



LIVE BEYOND TRAVELS

THE DESTINATION WEDDING & HONEYMOON PLANNING GUIDE

Everything you need to decide where, when, and how — before you spend a dollar.

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WEDDING, HONEYMOON, OR BOTH

WEDDING, HONEYMOON, OR BOTH?

Most couples treat these as one decision, and they should — but there are three genuinely different shapes this can take, and they cost very different amounts.

One place	You marry at the resort and stay on after your guests fly home. Cheapest of the three, simplest logistically, and the most common. The trade-off is that your honeymoon happens where your wedding just was.
Two places	Ceremony with guests in one place, then you two move on to a second destination. More expensive, but it draws a clean line between the event and the trip.
Honeymoon only	Traditional wedding at home, then travel. Best if your guest list is large or if travel would exclude people who matter to you.

THE TWELVE-MONTH TIMELINE

12+ months	Pick the destination and a rough date. Estimate who is realistically getting on a plane.
10–12 months	Contract the resort and hold a room block. Send save-the-dates — earlier than a wedding at home, because guests are buying flights.
8–10 months	Guests book and put down deposits. This is when you find out your real number.
6 months	Start documents. Passports first — renewals take longer than people expect.
3 months	Final headcount, ceremony details, vendor confirmations.
1 month	Final payments. Every document in hand and checked.
Arrival	The residency clock starts. Licence application, then the ceremony.

THE QUESTION THAT SETTLES IT

How many people are actually getting on a plane? Not how many you'd invite — how many will go. Under 20 opens up small islands, villas, and boutique properties. Over 50 and flight access starts driving every other decision.



CHOOSING YOUR DESTINATION

The Caribbean is not one destination. Flight access, cost, and atmosphere vary enormously across a few hundred miles. Here is the short version of who each place suits.

The Bahamas

Closest to the US mainland and the easiest for guests to reach. Nassau and Paradise Island handle large groups; Exuma and Harbour Island are for smaller, design-driven weddings. My specialty.

Jamaica

Strong all-inclusive market at a wide range of price points, and a deep bench of resorts that run weddings constantly. Good value for larger guest lists.

Turks & Caicos

Grace Bay is the draw. Upscale, quieter, and priced accordingly. Best for smaller groups who care more about the beach than the nightlife.

St. Lucia

The most dramatic scenery in the region — the Pitons are the reason people choose it. Adults-only and couples-focused resorts dominate, so check before assuming kids can come.

Dominican Republic

Punta Cana is the value leader for big groups. Enormous resort inventory and frequent flights make it the easiest place to absorb a hundred guests without anyone going broke.

Mexican Caribbean

Riviera Maya and Cancun. Huge selection, excellent flight access from most US cities, and the widest spread of budgets. Note that legal requirements here are stricter than most of the islands.

Puerto Rico & USVI

The simplest option for US citizens — no passport needed for Puerto Rico, and US marriage law applies directly, so the legal side is far less complicated.

WHERE I GO DEEPEST

I'm a Certified Bahamas Specialist, trained by the Bahamas Ministry of Tourism including their destination wedding module. That means I know the sixteen island groups apart from each other and can tell you which one actually fits your day.

I plan across the whole Caribbean. The Bahamas is simply where I can go furthest beyond what a brochure will tell you.



THE LEGAL PART

Getting legally married abroad is more paperwork than difficulty. Nearly every destination asks for the same core documents — what changes is the timing, the authentication, and how far ahead you have to file.

WHAT EVERY DESTINATION WILL ASK FOR

- ☐ Valid passports for both of you
- ☐ Proof of arrival — usually your immigration stamp or entry card
- ☐ Certified birth certificates, in many destinations
- ☐ A sworn statement that neither of you is currently married
- ☐ Certified final divorce decree, if either of you is divorced
- ☐ Death certificate of a former spouse, if either of you is widowed
- ☐ Two witnesses over 18 — the resort can usually provide them

WHAT CHANGES FROM PLACE TO PLACE

Residency	Some destinations require you to be on the ground for a set period before you can even apply. Others have no wait at all. This single rule can add days to your trip.
Authentication	Several destinations require documents to carry an apostille — a specific certification from your home state. It takes weeks, so it drives the timeline.
Translation	Spanish-speaking destinations generally require certified translation by a locally licensed translator.
Medical	A small number of destinations still require blood work. Most do not.
Fees	Licence fees are set by each government and change. I confirm the current amount before you budget.

THE ONE THAT TRIPS EVERYONE UP

The sworn statement of single status. Couples assume a birth certificate or driver's licence proves it — it doesn't, and it is the most common reason an application stalls at the counter.
I build every required document into your timeline months ahead, so nobody is scrambling on the island.



GUESTS, BUDGET, AND THE PARTS NOBODY WARNS YOU ABOUT

Who pays	The standard is that guests pay their own airfare and room. You cover the ceremony, reception, and usually a welcome event. Say this plainly in your save-the-dates — ambiguity here causes more friction than cost does.
Room blocks	A block holds rooms at an agreed rate. Some carry deposits or attrition clauses, meaning you owe money on rooms nobody books. I read those terms before you sign anything.
The attendance gap	Far fewer people come than say they will. Plan your budget on who has actually put money down, not on who said yes at brunch.
Passports	Many destinations want validity well beyond your travel dates, and renewals run long. Every guest needs to check theirs the week you send save-the-dates, not the month before.
Adults-only	This is a property-wide policy, not a reception choice. If anyone in your family is bringing children, it eliminates entire resorts — confirm before falling in love with a photo.
All-inclusive	Covers wildly different things at different properties. Premium liquor, specialty dining, and the wedding itself are frequently outside it.

WORTH ASKING ME ABOUT

Travel protection. It matters more for a destination wedding than for an ordinary trip, because you are coordinating dozens of non-refundable arrangements around a single date, for people flying in from everywhere.

It is never required to book with me. Ask me and I will walk you through what it does and does not cover, so you can decide for yourselves.



HOW WE'LL WORK TOGETHER

I'm an independent advisor operating under my own CLIA — not a franchise and not a call centre. Here is the sequence, so there are no surprises.

- 1 Inquiry**
You tell me what you're imagining. No cost, no obligation, and no pressure to have it figured out.
- 2 Planning fee**
Collected before I build anything. It buys you real research rather than a list of links.
- 3 Proposal**
Actual options with actual pricing, built around your guest count and budget.
- 4 Authorization**
You approve and authorize payment in writing. It becomes your timestamped record.
- 5 Booking**
Confirmed. You receive your itinerary document as a reference for the whole trip.
- 6 Pre-departure**
Documents, timelines, and what to expect on arrival — sent before you fly.
- 7 While you're away**
I'm reachable. Things go wrong on trips; that is when an advisor earns their keep.
- 8 Welcome home**
We debrief, and I keep your file for next time.

READY WHEN YOU ARE

Email or call me. No cost, no obligation — just a conversation.

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