party at the Grand Bohemian Gallery. A signature of The Kessler Collection properties, the gallery features priceless pieces from the CEO's private collection, as well as works by local artists. As a special treat for your guests, consider enlisting the help of one of the gallery's resident artists, like Daniel Velasco, to create one-of-a-kind works of art to commemorate your event. Another unique way to mark a special occasion at the hotel would be to take a wine blending class. Build your own blend and then have it bottled to savor at a later date.



Photos courtesy of (top to bottom, left to right): The Kessler Collection (1st & 2nd) & Courtney Cox (3rd & 4th)





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In a city known for its gastronomic exploits, it's no surprise that the Grand Bohemian Hotel Charleston rises up to meet the culinary challenge. Élevé offers modern, American cuisine with an emphasis on utilizing the most local ingredients possible. "It's familiar and it's fresh," says Executive Chef Ryley McGillis. It also offers one of the best Sunday brunches in town. Once you've enjoyed bottomless mimosas, let Old South Carriage Tours do the driving and take a ride through some of Charleston's most remarkable neighborhoods. If you're looking to take advantage of the city's coastal location, check out Charleston Outdoor Adventures for paddle boarding with Atlantic bottlenose dolphins in local saltwater estuaries.

Charleston artfully balances its storied past with forward-thinking establishments like The Ordinary, a 1920s bank-turned-upscale seafood restaurant, and the small-batch botanical gin at High Wire Distilling, the city's first distillery since the abolition of prohibition.

This city really does offer the best of both worlds for your destination wedding or honeymoon. Be sure to tell your guests to expect good ol' fashioned Southern hospitality, but to come with a foodie mindset and their funkiest outfits. **ido!**





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cross country CHIC

While the world is your oyster when it comes to hosting a destination wedding or getting away for your honeymoon, it's important not to overlook the vast and incredible options right here in the good ol' U.S.A. For example, Chicago, the Outer Banks, Fort Lauderdale and Bachelor Gulch all exemplify "Cross Country Chic." Each of these destinations and properties bring something classy to the table and are worthy of your nuptial attention.



NORTH
CAROLINA

History by the Sea

WORDS BY
SAMANTHA ROSS



Embodying the playful and inquisitive spirit of its namesake, the sea bird, the Sanderling Resort in Duck, North Carolina, is the perfect venue for the couple who dreams of an enchanted seaside affair. With event spaces ranging from intimate to extravagant, the resort is ideal for every occasion, from elopements to large catered events for the entire family.

While the Outer Banks is known for being a traditional summer destination, the Sanderling Resort will make sure your guests feel just as welcome as the families that have been vacationing there for years. Upon arrival, send your loved ones a custom-monogrammed beach tote or a bottle of award-winning

wine from Sanctuary Vineyards, located just across the bay from the resort. Encourage your guests to take a resort-prepared picnic lunch to explore the endearing city of Duck. Corolla Wild Horse Tours takes adventurers to seek out the spectacular equine residents of the community, whilst learning some of the fascinating history of the area.

After a full day of exploring, celebrate your forthcoming nuptials with exceptional dining at Kimball's Kitchen and, post-dinner, wrap-up around one of several enormous fire pits on property. Make the night memorable with a s'mores bar, complete with a selection of artisan chocolates and homemade marshmallows.

Almost entirely encircled by the Atlantic Ocean and the Currituck Sound, the Sanderling Resort does not abide a mediocre view. You'll want to capture every breathtaking moment from sunrise to starlight. Good thing the full-service Spa at Sanderling provides an entire gambit of luxurious wedding day amenities to ensure everyone is camera-ready.

On land or on sand, wherever you choose to say your vows, the Sanderling Resort will make sure your experience is just as sparkling as the Atlantic Ocean outside and just as relaxing as the crashing waves that will lull you to sleep every night of your unforgettable stay.

WORDS BY
CAROLYN STEERE

Say "I Do" TO COLORADO



Photos courtesy of: The Ritz-Carlton, Bachelor Gulch





High in the Colorado Rockies on Beaver Creek Mountain, The Ritz-Carlton, Bachelor Gulch is a wedding destination that exudes alpine charm combined with rustic elegance. This award-winning, luxury resort was purposely designed in the style of the grand lodges of the American West with majestic stone fireplaces, high beamed ceilings and wrought iron chandeliers. From the moment you are warmly greeted by the valets in Western garb and the wagging tail of the resident St. Bernard, you know you have arrived somewhere very special.

Breathtaking mountain views from each of the cozy, but well-appointed 180 guest accommodations beg you to snuggle in and relax. But, the outdoor calls in every season with a multitude of activities just outside your door. During the winter this ski-in, ski-out property invites you to hit the slopes and in the warm weather months you can easily access the Red Sky Golf Club, home to some of Colorado's highest-rated golf courses, or hiking and biking trails galore.

When you are ready to experience a bit of pampering, the Forbes Four-Star rated Bachelor Gulch Spa is ready to indulge you. For a truly unique experience, head to the rock-lined grottos where you can lie back, bask in the warmth and listen to the soothing sound of the indoor waterfall.

A satisfied palate awaits you whether you are huddled around the outdoor fire

pit sharing s'mores with your wedding guests or kicking back with a cocktail or cigar in the unique Bachelors Lounge. There are plenty of dining options on-site or the charming village of Beaver Creek is just a shuttle ride away.

The most difficult part of planning your destination wedding at The Ritz-Carlton, Bachelor Gulch may be choosing between the many options available for your ceremony and reception. You may select the Smith Terrace with panoramic views of Vail Valley for an intimate ceremony or, for weddings of up to 350 guests, the Mountainside Terrace with a backdrop of the White River National Forest. If your dream is to walk down the aisle in a quaint, picturesque chapel, the Beaver Creek Chapel is an excellent option. Tented lawns or the elegant Ritz-Carlton Ballroom can also host larger weddings.

Bachelor Gulch is rich in history and one of the hotel's newest additions is Anderson's Cabin. John Anderson was one of seven bachelors who settled the area in the early 1900s and his rustic and cozy cabin is now available for intimate gatherings (12 guests in the winter and up to 50 guests in the warmer months).

Nestled high in the mountains, surrounded by aspens and pines, this mountaintop resort won't disappoint – whatever season you choose to say "I do." It is Rocky Mountain luxury at its finest.



Photos courtesy of: The Ritz-Carlton Bachelor Gulch

CROSS COUNTRY CHIC |



WORDS BY
KATHY TILL

Urban Adventure IN CHICAGO



One of the most difficult decisions for a couple is deciding on the wedding venue. If an urban wedding is at the top of your list, then take a journey to The Ritz-Carlton, Chicago. It's uniquely located on floors 15 through 30 above Water Tower Place on the Magnificent Mile. It's also perfect for having an all-inclusive, luxury event and was made for couples who want to showcase their unique personal style.

The more than 25,000 square-feet of picturesque event space includes a Grand Ballroom with floor-to-ceiling views of Chicago and a spectacular 400,000-crystal chandelier.

The city of Chicago has become an urban fusion where modern concrete buildings, classical architecture and

nature collide to create the true essence of a metropolitan garden. If you decide to venture outside the hotel for a unique photo op, there are plenty. The rail system, lush parks, historical buildings, art galleries, the beach or even the harbor are all backdrop options.

While visiting, I was in the elevator when I happened upon a bride on her wedding day. I asked her why she selected The Ritz-Carlton, Chicago. Her eyes lit up when she explained that her and her fiancé were looking for the best-of-the-best with the most impeccable service. The first name that came to mind was The Ritz-Carlton. This property exemplifies The Ritz-Carlton motto, "Ladies and Gentlemen serving Ladies and Gentlemen."





Photo by Lin & Jirsa



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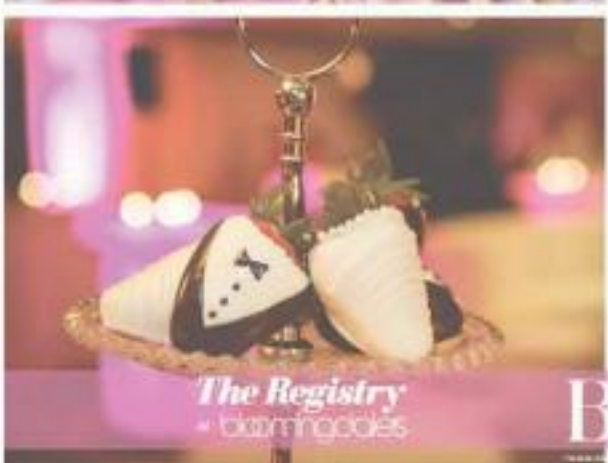
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Seaside Grandeur

IN FORT LAUDERDALE

WORDS BY
COURTNEY COX



Couples looking to say “I do” in Florida and who want to avoid the crowds of wedding hotspots like Miami or Key West, should consider Fort Lauderdale. Known for its beaches and boating canals, it’s 40 minutes north of Miami on Florida’s southeastern coast. Casually chic couples who want oceanfront accommodations, lush public gardens and boutique shopping will feel right at home here. When it comes to choosing your destination wedding venue, the Pelican Grand Beach Resort will more than meet your expectations.

You and your guests will instantly feel at home after entering the lobby with its sweeping veranda, complete with rocking chairs and ocean views. The Pelican Grand Beach Resort’s style was inspired by old Florida grandeur, but with a dusting of coastal chic. Think intricately paneled ceilings in the common areas and rooms with light and airy décor. After completing a renovation in 2016, the 156 rooms at the Pelican Grand feature pale color palettes and contemporary furnishings. Treat yourself and book the Sky Suite, the hotel’s 12th floor penthouse. Nothing says VIP quite like a private elevator, massive marble master bath and 1,100 square-foot terrace with an outdoor shower and soaking tub.

This boutique hotel is known for weddings of up to 100 people. They have recently expanded their event area to a whopping 10,000 square-feet of sun-drenched space. Whether you opt for a ceremony on the sand or in one of Pelican Grand’s two ballrooms, you’re guaranteed a view to remember. Both the Atlantic Ballroom on the first floor and the Ocean View Ballroom on the 11th floor offer a neutral backdrop for your event and grand, private terraces to-boot. The Ocean View Ballroom is especially spectacular with its floor-to-ceiling windows with sights as far south as Miami.

Beyond treating yourself and your wedding guests to swanky accommodations, you won’t go hungry at the Pelican Grand Beach Resort. In addition to its revamped rooms and event space, the dining options also underwent an overhaul. A sunset dinner and Sunday brunch at OCEAN2000 restaurant are a must with a seafood-centric menu and spectacular service.

While Fort Lauderdale might not seem an obvious choice for your destination “I do’s,” it’s well worth considering for a laid-back, coastal wedding. **ido!**





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The idea of a cruise often brings to mind buffets with mediocre food, cramped living quarters and sub-par entertainment. However, luxury cruising is coming into its own and we've found two lines that are turning the concept of hitting the open ocean on its head. It isn't your grandma's cruise when you travel with Windstar Cruises or Viking River Cruises. Both offer in-depth, culturally-focused itineraries, plush accommodations and smaller ships. Read on to discover our insights into

THE *Next* Generation OF *Cruising*



Photos courtesy of Windstar Cruises





YACHTING ADVENTURES IN **COSTA RICA AND PANAMA**

WORDS BY HARMONY WALTON

Adventure cruising doesn't have to be in the icy waters of Alaska. It can also be in a romantic, tropical setting. Get the best of both worlds with a sun-kissed honeymoon full of exotic outdoor activities, all while aboard a cruise ship. And not just any ship, but an intimate power yacht to be specific. The Star Pride of Windstar Cruises takes you through Costa Rica and Panama with just 212 guests on board and a schedule I found perfectly fitting for modern honeymooners seeking something a little different.

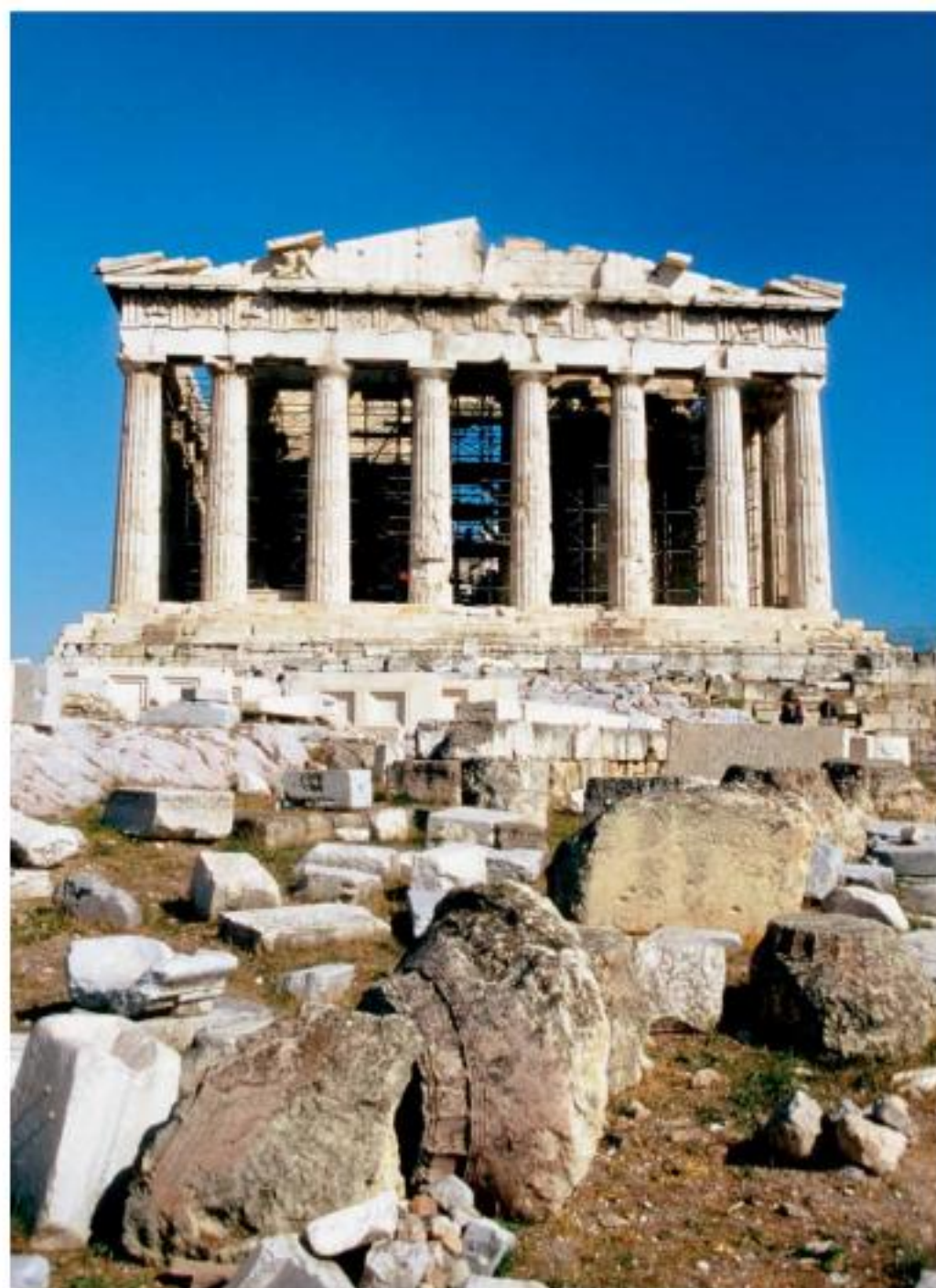
Go from a gourmet experience on a private island in Panama, to surf lessons in Costa Rica, a country known for their epic waves. Horseback riding through the rain forest and hiking to a waterfall followed by a refreshing dip are highlights for those seeking exotic romance. This cruise can't be described without mentioning the day you spend at sea going through the Panama Canal. I can't say enough about the amazing food and oh-so-friendly service you experience while watching the crew navigate through the locks – a sight everyone should see.

A day at sea will be one of ultimate luxury, thanks to the Star Pride power yacht that houses all suites, most of which include walk-in closets, sitting rooms and bathtubs. Don't miss out on the little known hot tub on the bow of the ship, a perfect place to get away for a little quiet time for two.

Sadly though, all good things must come to an end. Yet on this cruise, you can extend the good just a little bit longer! A big bonus to this itinerary is the option to add on a three or four-day pre or post-land program. This means zip lining alongside the volcano in Arenal, a night hike in the Cloud Forest of Monteverde or a visit with leatherback turtles in Tortuguero – all iconic Costa Rican destinations that are must-sees in my book.

VERDICT: If you're accustomed to the creature comforts of a luxury hotel, yet want to experience all the adventures of the rain forest, then this schedule is packed full of memories made for you.





Photos courtesy of (top to bottom, left to right): Windstar Cruises (1st-4th) & (5th) iStock





SAILING THE GREEK ISLES IN STYLE

WORDS BY HARMONY WALTON

Sailing through the Greek Isles may be one of the most romantic honeymoons on earth. Aboard Windstar Cruises, you get to experience that romance from a luxury yacht, complete with sails to deliver you to that once-in-a-lifetime itinerary. This means stopping in Santorini for a donkey ride up to the picturesque mountaintop towns, wine tasting in Nafplio with new friends, touring the ancient Acropolis in Athens and sipping tea seaside in Mykonos – a highlight of my week.

But, as in life, it's the journey that matters most. Journeying on the line's namesake yacht, the Wind Star, means the number of crew almost matches the guest count (148 guests to be exact) and they all know your name, delivering superb service with a smile.

The ship never feels cramped and no experience is ever crowded. The Wind Star is a sailing yacht designed with a truly efficient and elegant use of space (both in the staterooms and common areas). You can easily find plenty of nooks to duck into for a little private time, indoors and out, and many spots with views of the sails that are absolutely majestic and spectacular in size.

When onboard, take advantage of the yacht and head up to the deck early one morning to catch some stargazing before watching the sun come up over an island. Magical doesn't begin to describe this memory. If you've made it up for sunrise, then exit the ship early to explore, but not before stopping by the hospitality desk. Here, you'll meet a local expert who boards at each port to give you a personal account of the destination and help you plan your perfect day.

When the ship sets sail, make your way to the veranda for the raising of the sails, complete with awe-inspiring music booming on deck as you ride off into another epic sunset and settle in for another amazing meal of fresh local fare and entertainment.

VERDICT: If luxury travel is your speed, then sailing on the Wind Star yacht will feel like home. Whether you prefer to tour with the group or explore on your own, Windstar Cruises makes it easy to create the experience that's just right for the two of you.



VIKING RIVER CRUISES: MAGNIFICENT MEKONG

WORDS BY SUSAN MOYNIHAN

River cruising is travel's hottest trend, with new lines and itineraries popping up every year. But, is it right for a honeymoon? I signed up for a 15-day adventure with Viking River Cruises to find out.

Viking's Mekong Delta trip through Vietnam and Cambodia is one of their most physically active, with temple visits and multiple excursions a day in the Southeast Asian heat. I was drawn to its combo of land and sea: the 15-day itinerary included seven nights of hotels (Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam; Siem Reap, Cambodia) and seven nights cruising down the Mekong River.

At our first-day orientation, Viking promised to immerse us in the local culture and they more than delivered. From riding pedal-powered rickshaws through the frenetic, scooter-filled streets of Hanoi to visiting a tin-roofed wooden farmer's hut in the rural Mekong Delta — where the owner proudly showed off her battery-powered television and outdoor kitchen while neighborhood children climbed a tree to pick us star apples — it was more immersive than any other cruise I've taken.

The boat itself was lovely: a replica 1920s-style steamer, with relatively spacious rooms, a small front bar and a rooftop deck with plenty of pillow-topped seating for river-watching. What it lacked in amenities (no pool or hot tub; the gym was a set of free weights; entertainment was DVD movies on a bad screen), it made up for in ambiance. It was the perfect way to travel the rural Mekong. We'd stop along the way, visiting Buddhist temples and silk weavers in Cambodia and walking through a Vietnamese silversmith village, alive with the sound of hammering artisans. After a busy day of touring, we'd all gather on the top deck for cocktails, then head down to the dining room for four-course dinners paired with unlimited wine.

As expected, the Viking crowd definitely skews older; our group of 53 people had three people in their 40s and the majority in their 60s. But, we had a ball with our travel companions; it was a social group, well traveled and interesting.



Angkor Wat



That said, the romance quotient is limited; even on this, their smallest ship, you're with 50-plus other people for excursions and most meals (room service is not an option at sea). But the cruise tour's city-river combo gave us time to sneak away on our own: for bar-hopping in Siem Reap, shopping in Ho Chi Minh City and exploring Phnom Penh by tuk-tuk, with dinner at the famous Foreign Correspondents Club — definitely a highlight.

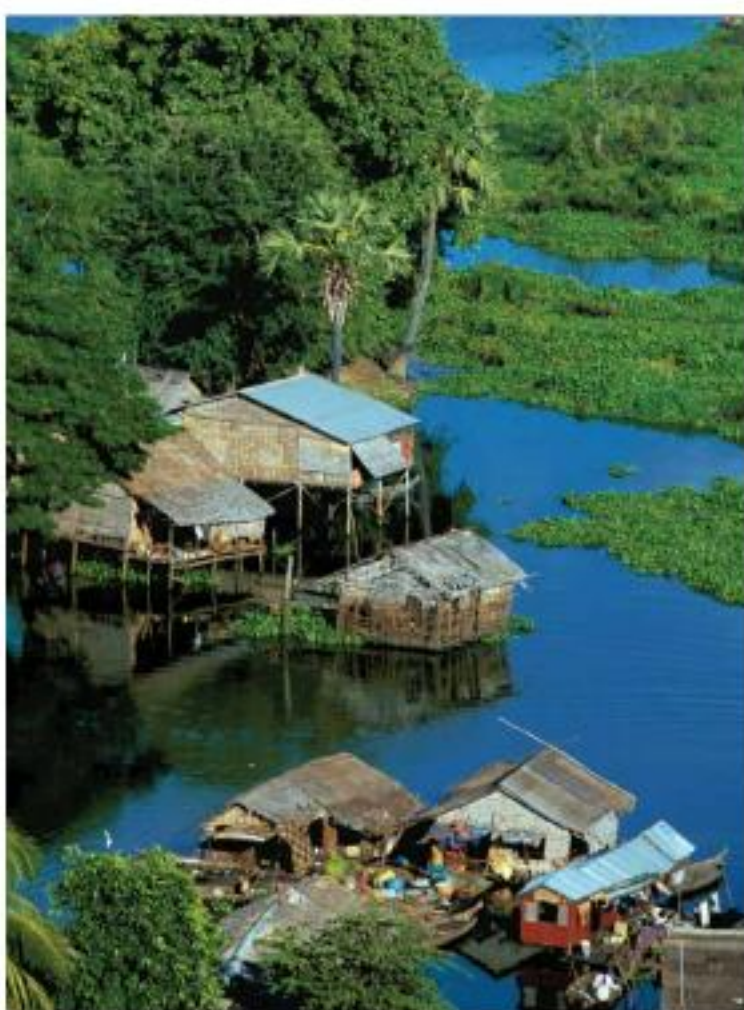
VERDICT: Viking is great for older honeymooners looking for seamless cultural exploration. But, you have to be social. If privacy is your goal, add on some post-cruise time on your own. **ido!**



Photos courtesy of Viking Cruises



Photos courtesy of
Viking Cruises



A wedding couple is featured in a close-up shot. The groom, on the left, is wearing a black tuxedo with a white shirt and a black bow tie. He has dark hair and is looking down at a large bouquet of flowers. The bride, on the right, is wearing a white wedding dress with short puffed sleeves. She has her hair styled in an updo and is smiling as she looks at the bouquet. The bouquet is large and tropical, featuring several pink and white protea flowers, long green palm fronds, and large green leaves with yellow variegation. The background is softly blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting.

MODERN MEETS *Tropical*

A MARRIAGE MADE IN MALIBU

PHOTOGRAPHER:
SANAZ PHOTOGRAPHY
DESIGNER: GATHER EVENTS
PRODUCED BY: BE INSPIRED PR

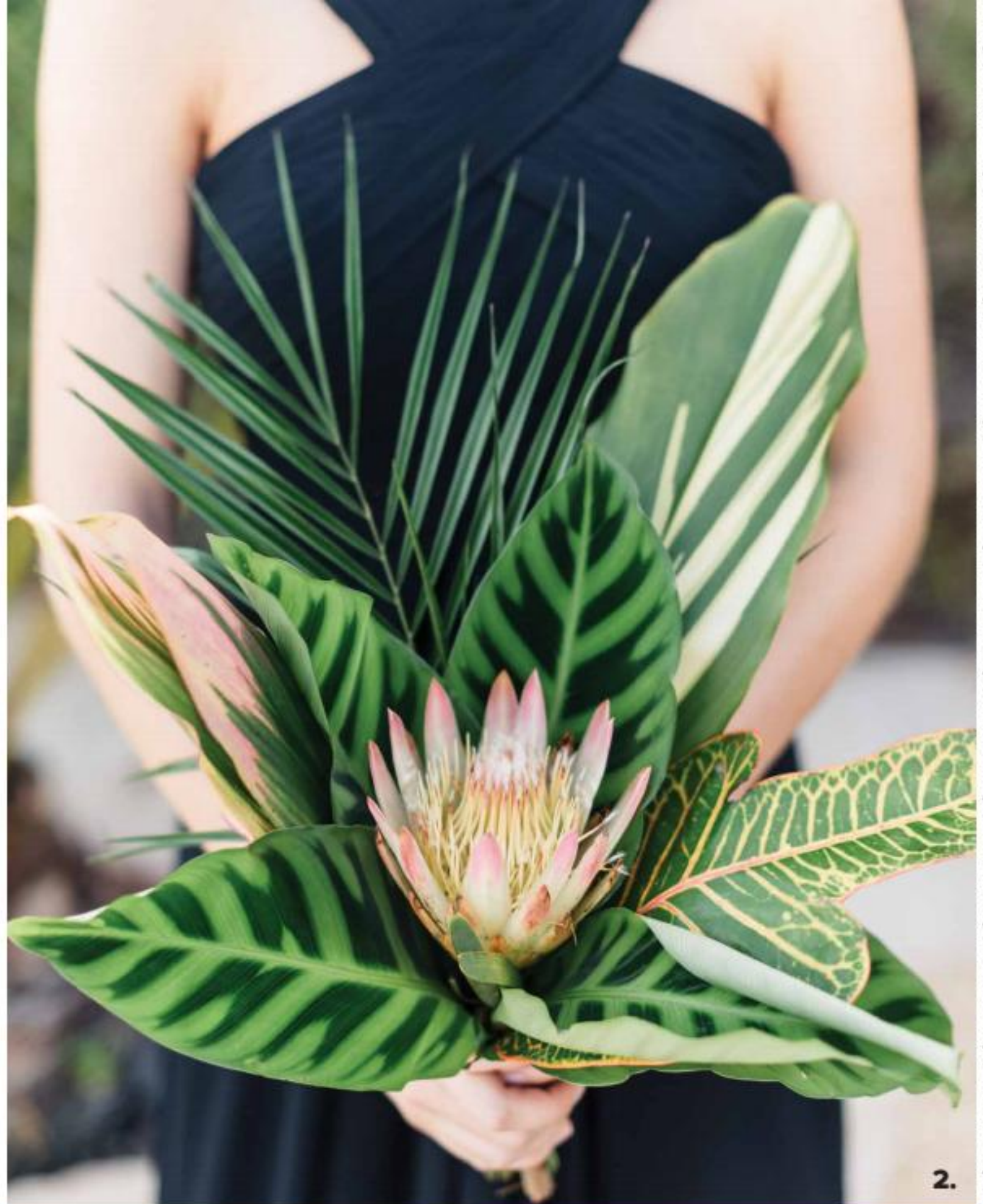


Incorporating a twist of tropical style into your destination wedding doesn't have to mean décor made up of seashells and shades of blue. For this photoshoot, our talented vendor team was inspired by fun patterns, tropical vibes and their coastal location. The Malibu, California setting is made modern with edgy black glassware and geometric details. Touches of tropical are introduced with creative catering and florals comprised of palm fronds and protea. A natural wood table and chairs are a nod to the rural, coastal landscape. This shoot is a perfect marriage between modern trends and tropical staples.

1: Our groom, in a tux by The Grunion Run, only has eyes for his bride, while she can't keep her eyes off her modern, tropical bouquet by Flower Duet. She's lovely with hair and makeup by Mobile Bridal Salon, "Fringed Crescent Earrings" by Noonday Collection, the "Margot" veil by Elisha Caplan and in the "Kimberly Long" dress by Joanna August.

2: Not to be entirely outdone by the bride, her bridesmaids are also carrying simple, tropical bouquets by Flower Duet. This maid is lovely in the "Kaleigh" dress in black by Azazie.

3: The couple's cake by Sweet and Saucy Shop would give even the harshest critic a sweet tooth. A traditional tiered design is given interest with a gold, geometric pattern and a fondant protea – all set-off by a black outline.



2.



3.





4, 6 & 8: Our bride's textured updo and gilded makeup is by Mobile Bridal Salon. Her chic "Kimberly Long" dress by Joanna August, "Fringed Crescent Earrings" by Noonday Collection and "Margot" veil by Elisha Caplan are the perfect complement to our groom's classic tuxedo from The Grunion Run. The bridesmaids' dresses by Azazie are a sophisticated addition. The ceremony arch, bridesmaids' bouquets and groom's boutonniere by Flower Duet are both colorful and minimalistic – a perfect illustration of the event's theme.

5: This lounge set-up proves trendy and chic doesn't mean you have to sacrifice comfort. The pale blue, tufted sofa, end tables, linen poofs and pillows, geometric table and shag rug are all courtesy of Found Rentals. The centerpiece and decorative floral accent are both by Flower Duet.

7: Lavish meets bucolic with gold serveware and a wooden tabletop from Found Rentals. Pomegranates provide a pop of color and crystal goblets from Borrowed BLU are filled with fresh crab salad by Modern Art Catering.





6.



7.



8.





9.



10.



11.

9, 11 & 12: Our bride and groom are toasting because this outdoor reception set-up is worthy of celebration. The tableware – everything from the wooden chargers to the matte black goblets – is courtesy of Borrowed BLU. The pale blue plates provide an interesting contrast to the pinks and peaches of the centerpiece by Flower Duet. A natural linen table runner and napkins serve to introduce both texture and pattern. The rustic table and chairs are courtesy of Found Rentals.

10: The ocean overlook and tropical touches combine to create a culinary masterpiece made-up of juicy pineapple, fresh crab and colorful pomegranates – all created by Modern Art Catering.





13.



14.





13. Give your guests a hint of what's to come with a joyously themed stationery suite. Green watercolor palm fronds liven up a modern black and gold color palette. The stationery is courtesy of Gourmet Invitations and the calligraphy is by Calligraphy Katrina.

14. Our groom is admiring the view and taking his new bride for a spin in her "Kimberly Long" dress by Joanna August and "Margot" veil by Elisha Caplan. He's dapper and worthy of her affection in a tuxedo by The Grunion Run.

15. Your bridesmaids would have a tough time finding something to complain about with these dresses. Their hair and makeup is by Mobile Bridal Salon and the bridesmaid on the far right is wearing the "Cow Horn Hoop Earrings" by Noonday Collection. They're wearing (from left to right) the "Kaleigh," "Iman" and "Regina" bridesmaids styles from Azazie.

VENDORS: Photographer: Sanaz Photography, sanazphotography.com, Designer: GATHER Events, gatherevents.com, Venue: Private Residence in Malibu, California, Produced by: Be Inspired PR, beinspiredpr.com, Floral Design: Flower Duet, flowerduet.com, Stationery: Gourmet Invitations, gourmetinvitations.com, Calligraphy: Calligraphy Katrina, calligraphykatrina.com, Furniture Rentals: Found Rentals, foundrentals.com, Tabletop Rentals: Borrowed BLU, borrowedblu.com, Catering: Modern Art Catering, modernartcatering.com, Cake: Sweet and Saucy Shop, sweetandsaucyshop.com, Hair & Makeup: Mobile Bridal Salon, mobilebridalsalon.com, Bridal Dress: "Kimberly Long" in the color "White Wedding" by Joanna August, joannaugust.com, Bridesmaids Dresses: "Iman," "Regina" and "Kaleigh" by Azazie, azazie.com, Veil: "Margot" by Elisha Caplan, elishacaplan.com, Jewelry: "Fringed Crescent Earrings," "Droplet Necklace" and "Cow Horn Hoop Earrings" by Noonday Collection, noondaycollection.com, Groom's Tux & Accessories: The Grunion Run, thegrunionrun.com, Models: Brand Talent Agency & AMAX Talent, brandtalent.net & amaxtalent.com

MEXICO

Puerto Vallarta

Jet Set to a Glamorous Getaway

WORDS BY JOHN ROARK

Puerto Vallarta has a well-earned mystique as a go-to for jet-setters and celebrities. In the 1960s, Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton made Mexico's Pacific Coast their playground, having a very public affair while he filmed "The Night of the Iguana." The reputation stuck and, 50-plus years later, Puerto Vallarta still tops the list of the world's most exotic romantic destinations.

Today, Puerto Vallarta is charming, colorful and accessible, with direct flights from most major U.S. cities. You'll find beautiful beaches, unforgettable local cuisine, charming shops and galleries, and vibrant night life, not to mention spectacular sunsets over the Pacific.

STAY: Casa Velas

The term "all-inclusive" once conjured

images of all-you-can-eat buffets and noisy parties doing cannonballs into the pool. Casa Velas has turned that concept on its head, creating an adults-only boutique resort that is truly private, tranquil and lovely. Minutes from Puerto Vallarta International Airport, this hidden sanctuary is one of three Velas Resorts in the area. As a guest of Casa Velas, you have access to all of the Velas Vallarta resort restaurants, pools and beaches.

"Casa Velas has the look and feel of a private, luxury hacienda," says Managing Director, Luis Angarita. "With only 80 suites, couples can take over the entire hotel and their celebration will feel like it's held on their own elegant estate."

Weddings at Casa Velas can be intimate or grand. Go glam with the exquisite four-bedroom Presidential Suite, which accommodates up to eight and has a

spacious terrace with a pool and golf course view. Amenities also include live wedding painting, drones, Internet streaming to friends and family at home and even a personal social media concierge.

DINE: Emiliano

This Casa Velas restaurant features Four Diamond-rated fine Mexican cuisine in an intimate setting. The diverse menu fuses ingredients, flavors and spices – many of which are grown on-site. Don't miss the ceviche.

EXPLORE: The Malecon

You haven't really been to Puerto Vallarta until you've strolled the city's recently renovated waterfront esplanade on the edge of the sea. Rich with restaurants, shops, street artists, galleries and public art installations, the heart of the city bursts to life when the sun goes down.





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MEXICO

San Miguel de Allende

Historic Charm at its Finest



WORDS BY VICTORIA ABBOTT RICCARDI

Intimate, historic and bathed in a shimmering apricot light, the cobbled mountain town of San Miguel de Allende is one of the most romantic spots in Mexico for a destination wedding or honeymoon. As a UNESCO World Heritage Site, most of the town's gorgeous 17th and 18th century churches and buildings have been preserved, including the cluster of colonial "casas" that make up the luxurious Belmond Casa de Sierra Nevada hotel. Conveniently located in the heart of the city, this enchanting property has a range of wedding venues, some of which can accommodate up to 300 guests in a semi-covered courtyard surrounded by trees and flowers.

All rooms and suites at the hotel have been exquisitely appointed with local

antiques, fine linens and art. Some rooms have copper tubs and stone fireplaces, while the Presidential Suite has its own plunge pool. There is a small outdoor pool in a garden area for all guests.

A sweet spot to savor a flute of bubbly is The Blue Bar adjacent to the hotel's excellent restaurant, Andanza. With covered alfresco seating, it offers modern and traditional Mexican breakfast, lunch and dinner fare, with such offerings as chicken with homemade mole and rib-eye with chimichurri sauce. You can learn to make these recipes and much more at the hotel's cooking school, Sazón, located next to San Miguel de Allende's colorful, covered food market.

The hotel also has the Laja Spa, a pampering oasis where you can enjoy a wide range of massages and body

treatments. Some unique therapies to consider are the Healing Herbal Therapy, employing essential oils and medicinal herbs, or the stimulating Cocoa and Chile Wrap.

Should you wish to explore the area, Belmond Casa de Sierra Nevada can arrange for a private historic walking tour of the town. They can organize a hot air balloon ride over the city, a day of horseback riding, golf or a visit to the nearby town of Guanajuato, the birthplace of Mexico's independence and artist Diego Rivera. Of course, it's easy to never venture out of San Miguel de Allende and spend your time strolling the tiny streets visiting galleries, shopping and gathering memories for your new life together.

Photos courtesy of: Belmond



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MEXICO

Cos cabos

A Marriage
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WORDS BY JENNIFER STEIN

Touting an average of 350 days of sunshine a year, one of Los Cabos' only swimmable beaches and dramatic oceanfront views should be enough to win your destination wedding or honeymoon business. But, the One&Only Palmilla takes it *so much further*.

A true luxury resort on the edge of the Baja Peninsula, this slice of paradise is the vacation spot for Hollywood celebrities and the world's elite for good reason. It's private, it's exquisite and they cater to your every whim – even ones you didn't know you had.

Any property can surround you with posh accommodations, and this one has luxury in spades, but not every resort can offer the lost art of genuinely kind service. Think black car airport transfer complete with Wi-Fi; bags whisked away and unpacked in your room; your favorite wine or snack waiting for you on the terrace; a special little "something" the chef prepared to whet your appetite (not included on the bill) and poolside,

complimentary head and foot massages. These are just a sampling of the services you'll enjoy as a guest of the One&Only Palmilla.

If you decide to take the marital plunge here, you'll feel like royalty, not just for the day, but the entire weekend. The resort only books one wedding a weekend, specifically so they can concentrate entirely on you. Arianna Ocampo, Director of Groups and Special Events, feels strongly about treating each wedding like it were her own. "We speak the 'wedding' language. We have a full staff dedicated to each event 24-7 and it shows." She's right. The couple is given their own cell phone upon check-in so they can reach the staff anytime, day or night with requests or questions. Now that's what I call white-glove service.

If venue options are a high priority, you won't be disappointed. One of the signature backdrops is the Chapel – a historic building built in 1956 with a dramatic, tiled staircase and courtyard that allows for an immediate reception following the ceremony. Cultural perks

such as a mariachi-led recessional down to the beach and a barefoot-in-the-sand reception under the stars with expertly prepared cuisine are also popular choices. The One&Only Palmilla is able to accommodate almost any size group, big or small.

When it comes to pampering, the One&Only Spa is, hands-down, one of the best in the world. Meandering lush gardens lead you from the spa lobby to your own private treatment villa. Each villa has its own sumptuous daybed and some even come with an open-air courtyard and cabana. This is one spa experience you won't ever want to end. If it has to, you can follow it up with a visit to OBO Salon by Jonathan and George. Love your locks with professional blowouts, updos, color treatments – you name it.

This resort destination has it all: private plunge pools, stellar and award-winning service, Michelin-starred cuisine, breathtaking sunsets, lavish accommodations and an idyllic location...dearly beloved, what are you waiting for? **ido!**

ASK THE EXPERT



Treats, Traditions & Trends



Wedding trends and traditions are always changing, but there's one constant that hardly any couple can resist — a sweet treat to help them celebrate! We've asked the incredibly talented Melissa Samuels with Melissa's Fine Pastries out of New Orleans for her expert insight on wedding cake traditions, trends and all the tasty treats inbetween.

Q. Hosting a destination wedding allows couples to think outside the box in terms of tradition. How important is it for couples to stick with a traditional wedding cake vs. a sweet alternative like pies or cupcakes?

A. We find our clients want something a bit more bridal because so many details of a destination wedding are unconventional. There is just something about a tiered cake that screams "wedding."

Q. Our readers are saying "I do" all over the globe. Do you think their cake is a good opportunity to incorporate cultural touches like specific color schemes or patterns?

A. Absolutely! As a cake studio, we specialize in curating custom designs that incorporate a couple's history and culture. A sugar peacock feather or white chocolate replica of your grandmother's brooch can be that special touch that makes your wedding cake unique and memorable.

Q. Some countries/destinations have specific, unique wedding traditions (i.e. the Hawaiian lei exchanging ceremony). What are some creative ways couples could possibly incorporate those into their cake designs?

A. A favorite New Orleans wedding tradition is the cake pull. Cake pulls are small charms tied to ribbons or attached to bracelets and each charm has its own unique meaning. The charms are inserted





into the cake's bottom tier before the reception starts and the bridesmaids pull the ribbons from the cake during the party to reveal their charms. It's a great tradition shared by the bride and her girls and is fun for the guests to watch and enjoy. Other traditions can be represented in the cake's design. The Hawaiian lei exchange, for example, can be represented with handmade gum paste leis or a cascade of the traditional plumerias and orchids.

Q. It is said in fashion that everything old becomes new again. Do you think the same is true of cakes? For example, groom's cakes seem to come and go...

A. Cake trends follow fashion trends to a T. Chevron print, ruffles and touches of metallic have all been seen on cakes in recent years, but simplicity has made a major comeback. Many brides want a textured buttercream or "naked" cake that looks effortless and ready to eat.

Q. What's your stance on using fondant? Couples seem to have a love/hate relationship with it. It can add a flawless look, but sometimes a not-so-great taste.

A. Fondant is a sugar dough that is rolled into a thin sheet and wrapped around an iced cake. When used properly, it

is a delicious addition to a wedding cake that allows for a smooth, porcelain finish. Fondant is extremely versatile and can be used to make everything from lace designs to tree bark texture. It has gained a bad reputation because it is often used improperly. Sometimes the fondant itself is low quality, which makes for a not-so-tasty experience. We import our fondant from Switzerland and it has a very pleasant marshmallow-like flavor. We encourage our clients who are apprehensive to sample our fondant and taste the difference for themselves.

Q. What would you recommend for couples to get the best of both worlds – a pretty and delicious cake? Are there any techniques or combinations you prefer?

A. Couples can have a cake that looks just as beautiful as it tastes if they are working with a high-quality cake studio. You should never compromise taste for looks or vice versa. Our cakes are baked from scratch and layered with delicious, house-made fillings like chocolate mousse, lemon curd and whipped mascarpone. Then we ice them in whippy, soft Italian buttercream. Once we have created that foundation, we begin the decorating process. Cakes are sculpted, painted or airbrushed until they meet our client's vision. As a wedding-

focused bakery, we take the time to adorn your cake with handcrafted sugar pearls or custom painted monograms. A traditional, high-volume bakery may not have the luxury to include such detail.

Q. What are some of your favorite flavor combos? Also, could you give a few examples of ways couples could incorporate flavors that are unique to your location of New Orleans?

A. One of our favorite flavors is our White Chocolate Raspberry Cake. It's a white chocolate chiffon cake layered with whipped mascarpone, seedless raspberry jam and fresh raspberries. Red Velvet is also a Southern classic, with its cream cheese filling and beautiful color. But, for a quintessential New Orleans experience, we recommend our Café au Lait cake. It delicately incorporates that delicious coffee flavor with a touch of chicory and cream.

Q. What trends are currently popular and what trends do you foresee in the near future for cakes?

A. The naked cake is extremely popular right now with its simplicity and approachability. If Fashion Week and the Met Gala are any indication, we will see silver and intricate, textural designs on wedding cakes for 2017. **ido!**



Photos courtesy of (top to bottom, left to right): Dark Roux Photography (1st), Ardent Studio (2nd), Stevie Ramos Photography (3rd) & Matt and Julie Weddings (4th)





Suggested Guidelines for Gifting

WORDS BY ELAINE HILBELINK

1 I've been to a handful of destination weddings and some couples registered and some didn't. Now that I'm planning my own destination wedding, is it appropriate for us to create a traditional gift registry?

A traditional gift registry is perfectly acceptable for destination weddings, as well as traditional weddings. It can be a helpful tool for guests to determine what your needs are.

2 My fiancé and I have talked to our families and we already know we want to register, but we aren't sure what type of registries are out there for destination weddings. What are our best options?

An Internet search delivers a myriad of options for different types of bridal registries, as well as the traditional store gift options. For example, you might consider a digital registry like Amazon or Newlywish, a registry geared toward earning funds for your first home like Hatch My House, or a honeymoon registry such as Honeyfund. Ultimately, it is important to remember the gifts your guests give are their choice. A gift should always be something graciously given and not an expectation from the couple.

3 After we've registered for our wedding, what's the most appropriate way to let our guests know? Can we include the registry information on the invitation?

It is never acceptable to include registry information in your formal wedding invitation. It has become more en vogue to include the information on a shower invitation, since the purpose of the shower is to give gifts. If you have a website for your event, you can also mention registry information there. Letting friends and family know where you are

registered through word of mouth is also appropriate. Let your parents, siblings and attendants know the sites you are registered on and they can spread the word to people who inquire.

4 I want to get a little something for each of my bridesmaids as a "thank you" on the wedding day. Do I have to get the same thing for everyone? If I do get each of them something different, is it OK to spend a little more on my maid of honor?

Appreciation gifts for people in your wedding party can vary slightly according to tastes, but should be of comparable value. Traditionally, these gifts might be presented at a rehearsal dinner with words of appreciation. If everyone is receiving their gifts at the same time, it could be awkward and cause hurt feelings if there is a discrepancy in the type or value of the gifts. The last thing you need is "girl drama" right before your wedding.

5 We're packing light for our destination wedding to avoid heavy baggage fees and are concerned about transporting all our gifts after the wedding is over. Is it okay to ask our guests to have all gifts shipped to our house instead of bringing them to the actual wedding? If so, what's the best way to pass along our request?

On most bridal registries you are able to designate where you would like gifts shipped and you can certainly indicate your home address. Your guests are probably just as concerned about toting extra parcels and would prefer to have gifts delivered to your home. If you are having deliveries made to your home, it would be wise to have a neighbor looking out for deliveries and holding packages until you're back. Some registries offer set-delivery dates so you can time them with your return. *ido!*



RELAX 2 WAYS

Get Hot in Thermal

Costa Rica



Photos courtesy of: Tabacón



WORDS BY KATHY TILL

If an authentic adventure surrounded by nature is what you are looking for, then Tabacón Grand Spa Thermal Resort is your destination. Begin your journey to the resort with a three-hour adventurous drive (the resort offers private airport transfers) up the winding roads to the largest and only 100% natural network of thermal mineral springs in Costa Rica. This off-the-grid hot springs resort and spa is nestled in the rainforest with the extraordinary backdrop of the Arenal Volcano.

At the resort, you will experience a maze of green vegetation where you will find handcrafted furnishings made by local artists. There is no need to heat the water at the resort

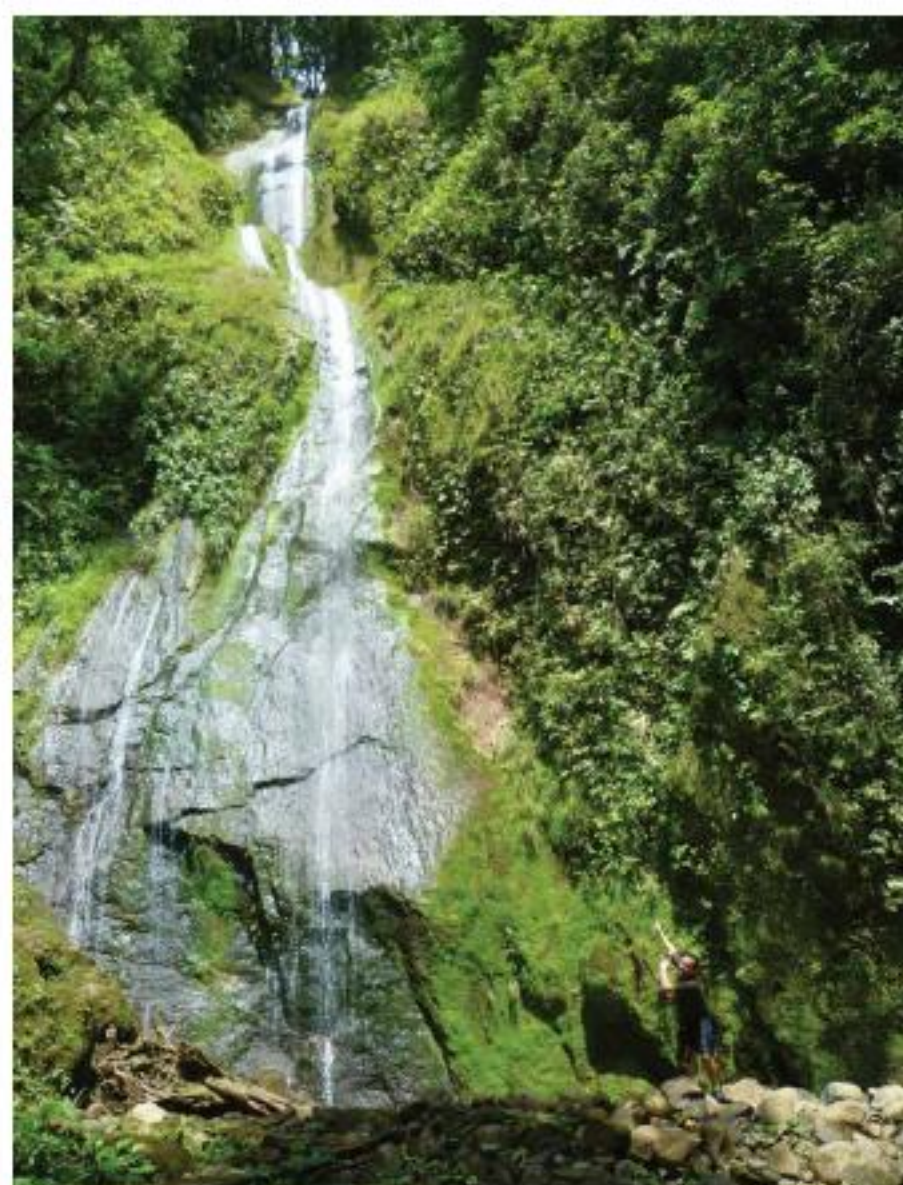
because of the hot magma from the volcano. Meander your way through the Shangri-La Gardens and relax in one of the many cocoon-shaped cabanas or just enjoy any of the quiet, secluded spots that extend over acres of therapeutic natural hot springs. Create the perfect mood no matter the weather and lounge in mineral water temperatures ranging from 72 to 105 degrees-Fahrenheit.

Looking for that special romantic moment? Opt for the "Over the Top" candlelit, five-course Champagne gourmet meal or drift off into rapture with a couple's spa treatment. Relax in an open-air, secluded bungalow along with your own private, natural-heated Jacuzzi and, of course, Champagne.

The resort will coordinate activities for you with Jacamar Naturalist Tours. They offer a variety of adventures including zip lining (which started in Costa Rica), hiking and horseback riding where you might stop to embrace the essence of nature.

A favorite adventure is just outside of La Fortuna, where a unique 15-minute hike through the tropical jungle leads to an awe-inspiring, jaw-dropping 200-foot high waterfall. Enjoy a swim and just relax in the wonder of it all.

If you are a thrill-seeker, someone who craves adventure, likes to travel through the jungle or is just looking for that ultimate romantic moment in time, then pura vida (pure life) and Tabacón are calling to you!



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RELAX 2 WAYS

Surrender to *St. Lucia*

WORDS BY JOHN ROARK

Each of the Caribbean islands is beautiful in its own way, but only St. Lucia has the Pitons, two majestically soaring volcanic spires that are impossible to ignore (not that you'd want to). The island is epically romantic: lush hills and valleys, swaying palm trees and pristine beaches are just the beginning. Big smiles, genuinely welcoming hospitality and unforgettable adventure are all part of the St. Lucian culture.

STAY

Rendezvous is the Caribbean's first couples-only, all-inclusive resort. Surrounded by tropical gardens and the island's longest white sand beach, Rendezvous has been owned by the Barnard family for more than 50 years. Originally the family's private home, the Barnards opened their doors to neighbors and friends and a resort was born. "We treated all guests as family, not strangers," says Managing Director Andrew Barnard, who grew up on-site.

Today that welcoming tradition lives on. Laid-back, friendly and unpretentious, you really do feel like a member of the family. "We remember a visitor's name, their favorite cocktail, we treat each other with respect and kindness, and that helps to create a very welcoming and positive atmosphere," says Barnard. "We don't wear name tags at Rendezvous, because who wears name tags in their home?"

Everything about Rendezvous is designed to encourage couples to unplug, forget the stress of the outside world and reconnect, rediscover and just *be*. Guest rooms do not include televisions ("Talk to each other!" urges Barnard) and the resort's nickname, "A Place of Stolen Time," more than delivers.

EAT

Rendezvous offers stellar cuisine, from glamorous, fine French-West Indian dining at The Trysting Place to no-shoes-allowed, toes-in-the-sand, water's edge Malabar Beach Club – our personal favorite for a rehearsal or wedding dinner.

Celebrations at Rendezvous are unmatched in the islands. Under a brilliant blue sky with the sea gently lapping at sugar-white sands, weddings, anniversaries and vow renewals can be as grand or as intimate as you wish. Whatever life moment you're celebrating, your experience will be unique. **ido!**



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Photos by Katie Stinnett & Jose Villa



Fall in Love with London

WORDS BY CAROLYN STEERE

Every city has a unique vibe and London offers a very complex and interesting one. As you meander through the streets, you can't help but recognize that this modern metropolis is built on a foundation of rich history including coronations and royal weddings. Stunning architecture, palaces, parks, monuments and cathedrals are all yours to experience and explore, and I personally enjoyed every moment of it. The city is a cinch to navigate, but if you get turned around, you will find very polite Londoners eager to help.

Our journey started just 20 minutes from London's Heathrow Airport in an idyllic country setting near one of the Queen's residences, Windsor Castle. Coworth Park is quintessential England, complete with lush gardens, walking paths through fields of wildflowers surrounding an elegant manor house, an equine center complete with polo fields, and a luxury spa. When you feel "peckish" there are several restaurants on-site including Restaurant Coworth Park, which serves classic British cuisine, the Drawing Room, where you can find light refreshments, The Spatisserie and the rustic charm of The Barn. Coworth Park offers a number of wedding venues including lovely lawn locations and indoor spaces that can accommodate 20-100 guests for your English countryside wedding.



Coworth Park



Coworth Park



Coworth Park

MARRY HERE, HONEYMOON THERE



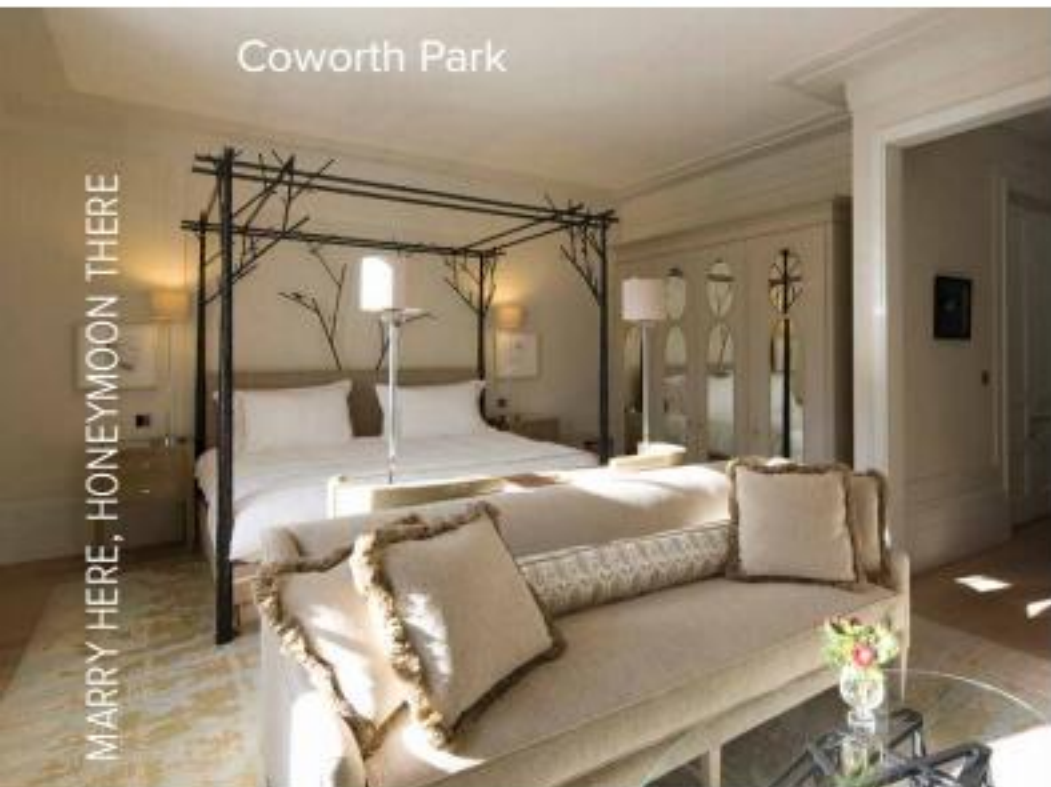
The Dorchester



The Dorchester



Coworth Park



The Dorchester

In London “proper” and adjacent to Hyde Park, The Dorchester is where we would direct you if your invitation to the palace gets lost in the post. This 5-star luxury property treats you like royalty from the moment you enter the elegant lobby adorned with floor-to-ceiling floral displays. It is difficult not to feel like a princess when you awaken in your draped canopy bed to gaze around at the sumptuous décor of your spacious bedroom.

The Dorchester opened its doors in 1931 and since then has been the home-away-from-home of royalty, political leaders and a long list of well-known celebrities. Three award-winning restaurants at The Dorchester offer a variety of exceptional culinary experiences including The Grill

where you can enjoy modern British tastes, French cuisine at Alain Ducasse and authentic Cantonese at China Tang.

This iconic hotel is no doubt one of the most “posh” locations you can find for an uber-elegant, glamorous destination wedding. The venues include the exquisite Ballroom for up to 500 guests or a more intimate setting like the Penthouse and Pavilion with its private terrace and stunning city views.

Just steps from The Dorchester is its sister property, 45 Park Lane. Totally different in feel and style, this trendy, contemporary hotel is the perfect complement for a chic rehearsal dinner in the spectacular Penthouse Suite with its private terrace where your guests can





take in stunning views of London. Every spacious room and suite overlooks Hyde Park and the hotel's central location provides a perfect base for exploring all that London has to offer. Striking examples of contemporary art decorate the interior of the hotel including CUT at 45 Park Lane, Wolfgang Puck's American steakhouse, and Bar 45.

Your destination wedding event must include two English traditions: a visit to an authentic English pub to down a pint and munch on fish and chips, and an afternoon tea experience with fine china, savory sandwiches, scones and English cakes. The Palm Court at The Ritz London, one of The Leading Hotels of the World, was the first place where young ladies were allowed to attend tea alone and is still a perfect place to experience this English pastime.

Glamorous and hip, elegant and rich in tradition...London is a blend of culture and history that is sure to please you and your guests for a fairy tale destination wedding that will be remembered for a lifetime.



The Ritz London

Photo courtesy of: The Ritz London, a member of The Leading Hotels of the World



Celebrate
the beginning of forever
in paradise.

SIRENIS
HOTELS & RESORTS



Venice

Get Lost in
“The Floating City”



Honeymooners who have never been to Italy need to put this European classic at the top of their list. More specifically, Venice is the place to be with the one you love. It offers everything required for a romantic trip for two: mouth-watering cuisine, world-class wine and mind-blowing history. Once the flights are booked, be sure to secure a room at the 5-star JW Marriott Venice Resort & Spa. Enjoy an exhilarating, 40-minute ride by water taxi from Venice Marco Polo Airport and dock directly inside the resort’s lobby – talk about making an entrance!

The resort opened in 2015 with 266 rooms and suites set on the private Isola delle Rose. This “summer resort” is open from February through October and is serenely located within the Venetian Lagoon. Previous to the JW Marriott’s opening, the island had been abandoned for 40 years – making this renovation project one for the books. What resulted were five levels of accommodations, ranging from the loft-style La Maisonette suites to the private Villa Rose, which features two bedrooms and its own pool. The hotel’s interiors are trendy with a mix of modern design and Italian rusticity. While you might not know you’re in Italy based on the décor, the island’s natural setting more than makes up for it with immaculately-kept olive groves and century-old gardens. Isola delle Rose is also one of the few islands in Venice that isn’t surrounded by walls – granting you unobstructed, 360-degree views from the Marriott’s adults-only rooftop pool.

Start your honeymoon off right by visiting the on-site GOCO Spa. It’s the largest spa in Venice and you could easily spend the entire day here with treatment rooms boasting outdoor patios and an extensive “humid area” that includes a vitality pool, hammam, sauna and biosauna. Kick back and relax on one of the spa’s heated chaises or submerged hydro chairs. Once you’ve slipped into a blissful state, hop aboard the resort’s complimentary water shuttle and enjoy a quick 15-minute ride into the heart of Venice. The JW Marriott has its own private slip right in front of the Royal Gardens, so you can step off deck and right into the hustle and bustle of Piazza San Marco.

In the era of Google Maps, you will be tempted to plan your route through the city, but resist the urge – your maps are no good here, anyway. With its ancient



narrow winding streets and bridges, Venice has managed to outsmart modern technology. Having never visited before, I found myself being pulled along with the crowds. The secret to getting the most out of this beautiful city is to flee in the opposite direction of the big draws like the Rialto Bridge and the Grand Canal. It's only when you find the less busy thoroughfares that you can really step back and enjoy the city's charm. My advice is to head toward the Galleria dell'Accademia where you'll see breathtaking portions of the Grand Canal, sans the crowds. Grab a gelato and take a seat on the canal steps to watch the graceful gondolas go by. Afterward, walk off those calories and tour the Doge's Palace where you can retrace the steps of the infamous Casanova and cross over the Bridge of Sighs.

Venice is loveliest in the evening; when the crowds have dissipated and the sun no longer casts harsh shadows along the narrow alleys and canals. Set sail for home and dinner at the Marriott as you ogle over the monuments shimmering in the soft glow of the setting sun. Don't be surprised if you're sitting alongside fashionable locals catching a lift to the resort's Dopolavoro Dining Room. Awarded its first Michelin star only six months after opening, Dopolavoro is the place to be and you can expect a sensational meal courtesy of 2-star Michelin Chef Giancarlo Perbellini. The restaurant is known for an interactive eating style and each course comes with a bread pairing – be still my beating heart.

There are literally countless options when it comes to deciding on where to take your honeymoon, but I can't imagine a scenario in which you would be disappointed after spending this most special of times in Venice. **ido!**





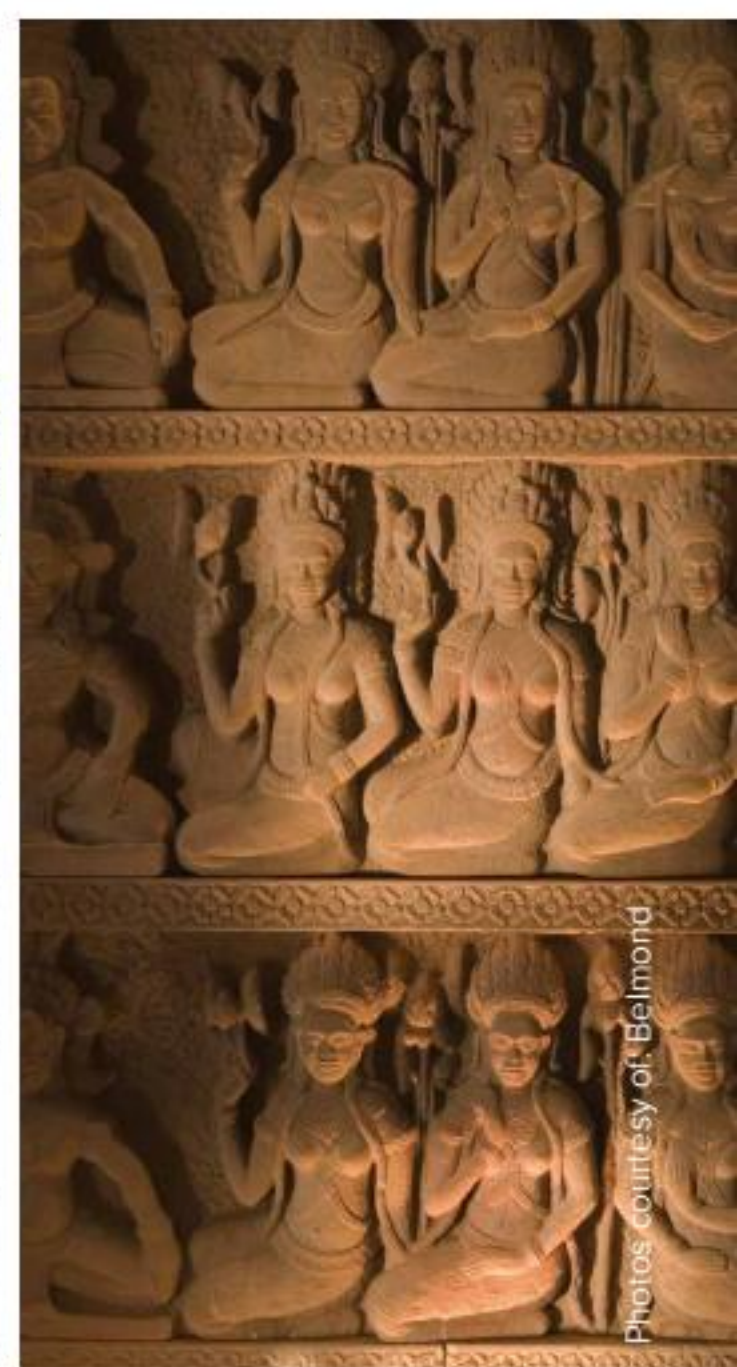
THE HONEYMOONIST

SECRETS OF CAMBODIA

WORDS BY SUSAN MOYNIHAN



All photos on this spread:
Belmond La Résidence d'Angkor



Photos courtesy of Belmond





Cambodia is high on many honeymooners' wish lists and with good reason. This Southeast Asian country, wedged between Thailand, Laos and Vietnam, offers fascinating culture, amazing food and an incredibly warm, welcoming culture that is even more poignant when you consider the country's tragic past of war and genocide. Here's how to honeymoon right.

CULTURE HUB: SIEM REAP

Cambodia's biggest claim to (tourism) fame is Angkor Wat, a massive temple complex built between the 9th and 15th century by the Khmer Empire. The largest religious monument in the world, the sandstone complex spans 400 acres of carved walls, temples and statuary on multiple levels. But, Angkor Wat is just one of the temples in the area and not even the prettiest. Ta Prohm is shrouded in oversized banyans and rainforest vines, creating a mystical mood. The Bayon is a climbable maze with hundreds of massive faces carved out of stone. You can take a

sunrise elephant ride through the jungle past Buddhist temples that ring the outside.

No place showcases modern Cambodia like downtown Siem Reap. This city was once a sleepy outpost, home to NGOs and backpackers. Today, you'll find luxury hotels and sexy restaurants. The shopping is fantastic, from the lively Night Market – an explosion of people, sound and color – to high-end galleries like Artisans Angkor, selling handmade crafts and goods.

WHERE TO STAY:

Belmond La Résidence d'Angkor

Set in a walled compound on the banks of the Siem Reap River, this 62-room luxury hotel is in the heart of everything, but feels like an oasis. The leafy courtyard pool is ideal for dipping after a morning of touring in the Cambodian heat.

Photos courtesy of: Belmond





All photos on this page: Raffles Hotel Le Royal



CITY SLICKER: PHNOM PENH

Cambodia's capital city is a perfect example of the vast changes sweeping through Southeast Asia. You can't turn around without seeing construction cranes and yes, it's hectic – scooters, tuk-tuks and trucks swarm the streets with no rhyme or reason, but everyone somehow gets where they're going. The centerpiece is the stunning Royal Palace complex and the long, pedestrian promenade that offers great people-watching come sunset, with locals and visitors making-up the scene. The lively Night Market is open from Friday through Sunday and offers live bands and street food alongside vendors bartering for trinkets. One must-stop for drinks or dinner is the Foreign Correspondents Club, which was a favorite hangout for journalists during the Vietnam War and has excellent food and a rooftop bar with great river views.

Phnom Penh is also a sobering place to bear witness to the reign of the Khmer Rouge, which lasted for four years and caused the deaths of nearly a quarter of the population. Today, the solemn ground of Choeung Ek is marked by a Buddhist stupa containing more than 5,000 skulls, in tribute to those whose lives were lost. The Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum honors the people who suffered and died there. Both sites are hard to visit, but only in seeing that tragic history can one fully appreciate how far Cambodia

has come in the years since, and how we must all work together to make sure the same tragedy is never repeated.

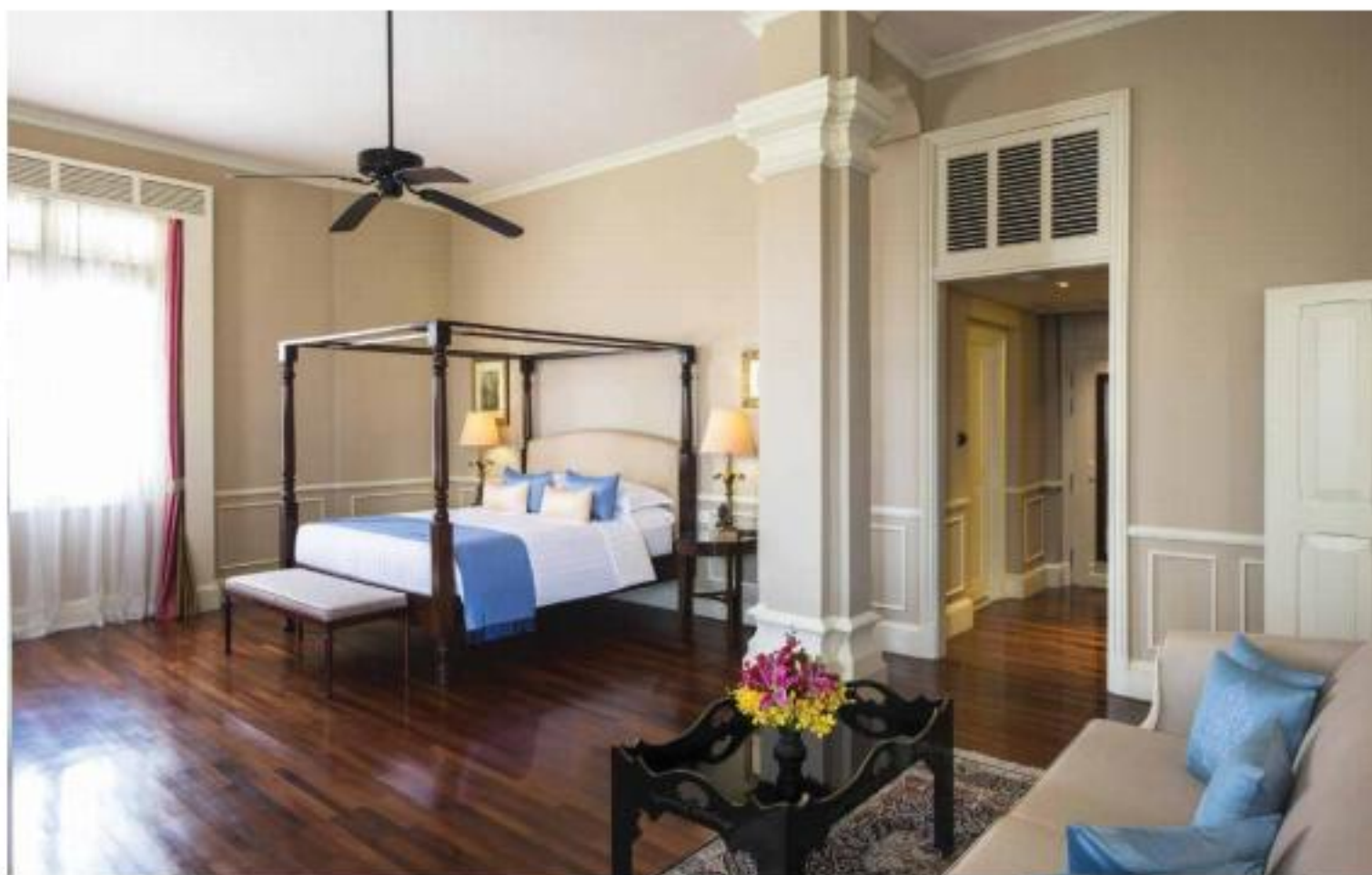
WHERE TO STAY:

Raffles Hotel Le Royal

Royalty, heads of state, leading journalists, even celebrities like Charlie Chaplin and Jackie O have checked into this landmark hotel, which opened its doors in 1929. Of the 175 rooms, the historic Landmark Rooms stand out as most romantic, with period details like original, claw-foot bathtubs. Drinks at the Elephant Bar are a must, as much for the eclectic, old-world vibe as for the expertly poured libations.

BEACH ESCAPE: KOH RONG

Cambodia's coastline isn't long like neighboring Vietnam or Thailand, but it shares the same beautiful water that makes those countries top the international beach scene. The port city of Sihanoukville draws backpackers looking for nightlife and parties. For a honeymoon, we suggest hopping a ferry from here to the Koh Rong archipelago, a collection of islands 30 minutes offshore. The crowds are fewer and the rates are much less than you would pay in the more frequented countries next door. Activities here are what you want at the beach: snorkeling, sea



Photos courtesy of: Raffles Hotels & Resorts





Photos courtesy of (top to bottom, left to right): Song Saa (1st-3rd & 5th-7th) & Carla Ten Eyck Photography (4th)

kayaking, sailing and just relaxing. But, if you're feeling more adventurous, you can arrange a tour through untouched rainforest and mangroved estuaries at Ream National Park, an 80-mile protected area that spans the mainland and offshore islands. A visit to the Buddhist temple at Koh Rong to get a blessing on your new marriage is another romantic option.

WHERE TO STAY:
Song Saa

This private-island eco resort was built from scratch by two expats who fell in love with Cambodia's culture and natural beauty. Whether you opt for a beachside bungalow or an overwater villa, enjoy extras such as a king bed, sunken bathtub, outdoor patio with daybed and your own private pool. **ido!**



LEARN MORE ABOUT THE HONEYMOONIST, SUSAN MOYNIHAN (AKA TRAVELER IN CHIEF), AT THEHONEYMOONIST.COM

CAMBODIA TRAVEL TIPS

DRESS CODE: The country is serious about dress code at temples, monasteries and culturally significant sites like killing fields. You need to cover knees and shoulders – and scarves over tank tops don't count. Think short sleeves at a minimum. If they deem your dress too scanty, guards have the right to turn you away without refunding your entry ticket.

CUISINE: Khmer cuisine is flavorful and diverse, drawing influences from neighboring Thailand and Vietnam (rice, fish sauce) as well as India (curries and spices). We couldn't get enough of curry-style fish amok and tangy beef lok lak.

CURRENCY: The official Khmer currency is the Cambodian Riel. But, due to the strong influence of UN and NGO groups helping the country rebound, the US dollar is accepted pretty much everywhere; you'll even find greenbacks at local ATM machines.

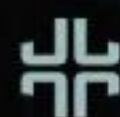
GETTING AROUND: Cambodia is a very poor country; highways (where you find them) are mostly two lanes and potholes are prevalent, as is traffic. It's easiest to hop by air from spot to spot or cruise along the Mekong River for an easy glimpse into local life. (See The New Generation of Cruising on pg. 44.)






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BALI: Far From Home, Close to Heaven



WORDS BY KATHY TILL

True, it's a far journey, but don't be apprehensive about a wedding or honeymoon in Bali. This somewhat primitive island is exotic, but more importantly, it fosters emotional and physical well-being, centered in tradition and community.

Your destination on the island, The Mulia Bali, is where you will discover the ultimate in attentiveness. It comes as no surprise it made the 2016 "Gold List" of Favorite Hotels in the World by *Condé Nast Traveler*. As you explore acres of prodigious green lawns and groomed gardens, experience a true 5-star hotel where the staff caters to your every need.

The Mulia Bali is not your typical cookie-cutter wedding venue. Here you experience 24/7 butler service, along with a variety of choices that begin with deciding which of the properties best suits you. The Mulia and Mulia Villas (one to six bedrooms) both overlook the Indian Ocean and were inspired by the terraced Balinese rice paddy fields that stretch out over the sandy beach of Nusa Dua.

You can customize your wedding (nothing is too big or too small) with countless choices, beginning with the first-of-its-kind, floating glass Eternity Chapel, a private white sand beach or the Harmony Chapel that is nestled high on a hilltop overlooking



Photos courtesy of (top to bottom): The Mulia Bali (1st & 3rd) & iStock (2nd)





the Indian Ocean. Investigate and choose from any of the ten restaurants and bars while you take pleasure in the delicious cuisines from seven different regions, which is nothing short of pure delight. Don't forget to end your culinary experience by indulging your sweet tooth with desserts like you have never seen or tasted before.

Design a wellness day and spa experience that offer all the amenity "must haves" – including a one-of-a-kind ice grotto. The outdoor pools are reminiscent of a luxurious Roman bathhouse and The Mulia Bali offers a complete variety of signature massages, which will deliver a day of blissful calm.

If the movie "Eat Pray Love" is a favorite, then plan a travel day to Ubud, which is considered the cultural center of Bali. Take a 15-minute, must-see adventure through rice fields to Sari Organik where you will partake in and appreciate an unusual open café that provides you with organic dishes designed especially for the truly health-conscious. It will become an immediate favorite.

Visit the cliffside religious site of Uluwatu Temple and be enlightened by the traditional Kecak Dance or choose to stop for a photo-op and explore the famous popular landscape scenes of the Tegalalang Rice Terrace. It's here that a revered holy man passes down traditional stories.

It is Balinese tradition to believe that everything that happens in life, both happiness and sorrow, always comes from and should return back to the gods. Once upon a time, those gods smiled down and blessed the Tirta Empul Temple where Hindus give offerings and bathe in the healing, natural spring water. This is where self-contentment and the beauty of Bali become synonymous.

Staying at The Mulia Bali is like catching up with old friends. Explore new adventures, discover who you really are and who you will be as a couple. It is nothing less than an enlightening adventure where you will gain a deep spiritual love for total togetherness.

A Tale of Three Cities: PRAGUE, VIENNA AND BUDAPEST



Vienna

Photos courtesy of (top to bottom): The Ritz-Carlton, Vienna, The Ritz-Carlton, Budapest & Golden Well Hotel

WORDS BY STACEY MARCUS

Naysayers contesting that fairy tales do come true will be hard-pressed to find evidence after castle hopping through Prague, Vienna and Budapest. The trio of storied capital cities are unique gems. They share streets filled with the sounds of church bells ringing, street musicians performing, and the scent of romance and heavenly confections perfuming the air.

A Central European honeymoon in the Czech Republic, Austria and Hungary feels like a waltz through the pages of a pop-up storybook filled with medieval castles and patios busy with merry patrons.

PRAGUE: THE CITY OF ONE HUNDRED SPIRES

"The city of one hundred spires is brimming with rich history, endless bridges, diverse landscape and narrow streets dotted with enchanting architecture," says Zuzana Šelová, Sales and Marketing Executive for the Aria Hotel Prague. Honeymooners will adore the Golden Well Hotel, a hidden gem of a 16th century hideaway below the walls of the Prague Castle. The hotel boasts 17 gorgeously appointed rooms and two suites. Understated elegance permeates the property where terrace dining offers heart-stopping views of Prague. Shared areas welcome cozy chats



The Ritz-Carlton, Budapest



Golden Well Hotel





Aria Hotel Prague

with guests praising outstanding staff whose joy of delivering superior service shines.

Sister property Aria Hotel Prague is cobblestone steps away, located next to Vrtba Garden. Guests of one of the 51 lovely rooms enjoy access to the gorgeous gardens as well as a mesmerizing musical-themed setting, with each of the four floors paying tribute to a genre of music. Dining at Coda Restaurant's rooftop terrace and savoring the 360-degree panoramic views of Prague is a royal treat.



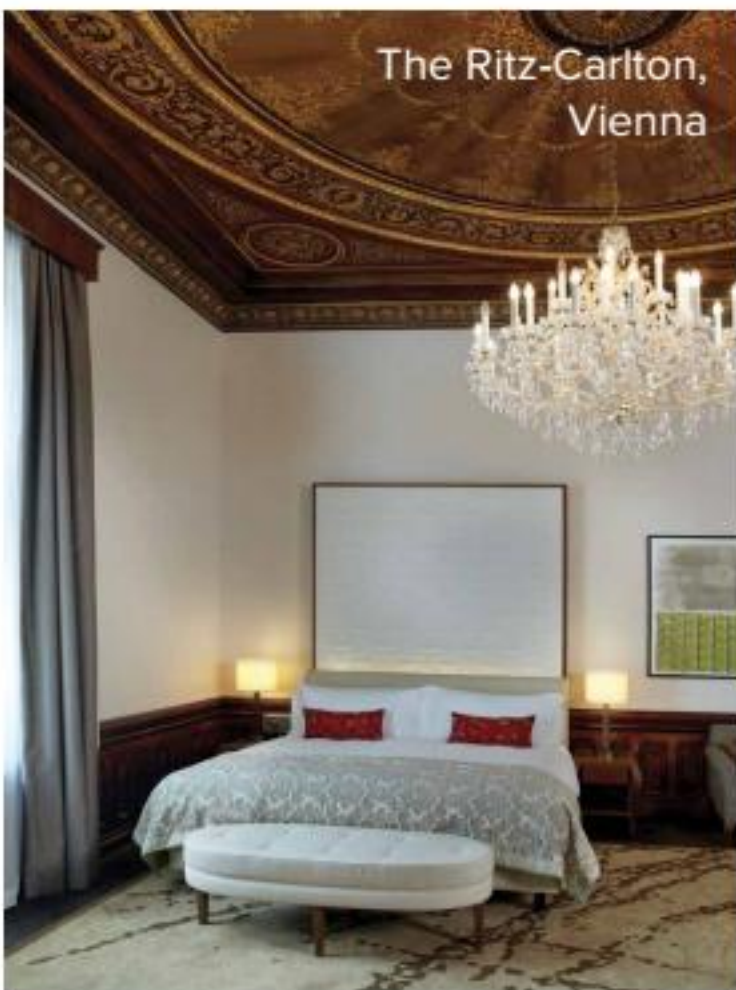
The Ritz-Carlton, Budapest

Photos courtesy of (top to bottom, left to right): Aria Hotel Prague, The Ritz-Carlton, Budapest (2nd & 5th) & The Ritz-Carlton, Vienna (3rd & 4th)

VIENNA: THE CITY OF MUSIC

One would expect the city that houses Klimt's masterpiece, *The Kiss*, to be sealed with a smooch and Vienna paints the town with love exquisitely. "Vienna is the city of music and offers a rich variety of both classical and modern performances in historic institutions, such as the state opera house and the Viennese music hall, both of which are within walking distance of The Ritz-Carlton, Vienna," says Jean-Paul Dantil, General Manager.

Guests can select from 202 spacious and sumptuous rooms and suites and enjoy a smorgasbord of delights at the farm-to-table Dstrikt Steakhouse or a luxurious treatment at the spa. Couples looking to enjoy exclusive tailored experiences will be awed by the imaginations of the concierge service at The Ritz-Carlton, Vienna. Whether you fancy a romantic, candlelit dinner in the Giant Ferris Wheel, a private cocktail reception at the Spanish Riding School, a horse-and-carriage ride followed by a picnic in Stadtpark or a private waltz lesson, The Ritz-Carlton, Vienna paves the path to paradise.



The Ritz-Carlton, Vienna



The Ritz-Carlton, Vienna

BUDAPEST: THE PEARL OF THE DANUBE

The first glimpse of the illuminated Chain Bridge and Buda Castle over the Danube River sets the stage for the magic that awaits in Budapest. An old city reborn into a dazzling destination, Budapest is a fabulous spot to celebrate love and life.

The Ritz-Carlton, Budapest was recently reimagined and is smack in the center of the Hungarian capital. Tradition with a modern twist describes the stylish interiors of the hotel that features 200 guest rooms, including 30 suites. Guests are treated to bespoke experiences as concierge services await to grant your every wish and Sommelier Daniel Varga handpicks a bottle of wine to pair with one of the Hungarian-inspired dishes at Deák St. Kitchen. "The Pearl of the Danube holds a magical allure for honeymooners and is known as one of the most romantic places in the world," says Dantil. "With its fairy tale architecture, UNESCO World Heritage Sites and unsurpassed thermal spas, it offers newly married couples a unique cultural opportunity, as well as being perfectly situated for romance."



Budapest

FIJI: A South Pacific Sojourn



WORDS BY JUDY KOUTSKY

The South Pacific has always held a strong appeal for honeymooners and for good reason. It's a beautiful locale that's not overly touristy. Plus, the Fijians offer a warm and friendly culture.

Distance wise, it's not too far either. There are direct flights on Fiji Airways from both LAX and San Francisco. If you splurge and fly business, you get a completely flat-bed seat (you'll be well rested when you land) and the yummy food is curated by Fijian celebrity chef, Lance Seeto.

Once in Fiji, there are many beautiful resorts that cater to honeymooners – each with their own appeal. This destination is perfect for couples who want to relax and de-stress, but also desire adventure options at the ready.

"We chose Fiji because it was so remote and I wanted that exotic, honeymoon-on-the-beach experience," says Gianna Lombardi, from Texas, who honeymooned in Fiji in 2016. "I am more of a 'relax on the beach' kind of girl and my husband is definitely more on the adventurous side, so we each got what we wanted out of the experience. I am so glad that we chose Fiji. It is one of the most beautiful places I've traveled to."

At Nanuku Auberge Resort, the rooms are simply amazing. Villas come with private outdoor plunge pools and Jacuzzis and the inside includes an oversized bathtub, full kitchen, living room and a separate media room (in case it rains and you want to snuggle up with a movie). The food is also some of the best in the country.



Qamea Resort and Spa Fiji



Qamea Resort and Spa Fiji

Photos courtesy of: Qamea Resort and Spa Fiji



The bread and pastries are all made fresh daily and you could just fill up on those, but it would be a shame because the freshly-caught snapper, rock crab and amazing desserts should not be missed. Each guest gets their own bicycle during their stay, so you'll bike off all the calories while riding to the beach, town or exploring the Cultural Center. Daily excursions at the resort include kayaking (this is one of the best places to kayak as it's along the mangroves in a calm river, protected from the wind), snorkeling, hiking to waterfalls, shark diving (some of the best in the world) and village tours. Nanuku Auberge Resort is the place to go if you're looking for upscale luxury with a variety of activities at your fingertips (it's known as the adventure capital of Fiji).

If you want to stay somewhere a little more rustic, head to Qamea Resort And Spa Fiji, the only resort on Qamea Island. You arrive via boat and seeing the resort from the water is stunning. Here, the resort blends in beautifully with its island surroundings, with individual thatch bures (villas) set amidst the palm trees. The

resort prides itself on barefoot luxury: beachfront tiki-lit dinners, jungle massages where you hear the soft songs of birds while you're getting pampered and long walks on the beach. The staff is also extremely hospitable and warm.

If you want an upscale resort feel, but on a private island, head to Yasawa Island Resort & Spa. Here, the 18 traditionally thatched, beachfront bures come with a spacious living room, outdoor shower and the rooms are quite large. Due to the island's location, the sunrises and sunsets are simply stunning. One of the most popular excursions – especially for honeymooners – is the island picnic lunch. A boat drops you and your hubby off on a gorgeous island beach with lobster, Champagne, a plethora of culinary treats and then schedules a pick-up time. It's an intimate, romantic afternoon in a gorgeous locale. What could be better?

Yes, there are plenty of places to go on your honeymoon, but Fiji really stands in a class of its own. **ido!**



Yasawa Island Resort & Spa



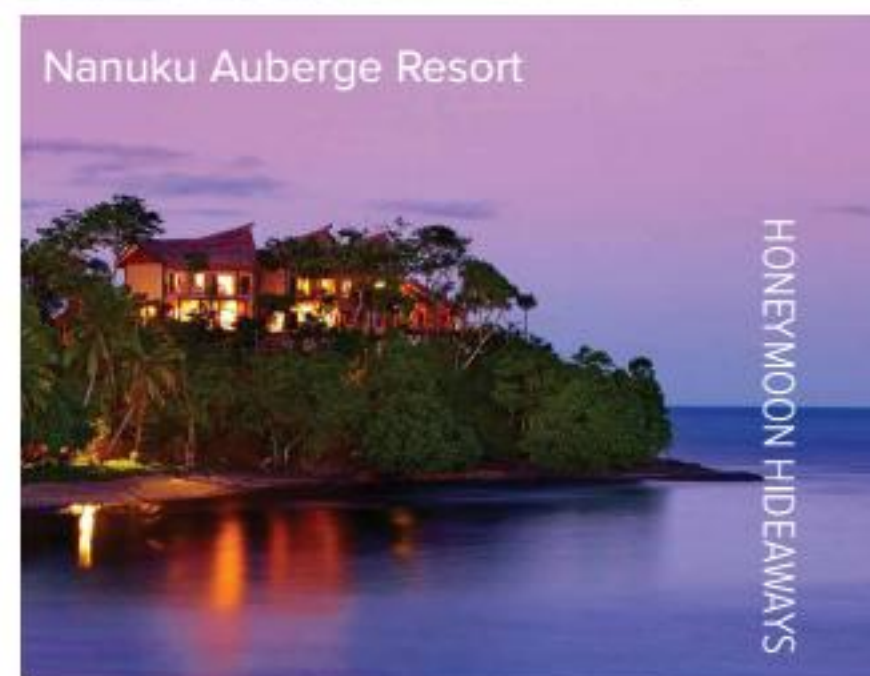
Photos courtesy of (top to bottom, left to right): Yasawa Island Resort & Spa (1st-4th) & Auberge Resorts (5th-7th)



Nanuku Auberge Resort



Nanuku Auberge Resort



Nanuku Auberge Resort

HONEYMOON HIDEAWAYS





ROCK OUT

Your Rehearsal Dinner

And Other Ideas for Pre & Post-Wedding Events



WORDS BY: COURTNEY COX
IMAGES BY: JENNIFER YARBRO
PHOTOGRAPHY
PLANNING, DESIGN & DÉCOR BY:
TODD EVENTS

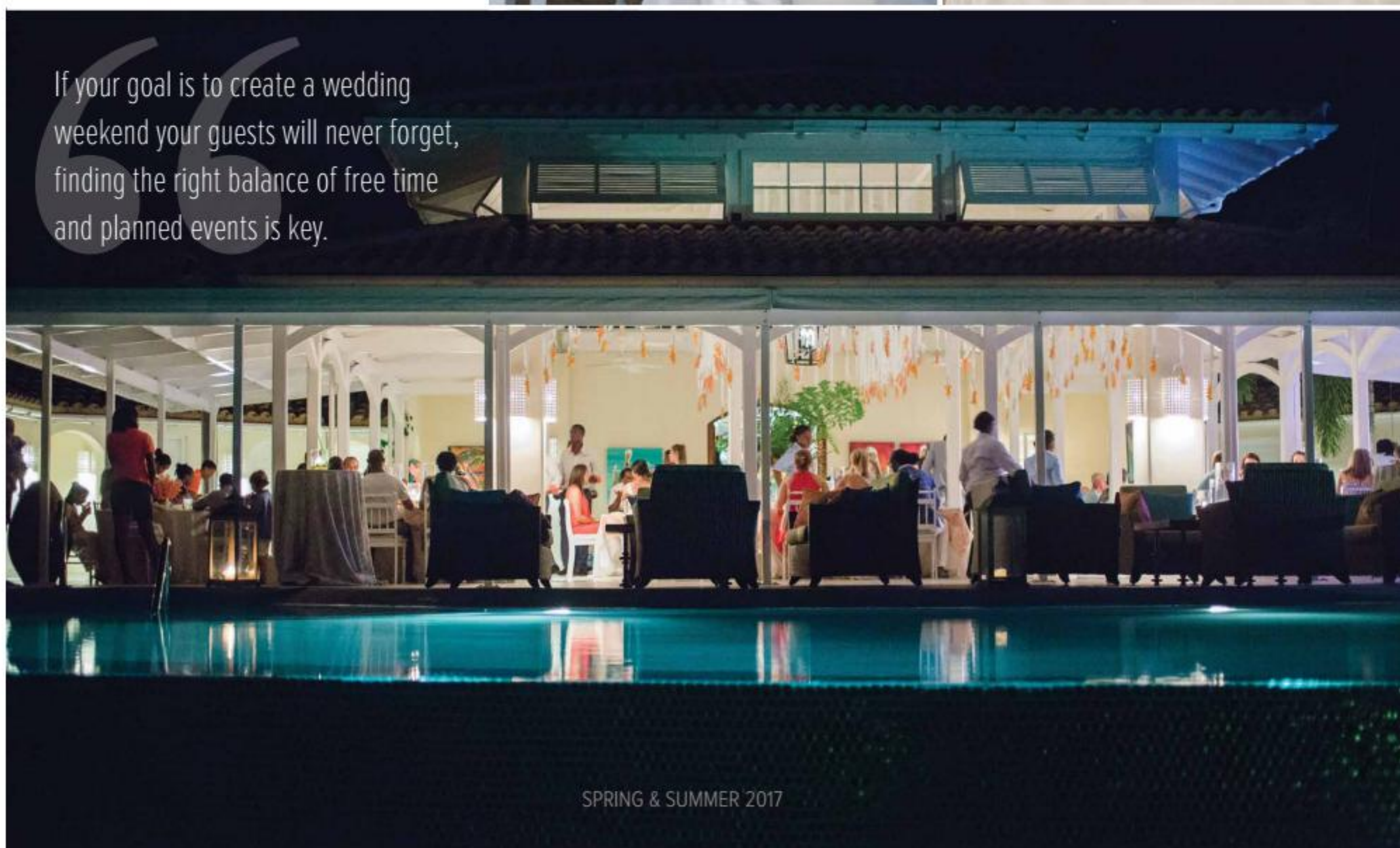
Opting for a destination wedding affords you endless options when it comes to customizing your event. You can stick with all the traditional to-dos, pick and choose what has the most meaning to you and your partner, or even create some new traditions of your own. The bottom line is, you and your guests will be on vacation together and they will likely be game for anything. We've found that more and more couples are taking advantage of getting away with their loved ones and planning detailed, organized events beyond W-Day. From elaborately themed welcome parties to a post-wedding send-off brunch, being a guest at a destination wedding has some serious perks.

As an example of a pre-wedding event done with a little extra imagination, check out the following pages of Kristen and Jeffery's rehearsal dinner. Their event designer and planner, Todd Fiscus, also weighs-in on what made it extraordinary.

Kristen and Jeffery wanted their Antigua and Barbuda destination wedding weekend to be packed full of joyous occasions. In addition to their beautiful wedding (see pg. 114), the couple hosted a chic, island-inspired rehearsal dinner. They worked with the planning and design team at Todd Events to create a festive atmosphere and a style that was



If your goal is to create a wedding weekend your guests will never forget, finding the right balance of free time and planned events is key.





infused throughout the weekend's events. For the rehearsal dinner, the couple decided on shades of orange for the florals and décor. "The beautiful orchids hanging from the ceiling looked like flames of candles hanging upside-down," says the bride. "It was surreal."

You might already have a style in mind for your wedding, but what about the other events? We asked the event and design planning team behind Kristen and Jeffery's destination wedding and rehearsal dinner to share their insight. "We try not to create a theme, but a subtle through line," says Todd Fiscus of Todd Events. "Something that allows the experience to be connected and [helps guests] 'make sense' of what they are experiencing. Details should be so well connected that the experience envelops the guest."

If your goal is to create a wedding weekend your guests will never forget, finding the right balance of free time

and planned events is key. "It's not just about parties, it's about all the time in between," says Todd. "We try not to over schedule a weekend and leave plenty of time for these experiences." Aside from crafting a style story and deciding on your number of events, another key to success for pre and post-wedding events is a strong relationship with your wedding planner or event designer.

Planning a wedding from afar can be tough, so it's important you have someone on the ground you can trust. In fact, Todd Fiscus stressed the importance of a strong planner-couple relationship when we asked him how other couples can pull-off an amazing wedding weekend. "The relationship [quality] that works the best for me is trust," says Todd. "I can guarantee that feeling of trust makes [my team] stronger, more attentive and [we] do better work because that trust is a gift. A client/planner relationship that is built

on fear of failure or worry is never good. Planners start to second-guess their gut, and after 20 years of creating these occasions, I demand more from myself than my client could ever ask."

Whether you opt to keep things simple and focus on your wedding day or go all-out and plan additional events, keep the heart of the matter at hand. It's important to craft a destination wedding that not only reflects your personality as a couple, but takes your guests' experience into account. **ido!**

VENDORS: Photographer: Jennifer Yarbrough Photography, jenniferyarbrough.com, Planning, Design & Décor: Todd Events, toddevents.com, Venue: The Pool Grille at Jumby Bay Island in St. John's, Antigua, jumbybayisland.com, Linens: La Tavola Linen, latavolalinen.com, Rentals: Pink Mongoose Events, barnesjyb.wixsite.com/thepinkmongoose, Bride's Dress: Romona Keveza from Joan Pillow Bridal Salon, romonakeveza.com & joanpillowbridal.com, Bride's Vegan Shoes: Parisxox, etsy.com/shop/Parisxox, Dinner Music: Foreplay, DJ: Lucy Wrubel, lucywrubel.com



becca rillo
PHOTOGRAPHY



www.beccarillo.com

TO HAVE & TO HOLD

WORDS BY JENNIFER STEIN & COURTNEY COX

Perfect

BODY BEAUTIFUL



Yoga Download

Traditional yoga classes are not always convenient. If you're like us and constantly on the go, a daily visit to a yoga studio might not be in the cards. Yoga Download is accessible from your computer or streaming device and, therefore, available pretty much anywhere. Select from hundreds of different classes and instructors and tailor-fit your practice to your needs. **Starting at \$12 per month, yogadownload.com**

UpBra

Let's face it; sometimes our "girls" need a little lift. Strapless bras are notorious for sliding down and making us constantly readjust. Not to mention, they offer hardly any support. The UpBra is a true piece of engineering. Get as much or as little cleavage and boost as you desire by setting the bra's internal hooking mechanism to your preference. The bra also offers multiple ways to wear it. From traditional, over-the-shoulder, cross-back and strapless, it helps defy gravity more than any other bra we've tried. **Starting at \$99, upbra.com**



IT'S ALL IN YOUR HEAD

Mineral Corrector Palette by Colorescience

Covering up blemishes, scars or any unwanted mark on W-Day is a must. One professional beauty go-to in this category is the Mineral Corrector Palette by Colorescience. It camouflages just about anything you can think of without making you look overly made up. There is a guide on the back to help you discern where to use which color, so you can expertly apply without the help of a professional. **\$54, colorescience.com**



Photos courtesy of (top to bottom, left to right):
Yoga Download, UpBra & Colorescience



Your Imperfections



Bio Ionic® GoldPro Collection

Whether it's balmy sea breezes or subtropical humidity, you're going to want to keep your hair in tip-top shape during your honeymoon or destination wedding. The experts over at Bio Ionic® Professional Haircare Systems recently introduced their GoldPro Collection. Infused with a 24K gold ceramic mineral complex, these products provide even heat distribution, while infusing moisture and shine. We tried the GoldPro Styling Iron and were impressed by its ability to maintain heat and our hair was left supremely soft and silky. What's better, the styling iron has a digital temperature control of up to 450°F and offers a one-year warranty. **\$120, bioionic.com**

BioClarity Acne Treatment

This acne fighting, direct-to-consumer product just hit the scene and offers something a bit different. With the help of nature, and specifically Floralux™, an active ingredient derived from chlorophyll, BioClarity is a three-product system that helps clear up blemishes without the harsh chemicals of generations past. A gentle, natural cleanser, followed by a salicylic acid treatment and finally the green Restore Gel helps clear up, soothe and rejuvenate problematic skin. **\$29.95 per month, bioclarity.com**

Frownies Anti-Aging Eye Gels

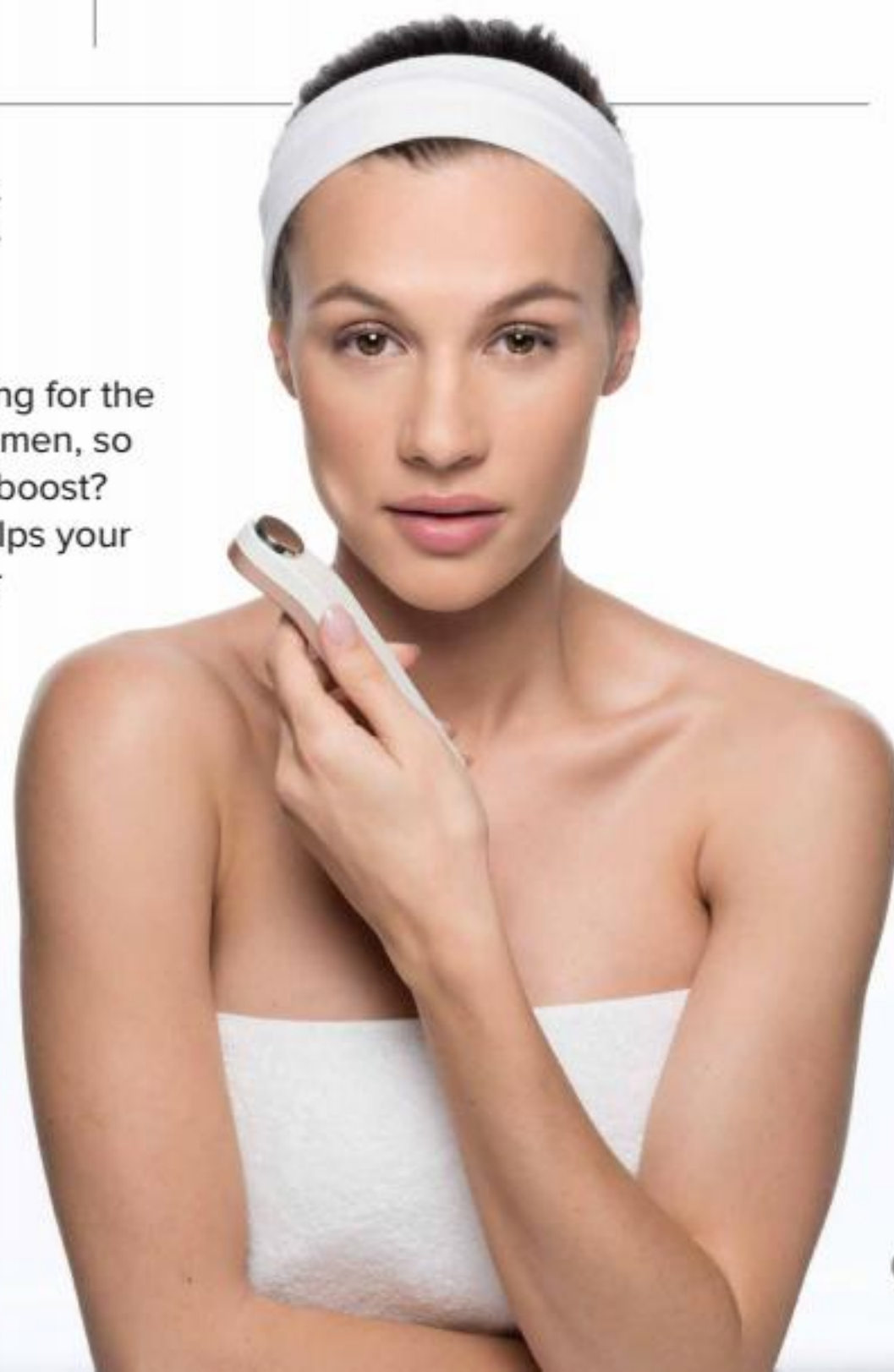
Get a moisture boost with Frownies. These cooling, hydrating eye gels make you feel like you just had a visit to the esthetician. Store them in the refrigerator to use up to three times and enjoy the refreshing feeling they provide. **\$29.95**

for three reusable sets, frownies.com



JeNu Plus Ultrasonic Infuser System

You spend time and resources hoping for the best results from your skin care regimen, so why not give those products a little boost? The JeNu Plus Ultrasonic Infuser helps your skincare products penetrate deeper into your skin, allowing you to see better results, faster. Use JeNu not as a replacement, but as an enhancement of your current beloved regime. We tried it for a few weeks and noticed an improvement within the first week when combined with anti-aging products. It's an investment, but one that has a one-year warranty. **\$279, jenu.com ido!**





MEXICO

CABO SAN LUCAS

Jessica + Taylor

WORDS BY: KINSLEY BROWN
IMAGES BY: MIRELLE CARMICHAEL PHOTOGRAPHY
WEDDING PLANNING BY: LAZY GOURMET CATERING
& EVENT PLANNING





While Jessica and Taylor were 100% committed to each other upon getting engaged, the same cannot be said for their wedding plans. “I’ll be honest, we contemplated eloping many times during our planning process, but now all I want to do is relive that day over and over,” reflects Jessica. The San Diego couple took their time in deciding on their destination. With the bride’s family on the East Coast and the groom’s family in Cabo San Lucas, Jessica and Taylor ultimately decided that hosting their nuptials south of the border was the right route.

“We thought [getting married in Cabo San Lucas] would be a great opportunity for my family and friends to see where Taylor grew up...we went down for a full week before the wedding to show them

around and it was wonderful,” reminisces the bride. Between the groom’s family living locally and the bride’s excited family having never been to Mexico before, the couple had 85 guests in attendance come W-Day.

When it came to choosing a venue, this ambitious couple thought outside the box. “We had our ceremony and reception at a private villa on the Sea of Cortez,” says the bride. “It was great to have the property to ourselves; it kept it very private and we were able to design everything the way we wanted. The best part about renting the private villa was that we could bring in our own alcohol, which saved a lot of money, and we stayed until midnight instead of the usual 10 p.m. We had so much fun, we didn’t want it to end.”



Looking back, the couple knows they made the best decision possible in hosting a destination wedding, but their resolve did waiver during their nine-month planning process. “It was definitely a rollercoaster ride at times, but no matter what, it’s 100% worth it when the day comes,” says Jessica. “It was so amazing to see it all pulled together. It was beyond our expectations.”

VENDORS: Photographer: Mirelle Carmichael Photography, mirellecarmichael.com, Wedding Planner: Lulu Kennedy with Lazy Gourmet Catering and Event Planning, lazygourmetcatering.com, Ceremony/Reception Site: Villa Vista Ballena, vistaballena.com, Videographer: Cheryl Tivar with Wonderfilm, wonderfilmphoto.blogspot.com, Florist: Florenta Flower Design, florentaflowerdesign.com, Stationery: Walnut St. Studio, Bride/Bridesmaids’ Jewelry: Blue Begonia Jewelry & Cicie Jewelry (bracelets), etsy.com/shop/bluebegonia & etsy.com/shop/ciciejewelry, Groom’s Ring: Blue Begonia Jewelry, etsy.com/shop/bluebegonia, Shoes: Vince Camuto, vincecamuto.com, Bridesmaids’ Clothing Designer: Jarlo London, jarlolondon.co.uk, Groomsmen’s Clothing Designer: Bar III, macys.com/shop/featured/bar-iii, Gown Designer: Essence of Australia, essencedesigns.com, Groom’s Clothing Designer: Bar III, macys.com/shop/featured/bar-iii, DJ: Alex DJ, alexdjcaboevents.com, Musicians: John Bennett and Jim Volkert



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DESTINATION

i do

& HONEYMOONS TOO!



Sometimes life leads us back to certain places. For Eric and Alexandra, that place is Lake Tahoe, California. It was the place both of them grew up visiting, where they spent their first trip together, the place Eric got down on one knee and asked Alexandra to marry him, and, ultimately, the place they chose to host their destination wedding.



“We were married in a Jewish ceremony under a chuppah of white flowers, against the breathtaking backdrop of the mountains.”

“We bonded early on in our relationship over our shared experiences in Lake Tahoe,” says Alexandra. “Because of the significance, it was a clear choice to get married in Lake Tahoe.”

Their wedding weekend was packed with fun activities to get everyone in a celebratory mood. A rehearsal dinner in an Irish pub, complete with pub food and drinks, kicked off the festivities.

The day before the wedding, a golf tournament was held for Eric and the men, while Alexandra’s aunt and grandma hosted a bridal luncheon. The night wrapped up with a welcome party, including Chicago-style food that paid homage to the couple’s time in the Windy City and lawn games to keep the fun going.

When it was finally their wedding day, the couple’s 200 guests watched them tie the knot. “We were married in a Jewish ceremony under a chuppah of white flowers, against the breathtaking backdrop of the mountains,” recalls the bride.



After a cocktail hour overlooking the lake, guests were served short ribs and polenta, while toasts were made by loved ones. The band rocked out well into the night, with an after party complete with tasty desserts, arcade games, bowling and a midnight snack of chicken and waffles.

As Eric and Alexandra's dream-like wedding weekend came to a close, they said goodbye to all of their loved ones with a farewell brunch and lots of hugs. When asked what part of their weekend was the most special, the couple says, "It is so hard to pick just one moment – the whole weekend was magical."

VENDORS: Photographer: Jacqui Cole Photography, jacquicole.com, Event Planning and Design: Summit Soiree, summitsoiree.com, Ceremony/Reception Site: Martis Camp, martiscamp.com, Accommodations: PlumpJack Squaw Valley Inn, plumpjacksquawvalleyinn.com, Videographer: Reel Eyes Media, reeleyesmedia.com, Florist: Martha Bernyk Floral Design, tahoe-florist.com, Stationery: Molly Pollet, mollypollet.com, Calligraphy: Anne Robin Calligraphy, annerobin.com, Rentals: Celebrations! Party Rentals, celebrationspartyrentals.com, Gown Designer: "Harbor" by Amsale, amsale.com, Groom's Clothing Designer: Spoon Tailor, spoontailor.com, Bridesmaids Clothing Designer: Natalie Deayala, nataliedeayala.com, Groomsmen's Clothing Designer: The Black Tux, theblacktux.com, Hair & Makeup: Greco Rose Beauty, grecorosebeauty.com, Bride's Shoes: Jimmy Choo, jimmychoo.com, Bridesmaid Robes: Plum Pretty Sugar, plumprettysugar.com, Band: Notorious, notoriousrocks.com, Rings: Dunay Joaillier, dunay.com, Ceremony Music: Ben Fuller, benfullermusic.com



HAWAII

MAUI *Brianna + Joseph*

WORDS BY: KINSLEY BROWN

IMAGES BY: WENDY LAUREL PHOTOGRAPHY

WEDDING PLANNING BY: MAUI'S ANGELS WEDDINGS



When planning your wedding, the best advice we can give is to go with your gut. Unfortunately, Brianna and Joseph learned this lesson the hard way. In an effort to include all their friends and family, the couple went against their initial instinct to host a destination wedding. “Right away, we both knew we didn’t want a large, stressful wedding...but we tried to plan a big wedding here at home in Minnesota anyway,” says the bride. The couple made it so far as to hire a local wedding planner and book a venue, but they quickly found the process overwhelming. “We are more reserved and laid-back individuals, so after many phone calls, we canceled the wedding here without having a back-up plan.”



"There were a good amount of people working their tails off right up until the ceremony to make everything perfect for us. When I saw how magical and perfect everything was...I became overwhelmed."



A plan B quickly ensued and, because the bride's family has visited Maui every year for the last decade, it's no surprise the couple ultimately settled on this island paradise for their destination "I do's." Come W-Day, the event was exactly what they had initially envisioned – laid-back, chock-full of romance and intimate with just 36 guests. "The ceremony was beautiful," reminisces Brianna. "As guests walked in, they were greeted with fruity, non-alcoholic beverages. We decided to go with a Hawaiian-style ceremony, so we had no idea how that was going to go. The officiant was wonderful and the readings were much different than what we were used to."



The couple was able to capture the ambiance they were after with sentimental touches like having their nine month-old daughter roll down the aisle in a wooden wagon and an after-dinner donut bar. When we asked the bride what her favorite moment of the day was, she explained how her groom did his best to make that distinction nearly impossible. "Joe had surprises sent to me throughout the day. It started with breakfast...after that, he surprised me with a trip to Thailand in a note, along with a diamond bracelet that I had my eye on for months. But my favorite was a framed picture of my dogs (next to a little shot of Patrón to calm my nerves). I was really bummed when I wasn't able to include them on the big day, so having a little piece of them there was just the cherry on top."



VENDORS: Photographer: Wendy Laurel Photography, wendylaurel.com, Wedding Planner: Maui's Angels Weddings, mauisangelsweddings.com, Ceremony/ Reception Site: Olowalu Plantation House, olowaluplantationhouse.com, Florist: Mandy Grace Designs, mandygracedesigns.com, Stationery: Kate Paulson Creatives, katepaulson.com, Bride's Hair & Makeup: MeiLi Autumn Beauty, meiliautumn.com, Gown Designer: Watters, watters.com, Groom's Clothing Designer: Jos. A. Bank, josbank.com, Bridesmaids' Clothing Designer: Show Me Your Mumu, showmeyourmumu.com, Groomsmen's Clothing Designer: Jos. A. Bank, josbank.com, Catering: Sugar Beach Events of Hawaii, sugarbeacheventshawaii.com, Cocktails & Bar: Garnish Craft Cocktail Catering, garnishcocktails.com, Live Music: Jasmine Rice, jasminerice.com, Linens: Adorn Company, adorncompany.com





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FRANCE
MONTMOREAU-
SAINT-
CYBARD
Erin + Kyle

WORDS BY: KINSLEY BROWN

IMAGES BY: KATELYN JAMES PHOTOGRAPHY

WEDDING PLANNING BY: ABIGAIL WELLS-DAVIES

Erin and Kyle are no strangers to travel. It's getting to choose the destination that's rare. "Since both of our families live far away from Baltimore, we spend a great deal of our vacation time visiting family," explains the couple. "We had been longing for a European vacation for many years and just hadn't had the chance." As it turns out, the couple's wedding was the perfect opportunity to ask their loved ones to return the favor and hop on a plane to celebrate.

The couple had been following a friend's renovation project on a Montmoreau-Saint-Cybard, France B&B over Facebook and quickly decided it was the perfect fit for their wedding away. "Les Mirandes had it all – gorgeous views, an in-house gourmet chef and a completely authentic experience," say the newlyweds. "It served as our home for seven days, our ceremony venue

and reception venue." Choosing to host their wedding in a rural, French manor meant the couple relied heavily on the B&B owners and their wedding planner for vendor referrals.

The couple spent the morning of their wedding enjoying breakfast in bed and some quiet time alone. "It was wonderful to have this time together before a day of non-stop activity and excitement," says the bride. When it was time to say "I do," they exchanged vows in Les Mirandes' front drive in front of its antique, iron gates. Following a traditional French Champagne reception, the newlyweds and their 22 guests sat down to a three-course dinner on the terrace. To cap-off the evening, the group moved to the manor's historic barn for dancing and enjoyed a croque-mouche covered in sparklers for a late-night snack.





One unique decision the couple made was to opt-out of hosting their wedding on a weekend. “Our decision to put our wedding in the middle of the week allowed for guests to travel freely and participate in events as time allowed. Before and after the wedding, they visited England, Germany, Spain, Portugal, the Swiss Alps, Monaco and other regions of France.”

When we asked Erin and Kyle what advice they would offer other destination wedding couples, their answer was practical and straightforward. “Give

yourself plenty of time. Overall, our wedding week was an incredibly relaxing experience. We had plenty of time to rest and didn’t feel rushed for time or the pressures of greeting and hosting the several hundred guests that would have been present had we hosted a stateside wedding.”

VENDORS: Photographer: Katelyn James Photography, katelynjames.com, Wedding Planner: Abigail Wells-Davies, myweddingstylist.com, Ceremony/ Reception Site: Les Mirandes, lesmirandes.com, Florist: Laure with Les Fleurs de l’Or, lestleursdelor.fr, Stationery: Blackbird Letterpress, blackbirdletterpress.com, Gown Designer: Romona Keveza from Garnish Boutique, romonakeveza.com & garnishboutique.com, Groom’s Clothing Designer: J.Crew and Collared Greens, jcrew.com & collaredgreens.com





Our decision to put our wedding in the middle of the week allowed for guests to travel freely and participate in events as time allowed.



FLORIDA
MIAMI
*Nichole
+ Cody*
WORDS BY: KINSLEY BROWN
IMAGES BY: ROB AND
WYNTER PHOTOGRAPHY
WEDDING PLANNING & DESIGN BY:
CHRISTOPHER CONFERO DESIGN





Opting for a destination wedding allows you to pick and choose what traditions you would like to include in your nuptials. A wedding away suited Nichole and Cody just fine, considering they made quite a few non-traditional choices. For starters, they were technically already married come W-Day. “We were legally married at home a few months earlier,” explains the bride. “It made the wedding day much less stressful. We had breakfast together the morning of the wedding and then got ready separately. We also did not have to worry about getting the paperwork done somewhere away from home.”

While this unconventional route isn’t for everyone, getting legally married ahead of time didn’t take away from the magic of this couple’s Miami, Florida destination wedding. “We wanted a smaller wedding and something that was different from everything around Alabama,” says Nichole. “We wanted a more European look and Vizcaya offered that without having to go very far.” After a short, but traditional Christian ceremony, Nichole and Cody once again deviated from the norm with their reception. “Dinner began right around sunset on the bay. We only had 36 people, so we did not do a big dancing reception. We did a first dance and a father/daughter and

mother/son dance, but that was all. After dinner, we cut the cake and everyone socialized a bit. It was over by 9:45 p.m. and went perfectly.”

In an effort to keep things as simple as possible, the couple chose to have only a maid of honor and best man in lieu of a large wedding party. “We know it is wonderful to share your big day with your closest friends, but having just one person to coordinate with made things much easier. Friends can still come up and get ready with you or stop by, but just having one person each was perfect for us.” While these newlyweds danced to the beat of their own wedding drum in most



respects, there is one traditional decision they never questioned. “Definitely do not do a destination wedding without a wedding planner. With Christopher Confero Design, [planning a destination wedding] was not hard at all.”

VENDORS: Photographer: Rob and Wynter Photography, robandwynter.com, Wedding Planning & Design: Christopher Confero Design, christopherconfero.com, Ceremony/Reception Site: Vizcaya Museum and Gardens, vizcaya.org, Florist: Petal Productions, petalproductions.com, Stationery: Amberly Shelton Paperie, amberlyshelton.com, Hair & Makeup: Art of Hair by Claudia, artofhairbyclaudia.com, Gown Designer: Paloma Blanca, palomablanca.com, Groom's Clothing Designer: Burberry, burberry.com, Catering: Starr Catering Group, starrevents.com, Cake: Earth and Sugar, earthandsugar.com, Linens & Rentals: Nüage Designs, nuagedesigns.com, Lighting: ARPI Group, arpigroup.com





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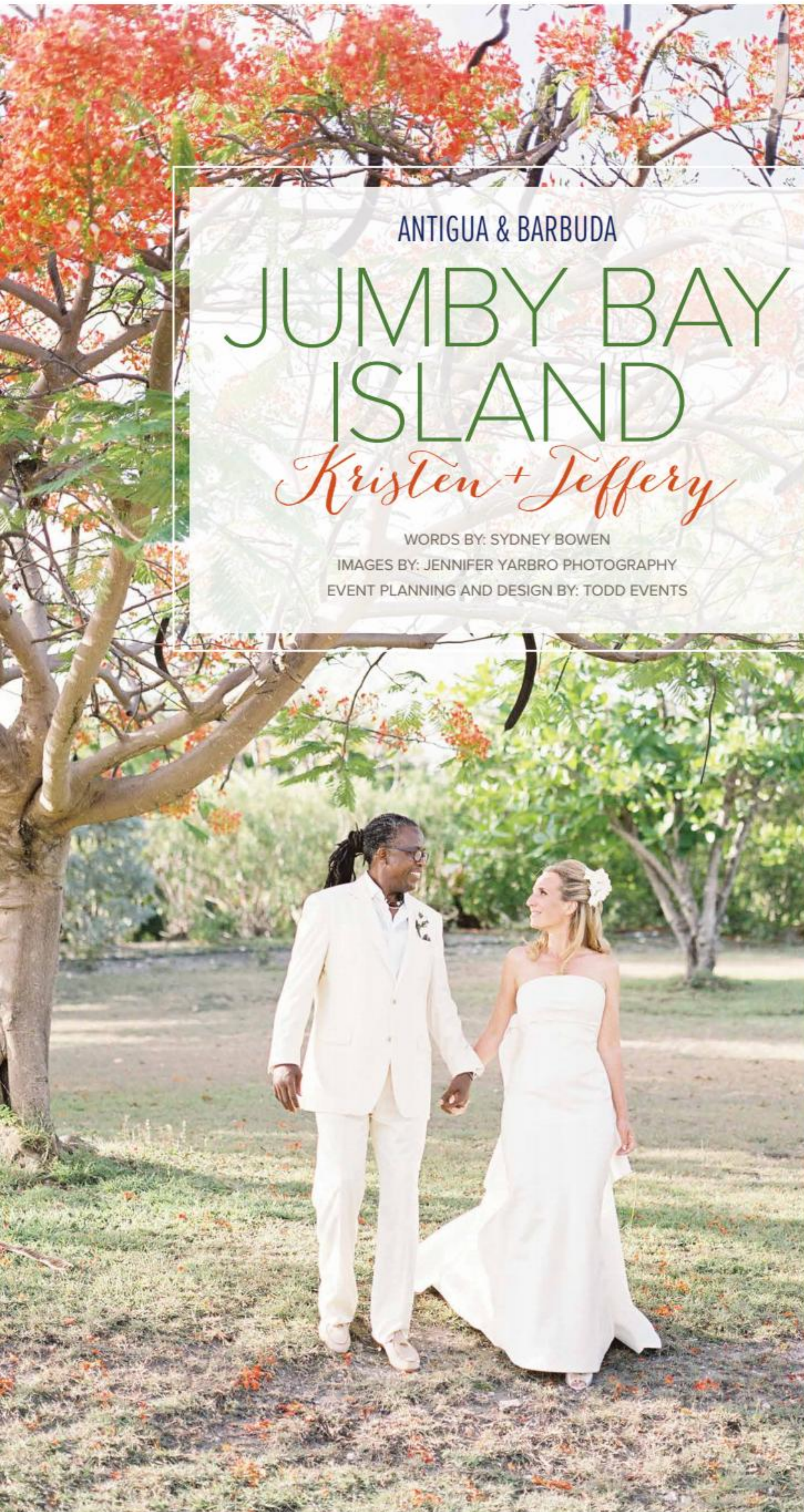
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ANTIGUA & BARBUDA

JUMBY BAY ISLAND

Kristen + Jeffery

WORDS BY: SYDNEY BOWEN

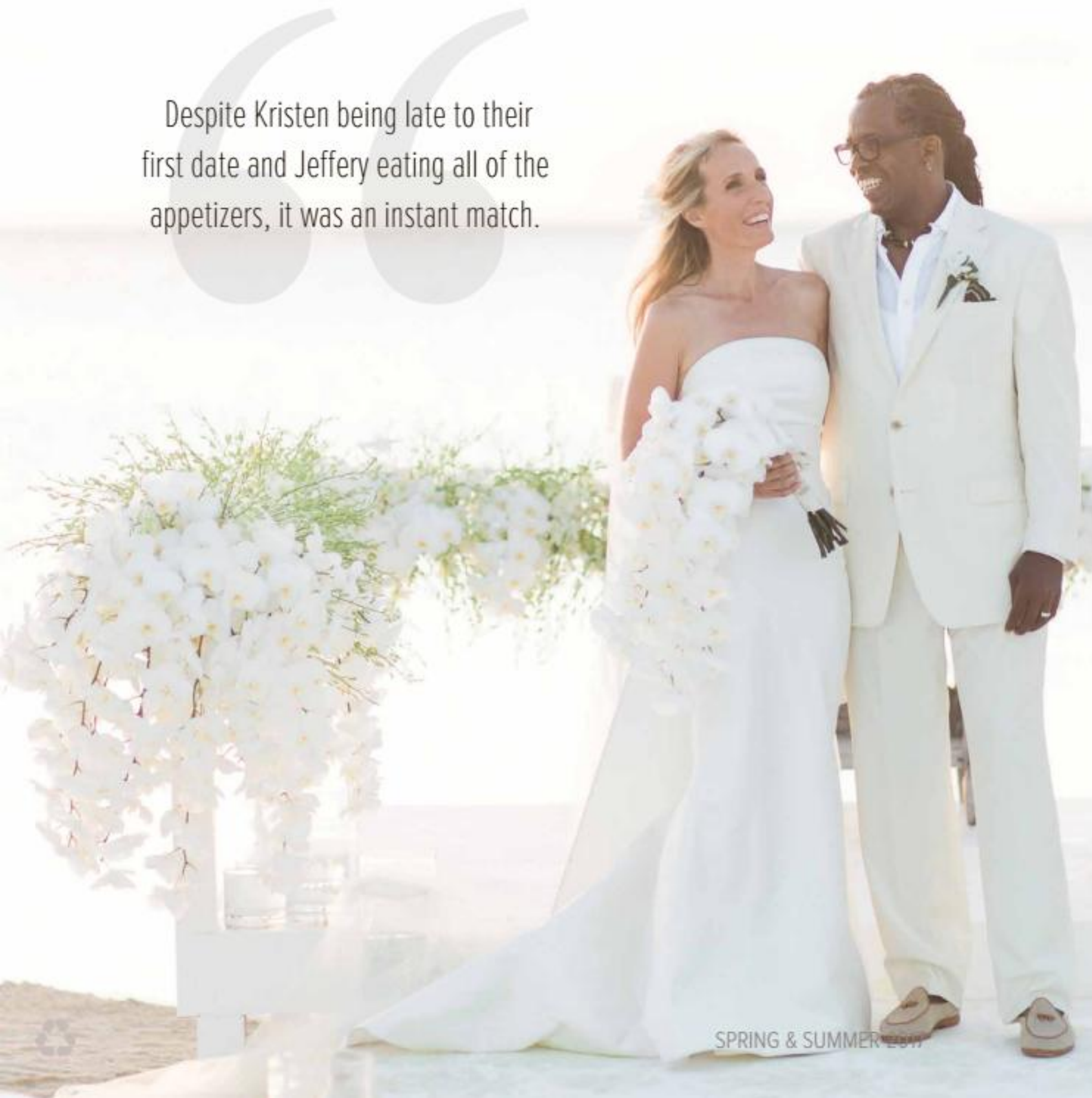
IMAGES BY: JENNIFER YARBRO PHOTOGRAPHY

EVENT PLANNING AND DESIGN BY: TODD EVENTS





Despite Kristen being late to their first date and Jeffery eating all of the appetizers, it was an instant match.



Jeffery and Kristen met on an online dating site, specifically tailored for vegans and vegetarians. Despite Kristen being late to their first date and Jeffery eating all of the appetizers, it was an instant match. "It's been an amazing journey of love ever since," says Kristen.

Fast-forward five years: Kristen and Jeffery swapped hand-written vows on Jumby Bay Island in Antigua and Barbuda. An intimate, beach wedding was something both the bride and groom had dreamed of.

"We are both bright, warm and happy people," says the bride. "Just like beaches on an island."

With guests coming from the United States, Italy, Austria and Australia to celebrate their marriage, the couple's planner suggested Jumby Bay.

"Jumby Bay turned out to be the perfect choice for the size of our party," says Kristen. "We rented the entire island to ensure everyone had intimate memories."

The wedding weekend kicked off with a welcome party that included dancing, delicious cuisine and a fire-eater show. The next morning, the couple organized a scavenger hunt all around the island, with guests taking Polaroid pictures for each clue. All the pictures were then placed in a photo album, with guests adding sweet notes for the bride and groom.



"The album is the best memory we could have ever imagined," says the couple.

When it came time for the wedding, Kristen followed behind her bridesmaids and 13 giggling flower girls. "I walked down the aisle alone, which is pretty much how I have gone through life before meeting Jeff," says the bride.

A trail of beautiful flowers paved the way to Jeffery. The couple said "I do" on an altar suspended over the water and in the company of their children and their loved ones.

"After the vows and the most romantic kiss on a beach one could dream of, we reunited with our children, Robert and Jasmine, and dove into the warmth and joy of all our family and friends," says the couple.

The reception followed with tons of dancing and vegan food. As the memorable wedding weekend came to a close, everyone released lanterns into the starry sky. To see Kristen and Jeffery's incredible rehearsal dinner, see pg. 88.



VENDORS: Photography: Jennifer Yarbro Photography, jenniferyarbro.com, Event Planning and Design: Todd Events, toddevents.com, Ceremony/Reception Site: Jumbly Bay Resort, rosewoodhotels.com/en/jumbly-bay-antigua, Florist: Todd Events, toddevents.com, Stationery: Colorbox Design and Letterpress, colorboxletterpress.com, Gown Designer: Le Spose di Giò from Joan Pillow Bridal Salon, lesposedigio.com & joanpillowbridal.com, Groom's Clothing Designer: Daniel Taylor Clothier, danieltaylorclothier.com, Bridesmaids' Clothing Designer: Monique Lhuillier, moniquelhuillier.com, Grooms-men's Clothing Designer: Daniel Taylor Clothier and Proper Cloth, danieltaylorclothier.com & propercloth.com, Videography: Elysium Productions, elysiumproductions.com, Linens: I Do Linens and La Tavola Linen, idolinen.com & latavolalinen.com, Rentals: Pink Mongoose Events, barnesjyb.wixsite.com/thepinkmongoose, Bride's Getting Ready Dress: Girls With A Serious Dream, girlwithaseriousdream.com, Bridesmaids Getting Ready Dresses: Plum Pretty Sugar, plumpretysugar.com, Bride's Veil and Retailer: Joan Pillow Bridal Salon, joanpillowbridal.com, Bride's Vegan Shoes: Parisxox, etsy.com/shop/Parisxox, After Party Dress: Givenchy, givenchy.com, Flower Girl Dresses: "Daffodil" dress by Stella McCartney & Bettina Bridal & Couture (made with Le Spose di Giò fabric), stellamccartney.com, bettinabridalandcouture.com & lesposedigio.com, Hair and Makeup: Ceron Hair Studio, ceronhairstudio.com, Groom's Shoes: Belgian Shoes, belgianshoes.com, Ceremony Guitarist: Joel Cross, joelcross.com, Band: Itchy Feet Homecoming, itchyfeethomecoming.com, DJ: DJ Lucy Wrubel, lucywrubel.com





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 - **Elite Wedding Planner - Brazil**



I had such an amazing time! Like you said so hard to absorb it while there, but I was so excited to tell everyone here all about it! That's when I realized how amazing it really was.
 Thank you for your teams hard work, it did not go unnoticed.
 - **Elite Wedding Planner - USA**



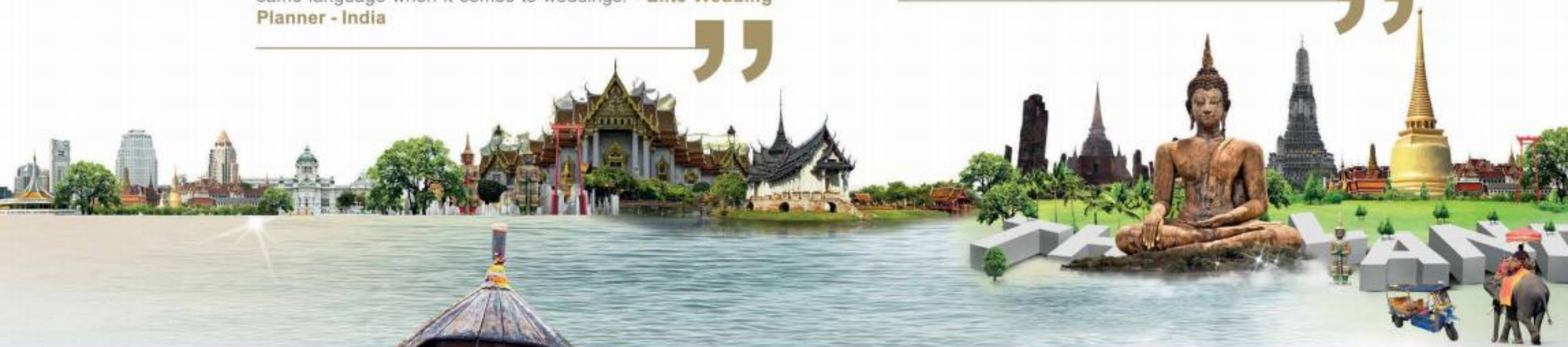
I was really impressed with the level of organising plus the variety of suppliers and potential opportunities and promising business, looking forward to the next one.
 - **Elite Wedding Plannerv, Bahrain**



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 - **Elite Wedding Planner - India**



A great opportunity to meet the leaders of the wedding industry while having fun with colleagues and new business partners. The organisation didn't leave anything to chance.
 - **Elite Wedding Planner - Italy**



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HAWAII

MAUI

Stephanie + Adam

WORDS BY: SYDNEY BOWEN

IMAGES BY: TAMIZ PHOTOGRAPHY

WEDDING PLANNING BY: BELLE DESTINATION WEDDINGS AND EVENTS



The night Stephanie and Adam met, she was looking forward to a quiet, girls' night in. Instead, she was dragged to a close friend's work event that Adam was also attending. Shortly after arriving, Adam introduced himself and Stephanie immediately asked him if he was Canadian. He wasn't, but that didn't stop them from falling in love and tying the knot in Maui, Hawaii.

With Adam hailing from Indiana and

Stephanie being from Sydney, Australia, Hawaii was the perfect meeting point for their family and friends located all over the world.

While choosing a Hawaiian destination wedding was an easy task, Adam and Stephanie still had to find the perfect venue for their nuptials. "While we knew we wanted to get married in Hawaii, we weren't sure about having a beach wedding or what you would normally

picture when someone says, 'a wedding in Hawaii,'" explains Stephanie.

With the help of their wedding planner, the couple discovered the perfect venue for their wedding – The Villa at the Calasa Gulch Olive Tree Farm. Instead of going with a more expected, tropical beach event, Adam and Stephanie were surrounded by gorgeous orchard views and Tuscan-style villas. "We loved that it showed our guests a different side of the





island that they might not otherwise get to see,” says Stephanie.

Stephanie and Adam’s wedding planner not only suggested their dream venue, but also had a list of recommended vendors who made the couple’s dreams a reality.

In a clearing amongst rows of olive trees, Stephanie walked down the aisle to Adam, as the sun shone down on them. “While there were lots of nerves and some tears

shed, mainly by Adam, it was incredibly happy and heartfelt,” says the bride.

Following their intimate ceremony, the newlyweds and their 46 guests noshed on wood-fired pizzas and sipped craft cocktails as the sun set. The night ended with a large, family-style Italian meal, complete with a serenade of “That’s Amore” for the bride and groom. “It seemed like our families, who had only just met, had known each other for years.” **i do!**

VENDORS: Photographer: Tamiz Photography, tamizphotography.com, Wedding Planner: Jessie Ellis with Belle Destination Weddings and Events, belledestinationevents.com, Ceremony/Reception Site: The Villa at Calasa Gulch Olive Tree Farm, calasagulchfarm.com, Florist: Mandy Grace Designs, mandygracedesigns.com, Stationery: The Distillery, the-distillery.com.au, Calligraphy: Miss B. Calligraphy, missbcalligraphy.com, Rentals: Signature Event Rentals, signaturemaui.com, Linens: Winters Events, wintersevents.com, Gown Designer: Pallas Couture, pallascouture.com, Groom’s Clothing Designer: Armani, armani.com, Bridesmaids Clothing Designer: “Willow” by Jenny Yoo Collection, jennyyoo.com, Makeup and Hair: Liz and Anna with Maui Makeup Artistry, mauimakeupartistry.com, Catering: Sugar Beach Events, sugarbeacheventshawaii.com, Cake: Maui Sweet Cakes, mauisweetcakes.com, Craft Cocktails: Garnish Craft Cocktail Catering, garnishcocktails.com, Tableware: Set Maui, setmaui.com, Officiant: Pia Aluli, piaaluli.com, DJ: Scott Doran with Maui DJ Services, mauidjservices.com

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