

Pacific Romance

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



VANUATU

VANUATU

A flair for the
dramatic



Tying the knot



Getting married in Vanuatu is a straightforward process. However, it's a process that's best started a few months ahead. First, an Intended Marriage Form needs to be filled out – the resort's wedding coordinator will be able to pass this on to you – and then this form needs to be lodged with the Vanuatu government at least 28 days prior to the wedding day. From there a couple will need to be in Vanuatu at least three working days prior to the wedding.

Plus the following will also need to be provided:

- Birth certificates and valid passports
- Divorce papers (if applicable)
- Death certificate (if a previous spouse has passed away)
- One witness for each person to prove your identity



Vanuatu is home to dramatic landscapes, Instagram-worthy white sand beaches and a welcoming culture where the majority of people live an uncomplicated lifestyle. Its warm climate, stunning natural surrounds, ease of travel and beautiful simplicity provide the perfect location for romantic escapes and weddings.

There's always a sense of anticipation when you start getting closer to your final destination. For couples who have planned a special romantic occasion, those expectations will no doubt be heightened. But as soon as your flight descends into Vanuatu, your mind will be put at ease. Sparkling blue water, white sand coves, lush rainforest and spectacular mountain backdrops. Yes, you're in the right place for romance.

IN AND AROUND PORT VILA

Bauerfield International Airport on the outskirts of Port Vila is the first touchdown for visitors. Home to a beautiful natural harbour, and with stunning views from the surrounding hillsides, Port Vila hums with locals going about their daily business and tourists exploring a fantastic choice of eateries and shopping.

As you'd expect, Port Vila provides romance travellers with Vanuatu's most extensive selection of accommodation and venue options. But even though this is Vanuatu's busiest centre, many of these resorts are tucked away in secluded locations. So the vibe is peaceful, private and relaxed.

The town has plenty of activities to keep a couple occupied (if they so desire). Taking a stroll along the harbour boardwalk is an excellent place to start. During the day, there's a vibrant buzz as visitors and locals soak up the pleasant waterfront setting. The iconic Nambawan Café is a great spot to pop into – grab an outdoor table, a glass of wine, a bite to eat and watch the world go by. Just a few steps down, the Rossi Restaurant offers the same spectacular views and a wide variety of fresh cuisine.

Elsewhere in Port Vila you'll discover a fine selection of Pacific influenced French, Italian and Asian cafés and restaurants. Or you can pop into one of the many waterfront bars to enjoy a delicious cocktail or a glass of wine. Set the evening up by watching the sunset with a quiet pre-dinner drink.

While couples might be tempted to 'stay-put' in Port Vila, that would mean missing some of the hidden gems that make Vanuatu so unique. Our advice would be to hire a car and go exploring!

An hour and a half from Port Vila on the eastern side of Efate Island is the Blue Lagoon, a large swimming hole with a refreshing mix of salty and fresh water. The perfect place for a dip on a hot summer's day, enjoy the surrounding gardens, have a swing on the ropes or make the most of the picnic tables to sample your fresh treats from Mama's Markets.

The Rarru Cascades is another equally picturesque swimming spot to visit. Drive east from Port Vila for about half an hour. When you come to the Rentapao Bridge, you've come to the right place. A tranquil riverside track will take you to the Rarru Falls cascade, with its collection of beautiful green pools. The kind you can't wait to jump into. Speaking of jumping, there are rope swings of varying heights and a couple of high platforms if you'd like an extra adrenalin rush. Other adventurous options around Port Vila include parasailing, zip-lining, kayaking, surfing and jet boating.



SANTO ©VANUATU TOURISM



SANTO ©VANUATU TOURISM



TANNA – SPARKS WILL FLY

While Port Vila and the island of Efate have more than enough to offer in the natural beauty department, couples wanting to go further afield will find a whole new world of activities and sightseeing opportunities. If time allows there are some great places to stay on Tanna. If time isn't on your side, a fly-in fly-out day trip is still worth it.

If you're after real fireworks, the island of Tanna is the place to go. Here visitors can experience all the power of Mt Yasur – Vanuatu's most active volcano. It takes just 45 minutes to hike the mountain on foot, or those wanting a more chilled-out adventure can park their four-wheel-drive just minutes from the crater rim. You'll be rewarded with the spewing of hot magma skyward every few minutes!

If you'd prefer to cool down, try swimming in the spectacular waters of Tanna's Blue Cave. A hole in the roof of the cave lets the sunshine through, turning the water a beautiful iridescent blue. If you have a Go Pro or waterproof phone or camera, make sure it's packed – this is the photo op of a lifetime! There is also more fun outside the caves. Leap off the platforms that are set-up for those who love making a splash!



SANTO – BE SEDUCED

Organising a "two flight wedding" isn't impossible. Still, it does add a level of complexity and cost – with extra flights, accommodation and transport just some of the necessary additions. But for a couple on a honeymoon or romantic getaway, going off the beaten track is very appealing and very straightforward.

This is where Santo comes in! At around 50-minutes flight time from Port Vila, the island of Santo might be a quick hop away – but it feels like another world. If you think that Efate is quiet, which it is, get ready for next-level relaxation!

Diving and snorkelling enthusiasts will find their paradise on Santo. The island's rich World War II history has left a playground of wrecks to explore. Million Dollar Point offers tonnes of dumped surplus army equipment (Jeeps, plane parts) ready for an underwater investigation.

As well as diving, visitors can hike to war remnants, kayak or cycle the coast, explore caves and experience unique vegetation and wildlife. A favourite for visitors is to paddle a traditional outrigger canoe to spectacular blue holes, where they can swing from giant banyan trees into a freshwater spring.

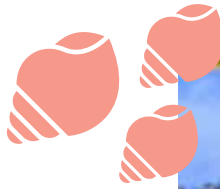
Santo also has arguably Vanuatu's most beautiful beach, aptly named, Champagne Beach. Picture warm, translucent water, powdery white sand and offshore islands in the distance, all surrounded by dark green tropical rainforest. It's magic. And if it were anywhere else in the world, it would be crammed with resorts, shops, cafés, restaurants and thousands of people. But in Santo, the crowd factor is non-existent – except during cruise ship visits – which a couple should plan to avoid anyway.



MT YASUR ©VANUATU TOURISM



PLACES TO STAY



Ramada Resort Port Vila

One of Port Vila's more recent resorts opening, Ramada Resort has plenty to offer romance travellers. Built on the shores of Erakor Lagoon, just a few minutes from downtown Port Vila, the Ramada is home to 80 self-contained apartments, each one with panoramic views. The resort is fully serviced, with an elegant lounge bar to enjoy fantastic views over the lagoon, and a restaurant offering international cuisine influenced by the Pacific.

Active couples will love it here. Enjoy an early evening cocktail in the swim-up pool bar, indulge in spa treatments and swim, kayak, paddleboard and snorkel the turquoise lagoon in front of the resort.

The Ramada has a range of wedding packages and a wedding coordinator to help you plan your day. Although they tailor each wedding to a couple's taste, they do like to tie in aspects of the rich local culture – to make the day extra special. This might be a performance by the Ekasup cultural dancers, a fire show by local boys or a bride entrance in a local canoe with warriors. Now that's a grand way to make an entrance!

Mangoes Resort, Port Vila

Set high above Erakor Lagoon, Mangoes Resort has been a popular couples destination for a good number of years. The attraction is undeniable. With 29 bungalows and panoramic views, the setting is quiet and stunning. The tranquil ambience also comes courtesy of an over 18 years child-free policy!

The in-house dining is also first-class. Mangoes Restaurant and Bar is considered one of the island's best eateries with its palm tree setting and views of the pool and garden, the icing on the cake. Couples can also toast their stay with a delicious tropical cocktail courtesy of Mangoes resident mixologist.

For that special occasion (such as a honeymoon), Mangoes Restaurant can set-up a special candlelit dinner. Set in the privacy of your room, balcony, or one of their special locations around the resort. Whatever the occasion, they will make the evening a memorable one.

Holiday Inn Resort, Port Vila

The Holiday Inn Resort Vanuatu 'Tugeta' Wedding Package includes a warrior escort on a traditionally decorated wedding canoe, a personal wedding coordinator and a minister or celebrant with all the necessary documentation. The happy couple and up to 20 guests can also enjoy an hour of celebratory canapes and drinks as part of the deal. In addition to the wedding package, Holiday Inn offers guests and brides specials at its 'Namele Day Spa' which features indulgent massages in its lagoon-side massage cabana.



RAMADA RESORT PORT VILA



MANGOES RESORT, PORT VILA



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Villa 25, Port Vila

Some of the most beautiful spots are completely hidden from view. As is this case with Dream Cove, a private, gated development tucked away on a picturesque headland just 15 minutes drive from downtown Port Vila. Dream Cove is dotted with a handful of premium beach houses and among them is Villa 25 – an exceptional boutique property that is loved by couples who treasure the peace and quiet of this private paradise.

Although the name suggests just one accommodation option, Villa 25 is in fact, one property with three luxury two-bedroom villas. Although they sit side by side, they have been cleverly staggered so that guests can enjoy their own space.

Being such a small property, there is no commercial kitchen pumping out meals. Instead, guests have a full kitchen in their modern villa – all you need to do is pick up supplies from the local supermarket or open-air produce markets. Or you can have a private chef come in and cook for you – plus they pick up all the ingredients from town.

As a honeymoon spot, Villa 25 is difficult to match. The managers are also experts at creating a small, intimate wedding onsite – which includes premium catering from Port Vila’s best suppliers.

Breakas Beach Resort, Port Vila

For an award-winning adults-only resort try Breakas Beach Resort just 10 minutes from Port Vila on Pango Peninsula. This intimate getaway prides itself on its “feet in the sand” philosophy and offers several packages for exclusive wedding ceremonies on its private beach.

Breakas is also perfect for a couples retreat or honeymoon escape with its 63 beachfront fares offering an attractive alternative to classic hotel accommodation. Relax the afternoon away with a massage at the beachfront spa, followed by a dip in the 22-metre infinity pool which drops away into the ever-changing outlook of the Pacific Ocean.

Then indulge in one of life’s most relaxing romantic activities – dinner served under the stars. Famous for its “La Table sur La Plage”, guests can enjoy the resort’s carefully crafted meals alfresco, while taking in the positive ions of the lapping waves.

Tamanu on the Beach, South Efate

For a hint of the Caribbean in a stunning, secluded hideaway, just 20 minutes drive from downtown Port Vila, there’s Tamanu on the Beach. Home to a picture-postcard stretch of private white sand beach, this is the kind of resort that makes lucky couples feel like they’re a million miles away from anywhere. With sand between the toes and waves on the doorstep, Tamanu is an ideal choice for a romantic getaway or wedding.

Guests can relax in the comfort of one of 15 modern, Caribbean style luxury villas. On top of that, the resort offers Vanuatu’s only purpose-built wedding chapel on the beach. Which means couples have a tough choice – get married on one Vanuatu’s finest white sand beaches, or in a stunning beachfront wedding chapel. Either way, the day will be wonderful.

Le Life Resort, North Efate

Searching for a rustic, low-key resort, far from the maddening crowd? Le Life Resort has all the ingredients for a soul-enriching couple’s experience. Located in the quiet northern side of Efate, Le Life Resort offers a truly sustainable eco-friendly stay. It’s also home to Vanuatu’s only glamping tents – all fully equipped with comfortable timber beds, windows, screens, table, chair and plenty of room to move.

Expansive uninterrupted views of the Pacific Ocean, paired with acres of picturesque tropical gardens, make this a unique wedding destination. The resort has a variety of wedding packages on offer and can co-ordinate all aspects – from the ceremony and reception through to legal requirements. Adventure-loving couples will also be in their element. In the area you can bike ride or walk through the many friendly villages, hike to hidden waterfalls and cascades, discover sea life amongst the colourful reef, and kayak the largest river on the island.



Trees and Fishes Retreat Luxury and Spa, Havannah Harbour

Looking for adventure and excitement, indulgence and relaxation without having to move too far? This unique island retreat, ticks all the boxes. Located in an absolute beachfront position on the serene Havannah Harbour – Trees and Fishes is an easy (and scenic) 30-minute drive from Bauerfield International Airport.

At its heart, lush vegetation enshrouds a collection of open-sided Balinese style huts, sitting amongst informal gardens and white coral paths. The communal area lies alongside the sparkling waters of the

lagoon, and it is here where guests gather to eat, enjoy a delicious cocktail, and share stories around the evening campfire.

Trees and Fishes accommodates a maximum of 20 people, making the resort an ideal spot for a couple wanting peace and privacy. Those in search of island glamour and decadence can stay in one of four suites. Each with a 96 square metre floor area and all featuring outdoor garden baths. They have been specially designed to provide couples with indoor privacy and access to a shared sheltered outdoor courtyard, where a large and inviting swimming pool adorns its centre.



TREES AND FISHES RETREAT LUXURY AND SPA

THE MOMENT
YOU REALISE SHE DIDN'T
SAY CANOODLING

ANSWER
THE CALL OF
Vanuatu

Romance is an adventurous affair when you Answer the call of Vanuatu. Whether you plan to spend your days on the water, in the rainforest or up an active volcano, you'll experience many a moment that will make your heart skip a beat.

Kayaking the Rentapao River

Go explore at vanuatu.travel

The Havannah, Havannah Harbour

The Havannah Resort is another Havannah Harbour resort where couples will feel right at home. Overlooking one of Efate’s most beautiful stretches of sand, the resort offers couples the choice of six Waterfront Villas, 10 Lagoon Pool and Garden Villas, and two Deluxe Waterfront Villas.

This award-winning resort caters for weddings big and small – guests can invite friends and family or enjoy a small, personal ceremony for two. Couples can choose to marry on the beach or in the tropical gardens, and the local villagers will ensure the wedding has traditional Melanesian touches.

The indulgent wedding package includes body treatments, pampering for the bride, champagne for the special moments, wedding bouquets, floral decorations and a three-course dinner for two on the beach. A wedding coordinator and venue set up is also included. 🌸



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Vanuatu is well known as a romantic destination that can offer far more than a fly-and-flop style holiday. And Villa 25 provides the ultimate setting for honeymoons, romantic escapes or an intimate wedding.

Conveniently located 20 minutes drive from the airport and 10 minutes from downtown Port Vila, Villa 25 is the ideal place for couples who seek luxury without the bustle of a busy resort setting.

Set on its own private beach, Villa 25 is home to three graciously appointed two-bedroom, air-conditioned villas - each one designed to maximise views across Mele Bay and ensure privacy at the same time.

Fitted out and decorated to the highest standard, each villa includes a fully equipped kitchen and private covered patio with sun loungers and a dining area. The full kitchen gives couples the option to create their own meals (or even just snacks). It's just a matter of purchasing local produce - be it French cheeses, organic beef, fresh fish or seasonal tropical fruits from the market.

Or for a treat, Villa 25 can arrange for a private chef to prepare gourmet cuisine for you, or organise catering

to be prepared and delivered to your villa. Plus a handy provisioning service is available too.

The poolside lowana (gathering place) is just a few metres from the water's edge overlooking a private sheltered beach. It's the perfect setting for couples to kayak, paddleboard, swim and snorkel amongst coral and tropical fish.

The lowana features a fully equipped kitchen and dining area too - an amazing place to share a romantic meal or enjoy a quiet drink. Particularly as the sun sets over the water.

Should you need any assistance during your stay, Villa 25's manager and staff will be on hand to look after your every need. And they can pass on their local knowledge on everything from supermarkets to scenic flights. They can even organise a massage or beauty treatments in the privacy of your own villa.

If you want to celebrate your love, Villa 25 is the perfect place to relax, unwind and feel the sand between your toes.

villa25.vu

The personal touch

Virginia Shore, Wedding Coordinator
K2 Weddings, Port Vila

How long have you had this role?

Some time! I have been a wedding coordinator in Vanuatu for the last 12 years and previously worked in a similar role back in Australia.

What lead-time do you require to plan a wedding?

I've organised a wedding in less than a week, though I do prefer a little longer lead time if possible!

How many weddings do you organise each month?

It just depends on the time of the year. The busier months are those in the middle of the year, but regardless, I only do one wedding a day – that way I can give every couple my full attention.

What are some of the unique things you can offer?

K2 Weddings is unique in itself, as we have a personalised wedding coordinator and a dedicated Executive Chef. Vanuatu has some amazing wedding locations, and our local knowledge gives us access to some of the most unique spots – such as private villas, waterfall backdrops, pristine beaches and coconut plantations, to name just a few! We cover everything from administration and paperwork, to providing all food and beverage requirements, accommodation requirements, through to planning and coordination of the actual wedding day.

What are some of the ways you personalise a wedding?

Our range of options is vast. From custom dancers and conch shell blowers to school choirs and fire dancers, "old school" buses, mini mokes and horseback options for transport, world-class photographers and many more exciting options on top of that!

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

What they want for their wedding day. What are their expectations of myself and Vanuatu. What the budget is!

Best advice you would give a couple?

Don't stress over the little things – that's what I am here for! It is your day and all about what you want. Relax and enjoy it.

What's your key tip to avoiding wedding day stress?

Start the day with champagne!

Do you have any unique wedding stories to share?

All weddings are memorable and unique. I especially love it when the couple come back to celebrate their wedding anniversary because they had such a great time! I have couples that stay in touch with me and update me on their lives and send me photos of their babies. Others contact me when they come back to Vanuatu, and we catch up for a coffee.



Virginia Shore



mangoes

RESORT & RESTAURANT



Mangoes – turning imagination into tropical holiday reality

Mangoes is a carefully designed adults only, full service resort of just 29 beautifully appointed boutique bungalows, with a choice of panoramic views over the Pacific lagoon or tropical-lush gardens. Many of the romantically louvered bungalows feature their own plunge pool, and thoughtful comforts of separate sitting areas and furnished terraces that make you feel immediately pampered.

**Email: mangoes@vanuatu.com.vu
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Featuring breathtaking views over one hundred year old tree top canopies and tropical sparkling waters, The Terraces is Port Vila's finest boutique apartment styled resort.

A mixture of generously proportioned one and two bedroom combinations span over two levels, designed specifically to take full advantage of the natural light, cool breeze and stunning views. Poolside the infinity edge pool is a hub for rest, relaxation and opportunity to laze in the sun lounges or over-water cabana.

For the active, a tennis court and modern gym is waiting for you. We can tailor make a bespoke honeymoon experience to start your journey as husband and wife. A Tour desk is available to book all your Vanuatu excursions our central location means we are a ten minute walk from Port Vila township. The Terraces is suitable for those aged 5 years and over.



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James and Irene Kerin

Tamanu on the Beach Resort and Spa

What inspired you to have a South Pacific island wedding?

We'd always wanted to get married on a tropical island beach and Vanuatu fulfilled our brief. Although we'd never been before, we browsed lots of photos and just thought it would be the perfect destination for us. We weren't disappointed!

What made you pick your resort?

Tamanu on the Beach were super-responsive. Their website was well laid out and the food looked amazing! We loved the wedding packages they offered and given it was just the two of us, they were able to be very flexible with what they could offer.

How many guests did you have?

None! It was just the two of us – which was perfect!

What were some of the advantages of an island wedding?

Getting married in Vanuatu was so simple. The whole process for us was very chilled, we submitted our documents to Raewyn (the wedding planner at Tamanu) and she submitted them where they needed to go. The whole process was very smooth and stress free.

What were some of the disadvantages?

There were no real disadvantages to getting married there. If we'd invited family and friends there would have been a travel factor (we are Irish and English), but that wasn't an issue for us.

Did you stay in Vanuatu for your honeymoon?

Yes, we stayed at Tamanu on the Beach for the entire time – and loved every minute of it!

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

We loved how relaxed it was. The resort staff and Pastor Gideon were a joy to be around and very helpful. The setting was amazing – the beach was fab and we loved the setup for the ceremony and the reception. The food was exceptional too.

What were some of your honeymoon highlights?

Apart from spending quality time together, we pampered ourselves with a massage at the spa. Plus our deluxe villa had a plunge pool which we made great use of!

How did the videos and photos turn out?

Magic! Groovy Banana captured our moments in a way that reflected our personalities.

Looking back, was there anything you would do differently?

Not a thing – it was perfect!

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This facility is independently owned and operated under a franchise/license agreement with Ramada Worldwide Inc.

A local flavour

**Esther Maximo, Wedding Planner
Ramada Resort Port Vila**

How long have you had this role?

I've been involved in the hospitality industry for the past seven years and joined the fabulous Ramada Resort in 2019.

What lead-time do you require to plan a wedding?

Every wedding is different. It just depends on the complexity of the arrangements that need to be made. Small, simple weddings will always be quicker than bigger, more elaborate affairs.

What are some of the unique things you can offer?

Although we tailor each wedding to a couple's taste, we do like to tie in aspects of our rich local culture – to make the day extra special. This might be a performance by the Ekasup cultural dancers, a fire show by our local boys or a bride entrance in a local canoe with warriors.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

I love meeting new people and providing them with a unique experience on one of the most important days of their life.

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

1. The budget! There's no point coming up with ideas that aren't feasible.
2. Guest list. It's harder than you think, so start planning early.
3. Confirm the wedding venue and ceremony locations.

What are some of the ways you personalise a wedding?

We put together the things that a couple love! For example, they might have table numbers named after their favourite artists or sports players. Or they can create their own playlist.

What the best advice you could give a couple?

Planning a wedding can be stressful, so fixing a budget from the start, setting priorities, and making your wedding personal in creative ways will take most of that the stress away!

What is your crucial tip to avoiding wedding day stress?

Relax and take some time out for yourself.

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

In Port Vila – anytime! It's nice and warm all year round, but as a rule, June to October are the most popular months – when it's winter in New Zealand and Australia.

Do you have any memorable stories you can share?

At one particular wedding, the bride arrived by canoe with warriors holding spears. As they stepped off the canoe, the groom had to defeat the warriors and claim his prize (the bride). It was so romantic and emotional to watch – everybody loved that bridal entrance.

