

Destination Wedding Locations Top 10

While your neighborhood church or a local park may provide a perfect setting for a wedding, you've decided instead on a destination wedding – one of those affairs where you and all the guests fly out to some exotic locale and everyone gets a vacation in addition to witnessing your marriage. The possibilities are almost endless, but you can narrow them down by focusing on the ambience you're looking for, whether it's a white-sand beach, a medieval castle, an ancient church, or a lush tropical landscape. Below are ten hotspots for destination weddings.

Hawaii - Who hasn't dreamed of a beachside wedding with the tropical breeze wafting and the sun dipping just below the horizon? Each of Hawaii's islands has its own flavor, from the tourist center of Oahu to the tropical remoteness of Lanai. Most of the larger hotels offer more than one wedding venue, and wedding services are varied and extensive. In addition, there are plenty of locations to choose from: possibilities include everything from a church to a waterfall or even a rainforest! And if you don't want the hassle of passports and foreign travel, Hawaii is the perfect stateside wedding destination.

The Caribbean - Jamaica is probably the most popular wedding destination in the Caribbean, but there are many more islands that make up the tropical beaches in this part of the world. The U.S. Virgin Islands alone include fifty islands in all, with the largest being St. Croix, St. Thomas, and St. John. Caribbean resorts cater to wedding parties, and most have several locations perfect for nuptials, or can arrange for you to take your vows on a nearby beach. If you want an all-inclusive package, you can easily find what you're looking for, and on-site wedding coordinators will fulfill your every need, from flowers to music to fabulous food.

Mexico - Going south of the border for your nuptials is becoming increasingly popular, and Mexico is often touted as the number one location for destination weddings. Mexico offers scores of beautiful locations for weddings, receptions, and honeymoons. Virtually all of the major hotels and resorts offer wedding planning services. Happily, you will likely find yourself spending less for a Mexican wedding than for a traditional wedding at home.

Cruising - Ever thought of booking a cruise for your fiancé, family, friends, and yourself, and making your wedding the centerpiece of your vacation? Weddings and cruises just seem to go together, and you have several options for the ceremony, including tying the knot on the ship, or utilizing an onshore venue while the ship is docked. Most major cruise lines now cater to brides and grooms, offering wedding planning services and special incentives for wedding travel. You can also consider holding your wedding and reception on board before the ship departs, with guests disembarking afterwards while you and your spouse remain on the ship for a honeymoon cruise.

Las Vegas - In recent years Las Vegas has gone upscale as a wedding destination along with having the 24 hour drive thru chapels. The larger hotels have lovely venues for tying the knot, and offer all the wedding services you could imagine. Lodging and food are relatively inexpensive, so you'll get lots of value for your dollar here, plus there's never a shortage of things to do. From top-flight entertainment to sumptuous buffets, you're sure to find something for everyone in Las Vegas.

Europe - If you're more into history than sandy beaches, consider Europe as a wedding destination. The Italian countryside is fast becoming the most popular place to get married in Europe, and its

combination of rustic beauty and romance is hard to beat. If you'd like to walk down the aisle in an ancient castle or historic church, consider Scotland. Other possibilities include the cities of Paris, Rome, and London, or the glamorous principality of Monaco, where you'll find some of the most luxurious hotels in the world.

Walt Disney World - Which princess hasn't dreamed of a storybook wedding, complete with white horses, twinkling lights, fabulous flowers, and, of course, a handsome prince? You'll have to supply your own prince (or princess), but Disney will take care of everything else, from the garden wedding spot to the sumptuous reception. You can even get married on the steps of Sleeping Beauty's castle, where you'll roll up in Cinderella's coach and walk down the aisle surrounded by starry-eyed guests who'll think they are living in a fairy tale.

The Bahamas - There are 700 islands that make up the archipelago known as the Bahamas, and many of these have their own unique culture. The most popular tourist destinations are Grand Bahama Island and Nassau/Paradise Island, with several smaller islands known as the "Out Islands" that offer the perfect location for a getaway wedding. The largest resorts are naturally located on the biggest islands, but you can opt, for example, for a small beachside ceremony on Andros, where the island's resort at Small Hope Bay can handle a reception for up to forty people.

Costa Rica - You may not think of this small Central American country as a typical wedding destination, but Costa Rica has much to offer you, your wedding party, and your guests – and it's only a few hours from Miami by air. From its fabled coastline to its national parks and reserves, Costa Rica offers a plethora of activities to all its visitors, including mountain biking, surfing, kayaking, hiking, and touring the rainforest. The wildlife is spectacular, with exotic populations of birds, sea turtles, butterflies, and amphibians. The cosmopolitan city of San Jose has many luxurious resorts with wedding planners, as well as less expensive accommodations. So whether you dream of getting married on the sands, or with your head high in the rainforest clouds, Costa Rica is the perfect wedding destination.

Fiji - If you're hungry for a bit of privacy and hate the hustle and bustle of some of the other popular island destinations, consider Fiji, a place where you might be able to book an entire resort for just yourself and your guests. There are over 300 South Pacific islands in Fiji, and with a little finagling, you can even reserve a whole island for your wedding! Imagine being carried in on a platform held above the heads of Fijian warriors, saying your vows in a traditional ceremony with both you and your fiancé in Fijian garb. The wedding can be followed by a Kava ceremony in honor of the bride and groom or a huge island feast.



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