

Pacific Romance

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



COOK ISLANDS

Tying the knot



The legal requirements of getting married in the Cook Islands are straightforward, but there are a few things that Kiwis should note:

- If a bride or groom is under the age of 21 they will need written parental consent.
- An application for a marriage licence must be made in person to the Registrar of Marriages at least three working days before the wedding, New Zealanders cannot apply for a licence before they arrive.
- Applicants for a wedding licence must produce a passport, and if divorced, a copy of the Decree Absolute.



Let your
love flow



©ROSS COFFEY

The Cook Islands has long been a favourite for couples in search of romance. The warm tropical sunshine and spectacular natural scenery provide a backdrop that few islands can match. But beyond the jaw-dropping views and silky white sands is a genuine ‘local’ experience that couples can connect with.

The Cook Islands is a destination where visitors holiday alongside locals who go about daily life in their relaxed island way. As opposed to some Pacific destinations, where the wedding experience, honeymoon or romantic getaway centres around the resort or hotel a couple choose to stay. In these places, a couple might never leave the property’s front gate. But in the Cook Islands, things are quite different.

‘The Cooks’ boasts magical resorts, hotels and boutique properties that are perfect for weddings, honeymoon and romantic escapes. But the real charm of the Cook Islands is the ease and enjoyment of sampling local life.

Like strolling down to a beachside café and grabbing a bite to eat. Or pulling up a bar stool chewing the fat with a few characters at a local bar like Trader Jack’s. Or grabbing a scooter and taking a tiki tour – randomly stopping off at secluded beaches, off-beat art galleries or anywhere else that catches the eye. Needless to say, couples will love exploring the islands together.

For the couples getting married, the “big day” will naturally be the highlight of any trip. And just like the Cook Islands vibe, there is

no reason to stress. The island is home to expert event planners, wonderful venues, first-class food and beverage options and exceptional accommodation. Rest assured, a couple are sure to find what they’re looking for.



FIRST STOP RAROTONGA

All international flights to the Cook Islands land in Rarotonga and any couple in search of romance will be spoilt for choice. Rarotonga boasts some seriously stunning escapes. Beautiful beachfront resorts providing every possible convenience, boutique adults-only luxury, self-contained apartment-style accommodation and private guesthouses are all great options and fit most budgets.

Exploring Avarua is a must. If you’re travelling by car or scooter, simply find a park in the middle of town (there are plenty to choose from) and go for a wander – everything is within easy walking distance. There are enough shops for those wanting some retail therapy – keep an eye out for the famous black pearls from the smaller islands of Manihiki and Penrhyn. There are also plenty of cafés and restaurants to tempt the tastebuds.

The coastal road that circles the island is only 32 kilometres long, so even with a 50 kilometre per hour speed limit, you’ll do the circuit in under an hour. Not that you’ll ever get around that quickly – there is too much to stop and see along the way!

Dotted all around the island are a variety of cafés, restaurants, bars and shops. When you feel the need, simply pull over and stop for a bite, beverage or browse. Keep a lookout for Charlie’s Café, which is set up in an old shipping container and pop into The Moorings Café, which has a reputation for making the Cook Island’s most delicious sandwiches! And if you feel like a dip, simply stop at any number of beaches – chances are you’ll have it to yourselves.



Look for this symbol...

The Cook Islands Tourism Accreditation Scheme is designed to set minimum standards. Whenever you see this logo, you can be sure that the business establishment meets requirements to ensure good service, good facilities, safe practices, and of course friendly Cook Islands hospitality.

We highly recommend you use the services of our many Accredited businesses:

1AAA Taxis
21.3 Vaiana's Bistro and Bar
Adventure Hire Cook Islands
Air New Zealand
Air Rarotonga
Aitutaki Escape
Aitutaki Lagoon Resort
Aitutaki Village
Akura Fishing Charters
Anchor Sands
Anchor's Aweigh
Anchor's Rest
Antipodes Restaurant
Aqua Café
Arcadia Retreat Rarotonga
Aretai Beach Villas
Ariki Adventures
Ariki Holidays
Aro'a Beachside Inn
Aroa Beachfront House
Aroa Kainga Bungalows
Arorangi Beachfront Bungalow
Avana Waterfront Apartments
Avis Cook Islands
Bank of South Pacific
Bella Beach Bungalows
Bergman & Sons
Betela Beach House
Black Rock Villas
Blue Lagoon Villas
Blue Water Tours
Captain Tama's Lagoon Cruises
Casa Del Sol
Castaway Resort
Charlotte Pihō Weddings
Clear Water Lagoon View Villas
Club Raro Resort
Coast House Studio
Coconut Tours
Cook Islands Canoeing Association
Cook Islands Holiday Villas
Cook Islands Sun
Cook Islands Tours
Cooks Bus Passenger Transport
Coral Sands Apartments
Crown Beach Resort & Spa
Crusoe's Restaurant

Crystal Blue Lagoon Villas
Destination Management Cook Islands
Dive Rarotonga
Dorothy's Muri Beach Bungalows
Dorothy's Taxi Service
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Escape Magazine
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Island Discovery Tours
Island Harmony Cottage
Island Hopper Vacations
Jetsave Travel
JJ's Retreat
Kaireva Beach House
Kia Orana Villas
Kikau Hut Restaurant
KiteSUP
Koka Lagoon Cruises
Lagoon Breeze Villas
Little Polynesian Resort
Magic Reef Bungalows
Makayla Palms
Mai's Bar
Mama Tara's
Manea on Muri
Manuia Beach Resort
Marlin Queen Fishing Charters
Matriki Beach Huts
Moana Cook Islands Adventures
Moana Sands Group
Motu2Motu
Muri Beach Club Hotel
Muri Beach Cottages
Muri Beach Haven Holiday House

Muri Beach Resort
Muri Beach Villa
Muri Beachcomber
Muri Hillside Guest Houses
Muri Lagoon View Bungalows
Muri Lagoon Villas
Muri Lodges
Muri Vista Villas
Nautilus Resort
Nirvana Cottage
Ocean Spray Villas
OTB On the Beach Restaurant
Pacific Cars
Pacific Resort Aitutaki
Pacific Resort Rarotonga
Palm Grove Resort
Paradise Holiday Homes
Polynesian Rental Cars & Bikes
Price Taxis
Punare Cultural Tours
Raela Villas
Raina Beach Apartments
Rapae Bay Restaurant
Raro Cars
Raro Reef Sub
Raro Safari Tours
Raro Tours
Rarotonga Babysitting Services
Rarotonga Beach Bungalows
Rarotonga Brewery
Rarotonga Daydreamer Resort
Rarotonga Rentals
Rehab Nightclub
Rehab Pub Crawl
Rendezvous Villas
Rito Cook Islands
Rongohiva Watersports
Royale Takitumu
Ru's Lagoon Cruise
Rumours Luxury Villa's & Spa
Sails Restaurant
Sanctuary Rarotonga
Sands Villas
Sea Change Villas
Seaside Beachfront Villas
Seaspray Beach Villa
Serenity Villas

Shipwreck Hut
Snorkel Cook Islands
South Pacific Publishing
Spaghetti House
Storytellers Eco Cycle Tours
Sunhaven Beach Bungalows
Sunset Quay
Sunshine Cultural Activities
Tamanu Beach Resort
Te Manava Luxury Villas & Spa
Te Puka Estate
Te Vakarua Villas
Te Vara Nui
The Anchorage Restaurant & Bar
The Black Pearl at Puakura
The Bond Store
The Cooks Oasis Holiday Villas
The Dive & Surf Shop
The Dive Centre
The Edgewater Resort & Spa
The Islander Hotel
The Lazy Trout Café
The Lucky Rooster Café
The Mooring Fish Café
The Palms Holiday House
The Rarotongan Beach Resort
The Sunset Resort
The Vaka Cruise
The Yellow Hibiscus Restaurant & Bar
Tik-e Tours
Tivaevae Collectables
Tropical Sands
Tuoro Holiday Villas
Tumunu Restaurant & Bar
Turama Photography
Turangi Lagoon Villas
Vai Villas
Vaikoi Ltd
Vaima Lagoon View Holiday House
Vaima Restaurant
Vibe Café
Wahoo Fishing Charters
Wed Bliss Rarotonga
Weddings Cook Islands
Wellesley Hotel
Whitehouse Apartments

CAPTAIN TAMA'S LAGOON CRUIZES

For a classic Cook Island experience, hop on Captain Tama's award-winning cruise around Muri Lagoon. Spy the tropical fish and their homes through the glass-bottom boat and dive off to get up close and personal with them. The captain has you covered for snorkels, life jackets and other gear, even a fresh fish BBQ lunch! You will only need to bring sunscreen, towels, togs and a camera. The crew will have you entertained with hilarious island stories and demonstrations throughout the cruise.



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NOTE: ALL VISITORS ARE REQUIRED TO WEAR BIKE HELMETS WHEN RIDING A SCOOTER.



PUNANGA NUI MARKETS ©CRAIG OWEN

Special moments shouldn't cost the earth.

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- Dream honeymoon bonus
- Group rates for family and friends
- Stunning ocean front setting
- Genuine Cook Islands hospitality



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GETTING ABOUT

In terms of transport, scooters are the most popular choice of traveller transport, but couples can also opt for a rental car. There are numerous rental car companies on the island. Or you can travel 'local' by jumping on the public buses that circle the island. Either way, you'll have the freedom to explore.

MARKET TIME

Muri Village has an excellent choice of cafés and restaurants, as well as the Muri Night Market. Held every Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday from 5 pm, it's a pleasant way for everyone to spend a few hours tasting local food from one of the stalls, enjoying some free entertainment and local dancing.

For another option, check out the Punanga Nui market in Avarua. Every Saturday it comes alive with an array of stalls offering fresh local produce, street food, coconuts and arts and crafts to take home as souvenirs of your romantic holiday. Open from 6 am to midday, this is a social occasion in the Cook Islands not to be missed, with performances by local bands and cultural groups and a chance to hang out with the locals.



9 VILLAS
TO
CHOOSE
FROM



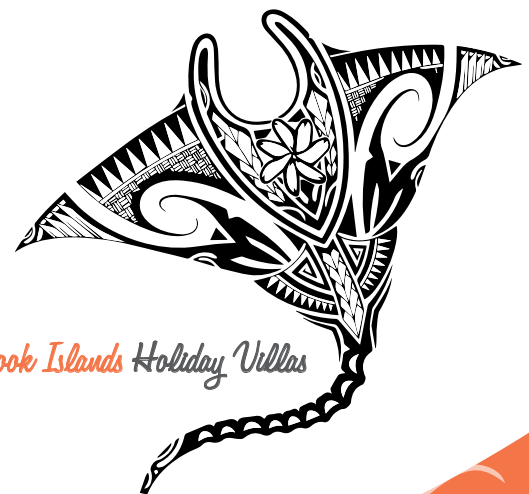
Cook Islands Holiday Villas

The home of Romance

Aere maru... in Cook Islands Maori means to 'take it easy' and that is exactly how we want visiting families to feel when they stay in any one of our well-appointed and comfortable villas, complete with a BBQ on the deck.

We have a total of nine villas scattered around the main island of Rarotonga, both on the Eastern and Western sides of the island. So you can enjoy either a sunrise or moon-rise (if you're lucky enough to be here during a full moon), or a sunset from our beautiful beaches.

With nine villas to choose from, including extra spacious 4 and 5-bedroom layouts, couples will find the perfect place to elope, get married or enjoy their honeymoon. Our villas offer ample room for families and friends to celebrate the special occasion alongside them.



Cook Islands Holiday Villas

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MARINE RESERVE, PACIFIC RESORT RAROTONGA ©DAVIDKIRKLANDPHOTOGRAPHY

PLACES TO STAY

Pacific Resort Rarotonga

Rarotonga's southern coast is home to some of the island's best beaches, in particular, the stretch of white sand along Muri Lagoon. Here you'll find Pacific Resort Rarotonga, a long-time favourite at the luxury end of the market. This full-service resort is home to 64 studio rooms, suites and two and three-bedroom villas. For couples who want to say 'I do' – there is a range of wedding ceremony experiences to choose from. On top of that, there are a wide variety of additional ceremony and reception options offering everything from string bands to vaka lagoon rides with a warrior to fire dancers. Regardless of your taste, Pacific Resort Rarotonga will make your dream come true.

Nautilus Resort Rarotonga

Another magnificent property on the Muri beachfront, Nautilus Resort Rarotonga ranks as one the island's best. This luxury resort has 17 premium villas, each with a saltwater plunge pool, large outdoor furnished deck with undercover gazebo and a private open-air outdoor shower and courtyard. The spacious villas have been designed to reflect

the tropical island location and climate. Each room has a well-equipped mini-kitchenette, and the bathroom includes a limestone bath.

The resort has on-site wedding and event planners who offer specially designed menus, a variety of entertainment and all the special touches and attention your special occasion deserves. Couples can choose from various reception venue options including a poolside or beachfront marquee, resort restaurant or private dining room overlooking the lagoon.

The resort can cater for up to 150 guests for a seated dinner or 300 for a cocktail party. Get married on the beach or travel across the lagoon to an uninhabited tropical island to celebrate in seclusion.

Muri Beach Resort

The sister resort of Nautilus, Muri Beach Resort shares the same prime beachfront location and high standard of service, but with a different style of accommodation. Here it's all about functional self-contained units and apartments. This makes it the perfect place for wedding couples to host a group of family and friends. And of course, all the details are taken care of by a personal on-site wedding coordinator.

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discover the romance of the Cook Islands



the
edgewater
— RESORT & SPA —
RAROTONGA

Dreaming of a romantic island wedding with friendly Polynesian hospitality and the sweet smell of frangipani in the air? Say 'I do' at one of the most romantic places on earth. With a range of superb accommodation options and great wedding packages to suit all budgets, The Edgewater Resort & Spa is the perfect place to celebrate your romantic destination wedding - from intimate ceremonies with close family and friends to large scale events and lively receptions. Whatever you're looking for, Edgewater's team of event planners will ensure your Cook Islands wedding is enjoyable and stress-free.

THE TIPANI WEDDING PACKAGE - FROM NZD\$1699

* **FREE Tipani Wedding Package**

If your guests book 35 paid room nights in any room categories and receive our Tipani Wedding Package FREE

* **50% off Tipani Wedding Package**

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- Services of a Celebrant or Minister
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- Decorated Beachside Ceremonial Archway
- Complimentary Bottle of Bubbly to Celebrate
- Wedding Gift from The Edgewater

RECEPTION:

- Mouth-watering Island BBQ Buffet Menu for 30 close family and friends
- 3-Hour Beverage Package for 30 close family and friends
- One-tier Wedding Cake
- Fully Decorated Wedding Reception Venue

BRIDE & GROOM'S ACCOMMODATION:

- 5 Nights in a Beachfront Deluxe Suite @ The Edgewater Resort & Spa
- Return airport-resort transfers for the Bride & Groom
- A His & Hers 30min Aromatherapy Massage or a Picnic Hamper for two (your choice)



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www.edgewater.co.ck

Crystal Blue Lagoon Villas

Enjoy one of just four spacious, two-storey, two-bedroom villas with sweeping lagoon views, wrapped around a deluxe infinity pool. Each villa is equipped with a modern kitchen, stylish living and dining area, and a private outdoor dining space.

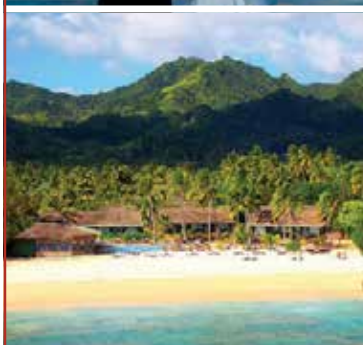
Swim in the infinity pool with its panoramic lagoon views, and relax in the daybeds and sun loungers. Make the most of your private beach access for strolls under the stars and soak in the sheltered jacuzzi. This indulgent, private space is perfect for a carefree couple escape. Crystal Blue Lagoon Villas also offers an idyllic romantic setting for a stylish private wedding or a fully catered event with family and friends.

Rumours Luxury Villas & Spa

Absolute beachfront luxury. Tranquil island vibe. That, in a nutshell, is the wonderful Cook Island experience guests enjoy at Rumours Luxury Villas and Spa. The property has just seven villas – each one is spacious, stylish and comes complete with a private courtyard and swimming pool. Swim in the sea or swim at home – the choice is yours.

The villas are also self-contained with a full kitchen at your disposal. If guest would prefer someone else do the cooking (who can blame them), dinner can be prepared on-site by a private chef. The other option is taking a stroll to one of many eateries around Muri.

Feel like a little pampering? Rumours Waterfall Spa is a multiple award winner with first-class, professional therapists. Their mission – to give guests a new dimension of relaxation and rejuvenation to their tropical island holiday in Rarotonga! The extensive menu has all sorts of lovely treatments to choose from – facials, Polynesian body masks, sugar and salt scrubs, massages, manicures, pedicures and a vichy shower!



*Experience the magic of Manuia
... in a truly romantic beachside location*

From quality accommodation – each room with an outdoor shower – to superb island cuisine in our ‘toes-in-the-sand’ restaurant, with cocktails on the beach at sunset... the holiday of your dreams is waiting for you here.

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Te Vakaroa Villas

The award-winning Te Vakaroa Villas has long set the standard for boutique properties in the Cook Islands. Sitting on a prime, absolute beachfront location on Muri Lagoon, Te Vakaroa has six luxury villas and a no children under 12 policy that ensures the kind of peace and quiet that romantic couples appreciate so much. For small wedding groups, there's also the option of securing exclusive use of the entire property for a private ceremony and reception.

Sands Villas

For small wedding groups, Sands Villas offers the chance to take over an entire property! Its three private three-bedroom villas overlook the lush gardens and the glorious Titikaveka Beach. Together the three villas can sleep up to 18 people. Plus a couple and their wedding party enjoy all the benefits that come with self-contained accommodation. Although this is very much an independent style wedding option, the property can provide a planner to assist with the occasion.

Palm Grove Resort

Set in Vaimaanga on the stunning Southern coast, the small and friendly Palm Grove offers 22 self-contained bungalows – 13 set in the hibiscus-filled gardens, and nine on the secluded beachfront. Relax in the swimming pool and beach followed by a meal at the Yellow Hibiscus Restaurant which offers open-air dining, serving quality Pacific fare and with live music, three nights a week. Palm Grove provides wedding planning through an on-site wedding coordinator who will take care of your reception, flowers, photography, videography, and music. There are several wedding packages to choose – from intimate weddings for two to a special day with friends and family, and you can choose from a beach or garden ceremony.



Welcome to Palm Grove, your private piece of paradise!



Beachfront and garden bungalows
Onsite restaurant and bar
Personal wedding co-ordinator
Rarotonga's quiet southern coast



Palm Grove
R A R O T O N G A

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SOAK UP RAROTONGA WITH MOANA SANDS

One stunning stretch of coastline. Three perfect places to stay.



Moana Sands Beachfront Hotel - Titikaveka Beach

Overlooking the clear blue waters of Titikaveka Beach, this absolute beachfront boutique hotel is home to just 17 rooms – simply sit back, relax, soak up the sun and some genuine Cooks hospitality.



Moana Sands Beachfront Villas - Vaimaanga Beach

Sitting on secluded Vaimaanga Beach, here there is something for everyone. Spacious 2-bedroom villas are perfect for families, while couples can enjoy the privacy of the studio apartments.



Moana Sands Lagoon Resort - Muri Lagoon

An adults-only oasis on Muri Lagoon, this resort boasts two levels of deluxe lagoon studios, a spectacular swimming pool, sun lounging deck and the contemporary and stylish Laguna restaurant and bar.



MOANA SANDS
BEACHFRONT HOTEL



MOANA SANDS
BEACHFRONT VILLAS



MOANA SANDS
LAGOON RESORT

www.moanasands.co.ck

PACIFIC RESORT HOTEL GROUP • COOK ISLANDS

Partner to Pacific Resort Hotel Group – Cook Islands

Moana Sands Hotel and Villas

Moana Sands Hotel and Villas is another fine wedding friendly resort, boasting yet another prime beachfront location – a common theme in the Cook Islands. Its white sand, blue lagoon combination is what dreams are made of. And importantly, they have a highly professional wedding management team who make the entire process as stress-free as possible. From the first email right through to the post-wedding follow-up, they'll provide an open line of communication, ensuring every little detail is right.

Rarotongan Beach Resort & Lagoonarium

On the Southwest Coast on Aroa Lagoon marine sanctuary, The Rarotongan Beach Resort and Lagoonarium is the perfect spot to enjoy the white sand beach and clear blue waters. With multiple accommodation options for couples, extended family and friends, this is a great resort to accommodate an island wedding. You'll be spoilt for choice with places to hold your special day including the Blue Lagoon Marquee and Treetops Verandah Room. You can even book the Latitude 21-30 private nightclub so you can keep the party going long into the night! There are resort experiences to suit all guests, including snorkelling, fish-feeding, stand-up paddleboarding, kayaking, tennis and night snorkelling tours.

Manuia Beach Resort

Manuia Beach Resort is yet another southern coast resort. The beautiful adults-only boutique resort sits on a private piece of Rarotongan paradise. Being a smaller resort, the vibe is very chilled, i.e. the ideal spot for a stress-free wedding. There is an experienced wedding planning team on hand to organise your wedding under a floral archway by the sparkling water's edge. A romantic sunset service on the beach is a romantic favourite. And of course, this will be followed by a delicious meal, drinks, music and dancing till the early hours. A number of set packages are available. However, every wedding can be tailored to suit. Heaven!



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Your Romantic Dream Getaway Awaits!

- Absolute Muri Beachfront
- ★
- Stunning Lagoon Views
- ★
- 4 Luxurious Villas
- ★
- Restaurants & Cafes close by
- ★
- Infinity Pool & Jacuzzi
- ★
- Kayaks & snorkelling gear
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- Popular Tourist Activities nearby
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PACIFIC RESORT RAROTONGA @TURAMAPHOTOGRAPHY



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Crown Beach Resort & Spa

With 5 acres of lush tropical gardens on Rarotonga’s romantic ‘sunset coast’, Crown Beach Resort offers a spectacular wedding location. Fringed by an exclusive 100m picture-perfect white sandy beach on the edge of Rarotonga’s pristine lagoon, couples can exchange vows against a backdrop of the Pacific Ocean. This dream scenario is assured by the resort’s wedding planning experts who can create a fully customised event, or put together a special occasion from one of many set wedding packages.

The Edgewater Resort & Spa

Very few Cook Islands resorts can match the experience and professionalism of the Edgewater Resort & Spa’s wedding team. Being one of the islands large resorts they’re well-practised in making this special time as enjoyable and stress-free as possible. Taking all the headaches away and leaving couples to enjoy their special moment.

The resort offers three wedding packages – ‘Tipani’ is simple and intimate, while ‘Jasmine’ adds extra inclusions such as a string band, canapés, sunset cocktails and photography packages. Plus the resort has an all-inclusive Group Wedding package that covers a beautiful ceremony, a reception for up to 30 people and the bride and groom’s accommodation.

Club Raro Resort

If tying the knot has to come with a tighter budget, Club Raro Resort is an excellent option. The lagoon front property has a wonderfully laid back atmosphere, and the resort team are experts at personalising a wedding day to suit any couple’s requirements. They offer affordable

group rates and have a simple, elegant wedding package that will ensure a memorable occasion.

Ikurangi Eco Retreat

South Pacific weddings don’t have to be all glitz and glamour. At Ikurangi Eco Retreat, couples can wed in the peace and tranquillity of lush tropical gardens – with an eco-conscious edge. The resort can arrange a wedding planner to make sure all the wedding details are put in place. And what better place to stay after the special day, than in one of Ikurangi’s luxury safari tents that come complete with super king-sized beds, private outdoor showers, luxury waffle robes and daily tropical breakfasts.

Cook Islands Holiday Villas

Cook Islands Holiday Villas are located at four prime spots around the island, ideal for couples and groups who want the convenience of resort-style accommodation with the added privacy of having your own place. Stay in one of four Tuoro Holiday Villas, situated in Arorangi village, and enjoy the spacious indoor-outdoor flow and shared swimming pool – perfect for large groups, as they can each house up to eight people.

Alternatively, Turangi Holiday Villas can comfortably hold up to a whopping 16 people and is located in Turangi village looking out to the sea.

Want direct access to Rarotonga’s best lagoons? Muri Lagoon Villa only has two bedrooms but offers the peace and comfort that comes with staying in a private beachfront property. The view of the vibrant turquoise lagoon from your deck is tantalising. The Blue Lagoon Five-Bedroom Villa will feel like your home away from home – it has everything you need for a memorable Raro retreat.



ISLAND LOVE STORY



EMBRACE THE ROMANCE AND BEAUTY OF A DESTINATION WEDDING IN THE COOK ISLANDS

Nautilus Resort is the luxury eco oasis nestled on absolute pristine beachfront overlooking the famed Muri Lagoon. Choose from a tropical gardens ceremony, stunning infinity pool, on the beach or your own private island for the moment you say "I Do".

Nautilus onsite Wedding Coordinators ensure every detail is taken care of to create the wedding of your dreams. Our award-winning restaurant and event planners will ensure your custom menu and dining experience exceeds your expectations.

For a celebration from 2 to 180 guests, your complete wedding and honeymoon experience can become a dream come true.

Retreat to your 1, 2 or 3 bedroom sustainably built and Polynesian-inspired Luxury Are'. All with private salt-water plunge pools. Be pampered in the Thalgo spa or with couples massage in the privacy of your own Are'.

Nautilus Resort sets the benchmark for sustainable, design-led authentic island luxury.

This is everything you have been dreaming of for your South Pacific Island Wedding.



NAUTILUS *Resort*

MURI BEACH • COOK ISLANDS

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nautilusresortrarotonga.com



AITUTAKI – HEAVEN

In the Cook Islands, couples get the best of both worlds. Step off the plane in Rarotonga, and you're in wedding heaven. We're talking about a beautiful mountain backdrop, stunning coastline and any number of properties that are well versed in weddings. But if Rarotonga is the first stop for weddings, Aitutaki is next stop for honeymoons.

Under 60 minutes' flight time from Rarotonga, Aitutaki is home to around 2000 permanent residents and a world-famous coral lagoon. If you want

peace in paradise, this is pretty much it. As you'd expect, snorkelling and boat trips exploring the lagoon are a must-do for romance seekers, and there are some other interesting sights on land, including local marae and some fascinating coral-walled churches.

Having said that, the best thing about Aitutaki is being able to do absolutely nothing. Sleep in, swim, snooze in the afternoon, kick back with a cocktail, on Aitutaki; there is no rush.

This is a place to relax and enjoy each other's company, which is just what this remarkable part of the world was created for.



ONE FOOT ISLAND, AITUTAKI @DAVIDKIRKLANDPHOTOGRAPHY

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The Rarotonga Beach Resort & Lagoonarium

Dreamy destination

It's no wonder The Rarotongan Beach Resort & Lagoonarium is a longtime favourite with bridal couples. It's set right on one of the island's best white sandy beaches beside sparkling Lagoon of Love, Aroa Lagoon. And being on the southwest coast, it's perfect for sunset wedding shots.

The Rarotongan's bestseller is their stunning Seventh Heaven All-Inclusive Wedding Package which includes the couple's beach wedding ceremony (with Plan B options) + wedding reception venue + Island BBQ buffet dinner for 30 people + \$1000 bar tab + wedding cake + after-party private nightclub + 5 nights in a Beachfront Suite for the bride & groom at adjacent boutique sister property, Sanctuary Rarotonga-on the beach (Adults Only). All this for only NZ\$7999 (commissionable to agents). The couple can add up to 70 extra guests if desired.

Bridal couples love The Rarotongan's exclusive soundproof private nightclub, Latitude 21-30, with its private bar, air-con and sound system. Latitude makes it possible for wedding after-parties to continue well beyond the 10pm noise curfew through to midnight.

Renowned as the island's most family-friendly beach resort, The Rarotongan offers KIDS STAY & PLAY FREE (to age 11) plus TEENS STAY & PLAY FREE (age 12-16 years). Their Moko Kids Club is a magnet for kids aged 4-11 years (under 4s can play free when under parental supervision). The FREE Moko Kids Club and Teen Zone are open year-round, Mon-Sat, 9am-12noon, 2-5pm & 7-9pm. The Rarotongan's Beachside Rooms and newly-renovated Beachfront Rooms are both available as interconnected guaranteed at time



of booking. For families with 3 children, the resort's Deluxe Beachside/ Beachfront Suites can accommodate 2A+2C+1 infant in a cot. All Rarotongan Resort rooms come with a microwave and air-con, and FREE activities include stand-up paddleboarding, kayaking and snorkelling in their sheltered lagoon marine reserve.

Those wedding guests travelling as couples enjoy the option of staying next door at sister resort, Sanctuary Rarotonga-on the beach (Adults Only), which boasts a unique swim-up bar. Sanctuary guests can use all facilities and services at The Rarotongan, such as joining the rest of the party for a cocktail, wine, beer or dinner at The Rarotongan's popular new waterfront extension to Captain Andy's Beach Bar & Grill which enjoys some of the island's best sunset views across Aroa Lagoon. Sanctuary guests can charge back purchases made at The Rarotongan to their room.

For wedding inquiries, email weddings@TheRarotongan.com or call tollfree 0800 727 686



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AITUTAKI LAGOON PRIVATE ISLAND RESORT

ACTIVITIES

Bishops Lagoon Cruise

Discover the eastern side of the Aitutaki Lagoon with Bishops Cruises. See turtles, snorkel the tropical wonderland of Aitutaki, visit the famous Heaven Sand Bar, then cruise your way to the star attraction of the lagoon – One Foot Island (Tapuaetai).

Enjoy a BBQ lunch in the Hideaway Hut and spend the rest of the afternoon relaxing and swimming. Get your passport stamped and send a postcard from the “smallest, uninhabited post office in the world”. Bishop’s Cruises also offer weddings on One Foot Island with a variety of packages to choose from.

Wet & Wild water activities

Wet and Wild offer a smorgasbord of ways to explore Aitutaki Lagoon. Water activities on offer include boat charters, kiteboarding, wakeboarding, tube riding, skiing, fishing, spearfishing, sightseeing, island hopping, snorkelling and whale watching. Take your pick and enjoy the ocean paradise.

Punarei Culture Village

Want to learn about the history and culture of this very special place? Visit Punarei Culture Village, which was built as a replica of traditional village life. Hear the real stories of Aitutaki, learn about the history and language and understand Aitutaki’s unique culture within the Cook Islands. Visit the sacred site ‘Marae Arangi-rea’ that was excavated as research for the cultural village, enjoy a traditional umu lunch together and help Aitutaki’s culture live on.

PLACES TO STAY

Etu Moana

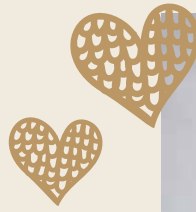
Imagine saying ‘I do’ on a beach created by thousands of years of warm winds and gentle waves. Picture a far away South Pacific island where a couple can immerse themselves in paradise and the purest joy of life. This is the unforgettable experience of getting married at Etu Moana on Aitutaki. The picture postcard, boutique resort has the expertise and passion to arrange everything to make your Cook Islands wedding dream come true. Whatever a couple desire, Etu Moana will create that perfect with a personal touch.

Aitutaki Lagoon Private Island Resort

If you’re after a true bucket list experience, Aitutaki Lagoon Private Island Resort could not be more perfect. It’s the only resort located directly on this spellbinding lagoon; it’s the only private island and the only property with overwater bungalows in the Cook Islands. As a wedding location, it’s hard to imagine anything as pretty as the resort’s palm-fringed champagne sands. All topped off by glorious sunsets over the lagoon. Wedding bliss, honeymoon heaven – a couple wins either way.

Pacific Resort Aitutaki

Very few Cook Islands resorts can match the recognition received by Pacific Resort Aitutaki. Over the years, the resort has picked up a string of international awards – all a reflection of the quality experience on offer. Here honeymooning couples can enjoy a premier stay in spacious beachfront bungalows or gorgeous villas hidden among lush tropical gardens. Indeed, this is a luxury retreat of the highest order. Rooms are finished to a very highest standard and guests enjoy a level of service to match. 🌺



Jesse and Luke Youngman

Pacific Resort Rarotonga

What inspired you to have a Pacific Island wedding?

We loved the idea of a destination wedding where we could celebrate our love with our nearest and dearest, not only on the wedding day itself but on a holiday where we could all make memories together.

What attracted you to the Cook Islands?

We first visited Rarotonga a few years ago on a romantic holiday for my birthday. We immediately fell in love with the amazing tropical scenery, friendly locals and relaxed vibe of the island, and we knew it was the perfect place to begin married life together.

What made you pick the specific resort?

After previously visiting Rarotonga, we wanted to get married on the Muri side of the island. The lagoon is beautiful and so lovely to swim in. We loved the feel of Pacific Resort Rarotonga right on Muri Lagoon – particularly the accommodation, and the beautiful ceremony and reception locations. It's family-friendly too, i.e. ideal for our guests with small children.

How many guests did you have?

33 in total.

What are some of the advantages of tying the knot in Rarotonga?

We were not just celebrating our wedding on the day itself, but we were able to enjoy a holiday with our favourite people and create amazing memories with them across the week. The islands also create the perfect tropical backdrop for any wedding, the scenery is breathtaking.

Did your resort or wedding venue offer a wedding planner?

Veronica, Pacific Resort's Wedding and Event Manager was my prime point of contact prior to arrival in Rarotonga. On arrival I met the wedding coordinator Sunnelia. Honestly, they were amazing! It was so helpful having someone to direct questions to, receive recommendations and customise my wedding to suit our needs. It also made the wedding stress-free!

What's your top tip for an island wedding?

Where possible, choose and support local vendors – they know what works well in the location. For example, our local photographer had shot many weddings at our resort. And embrace the local cuisine – the islands offer so many fresh, flavoursome food options you don't get back home.

What were some of the special 'island' touches?

Our tropical flowers and greenery were absolutely stunning and now hold special meaning to me now we are home. We tried to showcase the amazing fresh seafood including ika mata and prawns on our menu. The resort had a ukulele player serenade me down the aisle, an island maiden dancer followed the ceremony, an island string band entertained guests during cocktail hour and fire dancers followed dinner!



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Special moments made easy

**Trish Tau, Wedding Planner
Rarotonga**

How long have you had this role?

Since 2005.

What lead time do you require to plan a wedding?

Ceremonies can be organised quickly, but the bigger weddings, receptions require a little more time with the booking of suppliers. This is why it's so important to have a trusted network you can call on when needed. Relationships in this business are just as important as the ones in real life.

How many weddings do you organise each month?

It really depends on the year, season, what month couples met and if they have a specific time in the relationship they want to cherish for a lifetime.

What are some of the unique things you can offer?

Definitely our private beach location. Keep it personal and friendly I say.

What are the main benefits of getting married at your resort or destination?

Secluded beach and intimate setting.
Majestic coconut palms.
Rustic and beautiful in an authentic Cook Islands way.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

Everyday can change at the drop of hat, keeps it spicy – who wants boring!

What are Top 3 things a planner needs to find out from a couple?

1. What theme they want to achieve. Being a little island in the Pacific you can't just run down the road and find that little something out of the ordinary as you might be able to in large countries like New Zealand or Australia.
2. Their budget is a great place to start the planning process. This will keep the bride focused once we have created some boundaries.
3. Lastly her colours for flowers and types available, this always tends to be an important one for the brides.

Best advice you would give a couple?

Let a planner do it ... yes it comes at a cost, but at the end of the day why stress yourself out when this is the most important day of your life. Why spend endless nights searching through pages of info when the professionals have a network that is probably the best available.

What is the best time of the year to get married at your resort / destination?

In the Cooks all year round! But if you'd prefer the cooler months July to October.



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Joshua and Ashleigh - Rose Branch

Muri Beach Club Hotel, Rarotonga

What inspired you to have a South Pacific island wedding?

We have always loved Rarotonga. We love being on the beach and have always liked the idea of a relaxing destination wedding – so 'Raro' was perfect for us!

What made you pick that specific island ahead of all the others?

Rarotonga feels like home away from home. It's almost like a little New Zealand in the Pacific, which makes it very easy to settle in and feel comfortable as soon as you step off the plane.

What made you pick your specific resort?

We looked at five resorts before we choose Muri Beach Club Hotel. We were attracted to this resort by the perfect beach, amazing swimming pool and Terina the wedding coordinator.

How many guests did you have?

51 people including us.

What were some of the advantages of getting married in the islands?

Gorgeous, freshly cut tropical flowers. It was excellent value for money – a wedding and holiday in one package. The food was delicious.

Did your resort provide a wedding planner?

Yes, Terina was amazing! She helped in every possible way – from booking accommodation for our guests, to arranging flowers, to last minute bookings of make-up artists 12 hours before the wedding. She not only made our wedding day go by without any issues, but she also made the entire trip run smoothly for us and all our guests.

Did you stay on the same island for your honeymoon? No, we went to Aitutaki for 3 nights after the wedding. So beautiful over there!

If you had a friend planning an island wedding, what would be your top tips?

1. Get a wedding planner on the ground in your destination. They will make your life easy and destress you when needed.
2. Arrive early to your wedding to arrange the last-minute details. Plus, this means extra holiday time for you.



3. Choose your venue wisely. Make sure it caters for all your needs before booking it in.
4. Be open with your communication so you can optimise your wants and needs when over there.
5. It is island time so go with the flow. Something might not work out, but it isn't the end of the world.

What did you love most about getting married in the islands?

Being on the beach and seeing all our friends and family enjoy the sun, fun and cocktails.

How was the dining and catering?

The food was one of the best parts of the wedding. Fresh salads, perfectly cooked meat and enough food to feed an army. Guests were still talking about the food two months later!

