

Guide to a successful destination wedding

By METRO CREATIVE

Imagine reciting vows along the Mediterranean coast or amid pastel-hued homes and swaying palm trees. For the travel-inclined, destination weddings present the perfect opportunity to meld wedding and honeymoon all into one — with family and friends around to enjoy the magic.

The Knot Real Weddings Study, the largest survey of its kind, surveys thousands of American brides and grooms to determine the latest wedding trends. In its 2017 report, The Knot revealed 25 percent of weddings that took place that year were destination weddings. Couples are increasingly leaning on entertainment and personalization to create memorable experiences for their guests, and destination weddings are great ways to create those unique experiences.

While planning a wedding inevitably involves some ob-

stacles and even some stress, planning a destination wedding presents a unique set of obstacles. Before couples commit to a destination wedding, it's important to first consider a few factors to ensure knots get tied without a hitch.

Pick a meaningful location (but one that works for guests, too). Exchanging vows at a favorite hiking spot can give guests an inside view into what makes you tick as a couple, but the location of the ceremony should not come at the expense of practicality. Choose a locale that speaks to you but will also offer the convenience and amenities that work for the guests who will be traveling.

See the place in person. If budget allows, book a trip to the intended destination to see the facilities and location, advise the experts at Brides magazine. Working with vendors in person also can simplify sorting out certain details.



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Send save-the-date cards promptly. Unlike traditional weddings in which reminders can be sent roughly six months before the wedding, save-the-date cards for destination weddings should be mailed at least nine months to a year in advance of the big day.

Hire a professional. Pro-

fessional wedding planners may prove invaluable when it comes to destination weddings. Rather than organizing everything on your own, you can hire a wedding planner to take care of itineraries, obtain information about necessary travel documents, coordinate with local vendors, and much more.

Consider tourist seasons. Weather tends to be best during tourist seasons. There-

fore, make sure to reserve hotel room blocks and venues promptly. Slightly before or after peak season may still be fine, but ensure that vendors will be available and look into weather trends carefully before choosing a date.

Research the legality. According to The Knot, many countries have residency requirements, which means you must live in that country for a certain period of time before the ceremony. Factor this into budget and availability.

Scale back on DIY. Handling many of the details while getting married close to home can be challenging, but doing so for a destination wedding can be difficult to organize. Scale back on DIY, leaving many of the details to the professionals.

Destination weddings require extra planning, but they can be memorable ways for couples to start their new life together.

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