



Adventures by the Month

A guide to best places for your honeymoon, summer through winter



Switzerland

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There aren't enough hours in the day to plan your wedding — let alone your honeymoon. No wonder the details of that long-fantasized, future adventure lie dusty on the shelf, like an unfinished book. If you can only nail down those wedding pieces and parts, maybe you can finally focus on that romantic trip of a lifetime. That post-wedding adventure is the well-deserved

dessert to your 10-course meal. Yet, when you finally sit down to book your dream getaway, you may find that the options boggle your mind. How to narrow down the possibilities? Here's a plan: Figure out your honeymoon priorities (sightseeing, brilliant weather, more affordable off-season, festive high season or whatever else tops your list), then match your travel dates to a destination that fits. Read below for where to travel for the next few months and why.

June: Hawaii

Marrying in June dates back to Roman times, when the caesars honored the deity Juno, goddess of marriage and childbirth, with a party on June 1. Have your own Juno-inspired fete, Aloha-style, in Hawaii. While temperatures in this island state remain fairly stable, June's lack of rain ensures a drier stay. Why not recuperate from the wedding buzz on Lanai, the lesser-traveled island. A pineapple plantation until the 1980s, this tiny, red rock-mottled, pine-tree studded landscape drew tourists only recently. That means its old-school, laid-back, Hawaiian culture remains deeply entrenched. With a slow motion pace, Lanai doesn't have one traffic light, let alone throngs of visitors. Amid the tranquility, find the very tony Four

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Seasons Lanai at Manele Bay. With low-rise suites, encircled by gardens and bedecked with Hawaiian art and artifacts, it overlooks Lanai's favorite beach. Despite an award-winning, seaside golf course and trendy restaurants, such as Nobu, Manele Bay feels like an undiscovered hideaway. Hike to a nearby cliff to watch the sunrise over Pu'u Pe'e, Sweetheart's Rock, sail around the isle at sunset, or hold hands as you wander through the island's only village and peruse its handful of mom-and-pop shops.

fourseasonsmanelebay.com

July: Tahiti

Marlon Brando called his response to Tahiti the "tincture of the South Seas." Revived by the pristine environments, Polynesian lifestyle, remote expanses, and romantic French undertones of the island nation, Brando relished the lifestyle so much, he left Hollywood behind and became a resident. Composed of five archipelagos and countless Lilliputian islands the locals call "motus," French Polynesia sits far outside the Pacific cyclone zone. Nevertheless, this patchwork of paradise gets hot, humid and rainy, December through February. To avoid that clammy weather, jet over in July, when you can also celebrate both French Independence Day (Bastille Day, July 14) and Fourth of July in a tropical setting. Though you'll probably be so seduced by your over lagoon suite on stilts to remember the date, you'll certainly pay homage to the uniqueness of the locale — a sum product of generous-hearted people, eye-popping nature and a soothing, somewhat magical quality, the residents refer to as mana. While Brando's personal island, Tetiaroa, now vaunts an opulent eco-hotel, The Brando, French Polynesia offers other secluded island escapes, from Rantiaroa to Raitea. On Tikehau, in the Tuamotu Archipelago, you'll feel as welcomed as family at Tikehau Pearl Beach Resort. On its own private islet framing a limpid, cobalt lagoon, this low-key resort reminds you that there's more to life than checking your texts. Stay in an over-water bungalow and watch the colorful fish flit by from a window in the floor, kayak, and snorkel from your personal dock. spmhotels.com/resort/tikehau/welcome

August: Switzerland

Best known as one of the world's most swank winter ski towns, Gstaad attracts celebrities and royals worldwide. But paramours can be rulers of the realm, as well, when they slumber at The Palace, the mountain hamlet's most storied hotel. A turret and crenelated castle crowning a hill, the five-star hotel offers an array of summertime activities that makes August the dreamiest month to do the Alps. Opt for a tower suite, with views from your bathtub of the mountain peaks. Volley on one of four tennis courts, luxuriate in the immense spa, and splash in the pool. Dance at GreenGo, a world famous disco, but only after you've nibbled La Fromagerie's truffle-laced fondue — a bucket list meal. To root into Swiss culture, spend the night with the cows at the Palace's Walig Hut. An authentic, but restored, farmer's cabin, circa 1786, the log structure straddles a wildflower bright meadow 6,000-feet above the village. Hike up for the sunset and dinner prepared by a butler. Surrounded by cows, donning bells, sip Swiss wine kept cold in a centuries-old trough. If you dare — and many do — glamp all night in the retrofitted bedroom. palace.ch

September: Napa and Sonoma, California

The palate leads for wine and food buffs. What better place to explore the gourmand life than America's most renowned wine region. Belly up to the wine tasting bars in still authentic Napa and Sonoma counties — both just about an hour from San Francisco. In September, oenophiles get a rush from grape harvest season. With multiple lodges to bunk in, beaucoup wineries to visit, restaurants to bedazzle with farm-to-fork cuisine, and vineyards to trek, the



itineraries are limitless. Stay in a B&B, which is part of a wine estate. Ascend in a hot air balloon at dawn. Chug through the area on a wine train. Hover over the winelands in a helicopter, landing at the winery of your choice. Forget the touring, and just take a mud bath, a spa treatment famous in the area. Perhaps best, hire a designated driver who has limo wheels. While any section satisfies, ramble along the Wine Road of Northern Sonoma County, a plentiful haven of vineyards, boasting more than 190 wineries and 50 lodges, all wedged into the terrain's nook and crannies. Be coddled at the wine-centric Fairmont Sonoma Mission Inn, beloved for its Michelin-starred Sante and thermal water-themed spa.

fairmont.com

October: Mexico

With the summer crowds back in school and the rainy season elapsed, Mexico in October captivates. Share your rapture at Gran Velas Riviera Maya, an opulent all-inclusive on the Yucatan Peninsula. Fringed by verdant jungle, the 250-acre resort edges a turquoise sea and private beach. With eight world-class restaurants, a bevy of pools, an upmarket wine list, and white-glove service, this family-owned resort celebrates local culture with activities, farm-to-fork meals and ambiance. Embracing more eco-initiatives than any other resort in Mexico, Gran Velas respects the earth, as local Maya residents have done for centuries. Guests can take a complimentary eco tour to learn about the jungle's plant life, peruse the gardens, study the dunes, heaped to prevent erosion—even plant a tree in the forest themselves, which they can watch grow from home via Google Earth. At the Grand Velas's spa, partake of the Maya connection amid a cenote (local fresh water spring), and treatments, which employ Maya traditional ingredients from chocolate to honey. If you muster the energy to leave the resort, visit a Maya temple, such as Tulum or Chichen-Itza or explore a cenote (sacred to the Maya people), such as Rio Secreto. granules.com

November: Bali

Nibble. Meditate. Whisper sweet nothings. That's what you and your new spouse will do in Bali. Laced with mystery and poetry, Bali fuses influences brought by Arab and Indian spice traders long ago. A curative land with emerald rice paddies, soaring volcanoes, exotic temples, postcard-worthy villages and mischievous monkeys aplenty, Bali is best when rainy season ends in November. Visualize sun-dappled afternoons on bone-white beaches, temple floral offerings as beautiful as your own bridal bouquet, and friendly denizens waiting to show you their country. In Ubud, base at the Viceroy, where villas boast plunge pools and face the Valley of the Kings. Hike a mountain to watch the sunrise, have your union blessed by a Balinese priest, learn the local dance steps and practice yoga in this artsy enclave. Back at Jimbaran Bay, put your butler in charge at Ayana Resort. He'll unpack while you take a perfume making class or sip or beverage at the hotel's world renowned Rock Bar, which caps a soaring cliff above the Indian Ocean. Relish a treatment at Spa on the Rocks, where your massage happens in a hut poised on a tiny island encircled by the sea. ayanaresort.com

viceroybali.com

December: Beaver Creek, Colorado

Beat the crowds and make first tracks in the season's first snow at Beaver Creek. Perhaps Colorado's jewel in its resort-laden crown, this upscale, intimate, down-to-earth ski area boasts 1,832 skiable acres. Spoiling you with welcoming touches, such as just-baked, complimentary chocolate cookies at the base at day's end, champagne ice bars and a mid-mountain candy cabin, brimming with sugary treats served from vintage barrels, Beaver Creek exudes definite personality. Splurge with a slope-view suite at the Ritz-Carlton

Bachelor Gulch, where you glide right straight to the lift. Apres ski means cocktails in the Buffalo Bar with mixmaster Garret, who creates ambrosial cocktails or outside around the campfire, with a guitar playing cowboy. Commit to the resort's "White Glove Package," and spendthrifts will be mollycoddled for five days at Trapper's Cabin, located mid-mountain amid the ski runs. The package costs 50k, but comes with staff, a hell airport transfer, season ski passes, private ski lessons, custom-made ski clothing and meals in locations throughout the resort—among other prestigious amenities. beavercreek.com, ritzcarlton.com

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