

Pacific Romance

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



HAWAII

A state of bliss

Hawaii has everything required for a romantic getaway. The challenge is narrowing down the numerous options that each island has to offer. Regardless of which route you choose, you will be left in a state of romantic bliss.

Tying the knot

A couple must obtain a marriage licence when they arrive in Hawai'i.

This can be done from a marriage licence agent (there are many agents on each island and they can be found online or an appointment can be arranged by your wedding coordinator). Note: you have to appear together to obtain the marriage licence. As a rule, there is no waiting period for your licence, it is granted on application.

- Bride and groom need to be over the age of 18 years – otherwise a birth certificate and written consent from both parents, a legal guardian or a family court judge is required.
- Proof of age – Passport, drivers licence or birth certificate.
 - If either partner has been married before, a divorce decree is required.
 - Once the marriage licence is obtained, you have 30 days to get legally married in Hawai'i.





WAIKIKI, OAHU ©HTA / DANNY SEPKOWSKI

If your honeymoon could last a month, deciding which Hawaiian Islands to visit wouldn't be an issue! You could see them all, soak up their unique atmosphere and enjoy their unique adventures. Whether that's dining in a world-class Japanese restaurant on Oah'u, kayaking to a hidden waterfall on Kaua'i, watching the sunrise from a snow capped (dormant) volcano on Maui, or riding horseback through lush tropical rainforest on the Big Island.

You see, there are just so many wonderful options at a couple's fingertips. Deciding where to go is really just a matter of working out your priorities. Whatever they happen to be, Hawaii will have the perfect match. And if you miss something this time, it's a great excuse to go back.

The best way to start narrowing things down is by looking at each of the four main islands – Oah'u, Maui, Hawai'i (The Big Island) and Kaua'i. They are all amazing, but each one has its own distinct character and hero attractions. Most couples won't have time to visit every island, so it's best to make a list of priorities and then match the island(s) to suit.



OAHU

There are times when you want to be alone together, there are also times when you will be in the mood for lots of buzz, activity and colour. It's then that Waikiki is your place. It's fun just to put your towel on the sand and be part of the ever-changing scene.

Kick back and watch the surfers and the outrigger canoes ride the waves. You could hire a board and get out there yourself. Or maybe just swim, or grab a snack and drink from one of many food trucks.

Towering hotels and apartment buildings mean there are always lots of people around, and the resorts have some of the best dining in the

Pacific – and plenty of hole-in-the-wall spots for a quick bite to eat. If you get the chance, make sure you go to a luau, a traditional feast with hula dancing and other entertainment. It may feature laulau, or pork wrapped in leaves; a luau, poke, or raw marinated fish, lomi salmon, opihi and poi, a taro paste which is a staple of Hawaiian cuisine.

Overlooking Waikiki is the iconic mountain of Diamond Head. For couples who enjoy staying active, there is a 30-minute trail to the summit which is easy enough to start, and is then followed by several switchbacks as you gain height.

Toward the end, you pass through a military tunnel, go up a few flights of stairs and emerge through a bunker. The view is sensational.

Shoppers will be drawn to the Ala Moana Shopping Centre like children to an ice-cream. The world's largest open-air shopping centre is retail therapy maxed out, with luxury brands like Chanel close by department stores like Bloomingdale's and Nordstrom. Don't worry guys, there is plenty there for you too. The terrace on the fourth floor has international cuisine, combining local ingredients with Asian flavours, and live music.

For a complete change of pace, couples can head to the North Shore, a 12-kilometre stretch of still rural coast with some of the world's biggest waves. In winter, the waves at Waimea Bay, the Banzai Pipeline and Sunset Beach may tower seven stories high, and the beach sometimes shakes when they slam into the sand.

Leave the surf to the surfers, and sunbathe, go for a stroll, or cool off with a local delight, a rainbow-flavoured shaved ice. A short distance away is laid-back surf town of Haleiwa and the Polynesian Cultural Centre. And if you want to indulge your sweet tooth, head for Leonard's Bakery in Kapahulu, who are renowned for their malasadas, or Portuguese doughnuts. Delish!



PLACES TO STAY

Moana Surfrider, Waikiki Beach

You'll feel the history as soon as you step foot inside this grand Victorian era hotel. The first hotel on Waikiki, Moana Surfrider opened its doors in 1901. And for visiting couples it has everything you could ask for. The prime beachfront location in the heart of Waikiki means you're a short walk from everything. The Moana Lani Spa is the perfect place for couples, with special rooms for two, and enticing treatments, including a lomilomi ola, Hawaii's traditional healing massage refined over generations.

'Alohilani Resort Waikiki Beach

This luxurious oasis on Kalakaua Avenue has undergone a multi-million dollar redevelopment that has transformed the property into one of Waikiki's finest. The Swell Bar and Lounge is one of the hippest spots to hang out – think infinity pool, cabanas, driftwood sculptures, lanterns and glowing fire pits. At night the same space turns into a hot spot with live music and cocktails flowing. The resort also has two exceptional Japanese restaurants run under the strict guidance of acclaimed international Iron Chef Masaharu Morimoto.

Turtle Bay Resort, North Shore

Set on 850 acres of wide-open beachfront spaces, Turtle Bay Resort is the only resort on the famed North Shore. As you can imagine, staying here is completely different from the hustle and bustle of Waikiki. Indeed, Turtle Bay is very much about peace, quiet and getting back to nature. For the couple seeking quality time and space, it's a magic spot. An easy 60 minute drive from Waikiki, the resort offers miles of hiking trails, horseback riding, two championship golf courses, along with every water-based activity a couple could ask for.



MOANA SURFRIDER, WAIKIKI BEACH

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MAKENA, MAUI ©HTA / TOR JOHNSON



LOCALLY GROWN, MAUI ©HTA / MARK KUSHIMI



WAILUA FALLS, HANA, MAUI ©HTA / TOR JOHNSON



SNORKELLING MOLOKINI ©HTA / BLAKE BRONSTAD

MAUI

After Oahu, Maui is the second most visited island in Hawaii. It's not hard to see why. The beaches are considered among Hawaii's best, there are some splendid resort options and a huge variety of activities that couples will love.

If you can rouse yourself in the very early hours of the morning and take the drive to the Haleakala Visitor Centre, you will see the first rays of the new dawn break through from the top of a dormant volcano. Colours of every hue will swirl and dance until the sun finally appears. As you sit together snuggled under a rug (even though it's Hawaii it can snow up there), you'll be seeing one of the world's most dramatic sunrises.

Back down on the coast, Kanaapali was the first planned resort area in Hawaii, and five hotels, along with several apartment blocks, line the beach, which the Hawaiian royal family once claimed as their own retreat.

Some of Hawaii's best restaurants and luau entertainment is here, along with the Whaler's Village, a shopping and restaurant complex, free Hawaiian entertainment and Island Vintage Coffee, which roasts some of Hawaii's finest Kona coffee from the island of Hawaii.

Further north is Kapalua, once a ranch and a plantation. Now its vast 10,000 hectare expanse is a special resort area and the site of the Ritz-Carlton Kapalua, restaurants and boutiques, and two golf courses. Maui's third resort area is around the town of Wailea, with its three signature beaches of Wailea Beach itself, Polo Beach, and Uluu Beach Park.

You'll want to linger in the town and poke around its shops and boutiques, and either eat at one of the exceptional restaurants, or eat like a local and buy a plate lunch, with rice and macaroni, and maybe pork, barbecue chicken, or mahimahi.

PLACES TO STAY

Kaanapali Beach Hotel

If you're looking for a genuine, authentic Hawaiian experience the Kaanapali Beach Hotel is the place to stay. Known as the 'Hawaii's Most Hawaiian Hotel', the staff put a real emphasis on capturing the spirit of aloha, where a couple will be welcomed like one of the family. With 11 acres of gorgeous tropical gardens, glorious ocean views and a multitude of dining options, relaxation and quality time is guaranteed. A real must-do is popping to the Beauty of Aloha spa for a traditional Hawaiian Lomi Lomi massage. The long, gentle strokes will put you into a deep state of chilled-out bliss!

Fairmont Kea Lani

A honeymoon should be a time to be treated. Which is where the Fairmont Kea Lani is an absolute expert. The resorts award winning Willow Stream Spa is a state-of-the art oasis. And let's just say it has everything. 13 luxurious treatment rooms (including a couples Aloha suite), there are male and female relaxation rooms with heated stone lounges, inhalation steam rooms, sauna, a palolo (mud) bar and unique rain shower experiences. The list of treatments is also extensive - the long list of facials, massages and body treatments all look so good, it will be hard try to pick one (or maybe two). And after you've been pampered from head to toe, a couple can kick back and enjoy everything else this absolute beachfront resort has to offer.

Hotel Wailea Maui

It's a real feather in your cap, when Conde Nast Readers vote you the Number 1 Resort in Hawaii. Maybe it's the peace and privacy (there are only 72 one bedroom suites set on 15 acres). It could be the panoramic ocean views out to three Hawaiian Island, or the cascading waterfall (inside the resort) and lush tropical grounds. Complimentary yoga or group fitness anyone? How about Tesla Model X house vehicles for exploring the local Wailea area? This 5-star adults-only haven is pure honeymoon heaven.



HAWAII - THE BIG ISLAND

Just as there are two sides to every story, so there are two sides to the island of Hawaii, The Big Island. Its land area accounts for over a third of the total of the state's five main island. On one side it is lush tropical rainforest. But on the other, it's dry mountain slopes and black lava deserts.

The biggest attraction on the Big Island is without a doubt Volcanoes National Park, one of the most visited parks across the USA. 2018 was one of the most active in recent years. Most couples will have seen images of the lava outburst from Mount Kilauea, when lava flowed from the crater down to the sea during the recent eruption, creating primeval scenes.

It's safe now, and a drive up to the summit along Crater Rim Drive to peer into the crater will give some idea of this most powerful force. What was once a lake of molten, burning lava has disappeared and is now replaced by a gigantic hole. The Park's Jagger Museum tells the story that will no doubt have many more chapters. If you really want to get up close and personal, jump on a helicopter tour that will give you grandstand views of this spectacular natural landscape.

If exploration at a slightly slower pace is your go, you could horseback ride at Kahua Ranch. It's still a working sheep and cattle ranch and within its bounds you'll be able mosey through lush forest, rolling green hills and freshwater streams.



KAANAPALI BEACH HOTEL

Speaking of streams, the Big Island is also home to some of the most picturesque waterfalls in the Pacific. Some of these require a hike, however, they are well worth the effort. The Rainbow Falls, Pe'epe'e Falls, and Waiale Falls are all easy to access and if you want to see the big kahuna himself, visit the Waihilau Falls which are over 700 metres high!



PLACES TO STAY

Four Seasons Hualalai

This premium property situated along the Kona Coast is set amidst black lava, lush vegetation and white sand beaches. You have seven swimming pools to choose from. Or you could just take a dip in the beautiful Pacific Ocean which is steps away. Experience fine dining, world-class golf (the club pro is a PGA Tour winner), tennis and a health club. Then add in a first-class spa that provides luscious in-room massage treatments (yes, they'll bring the table to you).

Volcano House

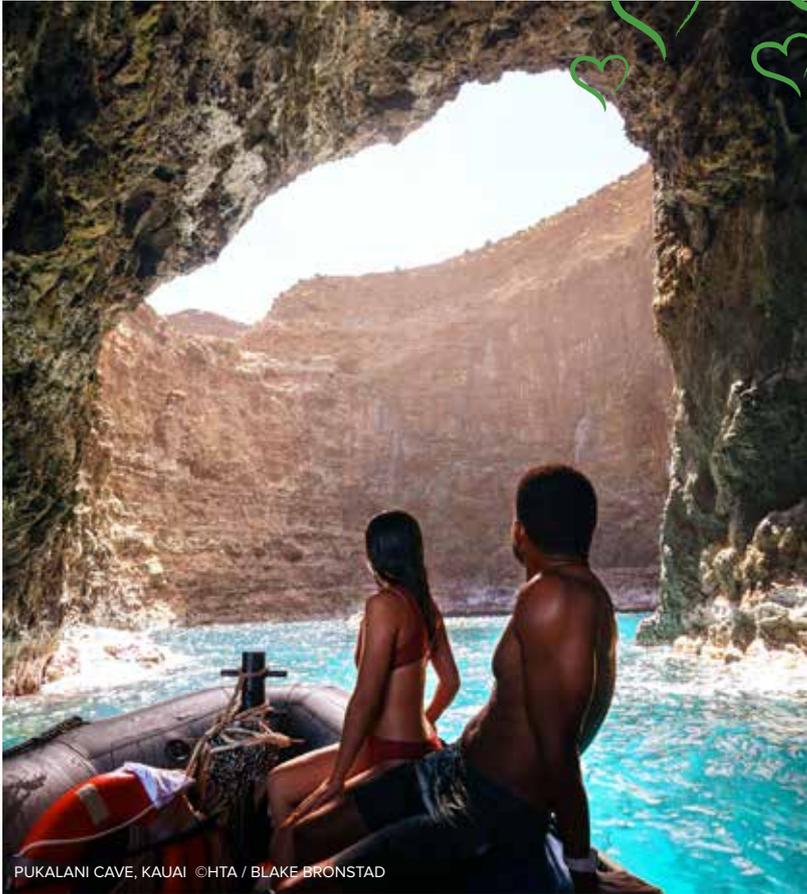
If you'd like to stay right in Volcanoes National Park this is the place. Volcano House, is a charming boutique lodge with picture windows that look straight out across the Kilauea crater. At breakfast you can sit in the restaurant and gaze out across this martian landscape and at dinner time you can sit back and marvel at the red glow.



ROPE BRIDGE NEAR UMAUMA FALLS, HAKALAU, ISLAND OF HAWAII
©HTA / HEATHER GOODMAN



HORSEBACK RIDING, NORTH KOHALA, ISLAND OF HAWAII
©HTA / KIRK LEE AEDER



PUKALANI CAVE, KAUAI ©HTA / BLAKE BRONSTAD



KOLOA, KAUAI ©HTA / TOR JOHNSON



KAPAA, KAUAI ©HTA / TOR JOHNSON

KAUAI

If your idea of a romantic escape means getting away from it all, Kauai is the obvious island of choice.

Sitting at the top of the Hawaiian chain, Kauai is the oldest, smallest and least developed of the major islands. And that's reflected in the sheer beauty of the landscape. Lush rainforests thrive, valleys and mountains have been weathered into the most spectacular forms, rivers snake their way across the countryside, waterfalls burst with life, and there's even a Pacific version of the Grand Canyon. It's no wonder Jurassic Park and Pirates of the Caribbean were filmed against this backdrop.

The mountainous interior and sheer cliffs of the North Coast has made it impossible to build a road circling the island – in fact, only around 10 percent of the island is accessible by car. This may sound like a hindrance, but it's actually a blessing as it means that much of this beautiful countryside is reserved for hikers, bikers and kayakers.

Couples that love a challenge can tackle the 18 kilometre long Kalalau Trail along the Na Pali Coast. This is Kauai's most famous hike and it's considered one of the very best in America. It runs from Ke'e Beach and goes through deep green valleys and along towering sea cliffs, before ending in the Kalalau Valley.

The other way to see Kauai is by helicopter. In fact, taking a mind-blowing aerial tour of Kauai should really be compulsory for any couple. Companies such as Blue Hawaiian Helicopters operate out of the island's main airport in Lihue. With rock music playing in your headphones, the pilots whisk you away for a 50 minute highlight package that includes the Waimea Canyon, Na Pali Coast, Bali Hai Cliffs, Hanalei Bay and Mount Waialeale – one of the wettest places on earth!

Exploring the island by water is another fantastic option. Kauai is home to some world-class kayaking. For example you can follow the Huleia

River into Huleia National Wildlife Refuge and visit waterfalls without another human in sight. There are also sea kayaking tours that will take you along the steep ocean cliffs of the Na Pali Coast.

PLACES TO STAY

St. Regis Princeville

Located on the north shore of Kauai and overlooking picturesque Hanalei Bay and Makana Mountain, this exquisite five-star property is widely considered one of Hawaii's best.

You will need a healthy budget to stay here, but you will get what you pay for. In this case, flawless five-star luxury, exceptional oceanside dining, a private beach with a water sports centre, and a 5,000-square-foot infinity pool. And not to mention, personal butler service.

Koa Kea Resort Hotel

This boutique property is a real favourite with honeymooners. It boasts a prime position in the middle of Poipu Beach. Along with their Ko'u Aloha Romance Package, couples can rejuvenate at the resort's spa, laze by the tropical pool and have freshly made cocktails from the outdoor bar. And the award-winning Red Salt Restaurant is the perfect place for a romantic dinner for two – using locally sourced ingredients, of course.

Aqua Kauai Beach Resort

Sitting on the eastern coast, Aqua Kauai Beach Resort is a laid-back alternative to the island's larger resorts. The resort offers couples a wide range of services and facilities, including four swimming pools (complete with cascading waterfalls), three restaurants, Rainforest Spa, and a modern fitness centre. But after hiking, kayaking and swimming all day, you may not need any further exercise.

Wedding Planner

Lauren Carson, Weddings of Hawaii

How long have you had this role?

I personally have been planning weddings in Hawaii for over 10 years. Our company, Weddings of Hawaii, has been in business since 1978.

What lead time do you require to plan a wedding?

We can plan a wedding in as little as two days to two years out! The lead-time really depends on how many guests are coming to Hawaii and the venue availability.

What are some of the unique things you can offer?

Having a wedding in Hawaii gives us the advantage of incorporating many unique Hawaiian-inspired themes into your event. A traditional Hawaiian kahuna can preside over your ceremony, or have a specialty dinner menu with traditional Hawaiian food, and even a hula halau to honour the couple and their guests with a beautiful dance!

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

There are many hotels in Waikiki. However, not all of them are directly on Waikiki Beach. You can have your celebration steps away from the sand. Tiki torches light up the sky and the sound and breeze of the ocean is truly majestic. There truly isn't anywhere quite like it in Hawaii.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

Our couples come from all over the world and from all walks of life. Hearing their stories of how they met, and how they came to be here in Hawaii, always touches my heart. This is one of the most wonderful parts of my job. Of course, hearing from my couple after their wedding on how thrilled they are is always a bonus.

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

1. How many guests are you planning to have at your wedding.
2. What type of location do you envisage for your ceremony and celebration afterwards.
3. What is your budget for both your ceremony and the reception.

These questions help us to provide recommendations that are relevant to the couple's needs.

What are some of ways you personalise a wedding?

Special personal touches are a sweet way to incorporate "you" in to your big day. This can be as simple as selecting a special song for the ukulele musician to play as you walk down the aisle, to a special Hawaiian "his and hers" cocktail at the reception, or even honouring your guests with beautiful Hawaiian leis as they arrive at your event. The options are endless.

What's the best advice you would give a couple?

The wedding day can go by so fast! Be sure to make time for the two of you to enjoy each other after your ceremony. After all, the celebration is about the two of you! Often times, the couple are so busy entertaining their guests that they forget to sit back and soak in the moment together.



Weddings of Hawaii coordination team – Glory Hashimoto, Teri Sharman, Rachel Hashimoto, Lauren Carson



Do you help with honeymoon plans, too?

Outrigger has numerous beautiful hotels and resorts all through the Hawaiian islands. The concierges at the hotels know how to help couples book activities, tours and local experiences which will provide them with a memorable honeymoon.

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

To avoid wedding day stress, hire a wedding planner! Let someone manage your big day so you can simply enjoy the moment with the people you love.

Any memorable unique wedding stories you can share?

In addition to weddings, we also coordinate vow renewals. A couple of years ago we had a vow renewal for this lovely couple from Canada who were celebrating 25 years of marriage.

They arrived at their ceremony to meet with the celebrant, Rev. Russ. They began to tell Rev. Russ that 25 years earlier they were married at the exact location, but they could not remember the name of the company, but they had a photograph of their ceremony.

They showed the photo to Rev. Russ and much to the woman's surprise, the celebrant in the photo was Rev. Russ's father, the late Rev. Hansen! There was not a dry eye to be seen and this was even before their special vow renewal ceremony! It was an incredible moment for everyone.

Peter and Irene Smith

Waialae Beach, Oahu

What inspired you to have a Pacific island wedding?

It was easy for our family to get to from Scotland.

What made you pick Oahu ahead of all the others?

We thought it would be a special place to spend time with family and friends - somewhere different and special.

What made you pick that specific resort or other wedding venue?

It was recommended by wedding planner.

Did you use an agent to book you and your guests' trip?

If so, who? We used Flight Centre for flights and our wedding planner sorted out everything else.

What was the main benefit of using an agent to book your trip?

Hassle-free and one less thing to worry about.

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

Point of difference. We were able to incorporate a wedding and a holiday at the same time.

What were some of the special touches that you could only get in the islands.

Our wedding drink. Hawaiian sunsets.

Did you stay on the same island for your honeymoon?

We haven't yet had our honeymoon. We are going away later to Bali.

Did your resort or wedding venue provide you with a wedding planner? If so, how did you find that experience?

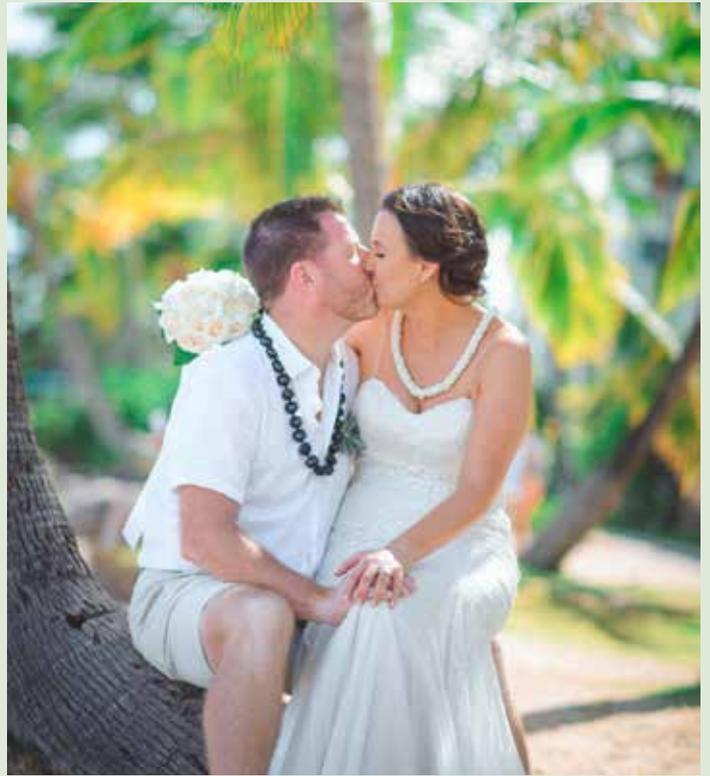
The wedding planner was amazing. We found them through a recommendation and they did everything. It was a relief to just turn up and have everything sorted and not have to run around at the last minute. There were things we still needed to do to add our own personal touch, but everything from flowers to the venue was all done.

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

1. Have a vision of what you want your day to look like.
2. Utilise the help of a wedding planner. They are experts at what they do and know where to access everything you need.
3. Be flexible with your budget.
4. The exchange rate can make a difference between what you want to pay and end up paying. Be prepared to tip.
5. Enjoy your day!

What did you love most about getting married in Hawaii?

The people and the island were so beautiful. Being able to share the experience with family and friends was something we won't forget. We were able to spend time with those we rarely see due to where they live, so that was extra special.



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WASN'T ENOUGH



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