

Pacific Romance

YOUR GUIDE TO WEDDINGS, HONEYMOONS
AND ROMANCE IN THE PACIFIC ISLANDS



NEW CALEDONIA

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Endless Love

From the cosmopolitan city of Nouméa to the Loyalty Islands that surround, New Caledonia summons the romantic within – no exceptions. It's the perfect place for couples to seal their love in marriage or to simply get lost in paradise.





Tying the knot



In 2009 a change in policy meant that couples visiting New Caledonia could hold a civil wedding ceremony. Applications are made to the Nouméa City Authorities five to six months in advance, via an email to the Town Hall Records Authority. Proof of civil status and a certificate of residence is required. An officially approved translator (French/English) will be present at the ceremony. After the ceremony, a certified transcription of their marriage certificate then needs to be taken to the consulate of their country.





ANSE VATA BEACH, NOUMÉA © S. DUCANDAS / NCTPS



AMEDEE LIGHTHOUSE © O. STREWE / NCTPS



SHOPPING NOUMÉA © TERRES DE LUMIÈRE / NCTPS



A TASTE OF FRANCE

If France were a sole city on an island in the South Pacific, it would be Nouméa. The New Caledonian cosmopolitan capital is nestled in the south of Grand Terre – the main island – where stunning South Pacific beauty blends with the elegance and romance of French culture.

Many people call Nouméa the ‘foodie capital of the South Pacific’. And it’s hard to argue. Exquisite French wine, macarons, cheese, pastries and cuisine – infused with island flavours – can be found on almost every corner of the city; in the form of restaurants, bakeries, Cafés, Parisian-style bistros, and local markets.

So much to sample, so little time! But there are some highlights that should be on every couples list. Au P’tit café, one of Nouméa’s most famous restaurants, which can be found on Avenue des Freres. This café has ditched the normality of a set menu to constantly test the chefs’ creativity. Each week they craft a line-up of four new dinners and desserts to suit the seasons. One thing does stay the same, however – their famous passionfruit cheesecake. A delicious treat to top off the evening.

The local markets are well worth a visit too. Port Moselle Market is New Caledonia’s largest market, which sits right next to the marina at Port Moselle. It provides market-goers – early and late risers alike – with a large selection of fresh local produce, delicious seafood, a French-inspired café bar, and souvenirs to take home, from Tuesday morning to Sunday morning. The succulent exotic fruits of the South Pacific and the freshly baked croissants are recommended.

Nouméa is also rich with culture, enticing settlers from around the world since the first European colonisers arrived in 1853. You’ll see it in

the architecture, arts, attractions and lifestyle. The capital’s art galleries, cinemas, museums and theatres showcase this way of life and New Caledonia’s history. There is a lot for curious couples in Nouméa, and it’s easy to do.

Ladies take note, the city centre is well known to those who love to shop, especially lovers of French fashion. Small clothing and accessory shops can be found on the streets of Rue de L’Alma and Rue de Sebastopol. However, major global brands are also present. To the south, on La promenade in Anse Vata, is a great place to enjoy some leisurely up-market shopping.



CITY BEACH

There’s not much worse than being stuck in a city on a sweltering day. But luckily, Noumea is not your typical city. The waterfront provides refreshing sea breezes and there are some beautiful beaches too. Baie des Citrons, is a laid back spot where couples can enjoy the bars, night clubs, restaurants, and stores on the shoreline road. Golden sand, trees and warm waters lie just beyond. Or chill out at Anse Vata Bay, ‘Nouméa’s beautiful walkway’. Both are picturesque spots to kick back and relax.

Feel like a little more action, how about harnessing the wind and zooming across the lagoon? There is a reason why you’ll see a ton of kites rushing along the waves; Nouméa is perfect for kitesurfing, regardless of your experience on a board. There are lessons for both newcomers and veterans alike available around the city. Kitesurf Attitude and Nouméa Kite School are just two of the various local establishments that offer them.



ILÉ DES PINS © ETHNOTRACK / NCTPS




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ABOVE AND BEYOND

While Nouméa is a fantastic city, the rest of Grand Terre can often slide under tourists' radars. Which is a shame. The largest island in the South Pacific has so much to offer. And is perfect for adventurous couples who are keen to rent a car, hit the road and discover the beauty that lies beyond.

There are plenty of hiking trails, carved out between forests and along mountains, for couples who want to stretch their legs and take in New Caledonia's great outdoors.

The Great South region is tattooed with the colours of red, green and blue. You'll find nature reserves and parks to walk, such as the vast Blue River Park and the N'Dua Reserve. Cap N'Dua, found on the tip of the Grand Sud, has a phenomenal view from a lookout, where humpback whales can sometimes be spotted.

Or take a long-distance hike from the old village of Prony to the dam of the Dumbea river, across seven main stages paved by the red soil of the Great South region. In the north of Grand Terre, Gouaro Deva is another spectacular hike, where visitors can climb the highest peak of New Caledonia, Mont Panie. But for hikers of all levels, the mountainous village of Sarramea is the place to go and submerge yourself in the island's greenery.

Ile des Pins

'The closest island to paradise', is what the Ile des Pins (Isle of Pines) has been labelled by both locals and visitors. And rightly so. New Caledonia's southernmost island is an absolute gem – and it's only a 20-minute flight from Nouméa. Picture salt-white sand sprinkled around a coast bordered by clear turquoise water and palm trees. Oro, Kanumera, Kuto and Upi Bays more than live up to this image. They're all beautiful places to take a dip or let the soft sand filter through your fingers as you soak up the warm beating sun.

A pleasant walk down along the sandy river from Oro Bay at low-tide will take you to one of the island's most sought after spots: a beautiful natural saltwater swimming pool. An idyllic spot to bathe in nature's handiwork. Plus bring your snorkel. The abundance of brightly-coloured tropical fish will blow you away!

While you're visiting the Ile des Pins, be sure to hike up N'ga Peak, the highest point of the island. This stunning view is the perfect backdrop for taking romantic photos to frame back home – or to make your followers jealous on Instagram.

While it is possible to make day trips across to the Ile des Pins, it is well worth staying for at least a couple of nights to soak up the island's majesty.



HÔTEL MÉRIDIDIEN, ILE DES PINS © S. ROBERT / NCTPS



The Loyalty Islands

The Loyalty Islands are for travelling couples who want to experience paradise and true traditional Melanesian culture, beyond life's creature comforts. These islands are immensely beautiful and pristine, with each offering their own unique spin on paradise.

Lifou

The largest of the Loyalty Islands is home to glowing white sands, sparkling blue lagoons, vibrant coral cliffs, limestone caves, and rich forestry – Lifou has all the ingredients for a romantic adventure. Embrace the local culture and go on a guided tour led by people who have lived off and loved the land for countless generations.

Mare

The easternmost island of the bunch is the tallest and perhaps the most pristine – which is by no means an easy title to claim. Lush forest covers the land and steep cliffs rise above. The beaches of Mare are stunning. Like the other Loyalty Islands, snorkelling should be mandatory, or at least a swim in the lagoon. Warrior's Leap, towering 30 metres above sea level, is a must-see cliff with a must-hear legendary tale. The natural aquarium is another sight to behold and experience, with crystal clear water trapped among tropical forest.

Ouvea

A World Heritage site, Ouvea is a truly remarkable atoll surrounded by an assortment of reefs and islets that are considered paradise for divers. The island is just 35 kilometres in length and 40 metres wide, meaning it's easy for couples to experience all it has to offer – and it's just a short flight away from Nouméa. Lay down on 25 kilometres of immaculate white sand at Fayaoue Beach. Strap on a snorkel and watch tropical fish glide past your very eyes. But don't forget to visit Hanawa Blue Hole, a large dent in the atoll filled with seawater and is completely surrounded by rainforest.



PLACES TO STAY

Le Méridien Noumea Resort and Spa

Located in the south of New Caledonia's capital, Le Méridien Nouméa Resort overlooks the waters of Anse Vata Beach. But is just 10 minutes away from the city centre. It's a great place to unwind – think spa treatments and laying poolside. If it's water adventures you and your partner seek, then head to the beach (right on your doorstep) and dive into some kayaking, paddle boarding or snorkelling.

A beautiful setting to tie the knot, Le Méridien Nouméa offers an array of wedding venues and exceptional catering to match. La Chapelle is a unique beachside building that accommodates 40 guests. There's Salon Laperhouse, for couples wanting a large ceremony, which holds up to 250 guests and has a dancefloor illuminated by windows like walls. Alternatively, you could get married under the setting South Pacific sun at Le Faré, a beachfront restaurant that accommodates up to 100 guests.

Chateau Royal Beach Resort & Spa

Chateau Royal Beach Resort & Spa, an apartment-style beachfront resort, is caught between tropical gardens and the stunning Anse Vata Bay. From excellent restaurants and dining to the blissful Aqua Royal Spa – home to the indoor Aquatonic pool – this four-star resort provides a luxurious romantic getaway. Which is why so many couples choose to get married here. Breath-taking views of the lagoon with multiple customisable wedding options are available, to cater to your every desire.

Ramada Plaza Noumea

Conveniently located near the city centre and with Anse Vata Beach just a short walk away, Ramada Plaza Nouméa is an excellent spot for

your romantic New Caledonian getaway. It provides fully equipped apartments, perfect for unwinding, and a fun sports bar that organises many events and concerts all year round.

A 360-degree rotating restaurant offers amazing views of the Hippodrome Henry Millard horse racing track down below and the surrounding city skyline, lush green mountains and vast blue. The food is also exquisite, meaning couples can absorb both the sights and cuisine of Noumea without leaving your table.



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Sheraton New Caledonia Deva Spa & Golf Resort

A two hour drive north of Nouméa, inside the Deva Domain, is where you will find the hidden gem that is Sheraton New Caledonia Deva Spa & Golf Resort. Nestled within an 8000-hectare regional park (with 13 kilometres of pristine white sand) the resort fits into the natural environment as if a part of it.

The resort has 180 rooms and three restaurants. Couples can enjoy a leisurely game of golf on Sheraton Deva's 18-hole course followed by a dip in the pool or beach. Or to the bush you can go, where there are hiking and biking trails aplenty.

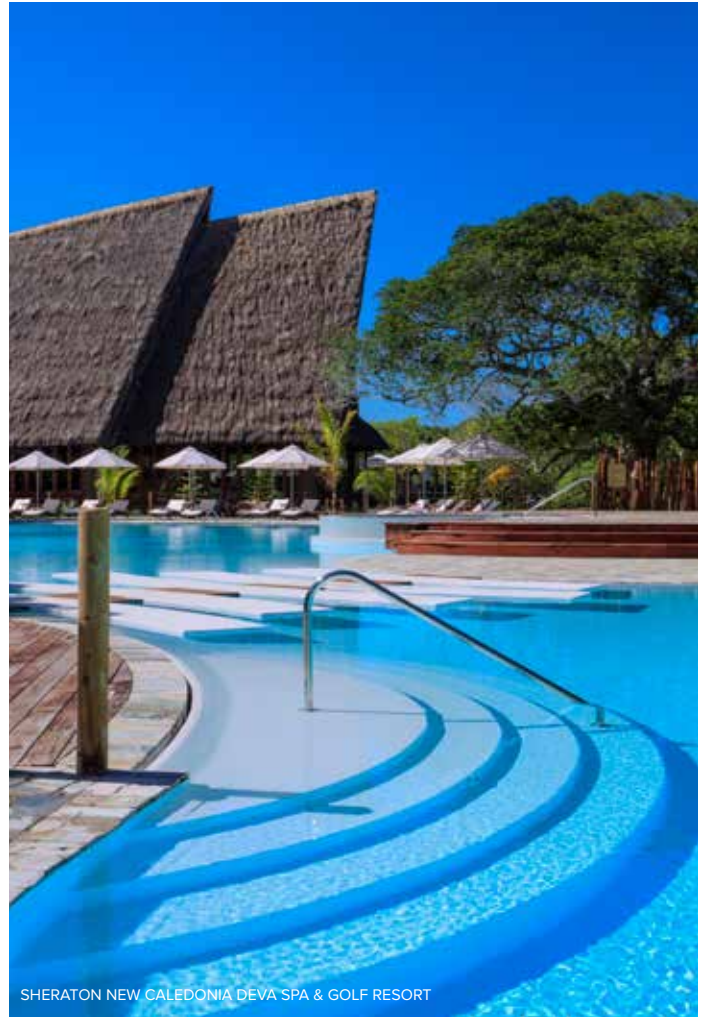
Couples to be can choose from one of three wedding ceremony locations: outdoor terrace, poolside, or resort gardens. Honeymooners are in good hands too, with the resort providing an idyllic backdrop for celebrating love.

Le Méridien Ile des Pins

Le Méridien Ile des Pins (Isle of Pins) is a slice of paradise that sits in Oro Bay – just a short drive east of the island's airport. Imagine swaying coconut trees, towering pines, snow-white sands and sparkling water. The resort has 48 luxurious rooms and suites on offer, a lagoon-styled pool, and two restaurants to dine at; each showcasing views of the bay. There are many sights to explore just outside Le Méridien, so grab a complimentary bike and find hidden treasures of the island. The Oro Bay lagoon is of course one of the main attractions, where visitors can bathe in and soak up the sun. Couples can also make the most of the canoes, paddle boards, pedal boats and snorkelling gear available.

L'Escapade Island Resort

On the small island of Maitre, just a 20-minute boat ride from Noumea's Anse Vata, L'Escapade Island Resort offers the ultimate in peace and tranquility. The garden and beach bungalows sit amongst lush greenery. But the resort's most prized accommodation is its over-water bungalows, atop the crystal-clear lagoon. The sun sets are to die for! 🌸



REAL LIFE WEDDINGS

George and Frances Quirke

Escapade Island Resort, L'Ilot Maître & Hilton Noumea La Promenade Residences, Noumea

What did you love most about getting married in New Caledonia?

There were a lot of things we loved, but number one was the relaxed nature of having an island wedding. We were in holiday mode from the minute we landed – it was so nice to leave the daily grind behind!

What were some of the advantages of getting married here?

New Caledonia is a unique destination. We loved experiencing the mix of French and Kanak cultures. We found the people warm and welcoming. The island's reputation for fabulous food and drink was spot on! (We had some unbelievable meals.) The beaches are excellent. We enjoyed some great walks and soaked up some of the island's fascinating history too.

How many guests did you have?

It was just us!

Did your resort provide you with a wedding planner?

Julie Cassin and Eva Miranda from GLP Hotels (Escapade Island Resort and Hilton Noumea) were superb organisers, and we wouldn't hesitate to recommend them. They were in regular contact and personalised our experience to a tee.

Did you stay in New Caledonia for your honeymoon?

Yes, our wedding ceremony was at Escapade Island Resort on L'Ilot Maître (20-minutes boat ride from Noumea), then we went back to the mainland – staying at Hilton Noumea. This was an excellent mix of quiet and luxurious, then a bit more lively back in Noumea and easy access to plenty of activities.

What were some of the special touches?

The stunning views we soaked up and being steps from New Caledonia's beautiful beaches.

What was the most romantic moment during your stay?

The sunset over the ocean horizon from the balcony of our overwater bungalow was magical.

Looking back, was there anything you would do differently?

I really can't think of anything. It was a dream come true.



