

60+ WAYS TO SAY 'I DO' IN DREAMY DESTINATIONS

TRAVEL+
LEISURE
INDIA
& SOUTH ASIA
SPECIAL EDITION

WEDDINGS & HONEYMOONS

2023-24 / ₹ 100

Mrunal
Thakur's
Whimsical Interlude At
Novotel Pune

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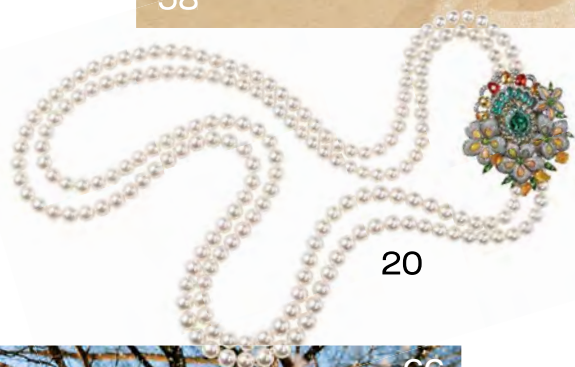
WEDDINGS & HONEYMOONS 2023-24



Mrunal Thakur dolled up in a gorgeous Falguni Shane Peacock lehenga at Novotel Pune.

ON HER: Outfit, **Falguni Shane Peacock**; shoes, **Jimmy Choo**; necklace, **Diosa Paris**; all prices on request

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06 SPICE IT UP

From makeup essentials to grooming must-haves, we find you the best products to help you get all glammed up for your big day.

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Figure out with us the art of capturing the most whimsical moments at a celebrity weddings.

ON THE COVER: Actor Mrunal Thakur in Novotel Pune Nagar Road.

ON MRUNAL: Outfit, Rahul Mishra; shoes, Jimmy Choo; necklace, Diosa Paris; all prices on request
PRODUCED BY: Simrran Gill
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ASSISTED BY: Shannon Lobo
STYLIST: Aastha Sharma
ASSISTED BY: Manisha Chhanang and Reann Moradian
MAKE-UP BY: Lochan Thakur
HAIR-UP BY: Tejinder Singh
LOCATION: Novotel Pune Nagar Road

LETTER *from the Editor*

IT'S TIME FOR THE 'BIG' intimate wedding. With the *shaadi* season in the country in full swing and 'bridal' becoming the bee word, weddings are ruling the roost this winter. And the one trend that's on top of mind is destination weddings—irrespective of domestic or international destinations—it's time to celebrate 'I do' with near and dear ones in a setting that leaves you with memories of a lifetime.

Be it actor-couple Kiara Advani-Sidharth Malhotra's wedding in Jaisalmer, actor Athiya Shetty's wedding to cricketer K L Rahul in the former's family farmhouse in Khandala, or actor Parineeti Chopra and politician Raghav Chadha's royal nuptials in Udaipur—all were intimate and serene affairs, minimalist yet elegant. Our issue focusses on such intimate destination weddings that put the spotlight on personal connections and subtle elegance. Go through our comprehensive guide to put together your dream wedding with tips from experts (p66).

Unconventional is the new normal in this special issue, and for our cover feature, we take the versatile actor Mrunal Thakur to the eclectic Novotel Pune Nagar Road hotel. She easily steps into the role of a carefree bride, who radiates unfiltered beauty and celebrates without reservations. Read up little known facts about her as she spills the beans in her off-the-cuff break at the luxury hotel (p58).

Let's accept that putting the wedding trousseau together is a Herculean task that can rob you off your peace of mind. To help you plan your shopping better, we have curated the best of outfits (p10), jewellery (p14), and accessories (p18) that would make you look like a million dollar on your big day.

As destination weddings only get more popular, don't miss out on our carefully-compiled list on the hottest wedding destinations, both in India (p76) and abroad (p81). You've planned the big day, bought the dress, chosen the flowers. Now comes the tricky part: deciding where to spend the first weeks of wedded bliss!



Honeymoons have become bigger and splashier than ever. Couples are back to booking proper romantic getaways in faraway places. Our list of dream honeymoon destinations across India (p86) and around the world (p91) will help you find the perfect romantic match.

But beyond all the hullabaloo, don't forget to enjoy every moment.

Carpe diem!

It's the wedding season and it's time to dress up and put your best foot forward at intimate celebrations that put the spotlight on personal connections and subtle elegance.

Aindrila Mitra
aindrila.mitra@burdaluxury.com



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GLAM IT UP!

Walk down the isle glowing like a radiant goddess with these glamorous makeup must-haves. **BY PRIYANKA YADAV**



1. Smoke and Brighten Kajal Eyeliner Duo, **Estée Lauder**, ₹2,900; esteelauder.in
2. Hollywood Glide Architect Highlighter - Champagne Glow, **Charlotte Tilbury**, ₹4,400; nykaa.com
3. Matte Lipstick - Royal Red, **Anastasia Beverly Hills**, ₹2,600; boddess.com
4. Retro Eyeshadow Palette, **Natasha Denona**, ₹7,100; sephora.nnnow.com
5. Makeup Insurance Longwear Setting Spray + Environmental Defense 18 Hour Wear, **Too Faced**, ₹2,600; nykaa.com
6. Diorshow Kabuki Brow Styler- 032 Dark Brown, **Dior**, ₹2,800; nykaa.com
7. Vitamin Enriched Pressed Powder in Peach, **Bobbi Brown**, ₹4,500; bobbibrown.in
8. Water Bank Blue Hyaluronic Cream, **Laneige**, ₹3,050; boddess.com
9. Vitamin C Ceramide Capsules Radiance Renewal Serum, **Elizabeth Arden**, ₹8,000; boddess.com
10. Faux Filter Luminous Matte Full Coverage Liquid Foundation - 320G Tres Leches, **Huda Beauty**, ₹3,650; sephora.nnnow.com



From left: Indulge in barefoot luxury at Jumeirah Maldives Olhahali Island; Below: From idyllic beach strolls to couple's massages, the resort has many romantic experiences on offer.

Island Paradise

If an island getaway is your idea of a dreamy honeymoon, **Jumeirah Maldives Olhahali Island** is a fabulous choice to enjoy the sun, sand, and sea, while indulging in barefoot luxury. **BY SHIBANI BAWA**

NESTLED AMIDST the crystal-clear waters of the Indian Ocean, Jumeirah Maldives Olhahali Island is a romantic haven for honeymooners. Located in the North Malé Atoll, it is easily accessible from Malé via a 55-minute thrilling speedboat or a 15-minute scenic seaplane ride. An idyllic resort for couples to collect memorable stories to weave into their very own fairytale, it unfolds an array of experiences from sunset cruises to movies under the stars. As soon as you check-in with the love

of your life, a dedicated butler is assigned to pamper you to the hilt.

DESIGNED FOR ROMANCE

Jumeirah Maldives is an all-villa, luxury resort offering 67 beach and over-water villas, surrounded by a breathtaking natural landscape. While each villa is designed in a contemporary Mediterranean style, a spectacular 120-square-metre roof terrace with a magnificent private deck offering unobstructed lagoon views is truly exceptional. Ideal for 'elevated love', it is the perfect space for myriad intimate adventures, from serene yoga sessions to rejuvenating couple's massages. This is also the perfect venue for personal cinema screening under the star-studded Maldivian night sky.

SENSUAL DINING

With six distinct restaurants and bars serving exquisite cuisines and unparalleled ocean

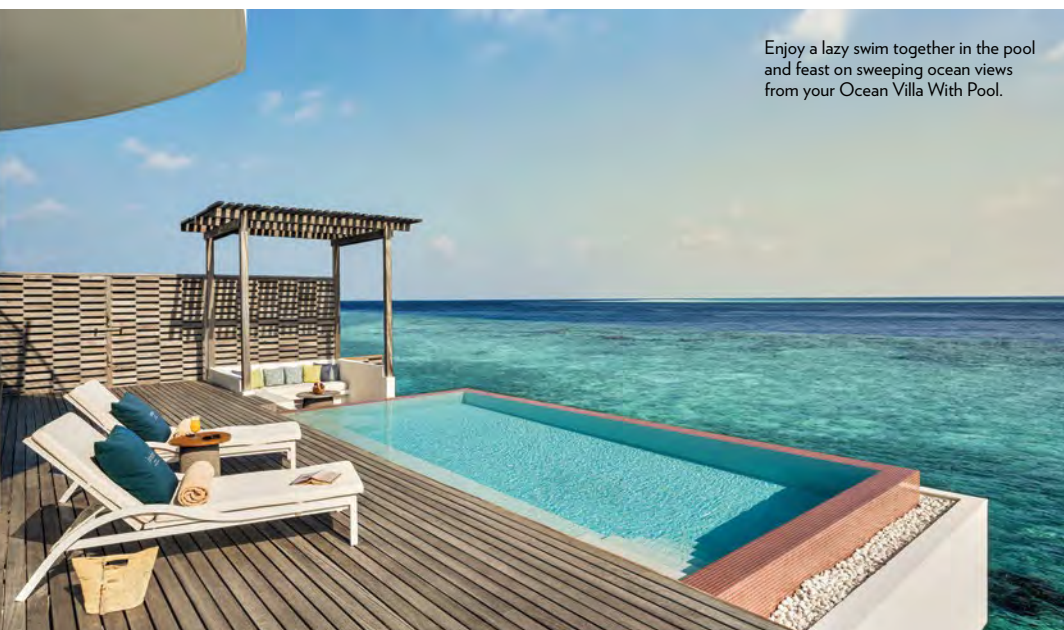
views, Jumeirah Maldives understands that the way to the guests' heart is through a symphony of flavours. The award-winning menus at Kayto and Shimmers showcase gastronomic excellence set against the backdrop of dazzling sea views. A range of romantic settings complement the culinary artistry—take your pick from an intimate gazebo dinner on the beach, a relaxed repast on the pier while soaking in the uninterrupted views of the Indian Ocean, or simply enjoy an indulgent floating breakfast in your private pool.

IDYLLIC ISLAND LIFE

Adventurous souls can pick from over 50 weekly thrilling activities—from guided nature walks to underwater photography. Capture memorable moments with a fun-filled photoshoot set against the backdrop of pristine beaches and lush tropical sceneries. Enjoy a romantic sunset cruise aboard a private yacht or a traditional *dhoni* boat, and be mesmerised with the Maldivian sky that transforms from clear blue to warm hues of orange and pink.

SPECIAL INDULGENCES

Lounging in the comfort of your villa, sauntering to your private rooftop to soak in the views, sampling the finest food and drinks, enjoying lazy swims or thrilling water sports, being pampered with couple treatments at the Talise spa, and indulging in a range of complimentary tokens like sparkling wine, exquisite bed and bathtub decorations, floral bath, and so much more—these are all the ingredients for the honeymoon of a lifetime!



Enjoy a lazy swim together in the pool and feast on sweeping ocean views from your Ocean Villa With Pool.

For more information, jumeirah.com

GROOMING GAME STRONG

On your big day, step up your grooming game and put your best face forward with these top products.

BY PRIYANKA YADAV



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1. Maximum Hydrator Activated Water-Gel Concentrate, **Clinique For Men**, ₹3,700; clinique.in
2. Cade After Shave Balm, **L'Occitane**, ₹2,900; loccitane.com
3. Mini Radiant Creamy Concealer - Ginger, **NARS**, ₹1,400; sephora.nnnnow.com
4. Hyaluronic Hydra Foundation, **BY TERRY**, ₹5,550; boddess.com
5. Clarifying Mask, **Sulwhasoo**, ₹2,950; nykaa.com
6. Nourishing Passionfruit Extract Lip Balm, **Aceology**, ₹5,230; nykaaman.com
7. Vitamin Enriched Eye Base, **Bobbi Brown**, ₹4,650; bobbibrown.in
8. Hydrate Primer - Clear, **Makeup Revolution**, ₹850; tirabeauty.com

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SARTORIAL DREAMS

Raise a glass to the beginning of the new chapter of your life, as you celebrate in a glamorous silhouette on your cocktail night. **BY PRIYANKA YADAV**



1. Metallic structured gown, **Amit Aggarwal**, price on request; amitaggarwal.com 2. Embellished gown, **Gaurav Gupta**, price on request; gauravguptastudio.com 3. Sunderbans la soleil lattice fish-cut trail skirt set, **Rahul Mishra**, ₹5,99,000; rahulmishra.in 4. Onion pink lace lehenga set, **Rimzim Dadu**, ₹4,25,000; rimzimdadu.com 5. Crescent sculpted gown, **Rohit Gandhi & Rahul Khanna**, ₹1,95,000; rohitandrahul.com 6. Warrior goddess gown, **Pankaj & Nidhi**, price on request; pankajandnidhi.com; 7. Embroidered skirt and bustier, **Varun Bahl**, price on request; varunbahl.com 8. Grey and ivory skirt and bustier with luminescent pearls, **Manish Malhotra**, price on request; manishmalhotra.in

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TOAST TO ELEGANCE

Be the best version of your dapper self and get your cocktail night look just right with these designer pieces.

BY PRIYANKA YADAV



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1. Rust Deluge bandhgala set, **Shantanu & Nikhil**, bandhgala: ₹1,75,000, waistcoat: ₹48,500, shirt: ₹38,500; shantanunikhil.com 2. Mirror knotted cactus threadwork bandhgala, **Kunal Rawal**, ₹1,09,000; kunalrawalofficial.com 3. Noir tigress blazer set, **Rahul Mishra**, ₹2,21,500; rahulmishra.in 4. Metallic twisted mesh tuxedo, **Rimzim Dadu**, ₹1,75,000; rimzimdadu.com 5. Rainforest silk brocade set, **SUKETDHIR**, bandhgala: ₹72,650, kurta: ₹48,650, palazzo: ₹44,650; suketdhir.com 6. Moulded polymer metallic jacket set, **Amit Aggarwal**, ₹1,60,000; amitaggarwal.com 7. Blade long bandgala jacket, **Antar-Agni**, ₹59,800; antar-agni.com

The background of the advertisement is a photograph of The Westin Himalayas resort. The image shows a modern, multi-story building with a mix of stone and wood cladding. The entrance is a large, glass-fronted structure with a flat roof, illuminated from within. In front of the entrance is a circular courtyard with a low wall and some landscaping. The sky is a clear, deep blue, suggesting twilight. The overall mood is serene and sophisticated.

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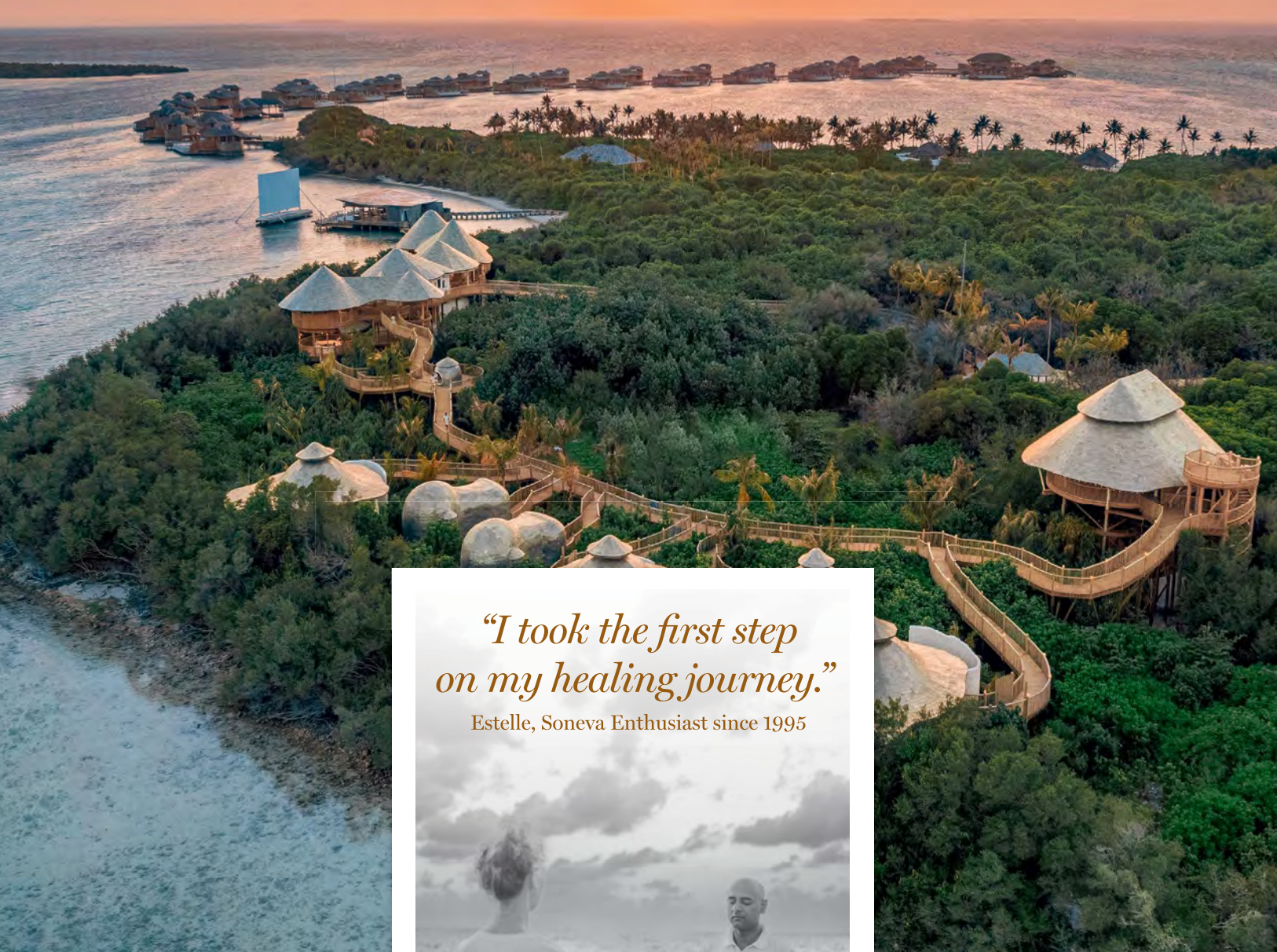
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ENCHANTING ENSEMBLES

Twirl your way into your happily-ever-after in these dreamy bridal couture pieces. **BY PRIYANKA YADAV**



1. Ivory and gold embroidered lehenga set, **Anjul Bhandari**, price on request; anjulbhandari.in **2.** Embroidered blazer with skirt, **Anamika Khanna**; price on request; anamikakhanna.in **3.** Red embroidered lehenga set, **JJ Valaya**, price on request; valaya.com **4.** Signature ivory Kashmiri embroidered organza lehenga set, **Manish Malhotra**, price on request; manishmalhotra.in **5.** Concept saree-blouse drape, **Tarun Tahiliani**, ₹5,24,900; taruntahiliani.com **6.** Wine-coloured Avani lehenga set, **Anita Dongre**, price on request; anitadongre.com



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FITTING FINESSE

Turn heads while you make a grand entrance as the most dapper groom in these elegant fits. **BY PRIYANKA YADAV**



1. Floret bandhgala, **Rohit Gandhi & Rahul Khanna**, ₹2,45,000; rohitandrahul.com 2. Sherwani set with kamarband, **Tarun Tahilliani**; price on request; taruntahilliani.com 3. Alencon allure sherwani set, **Shantanu & Nikhil**, sherwani: ₹2,25,000, safa: ₹28,500, dupatta: ₹75,000, kalgi: ₹12,500, kamarband: ₹18,500; shantanunikhil.com 4. Ivory threadwork embroidered sherwani set with custom-made jewellery buttons, **Kunal Rawal**, ₹2,64,000; kunalrawalofficial.com 5. Embroidered sherwani set, **Anamika Khanna**; price on request; anamikakhanna.in 6. Pale pink embroidered sherwani set, **Varun Bahl**; ₹2,75,000; varunbahl.com 7. Black embroidered sherwani set, **JJ Valaya**; ₹1,45,000; valaya.com

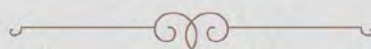
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THE BEDAZZLING BRIDE

Whether handed down or carefully crafted for you, wedding jewellery is precious to a bride. Find your pick from these statement pieces. **BY PRIYANKA YADAV**



1. Keepsakes statement polki necklace, **Her Story**, price on request; herstoryjewels.com
2. Rumi Polka ring, **Khanna Jewellers**, ₹1,52,535; khannajewellers.com
3. Haute Joaillerie Red Carpet collection cuff, **Chopard**, price on request; chopard.com/en-in
4. Gold peacock earrings, **Maresh Notandass Fine Jewellery**, price on request; mareshnotandass.com
5. Diamond Polki nath, **Birdhichand Ghanshyamdas Jewellers**, price on request; bgjewellers.in
6. Polki necklace in emerald stones, **The House of MBJ**, price on request; thehouseofmbj.in
7. Hathphool bracelet, **Sunita Shekhawat**, price on request; sunitashekhawat.com
8. Oriental Fantasy necklace, Bulgari Meditteranea High Jewelry collection, **BVLGARI**, price on request; bvlgari.com/en-in
9. Emerald and uncut diamond maangtika, **Razwada Jewels**, price on request; IG: [@razwada.jewels](https://www.instagram.com/razwada.jewels)
10. Amethysts uncut diamonds earrings, **Hazoorilal Legacy**, price on request; hazoorilallegecy.com





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REGAL AFFAIR

Want to look like a royalty on your big day? These gorgeous accents will help create the most stunning ensemble for the groom!

BY PRIYANKA YADAV



1. Brooch, **Kohinoor Jewellers Agra**, price on request; IG: @kohinoorjewellersagra
2. Polki royal kalangi, **Raniwala 1881**; price on request; raniwala1881.com
3. Jadau kalangi, **Tarun Tahiliani**, ₹49,900; taruntahiliani.com
4. Emerald uncut diamond with Meenakari ring, **Neety Singh Jewellery**, price on request; neetysinghjewellery.in
5. Ruby layered necklace, **Goenka India**, price on request; goenkaindia.com
6. Firdos cufflinks, **Aurus**, ₹50,000; aurusjewels.in
7. Victorian-design emerald and Polki brooch, **Sunita Shekhawat**, price on request; sunitashekhawat.com
8. 18KT Polki ring in rose-cut diamonds with gold, **House Of MBJ**, price on request; thehouseofmbj.in
9. Haute Joaillerie Red Carpet collection necklace, **Chopard**, price on request; chopard.com/en-in
10. Hexa Buttons (14k gold), **Moi**, ₹1,00,940; vibewithmoi.in



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BY PRIYANKA YADAV



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1. Haute Joillerie, **Chopard**, price on request; chopard.com
2. Serpenti Misteriosi High-Jewellery Secret Watch, **BVLGARI**, price on request; bulgari.com/en-in
3. Bohème Automatic Date 30mm, **Montblanc**, ₹2,77,100; montblanc.com
4. Hellenyum (WC-2S), **Versace**, ₹82,100; justwatches.com
5. Portofino Automatic 37, **IWC Schaffhausen**, price on request; iwc.com
6. Patrimony Self-Winding, **Vacheron Constantin**, price on request; vacheron-constantin.com
7. Caliber 9S 25th Anniversary Limited Edition, **Grand Seiko**, ₹6,10,000; grandseikoboutique.in
8. Navitimer Automatic 36, **Breitling**, ₹27,52,000; breitling.com

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BY PRIYANKA YADAV



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1. Traditionnelle Manual-Winding, **Vacheron Constantin**, price on request; vacheron-constantin.com 2. Alpine Eagle XL Chrono, **Chopard**, price on request; chopard.com 3. Star Legacy Automatic Date 42mm, **Montblanc**, ₹3,14,100; montblanc.com 4. Greca Logo-VI, **Versace**, ₹1,10,100; justwatches.com 5. Octo Finissimo Carbongold Perpetual Calendar, **BVLGARI**, price on request; bulgari.com/en-in 6. Navitimer B01 Chronograph 41, **Breitling**, ₹32,82,000; breitling.com 7. Caliber 9S 25th Anniversary Limited Edition, **Grand Seiko**, ₹7,10,000; grandseikoboutique.in 8. True Square Automatic Open Heart, **RADO**, ₹2,94,500; rado.com/en-in

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Enchanting Bahamas

White sand beaches and turquoise-hued waters combined with top-of-the-line luxury offerings at **Grand Hyatt Baha Mar** make it a great choice for a fairy-tale wedding.

THE NATURAL BEAUTY of the Bahamas is best enjoyed in the lap of luxury. With gorgeous beaches, tranquil waters, and the tropical sun making for a picturesque backdrop, Baha Mar is a 1,000-acre resort complex on the island of New Providence. The Grand Hyatt Baha Mar is a sprawling resort at the centre of it all. A sanctuary of natural beauty, stunning architecture, and utmost luxury, it offers an array of spectacular wedding venues and bespoke, personalised service to make it a preferred choice for hosting a destination wedding.



Clockwise from left: Host the perfect destination wedding at Grand Hyatt Baha Mar's spectacular venues; the resort is a great pick for an intimate beach wedding.

The resort offers an extensive choice of beautifully-appointed guestrooms, suites, and villas to host your friends and family. From personalised arrival service through the farewell brunch, the wedding specialists help you create the perfect celebration. A dedicated team takes care of every detail from bespoke venue décor, to delectable cuisine. All you need to do is kick-back and enjoy your special day with your loved ones!

When there is time between all the wedding revelry, there is plenty to do at the resort—eight swimming pools, nine tennis courts including pickleball, a 30,000-square-foot luxury spa, a Jack Nicklaus golf course, and a miniature golf course. Your guests will be spoilt for choice with offerings ranging from the largest casino in the Caribbean, to the Baha Bay Water Park, and The Current & ECCHO museums with a collection of Bahamian arts and crafts.

With all the gorgeous nature and luxurious offerings at Grand Hyatt Baha Mar, it is no wonder that it is a popular honeymoon destination as well. grandhyattbahamar.com —**SHIBANI BAWA**

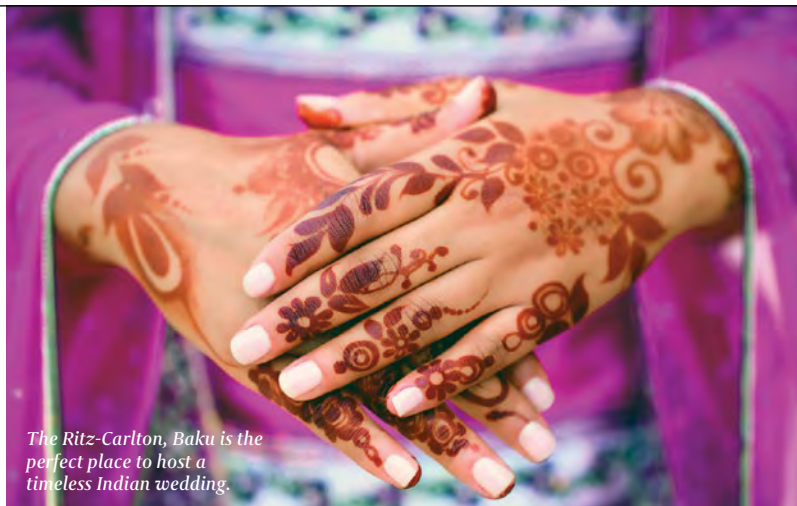
Opulence in Azerbaijan

The **Ritz-Carlton, Baku** is the perfect venue to not only enjoy the unique city of Baku, but also for hosting a memorable wedding.

THE CAPITAL CITY of Azerbaijan, Baku, boasts a spectacular coastline and an equally pretty skyline. As the largest city in the world located below sea level, it offers a unique experience of the Caspian Sea. As it is located on the crossroads between Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, it is a melting pot of various cultural influences that lends it an inimitable energy.

The Ritz-Carlton, Baku showcases the fascinating roots of Azerbaijan through immersive and authentic experiences in its signature luxurious style. Hosting a wedding here is a breeze as the hotel has an expert team of wedding specialists, who take care of every little detail, while you enjoy the momentous occasion with your loved ones. They are dedicated to creating unique wedding experiences—from an intimate affair to an ostentatious extravaganza.

The plush accommodation for your guests ranges from the Junior Suite to the Presidential Suite, each exuding opulence and style, and



The Ritz-Carlton, Baku is the perfect place to host a timeless Indian wedding.

showcasing authentic local artistry. The rooms with balconies offer breathtaking views of the surrounding landscape. The culinary team ensures that the most lavish banquet is laid out to celebrate the special day. The spacious ballroom at The Ritz-Carlton, Baku is a superb venue for a memorable wedding celebration. There are also smaller private spaces

as well, where you can host just about a dozen of your most precious ones. All the locations feature floor-to-ceiling windows, offering uninterrupted views of the city and the sea. The golden hour, just before sunset, is absolutely breathtaking, and we do recommend hosting at least one function at this magical time. ritzcarlton.com —**SB**

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BAHA MAR



From extreme left: Jetwing Saman Villas offer an array of romantic backdrops for your pre-wedding celebrations; Some luxury suites here come with a private plunge pool.

Crowning Jewel of the Emerald Isle

Jetwing Saman Villas is a luxurious hideaway at a dreamy location in Sri Lanka to celebrate the most special day of your life.

FEW LUXURY RESORTS can top the unbeatable location of Jetwing Saman Villas. Perched upon a rocky cliff and nestled between two gorgeous stretches of golden sandy beaches, it is a picture-perfect venue encircled by swaying coconut palms. An ideal hideaway to swoon the love of your life, this all-suite resort not only encapsulates tropical tranquillity, it will also leave you and your guests pampered with unparalleled luxury.

Located just two hours away from Colombo, Jetwing Saman Villas are a serene getaway in the fishing village of Bentota. The highlight of the hotel's design is that all suites open up to salty

sea breeze and stunning views of the Indian Ocean. There are 26 plush suites and a duplex villa that have all been aesthetically designed and fitted with state-of-the-art amenities. Some suites come with a private plunge pool, but there is also a breathtaking infinity pool with uninterrupted views of the Indian Ocean.

Culinary delights are an integral part of Sri Lankan hospitality, and the incredible chefs at Jetwing Saman Villas offer the most well-curated menu of Eastern, Western, and Sri Lankan cuisines cooked with the best quality and freshest produce. Take your pick from the fine-dining restaurants, or opt for the resort's unique signature dining experiences at the most stunning locations for an extra romantic touch. Finally, rejuvenate your senses with a treatment at the Sahana Spa that has earned the reputation of being one of the island's most exquisite spa experiences.

Jetwing Saman Villas offer an array of picturesque backdrops for hosting various pre-wedding and wedding events. This slice of paradise makes it possible to whisper your vows barefoot on the beach or enjoy a romantic rendezvous post all the wedding revelry. The stunning and magical surroundings also lend themselves for capturing beautiful photographs of momentous occasions that are celebrated here. Getting married in this surreal setting is the stuff that most romantic dreams are made of. jetwinghotels.com

—SHIBANI BAWA

From manicured lawns to grand ballrooms, this resort offers an array of wedding venues to pick from.



Sensually Yours

Awaken your senses and celebrate your love at **Sofitel Singapore Sentosa Resort & Spa**.

WITH ITS STUNNING location atop a cliff overlooking the South China Sea, Sofitel Singapore Sentosa Resort & Spa is the perfect destination for a magical wedding. The resort's stunning architecture is inspired by a unique combination of Paris' Jardin du Luxembourg along with the aesthetic style of a Balinese palace. The panoramic view of the sea, lush greenery, lavish outdoor spaces, and elegantly-manicured lawns with peacocks strutting about make this picturesque resort ideal for celebrating your love and exchanging vows.

Ideal for a destination wedding, you can either buy out the entire resort with 215 rooms, suites, and villas if you are planning an extravagant celebration, or book only one wing of the accommodation for a cosier affair. For bridal couples that prefer intimate solemnisations, the exclusive Villa du Jardin that comes with a private pool and garden fits the bill perfectly. From an elegantly manicured lawn at Spice Island Point to Saffron Garden, with its immaculate landscaping, and an unparalleled view of the South China

Sea, there are gorgeous open-air venues to choose from. Large outdoor spaces also allow for fire ceremonies, making it especially well-suited for Indian weddings. The spacious and open-aired Straits Verandah is particularly popular as a picture-perfect spot for sunset ceremonies. Then, there are two ballrooms for wedding banquets—the Straits and Saffron Ballrooms. Providing complete flexibility to host your nuptials in your special style, the ballrooms have their own private access and driveway, and since they are pillarless, they can be set up in any theme and size as per your requirement.

With two Indian chefs who specialise in authentic menus, all dietary requirements can be catered for in lavish and delectable spreads. Of course, you can also add a choice of Western and Asian cuisines. Besides the wedding festivities, you can indulge in fun and rejuvenating activities like spa treatments at Sofitel SPA or mixology masterclasses at LeBar. sofitel-singapore-sentosa.com —SB

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Dubai Bling

Glitz, glamour, and top-notch hospitality—**Shangri-La Dubai** makes a fine choice as the perfect wedding venue for couples looking for opulent celebrations.

Host a grand reception with Dubai's shimmering skyline in the backdrop at The Balcony Bar on Level 42.



IF YOU HAVE ALWAYS dreamed of saying 'I Do' in an opulent Middle-Eastern style, look no further than the Shangri-La Dubai. Located on Sheikh Zayed Road, the 42-storey hotel offers an array of stunning venues and luxurious accommodation combined with award-winning dining options and traditional world-class hospitality. Originally built in 2003, the hotel recently reopened after AED70-million worth of renovation of its public areas.

With 490 plush guestrooms, seven fancy restaurants and bars, two ballrooms, and seven meeting rooms, this grand hotel is well-suited for big, fat Indian weddings. The Al Nojoom (Grand Ballroom) and Al Bader (Junior Ballroom) are spacious and aesthetically designed to host lavish wedding parties. The grand ballroom can be divided into two smaller rooms, while the junior ballroom can easily accommodate up to 500 guests. There are also seven additional function rooms—Nasreen, Yasmin, Arjawan, Jihan, Sawsan, Rayhan, and Zaafran—for smaller gatherings and more intimate celebrations. With uninterrupted views of the Arabian Sea on one side and Dubai's spectacular skyline with the towering Burj Khalifa on the other, the rooftop terrace and The Balcony Bar on Level 42 is a fine space for a grand reception.

The culinary offerings are equally impressive. Experienced chefs deliver an authentic experience inspired from Vietnam, China, Thailand, and Italy, and of course the finest Indian fare. The celebrations team at Shangri-La Dubai pulls all stops when it comes to pampering you on your special day. From intimate soirees to lavish theme parties, they are wizards at honouring your requests efficiently. To top it all, the team is well-acquainted with Indian wedding customs, enabling them to cater to the finer details.

shangri-la.com —**SHIBANI BAWA**

Sicilian Splendour

Rocco Forte Hotels offers two exquisite Sicilian wedding destinations to celebrate the most magical moment of your life.

A CANOPY OF OLIVE TREES adorned with twinkling lights, a beachside celebration on the sun-kissed sand, a spectacular setting in an open-air amphitheatre—a wedding in Sicily promises all of this, along with the inimitable Italian charm. Pick the spectacular properties by Rocco Forte Hotels—Verdura Resort and Villa Igíea—for your perfect nuptials, where each moment is infused with the rich tapestry of history and the beauty of Sicily's natural surroundings.

Located on the south-west coast of Sicily, Verdura Resort is the epitome of elegance and sophistication. With an unparalleled choice of 11 reception venues, you'll be spoilt for choice with sites ranging from the olive groves to the beachside. If you are planning a party for 150 guests, both, the Verdura Beach and the poolside are ideal choices, while La Piazzetta is best suited for a big, fat Indian wedding with a capacity of 300 people. The olive groves make for a magical setting for an intimate get together for 50 guests.

At Villa Igíea in Palermo, the magic starts with a stylish arrival via a boat at the sun-kissed terrace overlooking the serene Gulf of Palermo. While Villa Igíea is a great choice for a romantic honeymoon, it is also well suited for hosting an

intimate wedding. The Belle Époque Ballroom seats up to 180 guests, but 280 guests can be accommodated for a standing reception. Sala Basile seats up to 120 guests. The Villa even has a picturesque temple nestled within the beautiful garden for a private ceremony.

Both the resorts have accomplished chefs, well trained to create a bespoke menu to cater to your individual tastes.

The fun part is a tantalising tasting session prior to the big day, where you can enjoy delectable dishes and choose from a carefully curated selection of wines and champagnes. A dedicated team ensures that your celebration is tailored to your unique style—they take care of the finest aspects including table linen, seat covers, and dazzling floral arrangements. *roccofortehotels.com* —**SB**



Villa Igíea in Palermo is the perfect pick for an intimate wedding.

AN EFFORTLESSLY *romantic* SRI LANKAN OASIS



Savour the soothing symphony of ocean waves, bask in the gentle caress of the sun, and take in the mesmerising views from our pristine promontory. In this sanctuary, where unparalleled luxury and natural tranquility seamlessly unite, alongside the warmth of our authentic Sri Lankan hospitality, you will find yourself at the epitome of indulgence, in a paradise with no compromise.



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Immerse yourself in the rarest luxury while celebrating the most precious moment at The St. Regis Langkawi. Nestled in a secluded enclave on the island's southern tip and fringed by a 600-meter private white sand beach overlooking the clear, emerald-green waters of the shimmering Andaman Sea, this intimate resort offers a quintessential setting for a honeymoon or celebrating love.

For reservations, please visit stregislangkawi.com or call +604 960 6666
Jalan Pantai Beringin 07000 Langkawi, Malaysia



Blue & White Oasis

The spacious **Hilton Salwa Beach Resort & Villas** is not only a luxurious retreat near Doha, but it also features the largest theme park in Qatar!



THE HILTON SALWA Beach Resort & Villas is a wedding destination like none other. The gorgeous blue and white façade of the luxurious property is warmed up with a regionally-inspired design. Besides the 246 spacious rooms and suites, 84 beach villas, and a signature Arabian village of 31 villas, the property also boasts Desert Falls Water and Adventure Park—the largest of its kind in the country. Choose from one of the seven signature restaurants that serve everything from Italian and Asian fare to Middle Eastern and world cuisine. For some rejuvenating activities, there's a luxury spa and sports academy.

Especially well suited for weddings, the hotel features more than 12,900 square feet of flexible entertainment space. There are elegant indoor areas and picturesque outdoor spaces set amidst verdant gardens and at the pristine beachfront for hosting a variety of events—try and catch the striking sunset against the beautiful lighthouse overlooking the marina! The grand ballroom, Al Masarra, can host up to 1,200 guests, while the Zilla Meeting Room is ideal for around 400 guests, and the Malwa and Shada are smaller rooms that can accommodate up to 156 and 90 guests, respectively. Expect state-of-the-art AV technology, high-end facilities, and other personalised services along with an exquisite choice of catering for lavish festivities.

There is a specialised events team that is well trained to curate special events. Depending on your soiree style, they can set up a food truck, a themed picnic or a fun barbeque. Some of the romantic experiences at Hilton Salwa Beach Resort include a pampering massage at the award-winning eforea Spa, or a rose-bud adorned beach front villa complemented with warm and personalised service. hilton.com



From top: The blue and white facade of the resort stands out along the breathtaking coast in Abu Samra; say "I do" at a sun-kissed beach against a striking sunset!.

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An island wedding like no other at the Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay



NESTLED on its own private island in the heart of Manama, Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay is the perfect address for a dreamy destination wedding with its lush lawns, white-sand beach, two opulent ballrooms, and scenic outdoor terraces. The hotel, located only fifteen minutes from the Bahrain International Airport, presents the privilege of taking over an entire island for a bespoke Indian wedding.

While the expansive lawns and gardens with swaying palm trees provide an unforgettable backdrop with beautiful views of the bay, the private white-sand beach, complete with sea breezes, sets the perfect setting for outdoor ceremonies with an option to put the toes in the sand.

Al Bahrain Ballroom offers an exclusive entrance for a memorable *baraat* procession and dinner seating for up to 500 people among sparkling chandeliers. The ballroom's terrace, boasting views of enchanting gardens and the sea, also provides seating for 180 guests. A unique Four Seasons touch, the tastefully designed Bridal Suite, featuring multiple

changing rooms, and its own photo studio, is designed to enjoy the pre-wedding hours ensconced in luxury with family members or close friends. Located next to the Al Bahrain Ballroom, the Bridal Suite offers special access to the event venue allowing the bride to make an awe-inspiring first appearance.

Weddings here are also elevated journeys into immersive Indian cuisine. The Four Seasons' culinary creativity shines forth in an extensive array of customised menus which can be further enhanced by fly-in chefs upon the couple's request. The two award-winning signature restaurants by worldly-renown chef Wolfgang Puck, with crowd-pleasing menus, will also be favoured by the refined palates.

At Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay, destination weddings seamlessly transition to honeymoon bliss. Designed with influence from luxury voyages of the art-deco era, the hotel is a cosmopolitan oasis combining opulence with elegant colors. The 230m² Royal Suite, crowned on the top floor and boasting unprecedented views of the Manama skyline, is designated as the Honeymoon Suite

in buyout weddings. And, every corner of the property is a place to celebrate love, whether for a leisurely hand-in-hand walk at the white-sand beach; a romantic afternoon under the swaying palm trees of the Azure Pool, or a private dinner by the beach for immersing in the idyllic island times.

With thoughtfulness in every detail and the most attentive Four Seasons service, the hotel promises a Bahrain wedding of unforgettable beauty in its romantic island setting. To turn this once-in-a-lifetime occasion into a dream-worthy wedding experience, Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay is the ideal address to say 'Yes.'



Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain

For inquiries or reservation, please call +973 1711 5000 or visit fourseasons.com/bahrain



Where Dreams Come to Life

Waldorf Astoria Lusail Doha is the ultimate destination in the Middle East for Indian and South-Asian weddings. **BY SHIBANI BAWA**

LOCATED JUST 20 MINUTES from the international airport at Doha, the Waldorf Astoria Lusail Doha is a haven of luxury overlooking the azure waters of the Arabian Gulf. With 429 lavish rooms, suites, and sky villas, this opulent hotel exudes grandeur everywhere you go. An ideal place for your celebration of love, it is a picture-perfect sanctuary for couples tying the knot. Offering an inspired blend of the finest traditional Arabian hospitality with an extravagant contemporary style, you can rest assured that every ceremony here will be more memorable than your fondest dreams.

MANIFESTING YOUR DREAM WEDDING

Ensuring complete comfort and joy for the bride and groom, the dedicated specialists at Waldorf Astoria Lusail Doha are well-versed in the customs and intricacies of Indian and South Asian weddings. As they take the stress out of all the planning details, the team actually transforms the entire journey of creating the wedding of your dreams into an enjoyable and joyous affair. Every detail, from themed décor to the sumptuous feasts, is executed expertly. With a special focus on the brides-to-be, the team's expertise ensures the festivities are free of any organisational concerns. They offer a meticulous blend of luxury, tradition, and personalised service, to ensure that every special occasion is as unique as the love story it celebrates.

A SANCTUARY CRAFTED FOR THE QUINTESSENTIAL BRIDE

The Waldorf Astoria Lusail Doha is much more than a venue and far greater than a hotel—this is where brides can have their dreams come true. At this hotel, every detail is cherry-picked to create the





Clockwise from left: Waldorf Astoria Lusail Doha is the perfect pick for the Indian bride; the resort offers a perfect blend of opulence and serenity; with 429 lavish rooms, suites, and sky villas, the hotel has plenty of options for wedding guests; the dedicated chefs are experts in a variety of cuisines; one of the most attractive features of the property is its serene beachfront.

world's most extraordinary wedding experiences. The bridal suite at Waldorf Astoria Lusail Doha is a luxurious oasis for the bride to get ready in the company of her family and friends before stepping out to embark on her happily-ever-after journey. The spacious suite combines opulence, comfort, privacy, and tranquillity, making it an exclusive retreat for the bride before her big day. It comes with a private access, a breathtaking balcony, and a grand powder room.

AZURE VIEWS AND ELEGANT GARDENS

One of the most attractive features of the Waldorf Astoria Lusail Doha is its serene beachfront. This private stretch of a pristine beach is idyllic for picturesque wedding ceremonies and receptions. The golden sand, soft lull of the waves, and the changing hues of the gorgeous sky create the perfect backdrop for exchanging your vows. This strip of paradise is also ideal for intimate pre-wedding soirees, or a tranquil escape in the midst of all the hustle and bustle of the endless festivities. Another dreamy al-fresco setting is at the 950-square-metre garden. An ideal venue for a grand reception or an elegant evening soiree, it is well suited for larger celebrations. With a seating capacity for up to 650, the impeccably manicured lawns and towering palm trees make a gorgeous venue for a grand celebration.



SANCTUARY OF SERENITY

The spa at Waldorf Astoria Lusail Doha is a wellness sanctuary. The ESPA Life spa is spread across three floors, with 19 luxuriously appointed treatment rooms, a couple's suite, a private spa suite, and even sleep pods-- it is a tranquil and luxurious retreat. The VIP suite is the most indulgent space for bridal parties. An array of relaxing and rejuvenating treatments and therapies ensure utmost pampering for the bride and her special companions. With a holistic approach to well-being and bespoke beauty treatments, the expert therapists ensure that you feel and look your very best for the dreamiest occasions.

CULINARY EXTRAVAGANZA

The gastronomic indulgence at Waldorf Astoria Lusail Doha is worth the hype! While the dedicated chefs are experts in a variety of cuisines, including Indian, Asian, and other international cuisines, you'll also find restaurant brands with international acclaim. The in-house Sushisamba offers a delectable array of Japanese, Brazilian, and Peruvian flavours. This is also the very first beach club by the brand with panoramic views and a vibrant setting. For delicious Italian fare, there's Scarpetta, a contemporary and chic New-York based modern Italian diner. For a relaxed brasserie style restaurant, there's Bywater with an elegant indoor as well as ambient alfresco seating. These restaurants offer uniquely immersive experiences and are also great venues to host smaller events.

A PRIVATE ESCAPE

If you like to reach for the stars, check into the Sky villas at Waldorf Astoria Lusail Doha. These villas provide uninterrupted privacy, making them perfect for hosting close family and friends or as a secluded escape for the newlyweds. Perched high with breathtaking panoramic views, each exquisitely-designed villa is well-appointed with lavish amenities and private jacuzzis, ensuring that you have the most memorable stay. waldorfastorialusaildoha.com

Turkish Delight

Set in a peaceful bay surrounded by pine forests and mountains, **D Maris Bay** is an idyllic luxury beach resort in Turkey.

NESTLED BETWEEN towering mountain ranges and lush forests, D Maris Bay makes for a stunning visual as it is located high up on a pine-clad hillside on the Datça Peninsula. This secluded beach resort boasts breathtaking views of five white-sanded beaches, a scenic cove, and an archipelago of islands. The picture-perfect vistas include azure waters, jewel-toned flowers, and vibrant fauna. Restorative and serene, the raw beauty of D Maris Bay is guaranteed to awaken the senses.

The epitome of luxury, D Maris Bay is a modern retreat flooded with natural light. The stylish architecture matches the spectacular



Clockwise from left: D Maris Bay is the best luxury beach resort for a lazy Turkish vacation; laze around in your private pool with the love of your life.



location's natural splendour. Granite and marble-laden grand interiors are complemented by Turkish artworks adorning the walls. The hotel has 196 rooms, with most offering floor-to-ceiling windows that open up to mesmerising sea views or hilly landscape. For extra privacy, there is one luxury villa that offers a private getaway in its personal garden, on-site hammam, pool, kitchen, and more.

There are plenty of activities and experiences to suit a variety of interests. The location, in a stunning bay surrounded by volcanic hills and dense forests, makes it suitable to pursue watersports, sailing, spa, hiking, biking, and much more. A dedicated kids club keeps the younger ones happily occupied too. The resort has five restaurants that serve an array of local and international cuisine—from high-end Japanese to Turkish mezze, a Greek tavern, a *sheesha* lounge, and a specialty seafood restaurant take care of all gourmet food cravings. The service and facilities are all enhanced by warm, generous, and welcoming Mediterranean hospitality. dmarisbay.com —**SHIBANI BAWA**

Lavish Indulgence

Experience unmatched luxury and opulent celebrations at **Waldorf Astoria Lusail Doha**.

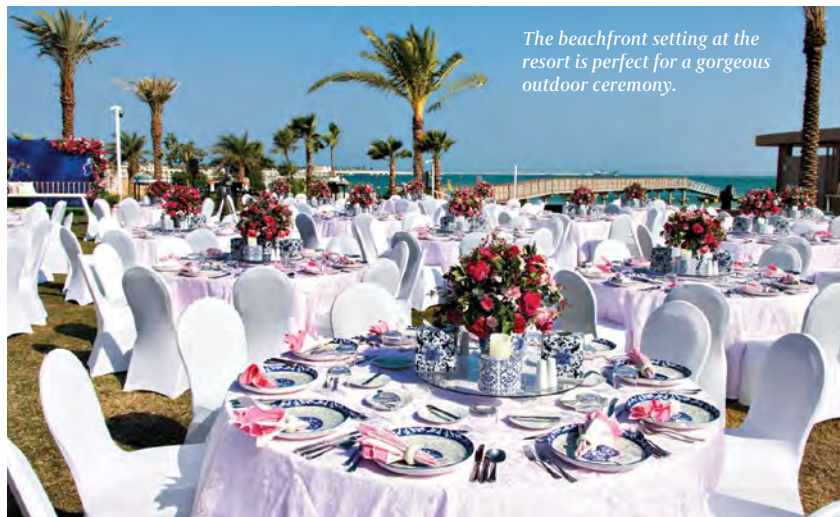
WALDORF ASTORIA LUSAIL DOHA is the last word in luxury for discerning travellers! It is a shining jewel in the collection of Waldorf Astoria Hotels & Resorts, Hilton's luxury brand of iconic properties at that epitomise superb service and culinary excellence. This particular architectural masterpiece is located in the heart of Doha and combines a chic contemporary style with quintessential Qatari elegance. The picturesque beachfront setting makes it ideal for a family holiday, milestone celebrations or romantic escapades.

The luxury accommodation at Waldorf Astoria Lusail Doha includes a range of plush rooms, suites, and rooftop sky villas. While they offer meticulously designed interiors with cutting-edge amenities, the private balconies offer breathtaking views of the Arabian Gulf. From the famous New-York based Italian restaurant, Scarpetta, to the internationally acclaimed Sushi Samba that is known for its world-class Japanese, Brazilian, and Peruvian cuisines, you'll be spoilt for culinary choice at the hotel. In fact, this is also Sushi Samba's first beach club in the world.

Then there's The Highmore, an exclusive rooftop lounge inspired by London's members-only clubs for swanky jetsetters. Exciting in-house activities include the exhilarating Wadi Lusail Waterpark, the delightful Aloha Surf Pool and the thrilling Adventure Trail. There are also some family-friendly pools for more water fun and dedicated kids and teenagers' clubs to ensure wholesome family fun. Do check out the Signature

Suite Packages that are specifically designed for two adults and a child—they allow you to make the most of the Waldorf Astoria Lusail Doha in utmost luxury.

This luxurious five-star resort is situated in close proximity to a wealth of experiences that Doha offers. The Place Vendôme Mall is a favourite amongst the well-heeled guests for some high-end retail therapy and a vast choice of gourmet restaurants. hilton.com —**SB**



The beachfront setting at the resort is perfect for a gorgeous outdoor ceremony.



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www.ayana.com

Te Amo, Mexico

A paradisiacal resort, superlative service and spectacular location in Mexico's gorgeous Baja California peninsula makes **Paradus Los Cabos** by Meliá Hotels a top choice for fairy-tale festivities.

LOCATED IN MEXICO'S BAJA CALIFORNIA peninsula, Paradus Los Cabos is the perfect adults-only, all-suite resort to celebrate your nuptials. From bespoke services by a dedicated Romance Team to Stay Safe Bridal Ambassadors who ensure that everything is perfect, you're guaranteed a dream wedding.

As the shimmering waters of the Sea of Cortéz and Gulf of California merge into one, you can expect only the most picture-perfect backdrops for your romantic celebrations—white-sand beaches or a lush tropical landscape, under a gorgeous starry sky or inside a stylish restaurant, by the lavish poolside or at sea on a relaxing sail.

As a member of The Leading Hotels of the World, the resort offers luxury accommodation

including a romantic swim-up suite with direct access to one of the two pools within the property. There are also plenty of activities to rejuvenate when the wedding revelry gets too hectic. YHI Spa offers indulgent treatments, the state-of-the-art fitness center ensures that your energy levels remain at their optimal best and there are plenty of golf courses near the resort. For some local flair, sign up for Latin dance classes, tequila and mezcal tasting, and mixology classes.

The highlight of this resort, however, is that it hails love by celebrating cultural traditions among their diverse guest list from all over the world—including Indian, Persian, South Asian roots—and embracing diversity and inclusivity with multicultural LGBTQ+ weddings. melia.com

—SHIBANI BAWA

Paradus Los Cabos by Meliá embraces diversity and inclusivity with multicultural LGBTQ+ weddings.



Where Luxury Meets Elegance

With an experienced event team, gorgeous venues and top-notch service, **Sheraton Grand Doha** is the ideal venue for hosting a grand wedding in Qatar.

STANDING TALL in the heart of West Bay, Doha since 1982, Sheraton Grand Doha has witnessed innumerable weddings, both, lavish as well as intimate. The plush resort is the epitome of timeless romance, and has been the preferred choice for grand celebrations for the well-heeled.

Sheraton Grand Doha offers 25 customisable convention spaces spanning 10,300 square metres, with the largest ballroom in all of Doha. Al Dafna is the largest indoor venue and it can comfortably accommodate up to 2,500 wedding guests! The various indoor and outdoor event spaces open up to stunning views of the Arabian Gulf as well as the expanse of the Corniche. You can thus exchange vows in front of the most magical backdrops—in the midst of a verdant garden or on the pristine beach with the imposing façade in front of you, with the décor of your



A dedicated team of expert planners manage the grandest celebrations with close attention to the finest details.

dreams. The striking venues are matched with meticulously designed wedding packages. A dedicated team is committed to offer warm and personalised service while you create everlasting memories and enjoy an unforgettable wedding day filled with revelry. These expert planners manage the grandest celebrations with close attention to the finest details, so you

can rest assured that all your dreams come true beautifully.

All the rooms and suites at this grand hotel offer furnished, private balconies with a breathtaking view of the Doha skyline, the sea or the spacious expanse of the resort. The well-appointed accommodation ensures that you and your guests are well rested and ready for each wedding event. marriott.com —SB

S O F I T E L

SINGAPORE SENTOSA RESORT & SPA

EN VOYAGE WITH SOFITEL SINGAPORE SENTOSA RESORT & SPA



A hidden gem set atop a cliff on the Southern edge of Sentosa Island, Sofitel Singapore Sentosa Resort & Spa offers guests a haven of peace and tranquility spread over 27 acres of outdoor palatial spaces. Offering breathtaking views of the South China Sea, with direct access to Tanjong Beach and an award-winning golf club, stay in absolute comfort whilst indulging in the kind of hospitality that you can expect from Sofitel.



Scan to find out more



The wide range of activities and experiences on offer at New South Wales make it a great pick for honeymooners.

THE MAGIC OF New South Wales lies in its picturesque landscape. From coastal cities, national parks, to rugged Blue Mountains, rainforests, and outback towns, there is a plethora of natural beauty. And of course, the crowning jewel, its capital—Sydney, where iconic landmarks like the Sydney Opera House and Harbour Bridge have provided the most memorable backdrops for many couples' big day.

If you want something truly unique, Glenworth Valley—the largest equestrian centre in New South Wales—has an extraordinary experience for the newlyweds. 'Running of the Horses' features 200 horses galloping past the events centre, leaving guests absolutely awestruck. Head to Jervis Bay, where there are spacious retreats with unique ceremony spots such as a natural bush cathedral, lush lawns, and non-denominational wedding chapels overlooking the UNESCO-listed Blue Mountains National Park. While these holiday spots are not designed exclusively for weddings, they certainly make the most perfect venues for celebrating nuptials. Or, pick one of the Tuscan-style wineries spread over acres of land, with views ranging from verdant vines to pristine lakes and lush forests. Finally, waterfront weddings can be organised by the sea, on the beach, overlooking the river, or at the side of the lake.

This southeastern Australian state has more wedding venues than any other state—from rustic barns to glitzy hotels, country houses to castles, equestrian centres, to eco resorts. Since NSW is particularly popular as a wedding destination, it is advisable to book the venue as early as you can, for popular wedding venues book out 18 months to two years ahead of D-day. —**SHIBANI BAWA**

New Beginnings in New South Wales

Whether you are looking for a ceremony location, reception venue, or a honeymoon getaway, **New South Wales** will leave you spoilt for choice.

Tropical Bliss

White sand beaches, cerulean waters, and idyllic island vibes of **Seychelles** make it a great choice for destination weddings.

WITH 115 ISLANDS to choose from, Seychelles offers barefoot luxury and the most romantic setting for hosting a lavish wedding in stunning surroundings or celebrating your love in the privacy of an intimate gathering on a secluded beach encircled by lush tropical vegetation. At Seychelles, you can really think out of the box to celebrate your special day in your unique way. From sundowners for the romantically-inclined, to lazy beach soirees for the easy-going types, to a range of adventure activities to celebrate the union of a thrill-seeking couple, Seychelles is the perfect playground to fulfill all your whims and fantasies.

Whether you are interested in a pre-wedding photo-shoot, or looking for a dreamy destination for your post-wedding holiday, there is an unending choice of outdoor beach venues in Seychelles to match your specific requirements. While there are many smaller, quaint, and spectacularly picturesque islands in the archipelago, the most popular ones are in Mahé



Enjoy barefoot luxury while hosting your dream wedding in Seychelles.

(since it has the international airport and is home to the capital city—Victoria), Praslin, and La Digue. The latter two have been featured in many Hollywood movies as well. Most luxury resorts are also located on these islands.

You can hire local wedding planners who offer an extraordinary selection of wedding packages that can be altered

to cater to your needs. Adept in English, French, and Creole languages, they can take care of the finer details including choosing venues with easy access, customised decoration to picking the colour theme with matching flowers, hiring the best photographers and videographers. They'll help you tie all the ends for the actual ceremony too. —**SB**



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Check Into Paradise

Imagine a breathtaking oasis where the shimmering waters of the Sea of Cortéz and Gulf of California merge into one. Think of a luxury playground that sets the stage for your life together, perfectly. Welcome to Paradisus Los Cabos!



“

Paradisus Los Cabo has emerged as a favoured destination for couples wishing to create unforgettable wedding memories.

”

LOVE, LAUGH, AND PLAY at Paradisus Los Cabos, a truly luxury resort in Mexico's Baja California peninsula, known for romantic rendezvous, white-sand beaches, aqua adventures, and a buzzing nightlife. The all-suite, adults-only resort—among several in the Paradisus by Meliá portfolio—is located on a private, crescent-shaped beach, nestled amidst lush tropical gardens, with stunning views of the Sea of Cortéz.

The allure of destination weddings has been on the rise in recent years, with couples seeking enchanting locales that can not only accommodate their dream celebration but also embrace their unique traditions. Paradisus Los Cabos, a breathtaking beachfront resort nestled in the lap of luxury, has emerged as a favoured destination for couples wishing to create unforgettable memories, while honouring their Indian, Persian, or South Asian roots, and to embrace diversity with multicultural LGBTQ+ weddings.

Exclusive amenities, exquisite architecture, and magnificent facilities beautifully transform your wedding or honeymoon into the time of your life. As a hotel member of The Leading Hotels of the World—an elite collection of five-star luxury hotels around the world, Paradisus Los Cabos promises nothing less than extraordinary when you say, “I do.” Romance by Paradisus ensures it, with a dedicated Romance Team that assists with every facet of your special day.

Couples can select from a choice of fully-customisable wedding bundles that help make this a special occasion before, during, and after the ceremony. Whether overlooking the beach, set against a tropical landscape, under the starry night sky, by the pool, at a stylish restaurant, or on a relaxing sail at sea—Paradisus Los Cabos makes your wedding extremely personal and special.

One of the most significant advantages of hosting multicultural weddings at Paradisus Los Cabos is the opportunity to foster cultural understanding and appreciation among the diverse guest list. Guests from different backgrounds come together to witness the beauty of various traditions, fostering a spirit of unity and acceptance. These weddings become a celebration, not only of love, but also of the world's rich cultural heritage.

For mehendi, sangeet or baraat, the resort caters to every need of the couple and their families. Opt for a soiree with delicious food, singing and dancing performances, and henna tattooing. On the big day, the groom can make a grand entrance as the Romance Team helps hosting a grand marriage procession. For a lavish cocktail or reception dinner, an exceptional menu curated by experienced chefs can include Italian, Mexican, Indian, as well as Persian delicacies. The hotel also offers custom decor and tailor-made set-ups for



Clockwise from left:
Overlooking the beach or under a starry night—Paradus Los Cabos offers a variety of bespoke set-ups for your big day; make the most of each of your wedding ceremonies filled with joy, love, and harmony at this dreamlike resort; expect exclusive amenities and exquisite architecture to come together to manifest the wedding of your dreams.

your big day. Additionally, Stay Safe Bridal Ambassadors ensure everything runs smoothly with all safety protocols in place.

A visit to the resort before the big day is an extraordinary part of wedding planning. The couple can enjoy a guided tour of the resort and wedding locations with a member of the Romance Team, and a private wedding menu tasting. You can also enjoy all-inclusive accommodations in a Paradus Jr. Suite, a welcome in-room surprise, and a credit* toward your wedding day (*based on a three-day minimum stay).

Paradus Los Cabos is an oasis filled with breathtaking experiences, including two sparkling pools—you can even choose to wake up in a swim-up suite with direct access to one of them! Treat yourself to exclusive services of The Reserve, designed to elevate your experience to the most extraordinary level—including privileged access to a wide range of activities, services, and facilities, such as personalised concierge service, exclusive pool, oversized suites, private terrace, dedicated valet, and more.

Relax your inner self at YHI Spa, a place to purify your body, balance your mind, and cultivate your soul. Enjoy the gentle sea breeze and pamper yourself with treatments made with local ingredients and essential oils, designed to nourish and relax. Participate in life-enriching experiences, such as meditation, stretching, water exercises, power dancing, beach volleyball, or table tennis. Enjoy Latin dance classes, sushi making, art sessions, wine and cheese tasting, tequila and mezcal tasting, and mixology classes. And, in the evening, enjoy theme parties and live music by resident DJs.

The hotel's Destination Inclusive® Experience takes you to a private canyon in Los Cabos for a yoga class to connect all your senses with nature and marvel at the spectacular scenery—a unique experience to enjoy peace and wellness just a few minutes from the hotel. A state-of-the-art fitness centre is open to all guests. If golf is more to your liking, take your best shot at some of the golf courses near the resort, including the Cabo Real Golf Club, a Championship Golf Course®. Take part in a golf tournament or sign up for a class under the bright blue sky with the turquoise sea in the background. It's the perfect way to both exercise and relax during your Los Cabos vacation.



As for cuisine, you can expect to be served with absolutely delicious, authentic cuisine. With seven restaurants that cater to both casual and fine dining, from the finest cuts of steak and Asian fusion, to Mexican, Italian, and international buffets—Paradus Los Cabos doesn't disappoint. A coffee bar, four cocktail bars, and an ice cream parlour round out the culinary journey, and are certain to delight the senses.

Paradus Los Cabos stands as an epitome of inclusivity, embracing the beauty of multicultural weddings, and ensuring that each celebration is a masterpiece of cultural diversity. By blending the opulence of its setting with the traditions of India, Persia, and South Asia, the resort creates an unforgettable experience that honours the past, while stepping into a future filled with love and harmony. As more couples choose to embrace their cultural identities and celebrate their unions in a global setting, Paradus Los Cabos continues to shine as a beacon of cultural fusion and love.

From the moment you arrive, Paradus Los Cabos attends to every detail, to ensure your wedding celebration—or honeymoon—is as spectacular as you imagine it to be. melia.com

Mystical & Magical

The stunning desert landscape and luxury resorts of **AlUla** combine to make an out-of-the-world setting for luxurious weddings and romantic honeymoons.



The undulating desertscape of AlUla, brimming with red-rock canyons.

ALULA IS AMONGST the rare destinations that are suspended in time and space. Located in northwest Saudi Arabia, it is an exceptional heritage site with stunning red rock canyons created out of sheer force of nature amidst an expanse of desert. Steeped in history, AlUla Old Town was an essential settlement along the pilgrimage route from Damascus to Mecca in the 12th century. It was also a prominent stop on the Incense Road—the route that facilitated the trading of spices

and silk through Arabia, Egypt, and India. Known to be one of the world's largest living museums, the town is overlooked by a 45-metre-high fort, a defensive lookout dating back to around the 10th century. In contrast with the arid desert, there is a 20-km long green oasis with millions of palms and native wildflowers, making this a breathtakingly beautiful destination. Exchanging your vows and embarking on a romantic new chapter of your life in one of the luxurious resorts in this

dramatic setting is an experience that'll remain etched in your mind forever.

Hosting a wedding here promises to be a lavish affair as you can choose from luxurious desert resorts like the Banyan Tree, Habitas, Maraya, Sahary Alula Resort, Shaden Resort. Each of them showcases the destination beautifully while offering complete comfort to their guests with state-of-the-art amenities, world-class service—and a range of stunning venues to host different wedding functions. experiencealula.com. —**SHIBANI BAWA**

Desert Rose

Ras Al Khaimah, the 'nature Emirate', is perfectly poised to become one of the top wedding destinations for Indians.

RAS AL KHAIMAH is a hidden gem that is gaining popularity for its beautiful topography, picturesque beaches, rich history and some of the most daring adventure activities in the world. It's no wonder that this Emirate is giving stiff competition to various tropical islands as a wedding venue. Smooth connectivity from India via a short flight makes it easy to host a big, fat Indian wedding here.

Ras Al Khaimah is home to one wedding venue better than the other. From world-class beachfront hotels and luxury desert resorts like the Waldorf Astoria and Ritz-Carlton, and upcoming international brands like Anantara, Wynn, Nobu, Sofitel, and W launching in the coming years, there is an array of breathtaking locations for bespoke celebrations. Sprawling deserts, picturesque mountains and sun-kissed beaches offer something for everyone whether they want an opulent Middle Eastern theme or a thrilling adventure-filled celebration with activities like ziplining, hiking, kayaking



Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority recently introduced new laws for regulating civil marriage in Ras Al Khaimah.

or glamping with views of the Hajar Mountains or the Arabian Gulf.

Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority (RAKTDA) recently introduced new laws for regulating civil marriage in Ras Al Khaimah. There is a new certification programme that enables wedding planners to easily facilitate the legal process of civil marriages. Once certified, planners can

obtain quick permits and organise wedding celebrations at unique venues in Ras Al Khaimah. But if you're the DIY wedding kind of couple and would prefer to plan your special day yourself, the Government of Ras Al Khaimah website offers a dedicated online portal that simplifies the document submission and enables you to select a ceremony date to tie the knot. rak.ae —**SB**



Relax by the sea amid the culture of Sicily

THE VIEW FROM THE POOL AT VERDURA RESORT, SICILY



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From a gorgeous outdoor courtyard to a pillarless ballroom, Andaz Delhi's stylish venues will let you host wedding of your dreams.

DELHI'S MAGICAL charm comes from a seamless amalgamation of the old and the ever-changing. Andaz Delhi brings the capital's inherent spirit alive through its service, décor, artworks, and attention to detail.

Let's start with the distinctive "Elephant Path". Setting the tone for kickstarting wedding festivities in a stunning and unforgettable style, the elephant path is especially designed for wedding processions. Allowing for a majestic elephant to lead the way, it makes for a grand entrance for the *baraat*. This exclusive walkway guides the procession directly into the main courtyard and up to the door of the exquisite ballroom. The oval-shaped, pillar-less ballroom can accommodate upto 2,000 guests, which means that you don't need to limit the number of guests! With its blank slate, you can truly create a wedding ambience that reflects your unique style and vision. From a glamorous affair to more intimate spaces, the ballroom offers the fluidity to host exactly the kind of celebration that you have always dreamed of. If you want to treat your guests to the finest feast, Andaz Delhi has more than 80 regional chefs, accomplished mixologists, and knowledgeable bartenders, to ensure that every gastronomic desire is fulfilled. From tailored cuisine selections to a sumptuous buffet, the culinary team satisfies even the toughest critics.

Smooth event planning is one of the pillars of the hotel's award-winning hospitality. There's a team of seasoned wedding consultants to take care of all the finer details, ensuring that you can have the time of your life and be rest assured that your wedding will be an affair to remember. hyatt.com —**SHIBANI BAWA**

Delhi Desire

From offering bespoke services to making sure you have a magical day, to treating your guests like royalty—**Andaz Delhi** is a popular choice for hosting weddings in the capital for good reason.

Hola, Espania!

Scenic coastline, heritage mansions, fine food and wine, and great entertainment—**Spain** offers the perfect mix for a dreamy Indian wedding.

A UNIQUE BLEND of Roman and Moorish culture, vibrant nightlife of its islands, exquisite hospitality, and venues ranging from medieval castles to chic resorts, makes Spain a super destination to host weddings. Add to this, balmy weather through the year and spectacular landscape for picture-perfect backdrops to create memories of a lifetime.

You'll be spoilt for choice of the perfect wedding destination with every city and town unveiling an inimitable vibe. Cultural buffs can't miss Barcelona for the matchless beauty of Gaudi's sinuous architecture dotting the city. From the towering La Sagrada Familia to the mosaic-tiled Casa Mila and Casa Batllo and the gorgeous Park Guell, there are several iconic spots to capture your memorable moments on camera. Keep this on your list for a pre-wedding photoshoot. The beautiful islands of Mallorca and Ibiza offer a range of picturesque

wedding venues and resorts for honeymooning, the quaint town of Granada has a distinct Moorish appeal under the shadow of the imposing Alhambra and gardens lined with tall eucalyptus trees, and Seville has a sex appeal of its own with palpable flamenco beats streaming from taverns lined along the River Guadalquivir in the kitschy neighbourhood of Triana.

For wedding venues, take your pick from Bell Recó, a magnificent summer estate nestled in Argenota, just minutes from Barcelona or Castell de Sant Marsal—a spectacular castle located in the Catalan countryside that has beautifully landscaped gardens and a chapel where you can seal the deal. The fun part of planning a wedding in Spain is that you can intersperse the wedding festivities with fun experiences like wine tastings, cooking classes, and guided tours of scenic historical towns. —**SB**

Scenic beauty and diverse landscape of its unique destinations make Spain a great choice to host a dream wedding.



FROM TOP: COURTESY OF ANDAZ DELHI; COURTESY OF © TURESPANA



D MARIS BAY
DATÇA PENINSULA



THE DAY OF YOUR DREAMS *at D Maris Bay*

Your wedding dreams come alive amidst the picturesque beauty of the Aegean Sea, where every detail is a testament to your love story. Experience the Baydreaming wedding of a lifetime, tailored to perfection, in the heart of your dreams with the bay of your dream.





From swanky villas, clubs, to beaches—Monaco offers the perfect setting for an extravagant wedding.

Glitz & Glamour

Monaco is not only the playground of the rich and famous, it is also a dream destination for weddings and honeymoons.

IT MAY BE A TINY city-state in the French Riviera, but Monaco is one of the wealthiest places in the world. It also attracts the wealthiest people from all over the world. From scenic settings with the finest views of the deep blue Mediterranean Sea to swanky hotels, Michelin-starred restaurants and bespoke services to pamper you to

the hilt, a wedding here promises to be an extravaganza that your loved ones will remember for a long, long time.

The high-end vibe is matched with gorgeous architecture to create the dreamiest backdrop to celebrate a marriage. If you want an extra dose of glamour, time it with one of the famous annual events held here—Monaco Film Festival in May, Monte Carlo International Fireworks Festival in July or August, or the Monaco Yacht Show in September when the entire place is livened up with an inimitable buzz and you may just

get your fair share of celebrity spotting too. Just make sure that you book well in advance, as hotels tend to go full during these occasions.

You can choose to host your wedding functions at hotels, villas, clubs or private beaches to celebrate your big day. Some of our top picks include The Hôtel de Paris Monte-Carlo, The Hôtel Hermitage Monte-Carlo, the Salon Excelsior and Salle Belle Epoque. Grand terraces with picturesque views to lavish meals and fine entertainment ensure that your big day will be spectacular in every way. —**SHIBANI BAWA**

Spoilt For Choice in America

USA is not only the land of unlimited opportunities, it also boasts a limitless array of gorgeous venues to host the most perfect nuptials.

WHETHER ITS ICONIC hotels or gorgeous natural surroundings, bustling cities or quaint towns, the United States of America has everything that you may desire for impeccable wedding celebrations.

A summer wedding at the Plaza Hotel is the stuff of dreams. One of the most coveted wedding venues in New York City, it has been epitomised in romantic Hollywood movies. Its legendary opulence and glamour is complemented by an expert team of wedding planners who take care of the finest details. If you prefer to keep things quaint and cosy, look out for European-style resorts in Tennessee. Here, the distinct Southern charm takes over from the big city vibes of New York.

From a secluded ranch in California, a mountaintop lodge in

Colorado, a rustic retreat in Texas, a chic beachfront resort in Florida, America literally offers something special for everyone. Then there are endless acres of scenic vineyards from the Napa Valley to Santa Barbara Wine Country, where historic estates are lined with sycamore trees and have glistening lakes on their precincts that make gorgeous backdrops to exchange your vows of love. If you want to get married in the most powerful corner of the world, head to Washington DC where historic hotels overlook the White House. Cherry blossom season is a great time to tie the knot in DC. And while talking of weddings in the US, we can't not mention the city that never sleeps—Las Vegas. From impromptu ceremonies to long drawn celebrations, the city



is a haven for weddings for those who like glitz and glamour and all-inclusive venues. Finally, if you like tropical vibes, head straight to Hawaii where you can celebrate your love at an open-air chapel with stunning views of the Ko'olau Mountains and the most spectacular sunsets. —**SB**

A Victorian building with panoramic terrace in California West Coast, USA is a popular venue for weddings.

Glitzy & Ritzy

The Ritz-Carlton, Baku is the perfect retreat to create unforgettable memories in Azerbaijan.



Add glamour to your wedding at the uber luxurious Ritz-Carlton, Baku.

THE CAPITAL CITY OF AZERBAIJAN, Baku, is located on the crossroads between Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. One of the hottest destinations for Indian travellers, it is a melting pot of various cultural influences that lend it an unmatched energy. Bustling with history at each corner and influences from neighbouring and far-reaching cultures over thousands of years, this fascinating city has layers that are waiting to be discovered. Baku's bustling streets offer myriad museums, concert halls, and restaurants, making it a veritable treasure trove for curious travellers.

AZERBAIJANI AESTHETICS

Baku is the largest city in the world located below sea level, so it naturally offers a unique experience of the Caspian Sea. Besides a spectacular coastline, it also has a striking skyline. The Ritz-Carlton, Baku is the perfect destination to make the most of this fascinating city. It showcases the fascinating roots of Azerbaijan through immersive and authentic experiences in its signature luxurious style. Designed by Kristina Zanic Design Consultants, the hotel's interior takes inspiration from its destination and artfully blends modern hospitality with history, art, and culture. The design reflects a city of many layers

and the enriching contrasts of Azerbaijan are subtly portrayed throughout, with decorative details reflecting unique patterns and colours that represent Baku. The hotel also offers lovely cultural experiences, including a daily music performance with a Whaletone piano and traditional Azerbaijani music, accompanied by a local dancer. This daily ritual is best enjoyed with local herbal teas and traditional sweets.

WEDDINGS & CELEBRATIONS

The luxurious environs and world-class hospitality at The Ritz-Carlton, Baku also makes it a great choice for hosting a memorable wedding. An expert team of wedding specialists takes care of every detail meticulously, enabling you to enjoy the momentous occasion with your loved ones. Whether an intimate affair or an ostentatious extravaganza, you can rest assured that yours would be a unique and memorable wedding experience. The spacious Shusha Ballroom is a superb venue for a grand wedding celebration. Bathed in natural light, a designated pre-function area, and a beautiful garden are the perfect welcome spots for guests. Smaller private spaces are also available, where you can host just your close circle of friends and family. Some of the venues have floor-to-ceiling windows that offer uninterrupted views of the city and the sea. The expert team of chefs whips up the most lavish spreads to make your wedding celebrations truly special.

LUXURIOUS ACCOMMODATION

Occupying 14 floors of an impressive 33 storey building, The Ritz-Carlton, Baku offers 190 spacious guestrooms and suites. The plush accommodation ranges from the Junior Suite to the Presidential Suite, each showcasing authentic Azerbaijani artistry and utmost opulence. Most rooms have private balconies that offer breathtaking views of the surrounding landscape. The spacious Presidential Suite is spread over 608 square meters, making it the largest suite in the city—a private living room, formal dining room, and a personal gym make it a luxurious private sanctuary.

REPAST & RELAXATION

The hotel has a wide range of culinary offerings. An American-style brasserie, Tribeca, is open all-day and serves classic New York and contemporary Californian cuisine. Blind Tiger bar is inspired by the speakeasy concept, where craft cocktails are blended with a selection of spirits. The signature Ritz-Carlton Spa features treatment rooms, two indoor swimming pools, an outdoor garden space, and a fitness center. ritzcarlton.com/baku



Pick medieval chateaus or riverside castles or head to the picturesque countryside to host your dream wedding.

France Je t'aime

Can anything be more romantic than a wedding in **France**? The entire country is dotted with picture-perfect venues for the most romantic big day.

FRANCE CELEBRATES love unlike any other country. From Paris to Brittany, Cote de Azur to Occitane, Alps to Normandy, it's almost as if each location is designed to evoke love in one scenic setting after another. From a lavish wedding aboard a swanky yacht off the coast of St Tropez, to the lavender fields of Côte d'Azur, rolling vineyards amongst

the mountains of Occitanie to the most breathtaking venues in the Champagne region, you'll be spoilt for choice. To add to the romance of the place, you can pick medieval chateaus or riverside castles, revel in the unmatched chic Parisian setting or head out to the picturesque countryside to host the wedding of your dreams.

Experienced wedding planners make your dream a reality since they're used to catering to the whims and fancies of romantic couples. From helping you visualise the most perfect celebration for your nuptials, to sticking to a budget, hiring the right vendors and looking at the minutest details, they will ensure that your big day is executed as smoothly as a dream. They are especially adept at bridging any language barrier so knowing French is not a pre-requisite to having a grand celebration. All you need to do is dress up and have the time of your life with your family and friends. A wedding in France guarantees the most stunning backdrops, idyllic romantic venues, wine and bubbles, fine gastronomy and top-notch entertainment to make it an affair to remember. france.fr/en

—SHIBANI BAWA

Green Haven

Located in the heart of Lutyen's Delhi, **Shangri-La Eros New Delhi** is a coveted address for hosting a grand wedding.

SHANGRI-LA EROS NEW DELHI is a stone's throw away from important landmarks of the city. The charm of hosting a wedding in the heart of the capital is inimitable. Right from the initial steps of planning, a dedicated team of expert wedding consultants dives into the finest details to create a dream wedding for the couple as well as their families. The Shangri-La Ballroom is a luxurious, elegant and well-illuminated space to for a lavish celebration. The beautifully-landscaped Garden Lawns make for a perfect outdoor venue.

With specialty restaurants serving fine Italian to exotic Sichuan and an all-day diner that serves an array of world cuisine, the food at Shangri-La Eros New Delhi is the talk of the town. The hotel often invites international chefs to infuse unique flavours or cuisines. Hence, it is not surprising that the culinary team is well equipped to cater delicious fare for large events as well. Even the patisserie executes all whims and fantasies in the form of delicious multi-tier cakes that not only look beautiful but taste delicious too.

Shangri-La Eros New Delhi also offers a special pre-wedding photo-shoot package to kick-start the revelry well before the actual ceremonies take place. Besides a photo shoot in the hotel's public areas, the offer includes a day's use of a deluxe room from 9 am to 5 pm, and a lavish buffet lunch at the international cuisine restaurant, Tamra, for the bride and groom. shangri-la.com —SB



The beautifully-landscaped Garden Lawns at Shangri-La Eros New Delhi make for a perfect outdoor venue.

Pick Four Seasons Hotel Cairo at Nile Plaza for a dreamy wedding or a romantic honeymoon by the Nile.



A Couple's Journey From The Nile To The Mediterranean

From **Four Seasons Hotel Cairo at Nile Plaza** to **Four Seasons Hotel Alexandria at San Stefano**, the best locations for exquisite weddings and unforgettable honeymoons.

THE ALLURE OF EGYPT comes from its ancient civilisation, majestic pyramids, age-old monuments, sailing trips along the Nile, and camel rides in the desert. This unique and romantic destination is ideal to celebrate nuptials in grand style. Four Seasons redefines luxury in Egypt with two spectacular properties—Four Seasons Hotel Alexandria at San Stefano and Four Seasons Hotel Cairo at Nile Plaza. Located by the picturesque Mediterranean Sea and the River Nile respectively, these spectacular hotels are havens of luxury and elegance.

BEACH WEDDINGS BY THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA

Four Seasons Hotel Alexandria celebrates each wedding as a unique love story. Its spectacular location is ideal for intimate gatherings and grand wedding ceremonies at a pristine sandy beach. While the hotel is particularly famous for crafting gorgeous beach weddings with meticulous care, the magnificent ballroom with opulent décor is also a great venue for lavish events.

ALEXANDRIA—A SECLUDED HONEYMOON DESTINATION

After exchanging the vows, the newlyweds can embark on their romantic journey at Four Seasons Hotel Alexandria sea view villas with private pools. This luxury resort is a romantic sanctuary with breathtaking views of the Mediterranean Sea and lavish amenities. Indulge in intimate

candlelit dinners at the beach, or savour the artistry of skilled chefs across the restaurants. The spa offers a range of rejuvenating treatments, including couples' massages and soothing baths. Adventurous twosomes may enjoy exploring the rich history and cultural heritage of Alexandria, with personalised itineraries by the expert concierge team.

CAIRO—UNVEILING ENCHANTING IN-HOUSE VENUES

At Four Seasons Hotel Cairo at Nile Plaza, luxury, elegance, and inspiration intertwine to create a magical wedding. Surrounded by the breathtaking beauty of the River Nile and the vibrancy of Cairo, weddings here are crafted with an undeniable sense of magic and inspiration. The spacious Plaza Ballroom can host up to 900 guests within its plush interiors.

CAIRO'S OFF-SITE LOCATIONS AT ANCIENT WONDERS AND HISTORICAL PALACES

Imagine hosting your wedding with the backdrop of 5,000-year-old Pyramids, or at the beautiful centuries-old historical palaces with stunning gardens. Be it a seaside wedding on the Mediterranean and Red Sea, or a destination wedding in Luxor or Aswan, your Four Seasons wedding in Egypt is sure to become an unforgettable affair.

HONEYMOON LIKE NO OTHER IN CAIRO

Embark on a mesmerising honeymoon at Four Seasons Hotel Cairo at Nile Plaza with a stay at the Nile-view rooms and suites, and a romantic dinner under the stars at the private in-room terrace. Rejuvenate at the serene spa, where you can relax with a range of couples' treatments. Indulge in a culinary extravaganza at ten world-class restaurants, serving everything from local Egyptian flavours, Chinese, and Italian, to Lebanese and Mediterranean specialties. A romantic felucca ride along the Nile, basking in the glory of Cairo's iconic landmarks, and immersing yourselves in the rich cultural experiences exploring ancient wonders, vibrant markets, and captivating museums and palaces, holds the promise of a memorable holiday for newlyweds.

At Four Seasons Hotels Egypt your romantic story becomes an experiential journey of a lifetime. fourseasons.com/egypt



Plan a secluded honeymoon destination or host the most gorgeous beach wedding at Four Seasons Hotel Alexandria at San Stefano.

Tie the Knot Like the Royals

The Pink City is the preferred choice of many for a destination wedding, and the **Hyatt Regency Jaipur Mansarovar** is a sprawling new hotel for celebrating momentous occasions.

JAIPUR UNDOUBTEDLY paved the way for destination weddings ever since the trend first started in India. With the Pink City's regal flamboyance, architectural flair and fine hospitality it still tops the charts. Amongst the many palaces of yore converted into hotels, or new-age palaces, the Hyatt Regency Jaipur Mansarovar stands out with its spacious indoor and outdoor spaces.

The hotel offers unique event spaces that blend the grandeur of Rajasthan with the signature, attentive service of Hyatt. Beautifully landscaped lawns are ideal for hosting alfresco wedding functions. The Chauras Bagh and the Navras Bagh have been designed with great thought and attention to detail. While the Chauras Bagh features 2100 square meters of landscaped gardens with areas segregated into Jal Chauraha, Kala Manch, Bagh Stambhs and Raikhik Jharna, the Navras Bagh is evocative of the nine emotions as per Indian Mythology. For indoor hostings, the Regency Ballroom is a spacious facility with dramatic lighting and modern fittings while the Imperial Room is adorned with hand-painted artwork by local artisans inspired by the erstwhile Mughals and Rajputana's private gathering chambers. A dedicated team of wedding planners offers personalised assistance for executing a magical celebration for the couple and their loved ones. From bespoke themes to customised décor and immersive experiences, they ensure that each wedding is truly one of a kind. hyatt.com —**SHIBANI BAWA**

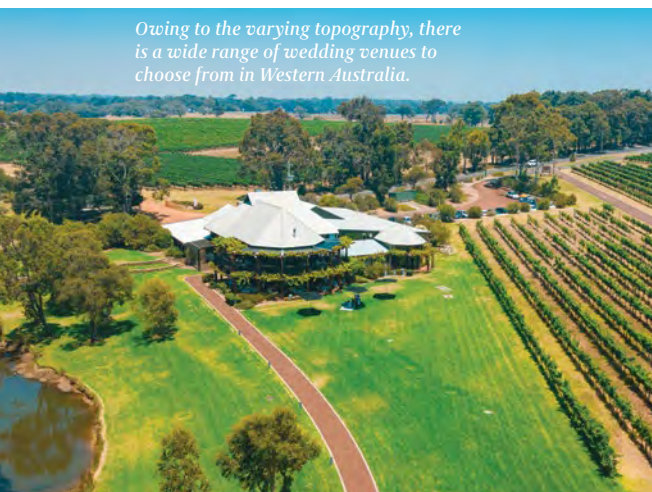
Expect to be treated no less than a royalty at the Hyatt Regency Jaipur Mansarovar.



A Dreamy Affair

Make your marriage celebrations undeniably memorable by hosting it in Australia's Dream State—**Western Australia**.

Owing to the varying topography, there is a wide range of wedding venues to choose from in Western Australia.

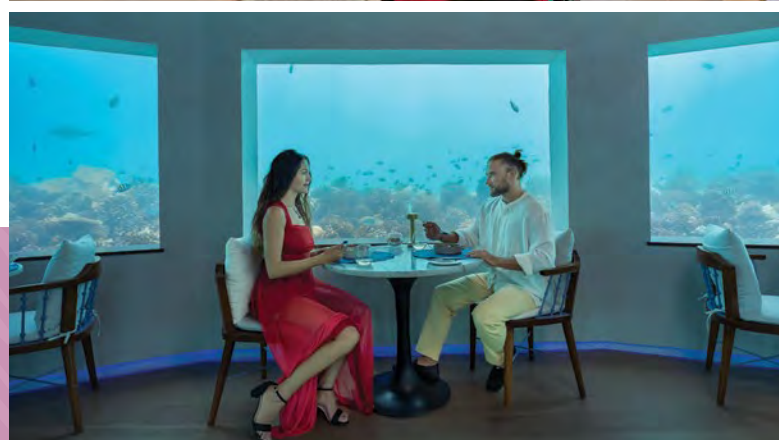


WESTERN AUSTRALIA is the largest state in Australia. Split into five regions - Destination Perth, South West, North West, Coral Coast and Golden Outback - it offers the complete Aussie experience. From an amazing desert landscape to the soft sand beaches along the Indian Ocean, verdant vineyards and caves dating back a million years, noticeable native ancestry, flora and fauna and a rich indigenous ancestry, a plethora of adventure activities and the longest coastline in the country, Western Australia literally has something for everyone - even for couples seeking to get married in an off-beat destination.

Owing to the varying topography, there is a wide range of wedding venues to choose from in Western Australia. One of our top picks would be the Margaret River Region. Not only is it the most awarded fine-wine region in Australia, it has pristine beaches, tall karri timber forests and ancient underground caves. Among the array of picture-perfect vineyards are many where you can host an intimate ceremony amongst your loved ones, whilst sipping some fine

wines and tucking into delicious fare. The surrounding low-lying mountains, clear blue skies, verdant greenery and kangaroos hopping complete the picture. If you like the idea of being marooned on an island for romantic nuptials, the Rottenest Island, surrounded with cerulean waters, is a short ferry or seaplane ride from Perth. There are a couple of upmarket resorts on the island where you can host your loved ones as you take your vows.

Back in the capital city, Perth, the picturesque Swan Valley has beach-side resorts, uppity golf clubs and swanky hotels to choose from. For the adventurous couple, the capital city has a new venue that is becoming increasingly popular for wedding proposals. The rooftop of Optus Stadium offers scenic views of River Swan and Perth city. One of the latest attractions at the stadium is the thrilling 'Vertigo' experience wherein you leave the rooftop behind and traverse 10 metres on a platform without any handrails. There have been many proclamations of love right on this platform! westernaustralia.com —**SB**



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A Coastal Paradise

Whether you dream of a laid-back beach wedding, wish to say ‘I do’ in the middle of a thick forest cover, or plan on exchanging vows in front of a historical marvel—whatever your idea of a perfect wedding or honeymoon is, Sri Lanka has just the right offering for you. **BY RIDDHI DOSHI**



THE TROPICAL ISLAND country of Sri Lanka has no dearth of azure waters, pristine beaches, lush green forests, tea gardens, standout historical sites, luxurious boutique resorts, and wellness retreats. Together, they make it an ideal destination for an epic wedding and a memorable honeymoon. You can say ‘I do’ in the midst of a tea estate, have your reception party at a beach, and escape to one of its misty hills for your honeymoon. Add tea-tasting, wooden mask-making, scuba diving, and paragliding sessions to the soiree, and you have one memorable wedding that your guests and, of course, you and your partner will remember forever. We scout out some of the top destinations, hotels, and experiences to mark your big day in this magical country.

THE MYSTERY OF HISTORY

Tucked inside the UNESCO-listed Galle Fort, there’s a stunning property that was once a Dutch mansion some 300 years back. Apt for an intimate wedding, the historic Galle Fort Hotel (galleforhotel.com) has 12 luxurious suites with varying themes and décor, and a great collection of priceless antiques. One of the structural highlights of this property is the stunning Palladian colonnade verandah, which houses the hotel’s iconic bar, known for its exclusive selection of gins from across the globe. Uga Ulagalla (ugaescapes.com) is another beautiful resort near the ancient rock fortress of Sigiriya, perfect for you in case a standout historic site is a must for your ceremony’s backdrop. A 150-year-old

village chieftain’s mansion, this one has 25 large villas, each with its own private pool and separate living areas. While the common areas of the resort resemble old Sri Lankan villages, decorated with huge cooking pots and wooden carts, the villas are lavish, modern living spaces with glass walls and bathtubs.

THE THRILL OF A FOREST

Wild Coast Tented Lodge, Yala (resplendentceylon.com/wildcoastlodge) is a UNESCO-design-award winner located at a point where a forest meets a beach, overlooking the Indian Ocean. Its organic

Clockwise: Fill your special day with romance and adventure at Cape Weligama; The dome-shaped restaurant at Wild Coast Tented Lodge, Yala.



FROM TOP: HANS NELEMAN/GETTY IMAGES; COURTESY OF WILD COAST TENTED LODGE, YALA



tent rooms look like scattered seed pods, seamlessly blending with nature, while the bamboo-clad, open-air restaurant and bar here are positioned beside a freeform turquoise infinity pool, complementing the Yala bushland-and-beach setting. If you love forests and wildlife, this one has got to be your pick. The resort conducts special safari tours to the Yala National Park, guided nature walks, and visits to the nearby elephant camp. Plus, there is the authentic Sri Lankan cooking and dining experience. The meals are made from locally-produced resources and makes for a unique wedding celebration feast that your guests will cherish forever.

THE GRANDEUR OF A GOLF COURSE

This one is for a grand wedding. The biggest resort in Sri Lanka, Shangri-La Hambantota (shangri-la.com) has 274 keys, an 18-hole championship golf course, sprawling lawns, a convention hall, and a beautiful spa. From your *sangeet* to *haldi* and even a family game night or cocktail party, the resort has room for everything. Hambantota itself is a city where there is lots to do. Guests can visit the Yala National Park, explore historic colonial architecture sites, marvel at the expansive salt flats, or visit the ancient *viharas* (Buddhist temples).

THE ROMANCE OF THE OCEAN

Love to see the vast ocean unfurling before your eyes like a vivid dream? Pick Cape Weligama (resplendentceylon.com/capeweligama) for your honeymoon—a 39-suite and villa property located on the cliff of the gorgeous Weligama Island. Overlooking the beach, the rooms here come with

private gardens (some even have their own infinity pools!) that offer uninterrupted ocean views. Experiences like a Cove pool dinner or cliff-edge dining promise to fill your days with romance and adventure. The former has your table set up in the calm waters of a pool overlooking the ocean. The latter is organised at the most scenic and private locations on the island! From elaborate floating breakfast to cocktail masterclasses, and sunset cruises, Cape Weligama will give you two the memories of a lifetime.

THE SERENITY OF A TEA GARDEN

Santani, in Sanskrit, means ‘in harmony with’. The luxury wellness resort and spa is situated amidst the former Aratenna Tea Estate, spanning 116 acres. Santani (santani.com) is an hour’s drive away from the historic city of Kandy, renowned for its ‘silent architecture’ that seamlessly blends the indoors and the outdoors. Life slows down here, and so does one’s heartbeat. The 18 rooms are built to allow natural ventilation and do not have air conditioning. Guests can forest bathe in the tropical jungle or walk around the fertile rice fields or practice yoga and meditation along the River Hulu. It is ideal for a couple who wants a peaceful honeymoon, amidst nature. +

Clockwise: The biggest resort in Sri Lanka, Shangri-La's Hambantota is perfect for a grand wedding; Offering uninterrupted ocean views, Cape Weligama is located on the cliff of the gorgeous Weligama Island.



Recreating the Romance of London in Macau

Immerse yourself in British elegance and unforgettable romance at The Londoner Macao—a British-themed integrated resort. **BY SHIBANI BAWA**

NESTLED IN THE HEART of Macau's Cotai Strip, The Londoner Macao is an enchanting escape for couples seeking a romantic getaway or a dream wedding. This is where British charm meets exotic allure—the captivating architecture, luxurious accommodation, and unparalleled hospitality in the bustling entertainment hub makes The Londoner Macao the most sought-out spot. From the Original 1966 London Bus at the main entrance of Shoppes to the Changing of the Guard entertainment extravaganza in a dramatic display of British pageantry, this resort transports you to the much-loved city by its meticulously crafted experiences, architecture, as well as culinary offerings.

ARCHITECTURE AND ATMOSPHERE

You get the inimitable familiarity of London even as you approach the iconic façade of The Londoner Macao. The architecture is based on the Palace of Westminster along with a magnificent replica of the Big Ben. Inside, the rich heritage and timeless elegance of London is palpable at every corner of the resort. You can even stroll through beautifully landscaped gardens inspired by those at Kensington Palace—flowers in full bloom, tranquil water features, and hidden alcoves create the perfect ambience to romance your significant other.

LUXURIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS

The Londoner Macao is the epitome of luxury in Macau. With distinct British elegance complemented with chic contemporary style, the luxurious suites are a haven of tranquillity for couples seeking a romantic retreat. Plush furnishings and opulent interiors ensure utmost comfort in the lap of luxury. If you want a truly special experience, check in to the super-premium multi-bay suites. These are especially well-suited for those seeking utmost privacy and even more personalised service.

ROMANTIC VENUES

The Londoner Macao's meticulous attention to detail and commitment to creating unforgettable



Experience the charm of the city of London in Macau at The Londoner Macao.



experiences extend to its wedding venues. The resort's convention spaces can be beautifully transformed into magical settings for both intimate ceremonies and grand celebrations. From the exquisite décor to the flawless service, every aspect is thoughtfully curated to ensure that a couple's wedding day is a dream-come-true. The stunning Crystal Palace in the awe-inspiring atrium is as magnificent as it sounds! It easily one of the most magical venues for exchanging vows with the love of your life.

CULINARY DELIGHTS

If food is the way to one's heart, The Londoner Macao woos with the most fabulous array of restaurants. Indulge in intimate dinners at the resort's distinguished restaurants, where candlelit tables and impeccable service set the tone for creating memorable moments. From traditional British fare to international delicacies, each dish is expertly crafted by renowned chefs. Tuck into authentic Chinese fare at The Huaiyang Garden, gorgeous Thai food at The Mews, or delectable Portuguese cuisine at Chiado. Gordon Ramsay's Pub & Grill and Churchill's Table celebrate the sweet traditions of London. Eateries like The Cheesecake Factory, The St. Regis Bar, Starbucks, and Shake Shack ensure that there's always something to satisfy everyone's culinary cravings.

UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCES

Beyond the luxurious accommodations and romantic venues, The Londoner Macao offers a plethora of experiences to ignite your sense of adventure. From quintessential London familiarities like the English High Tea to traversing the iconic landmarks of the city via the London Calling experience, the

Clockwise: From intimate dinners to well-crafted feasts, The Londoner Macao will spoil you silly with its culinary offerings; watch the luxury address come alive with over 10,000 lights during the spectacular Light and Sound show.

hotel will leave you in complete awe. It's Tea Time brings to life the traditions of British high-tea in a whimsical and immersive setting. Visitors can even take photos inside one of the huge cups, which are elaborately decorated with London themes including Shakespeare, famous landmarks, red double-decker buses, and the Crown Jewels. To add to the charm, you may also be joined by high-tea ladies all the way from London dressed in typical tea party fashion with fancy hats and flowing gowns. Add more magic with a fun-filled meet and greet adventure in the iconic Black Cab. The Black Cab Escape allows guests to take a ride around London with a hologram David Beckham, Sands Resorts Macao global ambassador, inside a British black cab. The newest attraction is The Londoner Light and Sound Spectacular. With more than 10,000 lights creating dynamic effects depicting London's signature black cabs, double-decker buses, and royal carriage, the show is accompanied by some of the most recognisable British-themed music like the soundtrack of James Bond movie *Diamonds Are Forever*, The Beatles' classic *Twist and Shout*, and more.

Whether you are seeking a romantic getaway or planning your dream wedding, this enchanting destination promises an unforgettable experience. londonermacao.com ✦



Say Yes to Novotel Pune

Versatile actor and rising star

Mrunal Thakur

arrives at Novotel Pune Nagar Road
to step into the role of the
free-spirited bride for our cover.

By Adila Matra



Produced by **Simrran Gill**

Assisted by **Adila Matra**

Photographed by **Keegan Crasto**

Assisted by **Shannon Lobo**

Styled by **Aastha Sharma**

Assisted by **Manisha Chhanang**
and **Reann Moradian**

Make-up by **Lochan Thakur**

Hair by **Tejinder Singh**

Location **Novotel Pune Nagar Road**





Actor Mrunal Thakur strikes a pose at Novotel Pune.

ON HER: Outfit, **Falguni Shane Peacock**; shoes, **Jimmy Choo**; necklace, **Diosa Paris**; all prices on request



Thakur fits the runaway bride theme perfectly.

ON HER: Outfit, **Rahul Mishra**; shoes, **Jimmy Choo**; earrings, **Diosa Paris**; all prices on request

F

rom the Premier Suite on the fourth floor of Novotel Pune Nagar Road, I hear giggles. Mrunal Thakur, our cover star, has cracked a joke, and the room has livened up in an instant. As she leans against the backlit blob mirror of the suite, I realise she is the perfect model for our runaway bride theme. She is playful, effervescent, and oh-so-comfortable in her own skin.

And Novotel Pune Nagar Road, the location of the shoot, perfectly complements this energy. It is a five-minute drive from Pune International Airport and ticks all the boxes for a business trip as well as a staycation. While the 11,000 square feet of banqueting space with an elegantly designed divisible ballroom can accommodate up to 300 guests, there are six meeting rooms with a capacity of 10-60 guests. The Square, the hotel's signature all-day dining restaurant, offers Indian and international flavours off the interactive cooking stations, making it an ideal place for a lavish Sunday brunch.

All the 311 rooms, including 16 suites, are ergonomically designed. The Premier Rooms, including the suite we are in right now, have broken the barriers of typical business design thinking—their plain architectural volumes and lines make the space intuitive, and features such as smart lighting, interactive mirrors, and touch-screen controls give the area a futuristic appearance.

Speaking of breaking stereotypes, there is Thakur, donning a bright metallic orange ensemble, looking at home as she lounges lazily on the bed in the suite, against the orange wall. In her latest release *Pippa*, the actor plays a cryptography specialist who is recruited to the Communication and Analysis Wing, a signals intelligence organisation, to decode enemy messages. Unlike most of the female roles in war movies, Thakur plays the sister of the protagonist in *Pippa*. “Many

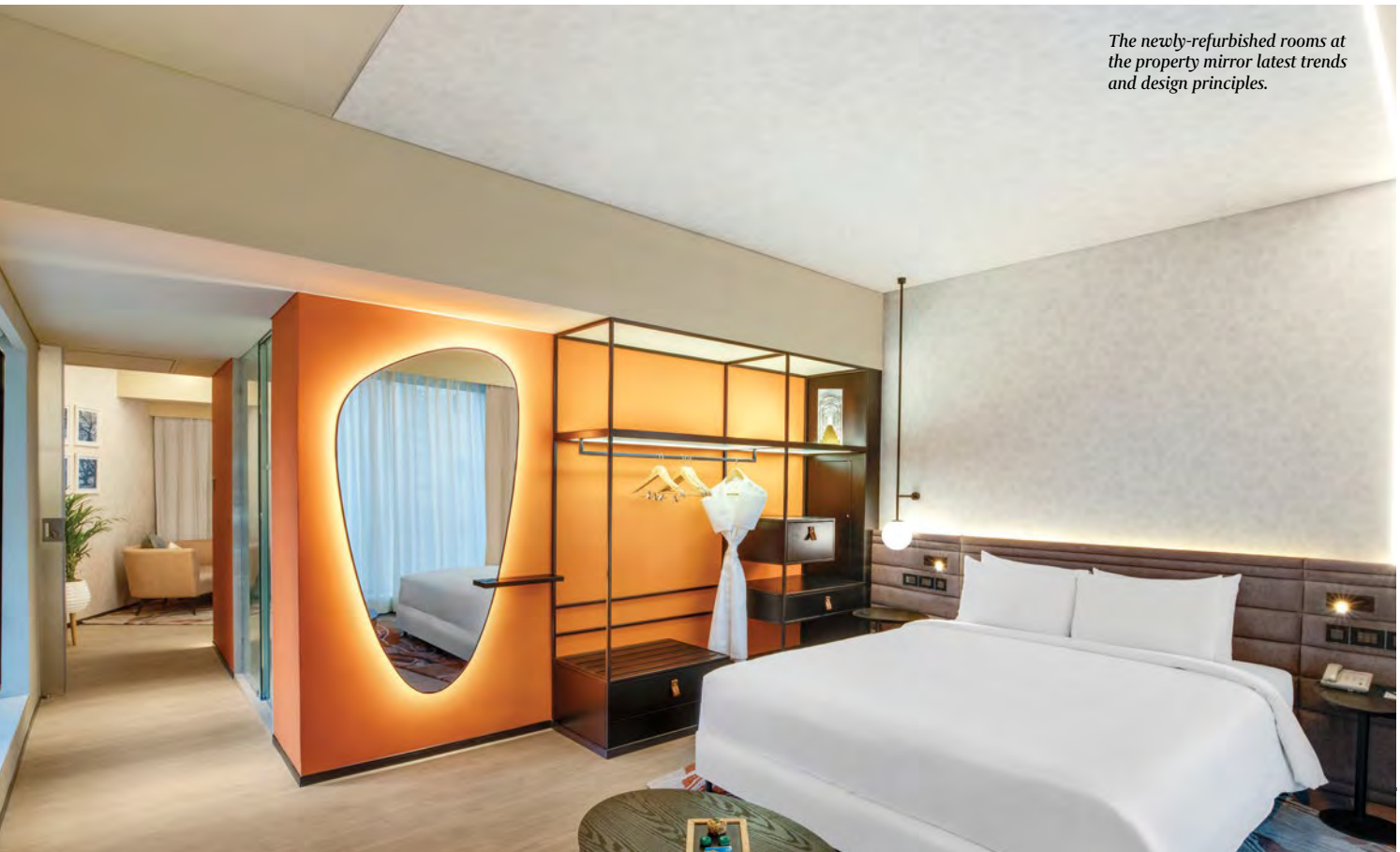
of my well-wishers told me not to take up that role,” says Thakur. “You won’t be romantically cast, they said. But that is why I wanted to do the film. I wanted the audience to accept the heroine in every kind of relationship. It is important for me to choose roles that have substance. I wanted to be a character who is actively involved in the war rather than be a love interest who is waiting for the hero to return,” she says.

Just then, Thakur notices the swing in the corner of the Premium Suite, and plops on it as the crew readies the next shot. Her sister Lochan Thakur tries to get a photo of her, but Mrunal is busy spinning around with child-like energy that is so elusive among actors.

“It is so nice that this property is so close to the airport,” Thakur says while browsing her playlist to get the right song to set the mood. She finally settles on *Watermelon Sugar* and hums along as the photographer shows her the last few photographs. “The suites are lovely, the modern interiors are colourful and bright, perfect for photographs,” she exclaims.

For the next shot, we move to the hotel's swimming pool, Soak, located on the second floor. Adjacent to it is the 24x7 fitness centre aimed at fitness enthusiastic guests who do not wish to miss their workout even when they are travelling. For this shot, Thakur wears a shimmering blue

The newly-refurbished rooms at the property mirror latest trends and design principles.





The pool and gymnasium on the second floor offer panoramic views of the city.

mermaid dress. Dangling the high heels from her fingers, she walks along the edge of the pool, past the sunloungers with a whimsical look in her eyes. During the downtime, she splashes about in the pool, chatting with those around her. "This place would just be great for a pool party, no?" she asks.

It is almost hard to believe that this is the same actor who stole hearts with her ethereal portrayal of Sita in the period movie *Sita Ramam*. So, what kind of actor does she want to be known as? "I just want to be known as an actor who is able to do different genres and different eras, and just be true to the character," she says.

And that is well evident during the shoot. At Bar Code, the hotel's cosy lounge bar with an exclusive range of wine and spirits, Thakur has uninhibited fun posing with a bucket of ice and a glass of margarita, while at the spacious lobby, she becomes a captivating bride in her off-white *lehenga*.

Of all the locations she has been to for her movies, she remembers Russia the most. "I was in St Petersburg in Russia to shoot Noor Jahan's scenes [for *Sita Ramam*]. Growing up, I always wanted to be a princess. Movies allow us to fulfill our dreams. And when I was in Russia, I woke up in the Yusupov Palace feeling like one. It was surreal," says the actor who started her acting career with the television soap operas *Mujhse Kuchh Kehti...Yeh Khamoshiyaan* and *Kumkum Bhagya*.



The actor enjoys a playful afternoon at Novotel Pune's house bar, Bar Code.

ON HER: Outfit, **Arpita Mehta**; shoes, **Arpita Mehta x SKO**; broach, **Outhouse**; all prices on request





Thakur lounges in the plush bed of the suite.

ON HER: Outfit, **Rocky Star**; shoes, **Jimmy Choo**; rings, **Diosa Paris**; all prices on request



When we move to Crimson, the divisible pillarless ballroom of 4,453 square feet that is ideal for grand parties and wedding banquets, I ask Thakur what kind of bride she envisions herself as. “I am a traditional bride. I want to get married amidst nature—nowhere that is too hot or cold. Maybe in a forest. That would be nice,” comes the answer.

Thakur is prepping for two releases in Telugu—*Hi Nanna* and *Family Star*. She says she wants to have more fun with her film choices now. “Earlier I wanted to prove myself, so I was choosing roles that were more performance-oriented, with good directors. Now, I am exploring the fun, glamorous side of movies as well. Romance was a genre that I never explored,” she says.

As we wrap up the shoot, Thakur notices a stairway against a wall with polished silver installations and wants to get a few shots there. As she lugs her heavy *lehenga* up the stairs, a few kids pass by and she waves at them, smiling. I ask her about her straightforwardness—many of us remember her teary-eyed post on Instagram, which was talked about quite a lot.

“I am a bad liar,” she says with a laugh. “I am also not afraid to communicate what I want. I don’t want girls who look up to me to be stuck in their head. Everyone has bad days and bad phases. I want people to accept that,” she adds.

And what are her plans for the future? “Well, on the travel front, I want to visit Masai Mara—I have seen beautiful images of the migration.” And movies? “People are looking at me as a performer, not just another heroine. That is what I want. Opportunities took some time. It is a ladder—one step at a time. There are no regrets, no complaints, only gratitude,” she signs off. +



Clockwise from up: Novotel Pune’s quiet nooks and corners are perfect to unwind post a hectic day; the property is ideal for business trips, staycations, as well as weddings; The Square is an all-day dining restaurant that offers Indian and international flavours.

The Big 'Intimate' Indian Wedding

WEDDINGS MAY HAVE BECOME SMALLER IN SIZE BUT NOT IN GRANDEUR—AS MORE COUPLES OPT FOR BESPOKE EXPERIENCES THAT TRANSLATE INTO INTIMATE LUXURY. **BY ARZOO DINA**

From intricate décor, to intimate gourmet dinners, and bespoke gifts for guests—personalisation is key when it comes to organising your dream wedding!



Designing Dreams

Wedding décor is no longer relegated to just simple floral designs and matching hues. From pillarless *mandaps* to sustainable themes, here's a handy guide to make your décor a truly personalised affair.

WE HAVE COME A LONG WAY from elaborate floral *mandaps* and cookie-cutter designs when it comes to wedding décor. Now, personalisation is key as couples look at innovative ways to showcase their love story or wedding journey.

Boutique meets bespoke

According to Prerika Puri, founder of To The Aisle (IG: [@totheaisle_weddings](#)), a boutique wedding design company, intimacy-meets-luxury is a big theme as couples and families opt for smaller guest lists but heightened opulence. Tying in with this concept, exclusive boutique properties with limited room inventory offer a bespoke setting. "Couples are customising every aspect, from the décor to unique wedding favours. Each moment is carefully curated for maximum impact, including the venue," she says.

Making a statement

Whether you want to tap into your love story for inspiration or simply the beauty of your wedding venue, décor is being



Clockwise: Wedding décor is becoming more personalised and innovative; an extravagant traditional wedding set-up by Aroosi at Suryagarh, Jaisalmer.



personalised in innovative ways. Ashima Arora, co-founder at Aroosi ([aroosi.co.in](#)), a Delhi-based luxury wedding design and décor company, gives an example of an intimate beach wedding they curated in Vietnam. "The couple wanted to capture the essence of the location with minimal structures and seashell accents. So, we used soft pastel shades of pink and peach, exotic flowers, custom cushions, seashell photo frames, and personalised tablescapes, while the *phas* by the pool featured pink and white florals. The *mandap*, supported by acrylic pillars, added to the seaside charm."

Another favourite was a *sangeet* celebration that truly captured the essence of the couple's love story, says Arora. "The bride and groom were high-school sweethearts, who first met in a chemistry lab. We decided to go all in on the chemistry theme. The stage structure resembled the ripples of a chemical reaction, and the ceiling mimicked scientific patterns. The dance floor featured intricate formulas and test tubes were creatively used as both hangings from the bar and table centrepieces."

Puri adds that customised signage, monograms, and bespoke colour schemes are features couples can incorporate to reflect their individual style.

What's on trend?

Moving away from the traditional four-pillar *mandap*, couples are looking for one-off ideas for their *phas*. There's a lot of scope here for innovation, says Puri. "For example, for a wedding in Goa, we created a beautiful pillarless *mandap* that was inspired by nesting birds and large leaves that we spotted at the hotel during our recce. It was quite a journey, involving sketches and models as we collaborated with fibre artists from Chennai." Arora adds that one of their brides wanted a *mandap* that incorporated Swarovski elements without the traditional pillars. "We designed a backdrop using beautiful mother of pearl and Swarovski crystals, which we nicknamed 'the garden of love'."

A play of colours

Arora points out that monochromatic tones are quite on trend. "Varying shades of a single colour make for a harmonious and elegant ambience. Rich colours like emerald, sapphire, and amethyst are eye-catching, while warm terracotta, olive greens, and rich browns draw inspiration from nature for a cosy, rustic feel. Remember, the key is to choose a colour palette that aligns with your personal style and wedding theme."

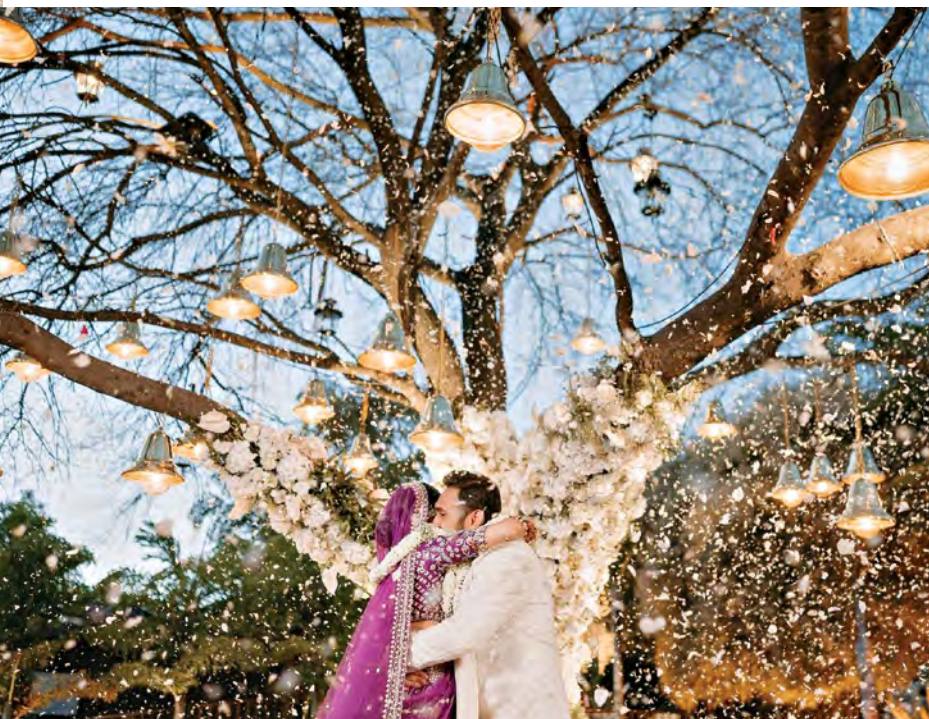
While pastel themes continue to be ever-popular, Puri notes that this season's trending colour palettes include shades of peacock, classic monotones of black and white, and the striking contrast of powder blue paired with vibrant red accents.

Embracing sustainability

As couples are becoming more eco-conscious, their wedding décor is also taking on a sustainable twist. "For instance, in Manali, we curated a sustainable



From top: Colour palette of a wedding theme must align with the couple's personal style; snapshot from a gorgeous destination wedding designed by To The Aisle in Udaipur.



wedding for a couple who were deeply passionate about eco-conscious celebrations. The *mandap* was built with locally-sourced wood and pine cone pillars. These pine cones were collected by the hotel staff from the property over the course of a year!" says Puri. "We used a lot of local flowers and foliage, and also set up a pebble counter where guests wrote heartfelt messages on stones collected from the River Beas. It really captured the essence of the destination."

Make your own rules

Puri says that when it comes to choosing décor for an intimate wedding, there are no strict rules, allowing you the freedom to tailor the ambience to your unique preferences. "Make sure to reflect your personal style, whether it's rustic, monochromatic, or boho-chic, ensuring that the décor resonates with both your personalities. Quality should always take precedence over quantity; opt for well-crafted, meaningful elements rather than overwhelming the space."

Of Warm Welcomes and Hearty Greetings

As weddings are evolving, so are the art of invitations. We give insights into popular trends this season and how to create one-of-a-kind, bespoke invitations to wow your guests.

WITH SO MUCH thought and effort put into creating a bespoke, unforgettable wedding, invitations aren't that far behind on the list of things couples are looking to innovate with. We speak to experts to get the low-down on crafting the perfect wedding invite.



Custom invites on trend

Some key themes to look out for with luxury wedding invitations this year are foil printing, minimalist embellishments, and metallic accents. Sanjana Chatlani, founder of The Bombay Lettering Company (bombaylettering.com), which does custom calligraphy and bespoke wedding invites, points out that the shift towards intimate luxury in Indian weddings has significantly influenced the design and presentation of invitations.

"Now, couples are placing greater emphasis on providing guests with unique offerings. For instance, you have customised boxed invitations, artisanal paper and printing techniques, engraved family crests, symbolic icons, or even a custom calligraphy font with a unique monogram."

Go green

Radhika Pitti, who runs a boutique design and print studio out of Hyderabad, Radhika Pitti Studio (radhikapittistudio.com), says that one of the biggest moves seen this year is people gravitating towards e-invites. "The number of people receiving physical cards is typically less than 50. So, digital invites are definitely becoming more popular," she says, adding that there is a noticeable shift towards clients demanding sustainable invitations, using handmade, recycled, or seed paper that can later

Clockwise: Minimalist embellishments and metallic accents are trending this season; couples and their families now prefer bespoke luxury invitations with elements of personalisation.



Personalised gifts to go along

Pitti says that apart from cards, there are other collaterals that make for meaningful personalised gifts. “From flower boxes to cute *mehendi* games, fun signages, and return favours—we always think of giving things to guests that they can use long after the wedding is over. Personalised ‘thank you’ notes and stationery are also in vogue.”

Chatlani echoes a similar sentiment, saying that to augment the experience, they often curate a selection of personalised gifts accompanying the invitation such as travel kits and pouches, accessories, home décor, and other thoughtful additions that add finesse to the couple’s wedding journey.

Clockwise: Extravagant designs with meaningful details are in vogue when it comes to wedding invites; people are actively picking sustainable invitations, using handmade, recycled, or seed paper.

be planted. “People are strictly shunning plastics, so some things we have done is use waste paper recycled with leaves that are later pressed in by hand to create our signature marigold invite.”

A quirky quest

Couples today aren’t afraid of letting their quirky, innovative side reflect on their wedding invites. Pitti points out that for one of her recent weddings, the couple requested for their beloved pets to be featured in the wedding invitations. “The card literally went out from their pets asking guests to attend and bless their parents. Another couple got a 3D structure created of the temple they were getting married at, as part of their invite.” For destination weddings, people are increasingly opting for the invitation to highlight the location and mood of the wedding, she notes.

Beauty lies in details

In terms of personalisation, couples are increasingly willing to invest in extravagant yet meaningful details, offers Chatlani. “This is especially true if it’s a destination wedding because guests are travelling from around the world. Hence, it’s important that each guest feels not only welcome but also exceptionally cherished,” she says.

Pitti refers to a recent wedding in Jaipur, where the studio designed a custom box featuring a silver bag for each guest, a silver-plated scroll with details of the wedding functions, custom gluten-free chocolates, and an acrylic top on the box with the couple’s name etched in. “This made for quite the luxurious gesture for guests.”

Uniquely-shaped invitations are on trend, breaking away from traditional rectangular formats. This allows for more creativity and customisation in design, adds Chatlani.





Gourmet Goodness

F&B experiences at weddings are being elevated like never before, offering guests a truly diverse culinary extravaganza.

FROM INTIMATE SIT-DOWN dinners and modern mixology, to regional Indian dishes, themed grazing tables, experimental tasting menus, and interactive dining—the new-age Indian wedding is all about adding that ‘wow’ factor when it comes to offering superlative culinary experiences for guests. We delve into the trend and see how it’s shaping up this wedding season.



From top: Food at weddings today has become a fancy affair; Intimate sit-down meals and pre-plated courses are getting popular at small-scale weddings.

Back to the roots

Chef Manu Chandra, founder-partner at Single Thread (singlethread.in), a Bengaluru-based bespoke catering company, points out that weddings have been getting creative and experiential in their own way. They are unique enough to require guests to travel, which means they have friends and family flying in from various parts of the world. Not just that, couples want to show what makes their wedding city, region, or state special from a culinary standpoint, says Chandra. “This helps us take on a new approach to what bespoke really means—it could simply be highlighting ingredients of the region, while using modernist techniques or going completely traditional to honour their roots.”

Immersive experiences

Aditi Dugar, founder of Sage & Saffron (sageandsaffron.com), a Mumbai-based boutique catering company, points out how there is now an emphasis on creating surprising moments for a lasting impression. This includes innovative features like a Teppanyaki bar, or for that matter, fixing up a fine dining restaurant-like set-up where guests dine in rotation, for a truly exclusive experience. Furthermore, grill stations, truffle bars, and live dessert stations with 3D mapping are emerging as popular picks.

“These elements elevate the culinary experience, offering guests a memorable and immersive journey through food. In some cases, couples are even flying in international chefs to add an extra layer of excitement and novelty to the dining experience,” she notes.

Keeping it close

While the traditional wedding buffet isn’t going away anytime soon—many discerning couples and their families are opting for intimate sit-down meals and pre-plated courses. Quality over quantity is taking

precedence as families want their guests to enjoy bespoke cuisine without cutting back on any element of luxury.

“We did an event in Coimbatore for a couple’s *mehendi* and cocktail party involving an elaborate menu that took inspiration from parts of Europe and a hint or two of inventive modern-Indian dishes, in addition to multiple interactive live counters,” says Chandra. The menu involved plates such as *kala* mutton curry and jackfruit Kolhapuri, both served with a special type of truffle *lacchha parathas*.” Giving another example, Chandra says that for the upcoming wedding season, they are already gearing up to cater a bespoke, all-vegetarian, and traditional South Indian wedding in Belgaum, Karnataka.

Mix it up

India’s cocktail culture has grown by leaps and bounds, and modern mixology is at the very heart of it. Don’t be surprised to find mixologists use different techniques as well as regional-inspired flavours from kokum and tamarind to *murabba* and even artisanal tisanes, as more discerning Indians look to experiment with their palates.

According to Chandra, the use of modern techniques like *sous-vide*, fat washing, clarification, and unconventional flavours from the kitchen is making room for mixologists to play with their craft. Custom cocktails are a big hit at weddings, paying homage to the couple’s journey, and a new trend to have emerged is that of perfume mixology where drinks are scented with edible fragrances.

Clockwise: Intricate bamboo installations for dining tables by Sage & Saffron; interactive dessert bars with personalised treats are the newest trend!



Tell your story

Increasingly, couples are delving into every detail, ensuring a truly bespoke experience. From buffet styling to food curation, these weddings are a testament to creativity, Dugar points out. “For instance, at a recent engagement party, we created a unique dining experience—an intricately shaved bamboo installation adorned the tables, and the food was interspersed within this artful display. This not only added an interactive element but also turned dining into a visual and sensory delight,” she says.

Dugar adds that the food offerings at the wedding evolved throughout the day. “It started with a sophisticated lunch, transitioning to high-tea, and culminated in an after-party vibe at dinner. Graffiti played a significant role in the overall décor. We even added graffiti to the takeaway boxes for the after party,” she says.

Citing another example, Dugar points out that a memorable instance was when they created an appetiser wall, specially designed for the event. “This not only added an element of surprise but also served as a storytelling canvas.”

Graze away!

Be it a salad bar, DIY taco station, or an edible dessert garden, grazing tables bring along casual intimacy, as weddings scale down in terms of the number of guests. “Couples are asking for bespoke gourmet spreads that reflect their individuality. This can include custom cocktails, signature dishes, interactive dessert bars with personalised treats, and more,” Dugar confirms.





A Token to Remember

Wedding favours are going beyond the ordinary with custom or highly-personalised gifts for guests.

FINDING THE PERFECT wedding favours to give to your guests can be a tough task, especially in this age of personalisation when there are a plethora of options to choose from. We spoke to expert wedding designers and planners for their take on creating memorable wedding favours. While custom tea blends and gourmet *mithai* might be a popular gifting option, there has been a slow and steady shift as couples gravitate towards highly-personalised gifts, be it prized artisanal handicrafts, custom fragrances, scented candles, or even engraved silverware.

Innovation is power

According to Aashna Lalwani, co-founder of Three Entertainment (threeentertainment.ca), a Mumbai-based boutique event management company, some innovative and bespoke ideas that you can look at are illustrations or portraits, hand-painted glassware with intricate designs, monograms, or even your wedding date.

Apart from that, gifts like essential oils, customised perfumes, and bespoke artisanal jewellery make for creative gifting. “Opt for favours that your guests will find useful in their daily lives. This could be anything from custom-made coasters to reusable tote bags, or even small succulents.”

Practical with a twist

Devanshi Patel, founder of Shreem Events (shreemevents.in), a bespoke wedding and event planning company, points out that couples want to experiment with different approaches to make their gifts special and memorable. “While traditional sweets remain a classic choice, there's a shift towards utility-based gifts.



Clockwise: There has been a shift towards utility-based gifts when it comes to wedding favours for guests; Highly-personalised gifts from custom-made coasters to labelled packaging are in trend.

“These encompass a wide range of items such as personalised frames, bedside platters, bags, pouches, travel sets, copper bottle sets, and even traditional spices like *kesar* and *elaichi*. Such gifts are both practical and a tribute to cultural traditions.” She adds that fashion accessories such as scarves and pocket squares are also popular and versatile gifts.

The element of exclusivity

“Personalised cards that can be turned into thoughtful presents are a wonderful gift idea,” Patel offers. Guests may have their names or identities etched onto luggage tags, keychains, or even bracelets. Additionally, a great option for adding a personal touch are caricatures. Even photobooths now offer more than just static images, she adds. “Think about including novel activities like live portrait painting, custom bracelet creation, or even scarf tie-dyeing. These engaging, interactive stations have the power to leave a lasting impression,” Patel notes.

For instance, one bride was deeply involved with a women-run organisation. So, we collaborated with JADE by Monica and Karishma (jadebymk.com) to design personalised silver bags. These were handcrafted by talented female artisans in Rajasthan, weaving a meaningful narrative into the wedding favours, she says.

Patel adds that some are even venturing beyond borders to source one-of-a-kind wedding favours. “An artist from Mexico was commissioned to design side table platters, adding an

international touch to the celebrations, while we have even curated special Pashmina shawls designed exclusively for a wedding. Art pieces remain timeless gifts that guests can cherish for years to come.”

The fun factor

According to Lalwani, one prominent trend is the emphasis on presenting wedding favours in a way that complements the overall theme of the wedding. “Couples and their families are placing great importance on packaging. Live engraving and curating counters that add uniqueness to the celebrations are a popular choice at weddings nowadays.”

Patel offers a similar take, saying that wedding favours like scented candles, bespoke bedding sets, and live counters that involve artisanal perfume-making or engraving glassware provides guests with a hands-on experience. “These live counters add an element of fun and personalisation to the celebration.”

Keepsake with a cause

According to Patel, it is encouraging to see people gravitate towards giving their wedding guests gifts that support an honourable cause. We’re also seeing a growing trend in promoting local artisans through gifting local textiles and prints. Traditional craft forms like Patan Patola are becoming more popular, as are complicated textiles like heavy Bandhanis or even Banarasi sarees.” +

Clockwise: Personalised scented candles and fragrances are a huge hit; boutique event planners like Three Entertainment are now offering everything from illustrations to monograms on gifts.



Band, Baajaa, Baaraat!

Turn your big day into an unforgettable affair by tying the knot at one of these *desi*, dreamy wedding venues in India! **BY SHIBANI BAWA**

Andaz Delhi

FROM STATEMENT installations to dramatic art pieces strewn across the hotel, the whimsical design of Andaz Delhi offers the perfect backdrop to celebrate your nuptials in style. For a traditional Indian wedding, the dedicated Elephant Path ensures a dramatic entrance for the groom and his troupe. From one of the largest indoor luxury spaces in Delhi to an ambient courtyard and eight smaller studios with open kitchens and attached outdoor terraces, the hotel offers an extensive choice of venues to host a lavish wedding as well as smaller pre-wedding functions. If you want a big, fat wedding, the hotel's oval-shaped, pillarless ballroom comfortably accommodates up to 2,000 guests when combined with the pre-function area and event courtyard.

The hotel's team of wedding specialists work diligently to make your every dream and desire come true. While the décor team can create any imaginable concept into reality, the F&B team is equipped to offer the finest fare to your guests. Besides an elaborate buffet menu, they offer signature menus from their award-winning restaurants—AnnaMaya, Juniper Bar, and Soul Pantry—in the form of interactive pop-ups for your events. Since Andaz Delhi is pet-friendly, your furry friends can also be right by your side on your special day. hyatt.com



JW Marriott New Delhi Aerocity

THE STYLISH JW Marriott New Delhi Aerocity is a luxurious, pet-friendly haven for celebrating a grand wedding in the capital. From offering elegant indulgences to providing expert event planning by Marriott Certified Wedding Planners, it is a much sought-after address for creating joyous memories of the celebration of your love.

From planning romantic rituals for the couple to pampering your guests, the Marriott Certified Wedding Planners team is well equipped to make celebrations as personalised as possible. Their inputs start from helping you set an event budget, deciding on a menu, to arranging table settings, and finding photographers, florists, or a even band for the big day.

JW Marriott New Delhi Aerocity has a range of venues offering different themes and settings spanning 30,000 square feet of flexible event space. One of the largest pillarless banquets in New Delhi, the Grand Crystal Ballroom can seat 1,400 guests, and the design enables it to be broken out into smaller rooms for intimate gatherings. Add to this, delicious catering, customised by the culinary team to suit your taste. marriott.com

The Leela Palace Udaipur

WITH ALL THE BUZZ around celebrity weddings in Udaipur, one destination hotel that stands out for its grandeur is The Leela Palace Udaipur. Set by the pristine waters of Lake Pichola, the hotel is built in the typical Rajasthani architectural style and adorned with exquisite embellishments. While the setting itself is ideal for the most magical wedding, the warm and attentive service by the entire staff makes the entire experience top notch.

The banquet spaces within the hotel can accommodate up to 200-seated guests, with an outdoor capacity for 100 standing ones. Sheesh Mahal looks magical in the evening as the City Palace lights up and the pristine Pichola shimmers in the moonlight. The mirrored courtyard in the heart of the hotel glimmers and reverberates with the sound of music, an ideal place for a *haldi* or *mehendi* ceremony. The hotel's team also helps arrange for gorgeous external venues like the Jagmandir Temple situated on a tiny island across the hotel.

The Regal Wedding Package includes a one-night stay in a luxury room with in-room champagne breakfast and a customised spa experience for the couple. theleela.com



Moksha Himalaya Spa Resort

IF YOU TWO DREAM of solemnly swearing to stay together forever in the midst of abundant natural beauty and unstated luxury, Moksha Himalaya Spa Resort is your best bet. Surrounded by the majestic Shivalik ranges at 5,000 feet above sea level, this luxury wellness resort located in Parwanoo in the heart of Himachal, checks all the boxes for an intimate destination wedding in the hills.

A renowned Ayurvedic spa, coolest check-in via a dedicated cable car service, an infinity pool offering panoramic mountain views, and exceptional culinary experiences—the resort promises a good, relaxed time for you and your guests with its unmatched amenities. While luxury rooms come here with private balconies and jacuzzi, the signature restaurant here serves up global cuisine—from Thai, Oriental to Continental and regional Indian.

Large and spacious, The Mansion Hall opens up to the adjacent Terrace Bar and is perfect for a grand wedding. Pick The Royal Ballroom for a lavish reception, and the gorgeous Garden Cafe for an intimate cocktail party. If you wish to unwind from all the wedding madness, let the polite staff arrange for private or group experiences for you and your guests! Pamper yourselves at the hammam, laze around with drinks by the pool, or indulge in a fun bonfire and barbecue night with your entire family! mokshaspa.com



Hyatt Regency Dehradun Resort and Spa

MISTY MEADOWS, spectacular sunsets, and picturesque vistas—wedding in the hills has its own charm. Hyatt Regency Dehradun Resort and Spa offers the perfect blend of a mountain escape and a luxurious haven to celebrate your special day.

Located on the Dehradun-Mussoorie Road, it is the largest luxury hotel in the state of Uttarakhand. While being easily accessible from major cities in North India, it offers majestic views of the Himalayan range and is in close proximity to the lush Malsi Forest. If you want to spread your wedding celebrations over a few days, it is the perfect venue as you can host different functions at different venues, ranging from the spacious Regency Ballroom with adjacent gardens to the beautiful Vista Lawns or the well-appointed Pinnacle Lounge.

Exquisite food and fancy drinks are quite the highlight at Hyatt Regency Dehradun Resort and Spa, thanks to their team of regional chefs and expert mixologists. Expect an exclusive wedding planning team to assist in chalking out and executing the perfect nuptials. From personalised themes, customised décor, and bespoke experiences, they'll ensure that your wedding is truly one of a kind. Being a pet-friendly hotel, they can even make sure that your furry loved ones are well catered to. hyatt.com

FROM TOP: COURTESY OF HYATT REGENCY DEHRADUN RESORT AND SPA; COURTESY OF PULLMAN NEW DELHI AEROCITY

Pullman New Delhi Aerocity

YOUR WEDDING must reflect your style. That is why Pullman New Delhi Aerocity has a specialised approach for creating bespoke experiences tailored to your personal taste. The hotel's theme of a peacock dancing in anticipation of the rains adds a dramatic aesthetic to the entire space—especially in the lobby, where a rain shower installation of hundreds of glass drops is suspended from the ceiling.

The hotel offers banqueting spaces encompassing 40,000 square feet. The Pillarless Peacock Ballroom is ideal for the main ceremony. It can also be partitioned into three separate halls for more intimate events. These venues come with state-of-the-art AV technology with lights installed on trusses that drop down from the ceiling to add bling to your celebrations.

The chefs here strive to win hearts through their culinary expertise. Right from a hearty welcome breakfast to extravagant wedding feasts, you can expect to be served finger-licking fare at every occasion. Signature Weddings by Pullman ensures that all the logistics and fine details are taken care of seamlessly, and you can simply have the time of your life as you start this beautiful new chapter of your life. pullmannewdelhi.com





ITC Grand Chola, Chennai

WHEN IT COMES TO managing a flamboyant wedding, you can be rest assured that ITC Hotels will do a great job. The opulence of ITC Grand Chola is truly legendary. This majestic hotel is a tribute to southern India's greatest empire—the Imperial Cholas. The richness of this grand palace hotel in the heart of Chennai coupled with the variety of venues, award-winning cuisines, stunning décor, and dedicated teams to look after every nuance of a wedding, makes it a preferred choice for noteworthy families across the country. A royal welcome with a shower of flower petals in one of the most photographed lobbies in India sets the tone for a majestic wedding.

The palatial pillar-less banquet hall is perfect to accommodate a grand affair as it can host up to 3,000 guests. The legacy restaurant brands that the hotel chain has honed are not limited to just winning accolades—they can be recreated as pop-ups at your special events. From Bukhara to Avartana, Royal Vega to Ottimo, you'll be spoilt for choice as the kitchen staff can cater exquisitely customised menus. Responsible Dining translates into organically-grown ingredients, sourced locally and cooked mindfully. The responsible luxury and sustainable initiatives that underlie all the lavish experiences are the cherry on the proverbial cake. itc-hotels.com

Radisson Blu Plaza Delhi Airport



FROM OFFERING THE right solutions for your unique celebration to seamlessly managing every individual detail, the experienced team at Radisson Blu Plaza Delhi Airport pulls all stops to deliver an iconic wedding. The hotel has special design elements that make it a great option for traditional weddings. Designated entrances for *baraat* ceremonies, special arrangements for *sangeet* and *mehendi* functions, and a sprawling space for grand celebrations are the cornerstones for creating lasting memories.

Pick from special styles and settings, including ballroom, royal, tropical, and even beach-themed décor! With ample space for up to 800 guests, you can easily include all your loved ones in your momentous celebrations. While personalised menus and a selection of drinks packages make sure that your guests are indulged to the hilt, a thoughtful and attentive team ensures that you are utterly pampered in the run up to the big day. There is a relaxed early check-in and late check-out for the special couple, and every wedding booked with Radisson Hotels earns valuable reward points that can be used for your next romantic getaway! radissonhotels.com

Novotel Mumbai International Airport

CONTEMPORARY DESIGN and the inimitable Mumbai spirit come together to create a wonderful wedding venue at Novotel Mumbai International Airport. There is a varied choice of dedicated spaces for weddings and soirees with capacities ranging from 80 to 700 guests. The largest venue at this hotel, spanning 5,122 square feet, is the pillarless Summit Room that offers gorgeous rooftop views of the city.

In addition to the banquet space, there is an additional area of 1,538 square feet, perfect for a hearty party. The flexible partition in the Harbour Room makes it easy to accommodate just the right number of guests or split the event into different sections as per your need. The Novotel team leaves no stone unturned to make your wedding preparations as bespoke for you as possible. If you are planning some intimate celebrations with close family and friends, Elphistone Room is ideal.

The chefs are also well equipped to lay out a lavish spread to complete the revelry. A special treat awaits at Tattva Spa that offers an array of luxury treatments to ensure that you show up as your best self on your special day. Take your pick from traditional deep tissue, Swedish, Ayurvedic, or Thai massages that truly rejuvenate the body, mind, and soul. novotelmumbaiinternationalairport.com



The Leela Bhartiya City Bengaluru

EMBODYING AN unparalleled ambience of tranquillity and sophistication, The Leela Bhartiya City Bengaluru is an idyllic venue for hosting splendid social events. It is situated within the impeccably-planned township of Bhartiya City, a futuristic technological hub with a grand theater, captivating entertainment options, Bhartiya Mall of Bengaluru, and lavish residences ensconced within expansive open spaces, gorgeous gardens, picturesque cycle paths, and more. Located at a comfortable half-an-hour drive from the Kempegowda International Airport, this hotel offers a wonderful blend of local South Indian culture, well-appointed facilities, and the relaxed vibe of a tropical destination. But to put it succinctly, the hotel exudes an aura of opulent majesty, showcasing an aesthetic of 'modern maharajas'. And of course, from the moment you step into the spectacular lobby, you are treated to the signature Leela hospitality.

Embark on a special journey with your loved one as the hotel's team sets out to make your dream wedding come true. The choice of venues offers flexibility to suit your specific requirements. From the Grand Ballroom to the Royal Ballroom and The Terrace, there are opulent spaces to celebrate intimate ceremonies and grand occasions. The catering team lays out quite a spread of world cuisine, including Indian, Asian, and Mediterranean specials, as per the theme. Other culinary offerings at the hotel include Quattro, an all-day dining restaurant; The Lotus Oriental, an Asian specialty restaurant; Falak, an Indian specialty restaurant; and The Library Bar.

Whether you are planning an opulent wedding or an intimate soiree, The Leela Bhartiya City offers the perfect amalgamation of elegance, expertise, and innovation to make your special day unforgettable. theleela.com +

Say Yes to the Dream Address!

Destination weddings are back in a big way. The world really is your oyster when it comes to ethereal settings for your nuptials, for each of these stunning destinations can add a beautiful chapter to your love story. **BY SUSHMITA SRIVASTAV**

Tropical Thailand

ABUNDANT NATURAL BEAUTY, tropical climate, exotic cuisine, and a rich cultural heritage to tie it all together—no wonder Thailand is reigning as one of the hottest destinations for Indian weddings. The oriental country offers an array of venue options, from luxurious beachfront resorts, to lush jungle villas, and ancient temples, catering to diverse wedding styles. Imagine walking down the sun-kissed aisle on a pristine beach in Phuket, with the sun setting over the Andaman Sea in the backdrop. Or immerse yourself in Thai culture as you tie the knot with the architectural gems like the Wat Ratchanatdaram Buddhist temple or the Grand Palace playing the perfect backdrop smackdab in the heart of bustling Bangkok. A contemporary paradise with swaying coconut palms, an endless stretch of gorgeous azure waters, soft sand, and thick lush foliage, Koh Samui is the picture-perfect setting for your dream beach wedding. The pristine islands of Krabi with the towering limestone cliffs in background make for a charming setting for any wedding ceremony—lavish or intimate. Then, there are less crowded, idyllic destinations including the breathtaking Hua Hin, the sandy shores of Rayong, and the coastal town of Khao Lak that make sure your big day isn't just an indulgent lifetime experience but is also peppered with sustainable celebrations. tourismthailand.org



Magical Maldives

PICTURE THIS—YOU are first whisked away to a private island in a speed boat, and are now walking down the aisle with the love of your life as the golden sun melts in the background. Or diving into the deeper ends, you and your partner say 'I do' while tropical fish, sting rays, and reef-tip sharks glide around while the crashing waves from the crystal-clear turquoise waters play the perfect music for your new beginnings! The Maldives, a touted romantic destination for honeymooning couples, is certainly a great place to tie the knot, too. The archipelago with over 1,200 islands sprawling across 26 breathtaking atolls, promises to epitomise your romance in a natural setting laced with gorgeous lagoons, powdery beaches, and brilliant blue vistas of crystalline seas teeming with corals and marine life. Thanks to the concept of 'one island, one resort,' you have a whole range of options to choose from, from slick luxurious showstoppers and secluded barefoot hideaways to the ultimate overwater villas and sustainable getaways. Other than unforgettable celebrations, experiences like dreamy dinner set-ups under the stars, relaxing spa therapies, sunset cruise in a traditional *dhoni* paired with bottomless champagne and dolphin sightings, promise to never let a moment go dull for you or your guests. visitmaldives.com

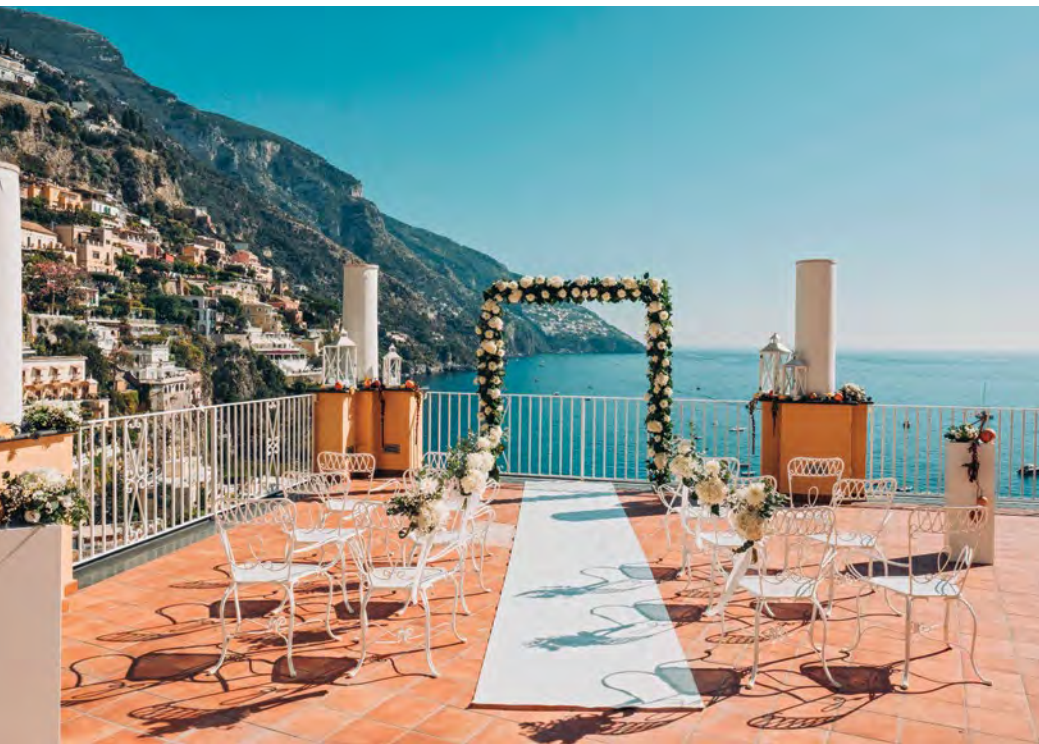
Beauteous Baku

AZERBAIJAN, the landlocked country at the crossroads of Eastern Europe and Western Asia is a refreshing pick for soon-to-be-married couples this year. While there are many destinations to pick from in this gorgeous transcontinental country, Baku sets the right tone for you to walk towards your fabled forever—thanks to its cobblestone streets, architectural marvels, narrow winding alleys, spectacular sea views, and a stunning skyline to match. The coastal capital city is a happy marriage of old-world charm and modern luxury as nowhere else in the Caucasus do East and West blend as seamlessly. Say your vows in the opulent Crystal Hall, or pick the luxury Fairmont hotel at the impressive Flame Towers for your special day. If you are looking for a more historical setting, head to the UNESCO-listed İçeri Şehir (Old Town). Gracefully illuminated stone mansions and exclusive boutique villas peppered around the Caspian-fronted promenade here give you plenty of venue options. Baku's diverse culture, Soviet architecture, unique Azeri cuisine, and balmy weather together provide a captivating setting for an elegant, traditional wedding. azerbaijan.travel



Dynamic Doha

THE GULF CITY OF DOHA is where modern sophistication meets traditional luxury. The capital city of Qatar has long drawn the world's elite with its miraculous fusion of age-old Middle Eastern culture, captivating architecture, and island bliss. No wonder it has emerged as one of the most sought-after wedding locations that promises unrivalled celebrations with a hint of Arabian mystique. Free visa-on-arrival, end-to-end airport assistance, and easy custom clearances for large groups from India further enhance Doha's allure when it comes to big, fat *desi* weddings. Pick from chic city venues, opulent high-end hotels, or beachfront resorts. If you are feeling particularly fancy, exchange rings in the majestic Museum of Islamic Art, surrounded by centuries-old artifacts, or choose one of Doha's luxury addresses where uninterrupted Arabian Gulf views, lush foliage, and a pleasant sea breeze keep you company at all times. Later, hit a relaxing spa, explore the stunning beaches, or shop at a traditional souk for that much-needed retail therapy! visitqatar.com



Idyllic Italy

GLASSY LAKES glittering under the golden sun, rolling hills hugging the salty shores, and sun-baked beach houses playing the perfect coastal setting—Italy can never go out of fashion when it comes to destination weddings. Some of the greatest works of art, lush landscapes, stunning architecture, and unparalleled gastronomy mark this dream land explaining why the world seeks the Italian way of life. The Amalfi Coast, with its dramatic cliffs and azure waters, offers a coastal backdrop for an intimate affair. Venice's Grand Canal provides a romantic and opulent setting reminiscent of a bygone era, while the picturesque vineyards of Lombardi create the perfect set-up for some indulgent revelry. Then, there's the postcard-perfect villages of Tuscany, the uber romantic Lake Como, the gorgeous islands of Tremiti, and the magnificent ruins of Rome—each of which will win both you and your guests over. The bespoke hospitality by countless luxury resorts, castles, villas, and residences peppered across the Italian landscape let you make the most of your big day, without having to break a sweat! italia.it/en

Blissful Bali

IMAGINE FLYING down to an archetypal tropical paradise for your novel nuptials, spending your days immersed in endless natural beauty and vibrant culture, and returning with the memories of a lifetime! That's Bali for you. Away from other bustling beachy hotspots, this Indonesian province is a land of sacred sites and traditions that also give way to adventure, leisure, and relaxation. Result? You've got yourself the perfect romantic (plus fun!) destination for your big day. Awash with crescents of sand, a variety of venues, and an addictive laid-back lifestyle, it is sure to offer you the perfect beginning of your 'happily ever after'. Picture yourself exchanging vows amidst the lush paddy terraces of Ubud or in an intimate beach ceremony at one of the golden beaches of Seminyak or at a majestic sea temple overlooking the ocean. You may even base yourself at one of the many luxe resorts in Canggu that will cater to your most whimsical desires. So that once you are done with the rituals, you two can turn it into a romantic mini-moon filled with experiences like pampering couples' spa treatments, fancy Indonesian meals, and a floating champagne breakfast in your private pool! indonesia.travel





Timeless Turkey

SUN-SOAKED BEACHES, bustling bazaars, steamy hammams, bougainvillea-draped villages, gorgeous taverns, and vast blue skies laden with vibrant hot-air balloons—Turkey's charm lies in its timeless experiences. Modern comforts paired with time-honoured traditions make it a unique destination for exchanging vows. From seaside resorts, Ottoman palaces, and luxurious hotels to quaint mountain B&Bs, and rustic farmhouses, there's no dearth of exotic venues offering customised wedding packages, exquisite cuisine, and dedicated hospitality. With the Bosphorus waters shimmering in the background from almost every corner, Istanbul makes the perfect pick for opulent ceremonies held at age-old palaces or mansions. Bodrum is your best bet if you dream of a laid-back, intimate wedding at sunset with the waves of the Aegean Sea slamming into the coast. Or go above and beyond as you two lift off over gorgeous Cappadocia in a hot air balloon, and say 'I do' gliding over a dreamy landscape of pointed fairy chimneys, sculpted by water and wind. goturkiye.in

Breathtaking Bahrain

BAHRAIN, OFTEN REFERRED to as the "Pearl of the Persian Gulf," is a hidden gem for destination weddings. Pristine beaches, urban cityscapes, desertlands—this Middle Eastern country has it all when it comes to hosting unforgettable ceremonies at exotic locations. With its idyllic beaches and a rich history, it's an excellent choice for a romantic ceremony. Whether you opt for a beachfront wedding on Amwaj Islands or a historic celebration in Bahrain Fort, its warm hospitality and cultural heritage will add a timeless charm to your special day. Add unique touches to your pre-wedding get-togethers and parties like a locally-made perfume stall (*itar/oud*), a calligraphy stall

to get names written in Arabic, traditional Bahraini wear photo booths, belly dancers, and more. Bring your exceptional wedding vision to life at any of the luxury island resorts under Manama's glittering skyline—complete with lush lawns, private beaches, opulent ballrooms, and scenic outdoor terraces. Massive support from the tourism board here for the planner, hosts, and guests including securing permissions, local support, discounted rates, VIP airport services, assistance in bringing fine jewellery into the country, and visa coordination among other benefits, makes your travel plans hassle-free. visitbahrain.bh





Swanky Singapore

THERE'S NO PLACE else quite like Singapore, a city-state known across the board for its modernity and cleanliness, when it comes to offering a chic and stylish setting for contemporary weddings. We're talking breezy beachfront resorts and historic colonial bungalows, elegant chapels, and opulent hotel ballrooms. Singapore's cosmopolitan charm, world-class infrastructure, and diverse culinary scene with Indian, Chinese, and Malay influences, make it an excellent choice for couples seeking a modern wedding. Say your vows amidst the futuristic Supertree Grove in Gardens by the Bay or behind the historic

walls of the National Museum of Singapore. Or celebrate your holy matrimony at the elegant Chijmes Hall with high ceilings and intricately-stained glass windows. You can even pick a quirky venue like the 110-year-old Beaulieu House that was once the headquarters for Japanese soldiers during WW2, or the Singapore Zoo where resident animals make guest appearances during your nuptials! The country also has a well-established wedding industry with experienced professionals and a wide range of awarded chefs and restaurants that will cater to all your whims. visitsingapore.com



Extraordinary UAE

EACH OF THE SEVEN emirates of the United Arab Emirates has its very own character and allure, making this breathtaking Middle Eastern country stand out from the crowd. With luxurious accommodations, breathtaking venues, and world-class hospitality, UAE has something to suit everyone's style and taste. Choose the glitzy Dubai if your heart wants a glamorous address with Michelin-starred culinary offerings, over-the-top décor, bucket-list experiences, and iconic landmarks in the shimmering skyline for your lavish wedding. In contrast, Saadiyat Island, just a short drive from Abu Dhabi, offers serene beachfront settings surrounded by pristine nature, perfect for an intimate celebration. If you both are adventurers at heart, pick Ras Al Khaimah! Afterall, what could be dreamier than getting married atop Jebel Jais Mountain Peak, the UAE's highest mountain or in the middle of a desert where the real Bedouin dining, sandboarding, and camel rides highlight your ceremonies? Abu Dhabi is all about opulent interiors and magnificent seaside views—ditch the usual and go for a cruise wedding to set sail towards your 'happily ever after' in the dreamiest way possible. u.ae ✦

Come Away with Me

Honeymooning in India? We've got you covered with these 10 romantic resorts where you'll be pampered silly, indulged with immersive experiences, and given utmost privacy to celebrate with the love of your life. **BY SHIBANI BAWA**



Royal Passion Fairmont Jaipur

THE PINK CITY has a romantic charm of its own. Fairmont Jaipur is one of the finest destinations on the outskirts of the city and is ideally located for a romantic holiday—the entire team is geared up to treat you and your loved one like royalty. This new-age palace will transport you to a bygone era of kings and queens with its ornate arches, rich interiors, and a beautiful blend of Rajasthani architecture with Mughal influences. Check into the Terrace suite for a memorable honeymoon. Butler service, private check-in and check-out, fine amenities, swish bathrobes, and warm, unobtrusive service are guaranteed to make you feel extra special.

As a haven for newly weds, there's enough to do within the hotel, from lazy swims in the gorgeous pool, to rejuvenating treatments at the Ruhab Spa. Zoya, the all-day dining, serves up lavish breakfast spreads, delicious local fare cooked by Rajasthani home cooks, and a range of specialties served by expert chefs. In the evening, intricate-*jaali* doors lead you to Aza, a luxe library bar designed like an emperor's hunting lodge lined with leather bound books and a fine range of tipples. Anjum is a tea lounge decked up with shimmering ornate murals, ideal to enjoy some *kadak adrak waali chai* and nibbles. fairmont.com

Mystical Mountains The Westin Resort & Spa, Himalayas

A HONEYMOON IN THE hills has a timeless appeal. Located in the heart of 12 acres in the lush foothills of the Himalayas is The Westin Resort & Spa, Himalayas. The beautiful views of Uttarakhand's Tehri Garhwal region from the hotel, along with the warm and attentive service make it a great escape from the city. Just 45 minutes away from Jolly Grant Airport in Dehradun, the hotel is well located for trips down to Rishikesh and Haridwar. However, the brand's signature Westin Heavenly® beds are perfect if you wish to sleep in all day long and spend more time at the resort with your partner.

Take a dip in the infinity pool with a swim-up bar, or book an appointment at the spa and relax with therapeutic couples' massages, footbaths, and facials. Follow that up with a lazy in-room meal. Better yet—dress up and head to Akasa for some fancy international cuisine or tuck into a progressive Asian menu at Toya. marriott.com



Into the Wild Aahana–The Corbett Wilderness

THIS ONE'S ESPECIALLY for the wild ones! Couples, who love spending time in the wilderness and enjoy the rhythm of the jungle, need not look further than Aahana–The Corbett Wilderness.

Aahana is nestled in 13.5 acres of lush green landscape sharing a boundary with the Bijrani Zone of Jim Corbett National Park. While it is perfectly located for safaris into the jungle, you'll always wake up to birdsong as the resort is home to more than 200 species of birds. There are 10 residential blocks built in Victorian style of architecture with beautiful, plush interiors. Ideal for an amorous staycation, the rooms feature a king-sized bed with an enclosed rain forest shower and a private sitting area or balcony with a choice of garden, jungle, or pool view.

As you spend the days pursuing the thrills of being in a jungle, you can unwind over a bonfire and live music or head to Jim's bar for some fine drinks and a nice ambience. While the organic farm-to-fork menu ensures great food cooked with the freshest produce, you'll also be indulged with a variety of Mongolian, Burmese, and Indian street food as well as some poolside barbecue.

Couples that are united by a common cause to save the planet will be happy to learn about the eco-initiatives and sustainable tourism efforts made by the resort. aahanaresort.com



Romantic Escapade Hyatt Regency Dharamshala Resort



MISTY MEADOWS, the snow-capped Dhauladhar range, and a luxury resort high up in Himachal Pradesh come together to create an utterly romantic honeymoon destination. Located high up at the altitude of 6,900 feet, Hyatt Regency Dharamshala Resort offers unparalleled luxury amidst towering cedar trees and gorgeous mountain valleys. We recommend you to stay in the Regency Suite with a private balcony to enjoy the gorgeous surroundings. An indoor fireplace in the lounge is ideal to keep you warm but the outdoor activities offered by the resort are even more rejuvenating.

Creating memories together as you start your journey as newly weds is as symbolic as it is enthralling. This luxurious haven has warm fireplaces to wind down in the evening, exquisite farm to fork cuisine, and Shanti Spa with a dedicated couples' therapy room. The adventurers-at-heart can go on a guided nature walk where you will explore the local flora and fauna on a relaxed trail spanning 5 km. The Tibetan guided tour is not for the weak spirited as it entails a 40-km trip exploring noted landmarks like the beautiful Norbulingka Institute, Tsuglakhang Temple, Karmapa Monastery, Men-Tsee-Khang Institute of Tibetan Medicine and Astro Science and a Tibetan Library! hyatt.com



Your Happy Place, **Alila Diwa Goa**

GOA IS ONE OF THE most preferred destinations for honeymoons in India, and for good reason. South Goa is particularly well suited for romantic getaways—away from the bustle, expansive beaches with calm waters and unparalleled serenity.

Alila Diwa Goa is a great pick as it blends state-of-the-art conveniences, pristine tropical surroundings, and an inimitable Goan vibe. To add to the charm, the resort is located in close proximity to the Majorda Beach as well

as the Basilica of Bom Jesus, Colva, and Benaulim. But if you prefer to spend more time in the privacy of indoors rather than exploring the outdoors, the rooms feature a king-size bed, private balcony, and luxe bathroom. Take your pick from fabulous views of the paddy fields, the poolside, or the hotel's lush gardens.

The hotel offers a choice of restaurants and bars to indulge in some local flavours or international gourmet fare. Spice Studio serves authentic coastal dishes from Kerala, Karnataka, and Goa,

while the Bistro is a poolside all-day diner ideal for an elaborate breakfast and light Mediterranean-style food. Vivo serves an array of Oriental, Indian, and Continental favourites along with an elaborate Sunday brunch. Courtyard Bar is a retro-themed cocktail bar that specialises in hyperlocal drinks infused in-house with local spices and build-your-own gin and tonics. Edge is another tropical bar and kitchen that is the perfect spot for sundowners overlooking the infinity pool and lush paddy fields. hyatt.com

Temple Splendour **InterContinental Chennai Mahabalipuram Resort**

LOCATED ON A SCENIC highway along the Coromandel Coast, InterContinental Chennai Mahabalipuram Resort is nestled amidst peaceful casuarina groves. The well-manicured gardens are spread over 15,000 square feet, and there is a private beach as well. One of the highlights of staying at this resort is its close proximity to Mahabalipuram (14 km). Also known as Mamallapuram, this temple town is famous for a collection of 7th- and 8th-century Hindu monuments and has been declared as a UNESCO World Heritage site. It is definitely top of the list sight-seeing for couples who come here from all over the world.

The rooms are well appointed and comfortable. There is a range of dining options—including The Melting Pot: Market Cafe with three live kitchens

that serves fine European, Asian, and Peninsular Indian cuisines; a Chinese specialty restaurant, Tao Of Peng; and KoKoMMo beachside seafood restaurant.

InterContinental Chennai Mahabalipuram Resort is well suited for honeymooners, and even has a dedicated package—Romantic City Break for Couples. This includes a stay for a night in a well-appointed room, a set-menu dinner at the beachside KoKoMMo Tiki Shack, discounts on couples' spa therapies, and an in-room Maharaja Royale breakfast the next morning. Another offer for couples is the 'Unwind' With Spacation package that includes a one-night stay along with breakfast, 60-minute couples' spa therapy once during the stay, and access to resort activities. ihg.com



Epitome of Love The Oberoi Amarvilas, Agra

RANKED AS ONE of the top hotels in the world, The Oberoi Amarvilas in Agra is inspired by Mughal palace designs—the expanse of the hotel is dotted with fountains, terraced lawns, reflection pools, and pavilions. But the main highlight is that every room at The Oberoi Amarvilas offers uninterrupted views of the iconic Taj Mahal. To take you up close, the hotel offers a guided tour of the monument along with a complimentary shuttle service in a golf buggy. It is highly recommended to visit at sunrise and sunset to witness the magical play of light, shadows, and colours on the white marble minarets.

To make honeymoon even more special for newly weds, there are a few special experiences at The Oberoi Amarvilas that are absolutely magical. Dine Under the Stars includes a specially crafted meal for two, served by a personal butler under the stars and next to gurgling, shimmering water bodies. You can opt for either a specially-curated four-course dinner or go with the highly recommended Royal Indian thali. There's also a Private Balcony Dining experience where a candlelit dinner is set up in the privacy of your balcony, overlooking the monument of love.

Do save some time to indulge in rejuvenating treatments at the spa. Take your pick from Eastern and Western treatments, and follow it up with a dip in the temperature-controlled pool. oberoihotels.com



Island of Love Raffles Udaipur

UDAIPUR HAS FIRMLY placed itself amongst the best destinations in the world for extravagant weddings. It is, however, also an extremely romantic getaway, well-suited for honeymooners. Those wanting to spend some quiet time in the lap of luxury in the City of Lakes, must arrive at the Raffles Udaipur.

The very first romantic experience is the scenic boat ride to reach the hotel. Designed in the classical European Palladian architecture, with ornate domes and high ceilings, Raffles Udaipur is set amidst beautiful baroque gardens. Located along the banks of the tranquil Lake Udaisagar, the hotel offers spectacular views at all times.

Raffles Udaipur caters to a romantic holiday with a relaxing stay for two nights in a plush suite with your own plunge pool with cabana, private balcony, walk-in wardrobe, and sprawling bathroom with personalised amenities. Unwind with a couples' treatment at the spa, while the Raffles Butlers take care of your every whim. Indulge in a signature afternoon tea at the Belvedere viewpoint, and later, sip on Udaipur Sling—an innovative twist on the classic Singapore Sling that was first created at Raffles Singapore—served at the Long Bar. Finally, enjoy relaxed mornings over a lavish in-room breakfast, with a view of the lake! raffles.com



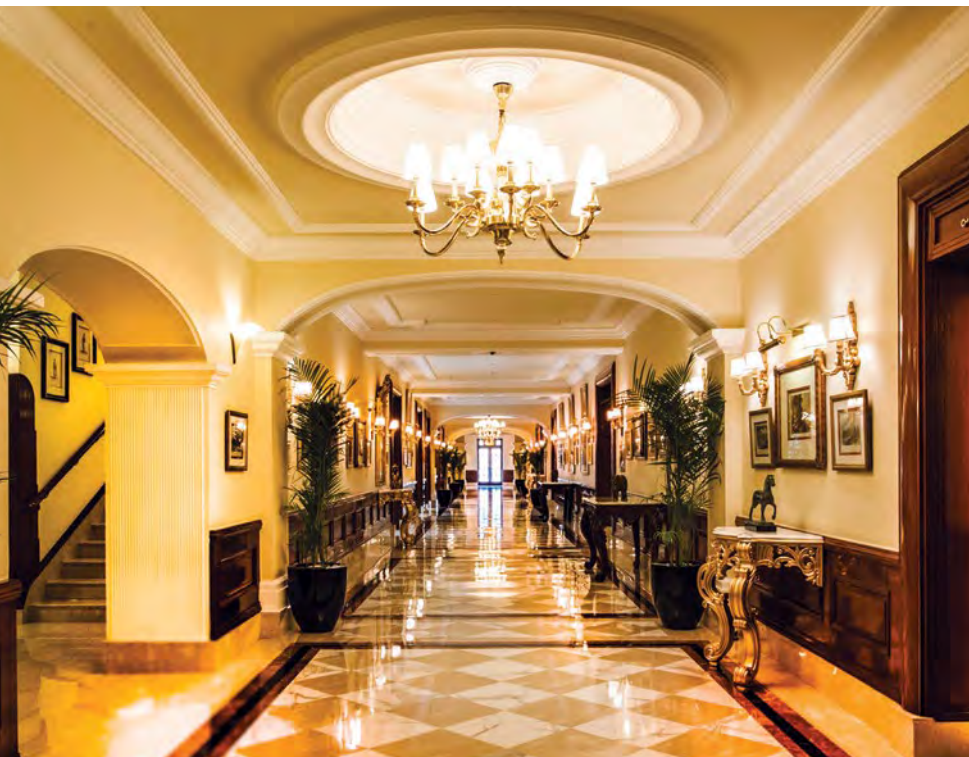
Chilled Cityscape The Ritz-Carlton, Bangalore

BESIDES BEING known as the Garden City, Bengaluru has a rich history of Maharaja palaces, colonial museums, and artisanal silk emporiums. Along with all the heritage in the city, there are magnificent parks and verdant landscapes, wonderful weather through the year and a vibrant pub culture that lend it a distinct appeal.

The Ritz-Carlton, Bangalore is centrally located and is in close proximity to MG Road, Cubbon Park, and UB City. Well suited for a city-based honeymoon, the hotel evokes a unique kind of romance. Home to more than 1,200 artworks, it also echoes the historical heritage of the city. Boasting some of the largest rooms and suites in the city, it is the preferred choice for a luxurious stay. The most opulent, however, is the one-bedroom Crown Suite.

If you want to enjoy a cosy staycation without stepping out, there are enough fine dining options within the hotel. Riwaz is well-known for a delicious array of Northwest frontier specialties, and The Market serves a variety of world cuisines and a swanky dessert studio. But our pick for the most romantic spot in the hotel is at the rooftop bar—Bang. Electrifying music, spectacular cocktails, and a beautiful view of the city makes it the perfect hangout. For some extra pampering, book a spa session at the VIP Suite, where expert therapists draw from traditional Indian and Western healing techniques.

In short, Ritz-Carlton, Bangalore is a great choice for an easy-going honeymoon in the heart of a bustling city. ritzcarlton.com



Classic Romance The Imperial New Delhi

RANKED AS ONE of the top hotels in India, The Imperial New Delhi, in the heart of Lutyen's Delhi, offers utmost luxury, fantastic restaurants, an unbeatable art collection, and a space where history comes alive. The grand façade, painted a pristine white against the verdant lawns, the 24 king palms that lead up to the porch, high-ceilings, and period furniture, and a treasure trove of original artworks and lithographs will evoke romance of a bygone era for historically inclined couples.

The team pulls all stops to ensure that the couples are pampered even as they soak in all the historical grandeur. Check into The Imperial Suite for an unparalleled stay.

Begin your city-style honeymoon with an art tour within the hotel, followed by a guided tour of Delhi in a luxe limousine, taking you through the Spice Market at Old Delhi, Agrasen ki Baoli, Lodhi Gardens, Qutub Minar, Humayun's Tomb, Red Fort, and more. Come back to an indulgent treatment at the sprawling spa.

Spend an evening at the two iconic bars at the hotel—Patiala Peg and The Hardinge Bar. Tuck into cuisine inspired from the Silk Route at the eponymous restaurant with mural arts and ancient temple pillars, or sample the finest Italian at the San Gimignano that has a gazebo, ideal to enjoy balmy Delhi evenings. theimperialindia.com

Where Wanderlust Meets Wedded Bliss

Ready to take the most memorable trip with the love of your life but confused where to go? These swoon-worthy destinations around the world promise romance, adventure, and memories of a lifetime. **BY RIDDHI DOSHI**



Romancing the blues in the **Maldives**

THE ISLAND NATION with its 26 atolls is an exquisite paradise nestled in the heart of the Indian Ocean that has pristine beaches, azure waters, and luxurious resorts ensuring endless romantic experiences and ample privacy. Newly-wed couples can indulge in a quiet yacht ride around the island; go for a candlelit beach dinner under the stars; or watch a romantic movie on a giant screen outdoors. If you are looking for something more exclusive, dine at an underwater restaurant at the Conrad Maldives or inside a wine cellar at the St. Regis. Watching the golden sunset here, either from the deck of your villa or cuddled in a hammock from your resort's beach is truly an

unforgettable experience—you may not have seen so many shades of yellow and orange in the sky ever before!

Start your day with a serene yoga session by the beach followed by a floating breakfast in your very own private pool in the overwater villa. Many resorts here also facilitate fun activities like private art sessions on a secluded island, where you get to take home your creation as a souvenir of the trip, or a couple's massage at a scenic spa, while watching a school of dolphins hop by. Spend your evenings strolling along the shores; snorkelling amidst colourful coral reefs and exotic fish; and partying at a beach club! visitmaldives.com

Switzerland—a sanctuary of sublime love

BOLLYWOOD'S FAVOURITE destination to kindle romance is every bit as beautiful as you see it on the big screen. Switzerland has been a dream honeymoon destination for Indian couples spanning generations. The snow-clad mountains, majestic waterfalls, quiet lakes, pretty countryside, and charming wooden homes make for a perfect escapade to paradise. Begin your married life with a cruise on Lake Geneva and revel in the mesmerising views of vineyards and castles. Explore the beautiful city of Lucerne, known for its wooden bridges and medieval architecture. Snuggle up in a cosy chalet in Zermatt with the iconic Matterhorn as your backdrop, or indulge in an exotic bath in your hotel's bathtub, while enjoying some of the best wines in the world.

In the quaint town of Montreux, take a leisurely stroll through the fragrant blooms of Queen's Rose Garden, or lose yourselves in the charm of Interlaken—a paradise nestled between two lakes. There is also Gstaad, a favourite amongst both Bollywood and Hollywood stars, for its quaint charm and pretty

boutique stores. No honeymoon in Switzerland is complete without a scenic train ride on the Glacier Express. Marvel at the panoramic views while enjoying a gourmet meal, creating an unforgettable experience for you and your beloved. Then, there are the chocolate and cheese factory tours, art walks, skiing expeditions, hikes, and so much more for you to explore with your partner. myswitzerland.com



Mexico magic

IT CANNOT GET better than this. A honeymoon in Mexico promises a great mix of culture, adventure, and relaxation. Start your honeymoon at Playa del Carmen, a coastal town known for its beautiful beaches and lively atmosphere. Explore the ancient Mayan ruins of Tulum, perched on cliffs overlooking the Caribbean Sea, and delve into the mystique of cenotes (natural sinkholes formed by collapsed cave systems) by going for a refreshing swim. Head to Cancun for its world-class resorts and indulge in watersports like snorkelling and diving at the Mesoamerican Reef, one of the world's largest coral reef systems. Discover the charm of Isla Holbox island, where you can swim with whale sharks, or relax on pristine beaches.

Try the delicious Mexican cuisine by taking a food tour in Oaxaca known for its mole and *mezcal*. Visit the bustling markets, trying local delicacies like tacos, *tamales*, and ceviche. For a romantic escape, venture to Puerto Vallarta, nestled between the Pacific Ocean and the Sierra Madre Mountains. Enjoy a sunset cruise in Banderas Bay, sipping cocktails, and marvelling at the picturesque views. Unwind in luxurious spas with elaborate massages and rejuvenating treatments. Visit the colonial city of San Miguel de Allende, known for its colourful streets dotted with charming restaurants, heritage architecture and artistic vibes. visitmexico.com



Langkawi—the love island

ON THE SOUTH of Malaysia sits an archipelago of over 100 islands called Langkawi. The tropical paradise in the Arabian Sea with turquoise waters, beautiful beaches, and thick rainforests beckons honeymooners for its natural beauty. Picture yourselves on a private beach, toes in the soft sand, as the sun dips below the horizon, painting the sky in hues of pink and orange. Langkawi's sunsets are legendary. Couples can also embark on a sunset cruise, sailing on calm waters, enjoying the serenity of the sea. Explore secluded coves and pristine beaches on a private boat, or go chasing waterfalls together.

For a touch of adventure, take a cable car ride up to Gunung Mat Cincang, Langkawi's second-highest peak to enjoy panoramic views of the island and the surrounding ocean. Visit the Pulau Payar Marine Park for snorkelling and scuba diving. Spot eagles, mouse-deer, hornbills, snakes, monitor-lizards, and peacocks at the Pulau Singa Besar or the Giant Lion Island, or go mangrove kayaking. Langkawi is home to many luxury resorts and private villas that will spoil you silly with their elaborate spa treatments, candlelit beachfront dinners, golfing lessons, and lively bars. naturallylangkawi.my

Ravishing Ras Al Khaimah

FROM THE SOFT, white sand beaches to the mangroves dotted with flamingos and the awe-inspiring mountain ranges, the northernmost emirate has a lot to offer. Go kayaking in the mangroves to spot the pink flamingos, hike through the cloud-piercing Jebel Jais mountain to fly at 150 kilometres per hour on the world's longest zipline, or just take a lesson in the ancient art of falconry. Another not-to-miss experience is taking to the skies in a hot air balloon to see the endless desert vistas. With big hotels such as the Ritz Carlton, Waldorf Astoria, InterContinental, and Hilton competing to offer you the best stay experience, you two are sure to find the best spa and dining experiences along with world-class amenities.

History and culture lovers will love the place too. The National Museum of Ras Al Khaimah gives a glimpse into the region's past. The historical Dhayah Fort, perched on a hilltop, offers panoramic views of the region. The man-made Al Marjan Island hosts traditional music and dance performances, and displays local crafts. The best place to shop here is the Al Hamra Village, where you can stroll through narrow alleys, explore traditional souks, interact with local artisans, enjoy traditional Arabic coffee, ride camels, and stargaze under the desert night sky, learning about Bedouin culture and traditions. visitrasalkhaimah.com



Lover's nest in Thailand

NOTHING CAN BEAT the Thai hospitality in making honeymooning couples feel extra special. Room upgrades, welcome cakes, champagne baths, couple massages, and candlelit dinners—you dream of it and they will make it happen. Add to that beautiful beaches and islands, ever-smiling people and a great shopping experience along with luxury hotels, resorts, and cruises. Begin your journey in Phuket, the party capital of the country, by visiting Patong or Karon beach. For a touch of culture, head to Chiang Mai, nestled in the mountains of northern Thailand. Visit ancient temples like Wat Phra Singh here, and take up traditional Thai cooking classes with your spouse.

Continue your romantic escapade in Krabi, home to stunning limestone cliffs and clear turquoise waters. Take a boat tour to the Phi Phi Islands, where you can snorkel amidst coral reefs and sunbathe on beautiful beaches. Railay Beach, known for its dramatic landscapes, is perfect for rock-climbing enthusiasts and beach lovers alike. If you are seeking a quieter holiday, travel to Koh Samui. Enjoy private beachfront dinners, explore the lush jungle interior, and unwind in luxury resorts. Additionally, the Ang Thong Marine Park, a cluster of idyllic islands, is a must-visit for kayaking and snorkelling adventures. End your trip in Bangkok, the street food paradise of the world with great shopping destinations. tourismthailand.org



Bahamas beckons the romantics

LOCATED JUST OFF the coast of Florida in the US, Bahamas is a group of 100 islands with azure waters, beaches with pink sands, fun pubs and bars, and happening beach parties. It is an evergreen honeymoon destination, where you can enjoy a quiet stroll with your partner when the sun sets over the horizon or explore the calm waters of the Exumas by renting a private boat and swimming with nurse sharks at Compass Cay. Visit Exuma Cays Land & Sea Park, a well-preserved marine reserve, perfect for snorkelling amidst coral reefs and a rich marine life. Indulge in fresh seafood in local shacks

like Nassau's Fish Fry, savouring the authentic flavours of the islands.

Take a day trip in the rare blue holes on Andros Island. For a romantic evening, dine at beachfront restaurants like Graycliff Restaurant, offering a blend of Bahamian and international cuisines. Explore the underwater world together by scuba diving in the Andros Barrier Reef, one of the world's largest coral reef systems. For some relaxing time, take a trip to the serene shores of Tropic of Cancer Beach in Exuma, enjoying each other's company in the tranquillity of the Bahamian paradise. bahamas.com



Postcard-worthy Portugal

THE POST-WEDDING bliss in Portugal promises to be simply magical. Begin your journey in Lisbon, where you can wander through the narrow alleys of Alfama, the city's oldest district, and witness breathtaking views from São Jorge Castle. Head to the UNESCO-listed town of Sintra, known for its gorgeous palaces like Palácio Nacional de Sintra and Palácio da Pena, that make for a dreamy backdrop for your honeymoon photos. Explore the picturesque Douro Valley for its terraced vineyards and scenic river cruises.

Journey to the southern region of Algarve and relax on the golden beaches of Lagos or Albufeira. Take a boat trip to explore the hidden caves and grottoes along the coastline, admiring nature's wonders together. Experience the romantic ambience of Porto, Portugal's second-largest city, famous for its charming riverside district, Ribeira. Enjoy a leisurely stroll across the iconic Dom Luís I Bridge and have a romantic dinner at a traditional Fado restaurant with melodious Portuguese music playing in the background. End your trip on a high note at the serene Azores, a cluster of volcanic islands, and take a relaxing bath in the thermal hot springs in São Miguel, surrounded by lush greenery. visitportugal.com

Make memories in Mauritius

A HONEYMOON IN Mauritius promises a great mix of romance and adventure with the backdrop of turquoise waters and pristine beaches. Start your journey in the capital city of Port Louis, where you can explore the bustling markets and indulge in the island's rich culinary delights. Venture into the heart of the island to discover the Chamarel region, where the sands of seven colours can be seen. The uneven volcanic surface is also home to the highest waterfall in Mauritius. Experience a blend of cultures by visiting Grand Bassin, a sacred lake for the Hindus, or explore the historic Aapravasi Ghat, a UNESCO site that tells the story of indentured labourers. Or indulge in watersports like kite surfing and parasailing in Belle Mare.

Mauritius has a lot for luxury seekers as well with the many world-class resorts lining the beaches of Trou aux Biches or Le Morne, offering private villas and overwater bungalows with unparalleled ocean views. Dive into the island's rich marine life through snorkelling or embark on a catamaran cruise to spot dolphins playing in the waves. End your day with a romantic beachfront dinner, serenaded by the sounds of the ocean, and savour local delicacies like seafood curries and tropical fruits. mymauritius.travel



The allure of Australia

AUSTRALIA IS A LAND where people take helicopter and seaplane rides to relish long lunches and dinners. It's a country of people who love good times and finer things in life, whether it is art, adventure, nature, or food. Sydney should be the city you start with—to sample the best Australia has to offer. A visit to the Opera House, the bridge-climb experience on the Sydney Harbour Bridge, the Aboriginal Art Museum, the array of shopping arcades, and a great culinary scene—there is so much to do here. A visit to the

Toranga zoo is also a delightful experience for where else will you see a cuddly Koala or tiny penguins. It's also the place to go on boat rides to see the majestic Crested Bullheaded sharks.

Next stop, Hunter Valley. It's one of the oldest wine-producing regions in the country that has many wineries that make some of the finest wines in the world. Do not miss the hot air balloon experience here to see the wine region from high up at sunrise and spot several kangaroos hopping around freely. australia.com ✦

PICTURE-PERFECT MEMORIES

These celebrity nuptials showcased heartwarming, whimsical moments captured on camera. We delve into what made these weddings truly romantic and enchanting. **BY ARZOO DINA**



Influencer Alanna Pandey sharing a magical moment with beau Ivor McCray before the beginning of their 'together forever'.



Inside actor-director duo Nayanthara and Vignesh Shivan's regal wedding that was high on love and aesthetically-pleasing details.



The couple said 'I do' in a dream-like intimate wedding in Mumbai surrounded by their loved ones.



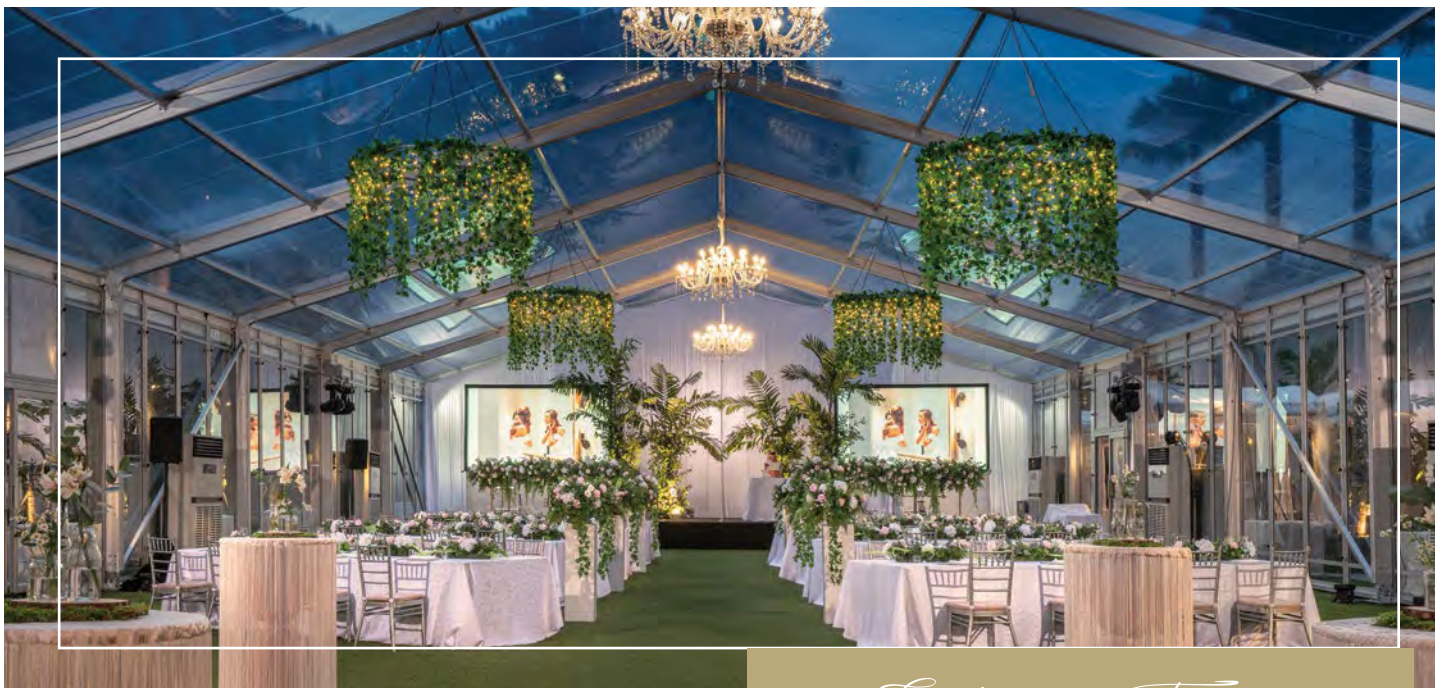
Little did the couple know that their little film narration meet-cute in 2015 would eventually lead to saying 'I do' someday.

ALANNA PANDAY AND IVOR MCCRAY

The entire (virtual) world took a pause and watched in awe, as Alanna Pandey—clad in a dreamy off-white *lehenga*—walked towards the love of her life, Ivor McCray. Siddharth Sharma, founder of House On The Clouds, who was privy to the emotionally-charged moment, shares, “Initially, we planned a ‘first look’ before the ceremony. But Ivor was keen on having it as a part of the wedding itself, owing to the tradition. Finally, the long-awaited moment unfolded in sheer beauty. As Alanna made her way down the aisle, an undeniable sense of anticipation filled the air. The sheer magic in Ivor’s reaction and the exchange between them as their eyes first met, was dreamy! It’s a memory we were fortunate to capture.”

NAYANTHARA AND VIGNESH SHIVAN

Celebrity couple Nayanthara and Vignesh Shivan’s vision for their nuptials was translated into a grand, fairytale wedding by Shaadi Squad. The brand’s co-founder, Tina Tharwani, shares how it all came together, “We had been in touch with Nayanthara well before the wedding planning had really begun, and had the most interesting conversations about the ceremonies. While we always knew the wedding would be as regal as it could get, our minds were blown away when she walked in, under her *chaddar* with a dainty Goddess Lakshmi motif! Everybody had goosebumps. It was as if the time stood still to witness Nayanthara walk into the most blissful day of her life, as Vignesh waited at the *mandap* with his arms wide open!” +



Epitome of Timeless Romance in Singapore

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