

Follow Your Bliss

Every couple has their own vision of honeymoon heaven. Maybe it's finding the whitest sand ... or the finest wine ... or the steepest ski run. The point is doing what you love—and doing it together—on your first trip as a Mr. and Mrs. We've rounded up 40 great vacation ideas, whether you're a beach lover, gastronome, adrenaline junkie, or culture buff. Bon voyage!

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Best Beaches

All that planning, entertaining, and air-kissing long-lost aunts can be exhausting. If you want to recharge in the sun and sand, choose one of these shorelines—each is honeymoon-worthy in its own way.

Catch Some Waves → Poipu Beach, on Kauai, is a renowned surf spot, but you don't have to be Laird Hamilton to hang ten. The resident surf instructor at the oceanfront **Ko'a Kea Hotel & Resort** will get beginners up on their feet after just one lesson. Plus, the snorkeling, scuba diving, and paddle-boarding are also top-notch (from \$369, koakea.com).

Hide Away → While the British Virgin Islands have many worthy strips of sand, the aptly named Honeymoon Beach, on über-chic **Peter Island Resort & Spa**, is the standout. One lucky couple at a time can reserve the idyll for a picnic lunch or tropical cocktails, or for just hanging out far from civilization (from \$430, peterisland.com).

Go Barefoot → Matemwe Beach, on the eastern shore of Zanzibar, is so soft and powdery, you'll be tempted to take endless hand-in-hand strolls. But make time to kayak or dive off the famed Mnemba Atoll coral reefs, accessible from the quietly luxurious **Matemwe Lodge** (from \$360, matemwe.lodge.asiliaafrica.com).

Sail Into the Past → If you're more lake lovers than ocean buffs, find a home away from home at **Lake Placid Lodge**, in upstate New York. Built as a summer house, it was transformed into one of the Adirondacks' most beloved hotels in 1946 and exudes the glamour of a bygone era. Dress up for supper in the Arts and Crafts dining room (from \$499, lakeplacidlodge.com).

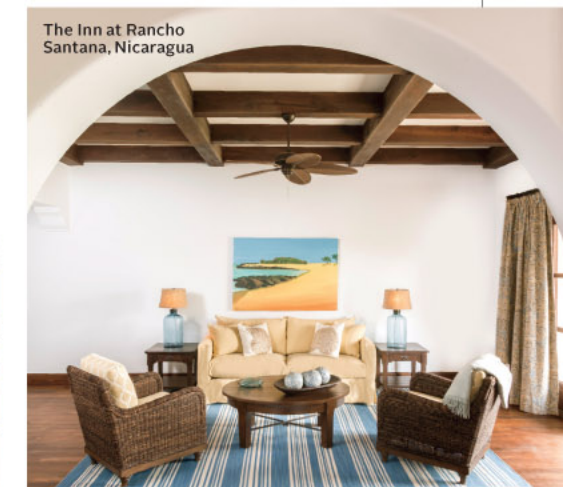
Float in Place → There are overwater bungalows—and then there are those at **The St. Regis Bora Bora**, in French Polynesia. The spacious one-bedroom villas are set right in a bright turquoise lagoon, and some come with whirlpools. Even indoors, the water is never far from sight, with walls of windows and glass panels in the floor (from \$1,248, stregis.com).



The St. Regis Bora Bora, French Polynesia



Lake Placid Lodge, New York



The Inn at Rancho Santana, Nicaragua

Book a Room With a View → Spread along 2,700 acres on an isthmus perched between Lake Nicaragua and the Pacific Ocean, Nicaragua's new **The Inn at Rancho Santana** has two miles of shoreline and five beaches—not to mention its own art gallery, café, and organic garden. Each of its 17 light and airy rooms grants the bride and groom a Pacific Ocean vista (from \$249, ranchosantana.com).

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: COURTESY ST. REGIS BORA BORA RESORT; COURTESY INN @ RANCHO SANTANA; COURTESY OCEAN PROPERTIES, LTD.

Hike to the Shore → Tucked away on a private peninsula in southern Brazil is the serene, romantic **Ponta dos Ganchos** resort. Even more special than the compound's secluded beaches are the guided treks through its surrounding lush, wild rain forest (from \$470, pontadosganchos.com.br).

Grab Your Snorkel → With calm waves, soft sand, and bathtub-warm water, Arashi Beach, on Aruba, is the ultimate place for a dip—but it's even better for spotting sea life. (And it's just a five-minute taxi ride from **The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba**; from \$399, ritzcarlton.com.) Come prepared: There are no facilities, just a few huts, so pack your snorkel, towels, water, and snacks.

Join the (Beach) Party → If your idea of a good time is staying up until sunrise, look no further than the new **Gansevoort Dominican Republic**, in the DR's thriving Puerto Plata region. At the super-social resort on Playa Imbert, you can bring your evening cocktails to the beach or the adults-only pool. After-hours action can be found at La Cantina Wine + Cigar Cellar and the Baia Lounge + Restaurant (from \$485, gansevoorthotelgroup.com).

Kayak Into the Wild → Just over an hour by van and speedboat from Thailand's Krabi International Airport lies laid-back Koh Lanta, part of a 52-island archipelago protected by the Mu Koh Lanta National Park. Here, you can paddle through limestone caves, go hiking, and sunbathe on Ba Kantiang Beach (which is backed by a tropical forest). As for where to stay: **Pimalai Resort & Spa** is one of the area's few high-end resorts (from \$187, www.pimalai.com).



Monteverdi Tuscany, Italy

Tasty Delights

Foodies take all forms, from simple gourmands to Anthony Bourdain-style culinary anthropologists. If the two of you live to eat (or drink, or cook, or crush grapes), one of these trips will be a recipe for delight.

Eat Your Way Through Tuscany → To sample the bounty that is Tuscan cuisine, stay at the 12-room hilltop hotel **Monteverdi Tuscany** and do just about anything. (Options include truffle hunting and wine tasting.) Don't worry about over-indulging: The new spa offers ways to detox (from \$425, monteverdituscany.com).

Shuck It All! → Your shellfish, that is. At the 140-year-old **Wauwinet**, on Nantucket, Massachusetts, guests can experience ocean-to-table firsthand. You'll watch as the captain of the *Wauwinet Lady* pulls bivalves from a nearby oyster bed, and learn how to chuck the bad and shuck the good—then pair them with wine (from \$225, wauwinet.com).

Dine à Deux → The City of Light is in the midst of a bistro renaissance, and at our current faves, French classics are getting a 21st-century twist. Try **Septime** (septime-charonne.fr), **Clown Bar** (clown-bar-paris.fr), **Le Dauphin** (restaurantledauphin.net), or **L'Ami Jean** (lamijean.fr). The best part: They all take reservations.

Barbecue Blow-Out → Everything's bigger in Texas—and that includes Austin's

'cue scene. The waits are worth it at **Franklin Barbecue** (franklinbarbecue.com) and **La Barbecue** (labarbecue.com). Give in to the inevitable food coma at the new **South Congress Hotel**, home to a restaurant by beloved local chef Paul Qui (from \$289, southcongresshotel.com).

Bottle It! → **The Vines Resort & Spa**, at the foot of the Argentinian Andes in Mendoza's malbec country, offers the ultimate souvenir: At the property's vineyard, you can learn how to blend wine with master vintners and create your own barrel to toast future anniversaries. After you've worked up an appetite, hit the on-site restaurant run by famed chef Francis Mallmann (from \$550, vinesresortandspa.com.com).



Mendoza, Argentina

Cook a Greek Feast → Grapes, olives, and figs are all ripe for the picking at **The Romanos** resort, part of the Costa Navarino complex on the fertile Peloponnese. Ladies from the region will teach you how to prep your spoils. At breakfast, take full advantage of the local fare, including multiple types of organic honey—and honeycombs (from \$436, romanoscostanavarino.com).

Live Farm to Table → When **Kittitian Hill**, on the Caribbean island of St. Kitts, calls its 400 acres of organic farmland and forest "an edible landscape," they mean it: A "Pick Me" sign invites guests to pluck fruit right from the trees. Book one of the Belle Mont Farm villas, where you can make your own meal with fresh produce delivered to your door (from \$625, kittitianhill.com).

Cast a Line → On an excursion available at Vietnam's **Six Senses Ninh Van Bay**, you'll spend the day angling with local fishermen before taking your haul to a cooking class. That night, enjoy your masterpiece in the ultimate romantic setting: The Wine Cave, a hillside rock cavern (from \$660, sixsenses.com).



Six Senses Ninh Van Bay, Vietnam

Wine and Dine → We all know Napa Valley is famous for its vineyards (and for good reason), but the restaurants are equally world-class—from the special-occasion **The Restaurant at Meadowood** (therestaurantatmeadowood.com) to the more casual **Atlas Social** (atlassocialnapa.com), a newbie right downtown.

Plan a (Beach) Shack Attack → Forget fancy restaurants. In Negril, Jamaica, the more casual setting, the better. Hit **Murphy's West End** (876-367-0475) for its spicy jerk chicken and **Sweet Spot** (no phone) to try the national dish of ackee (a lychee relative) and saltfish.



Schanfigg Valley, Switzerland

Epic Adventures

Surf, sail, heli-ski, golf... there are plenty of ways to get your heart rate going. These high-energy activities will challenge your sporty side—without neglecting the romantic in you.

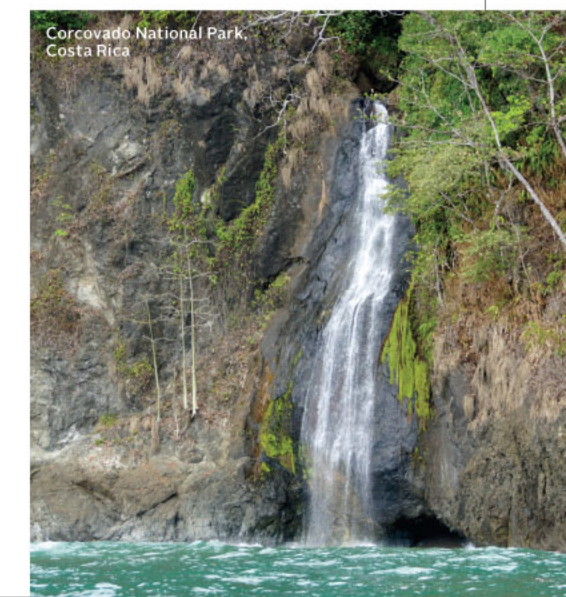
Climb the Ruins → The Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve in Tulum, Mexico, provides a welcome break from the beaches of the Riviera Maya with its **Nature Encounter**, a boat ride through a 1,000-plus-year-old Mayan canal, with stops to spot manatees and sunbathing crocodiles and float through mangroves (visitsiankaan.com).

Ski the Friendly Skies → Black diamonds not challenging enough? Go off-piste with **Telluride Helitrax**, a company that specializes in heli-skiing in the Colorado Rockies (helitrax.com). Then book a couple's massage at Telluride's **Madeline Hotel and Residences**—your hamstrings will definitely thank you (from \$329, madelinetelluride.com).

Golf on High → At almost 6,000 feet above sea level, **Golf Club Arosa**, in the Swiss Alps' rugged Schanfigg Valley, is one of Europe's highest-altitude greens (golfarosa.ch). The **Tschuggen Grand Hotel**, whose showstopping spa resembles a series of sails, provides free rides to the 18-hole course (from \$360, tschuggen.ch).

Paddle by Moonlight (and LED, too) → The adventure center at **Frenchman's Reef & Morning Star Marriott Beach Resort**, on St. Thomas, U.S.V.I., rents out clear-bottom kayaks illuminated with LED lights. After dark, the glow attracts sea turtles, tarpon, stingrays, and other magnificent marine life (from \$159, marriott.com).

Roam the Rain Forest → It takes three days to explore Costa Rica's pristine Osa Peninsula during a hotel-to-hotel hike, but the effort is worth it. On a custom itinerary from **Costa Rican Vacations**, a guide will lead you through Corcovado National Park, pointing out rare big cats along the way (from \$2,400 for four nights, vacationscostarica.com).



Corcovado National Park, Costa Rica

Jump at the Chance → Thrill-seekers, New Zealand's **Queenstown Combo Awesome Foursome** excursion was made for you: You'll bungee jump with the company that invented the commercial sport, jet-boat on a river, white-water raft, and take a helicopter ride—all in one trip (\$375, queenstownadventure.com).

Hitch a Ride → Picture it: the two of you on horseback, cantering through allspice trees and into a deserted cove on the pink sands near Bermuda's Horseshoe Bay Beach. Now, make this dream a reality through **Spicelands Equestrian Centre** (from \$350 for one hour, spicelandsriding.com).

Succumb to Reef Madness → The **Westin Grand Cayman Seven Mile Beach Resort & Spa** has partnered with Red Sail Sports to take guests out to the Caribbean's deep and famously clear waters for dramatic wall dives. Pack an underwater camera to take selfies with nurse sharks and stingrays (from \$239, and from \$80 for dives, westingrandcayman.com).

Sail Away → Be your own skipper and tack your way to the Bahamas' micro islets, some of which are so remote they don't even have names. **Sunsail Vacations**, on the Abacos in the Out Islands, rents out 43-foot catamarans. Want the nature without the navigating? Kick back and let a captain and cook take the helm (from \$5,500, sunsail.com).

Surf Secret Spots → Ride the waves other surfers only dream about. At famous Bondi Beach and Byron Bay, the **Let's Go Surfing** school offers a private guide who will take you to the area's hidden breaks and tailor the trips to your skill level (from \$210, letsgosurfing.com.au).

Bondi Beach, Australia



Taj Mahal, India

Horizon Expanders

It is possible to have a relaxing honeymoon *and* learn a thing or two. By delving deep into destinations rich with art, culture, and history, you'll come home refreshed and ready to conquer the world together—not to mention toting some killer souvenirs to feather your newlywed nest.

Live a Bollywood Love Story

The Taj Mahal may be the greatest homage to romance in the world. The story goes that the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan built it to honor his beloved late wife. A room at **The Oberoi Amarvilas, Agra** offers unobstructed views of her white marble mausoleum after all the tourists have gone. For more imperial grandeur, the concierge can help plan a side trip to the city of Fatehpur Sikri, 28 miles away, which was once the capital of the Mughal empire and is full of gorgeous palaces, monuments, and mosques (from \$978, oberoihotels.com).

Explore New York's Creative Scene → The relocated **Whitney Museum of American Art**, which opened this year in a shiplike Renzo Piano structure near the Hudson River, is bolder and better than ever (whitney.org). And it just scratches the surface of the exhibits the Chelsea neighborhood has to offer—from iconic galleries (Barbara Gladstone, Gagosian, Matthew Marks) to younger upstarts (Chamber, a design shop-gallery combo).

Page Dr. Zhivago → With the dollar strong against the ruble, you can live like a czar (or at least a minor aristocrat) in St. Petersburg, soaking in the scene at the

State Hermitage Museum, which includes Catherine the Great's Winter Palace and now houses a world-class collection of decorative arts. **Exeter International** will draw up an itinerary that also features tickets to the Mariinsky Ballet and a boat ride on the city's Venice-like waterways (from \$400, exeterinternational.com).

Discover an Ancient City → The ruins of **Tikal**, buried in Guatemala's dense forests, date back as far as 600 B.C. (tikalnationalpark.org). Meander the temples and pyramids on day trips out of **La Lancha**, a 10-room waterfront retreat above the



Tikal, Guatemala

shores of Lago Petén Itzá just 45 minutes from the ruins, which is owned by director Francis Ford Coppola (from \$149, coppolareorts.com).

Bargain in Byzantium → Attention, shoppers! One of the oldest covered markets in the world, Istanbul's Grand Bazaar is a treasure trove of jewelry, leather, and antiques. Decorate your home with a rug from **Dhoku**, where old kilims are retooled into contemporary (and affordable) designs (dhoku.com). The **Four Seasons Hotel Istanbul at Sultanahmet**, an ultra-luxe retreat set in a former jail, makes a divine home base (from \$360, fourseasons.com).

Walk an Art-Filled Island → Imagine a place with museums and site-specific masterpieces at every turn. That's the Benesse Art Site Naoshima, set in Japan's Seto Inland Sea. Among the highlights: a massive pumpkin sculpture by Yayoi Kusama and the Chichu Art Museum, built almost entirely underground. Stay at the Tadao Ando-designed **Benesse House Museum**, which is filled with works by the likes of Jasper Johns and Cy Twombly (from \$270, benesse-artsite.jp).

Take Your Show on the Road → Cruise north along Highway 1 from Los Angeles (don't miss **The Broad**, a new museum downtown; thebroad.org) to San Francisco. Along the way, stop to hike and take in the stunning cliffs-meet-ocean views of the haute-hippie town of Big Sur and the world-renowned **Monterey Bay Aquarium** (montereybayaquarium.org) before landing at San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge.



Highway 1, California

Soak It Up → Georgian architecture, the site of a 1,200-year-old abbey, a literary heritage as the setting of novels by Jane Austen and Charles Dickens—what's not to love about Bath, England? Even the ancient Romans were smitten: They built the public baths that still stand at the mineral-rich natural hot

springs. The new **Gainsborough Bath Spa** uses the famed healing water, which is said to soothe dry skin and even jet lag, in its pools and therapies (from \$447, thegainsboroughbathspa.co.uk).

Sleep in Splendor → Live out your fairy-tale fantasy at the **Fairmont Le Château Frontenac**, a castlelike hotel that stands sentry over the fortified walled city of Old Québec, a UNESCO World Heritage site. The property's new self-guided tour app shares its storied history (spoiler alert: Queen Elizabeth and Princess Grace both slept here). Request a room on a high floor with views of the Saint Lawrence River (from \$189, fairmont.com).

Travel the (Art) World in One City → It's in Berlin—not in Egypt, Italy, or Greece—that you'll find the bust of Nefertiti, Donatello's *Pazzi Madonna*, and the Pergamon frieze. The German capital is home to a number of impressive cultural centers devoted to the arts of antiquity, and five of them are located in a cluster called **Museumsinsel Berlin**, in the central neighborhood of Mitte (smb.museum).

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Fairmont Le Château Frontenac, Canada

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