

Pacific Romance

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



NEW CALEDONIA

A South Pacific *seduction*

What could more seductive than a laid back Pacific Island
ambiance that blends the best of French food, language and
customs? Say bonjour to romance travel in New Caledonia.

Tying the knot

In 2009 a change in policy meant that couples visiting New Caledonia could hold a civil wedding ceremony. Applications are made to the Nouméa City Authorities five to six months in advance, via an email to the Townhall Records Authority. Proof of civil status and a certificate of residence is required.

An officially approved translator (French/English) will be present at ceremony. After the ceremony, a certified transcription of their marriage certificate then needs to be taken to the consulate of their country.





NOUMEA © TERRES DE LUMIÈRE / NCTPS

A world heritage site with Polynesian and French culture, New Caledonia offers crystal blue waters, unique flora and fauna and a bustling cosmopolitan centre with a generous offering of dining and nightlife options. Couples can choose to stay in the main centre of Noumea, or venture out to Isle de Pines for an intimate, away from it all experience – or combine both for the ultimate New Caledonian escape.

VIBRANT NOUMEA

The capital city of New Caledonia, home to about 100,000 people, is located in the South of Grand Terre Island, about 45 minutes from La Tontouta International Airport.

Most of the resorts and hotels in the predominantly French speaking capital are situated near the beautiful bays of Anse Vata and Baie des Citrons (Lemon Bay). You can easily spend your holiday in this vicinity, enjoying the water activities, biking or walking the sheltered bays or simply soaking up the surrounds in between dips in the ocean or pool. At night, take your pick from the abundance of delicious restaurants that line the main strips in walking distance.

If you want to venture further however, you can easily cab or bus (or drive, if you have a hire car) into Noumea's main centre. Here you can learn about New Caledonia's indigenous Kanak culture at the Tjibaou Cultural Centre which includes an art centre, museum and a landscaped park, do some shopping, pick up French cheese and wine from the Moselle Market or try one of the many restaurants on offer.

AQUA BLISS

Aquatonic Spa at the Chateau Royal is a unique wellbeing experience not to be missed. The idea of soaking in warm water at such a tropical location, might seem a little odd, but you'll soon understand the appeal. With an extensive view of Anse Vata Bay the 300m pool is made up of several areas, ranging from 28 to 34 degrees Celsius, with jet baths and shower massage loungers targeting different areas of the body at varied intensities. We left feeling like we'd had a full-body therapeutic massage. Don't wear your board shorts, only swimsuits and speedos are allowed here.



AQUATONIC SPA AT THE CHATEAU ROYAL

EXPLORING TOGETHER

Pack a picnic and head up Ouen Toro Hill, located about 25 minutes from Le Meridien Hotel on Pointe Magnin. Open a bottle of French wine, unpack the French cheese and baguettes and take in the 360 degree view over the city and the lagoon - and if the weather allows it a view of the Amédée lighthouse, 20 kilometres away.

A great way for couples to see the sights is on the picturesque jogger's highway at Promenade Pierre Vernier, from Pointe Magnin. This highway winds around the coast, with designated cycling lanes where you can breathe in the sea air and watch the windsurfers and yachts sweep by. This is a beautiful way to see the coast while burning off some of those croissants.

A leisurely walk from Anse Vata, along the Roger-Laroque promenade to Baie des Citrons (Lemon Bay) is also fun. Sheltered from winds, the swimming here is the kind of calm you close your eyes and try to remember in times of stress! Swim out to the floating platform and soak up the scenery and when you've both had your fill of sea and sun, cross the road to the strip of bars and restaurants for a bite to eat or nice glass of wine.



ISLAND TRIPPING

Forty minutes boat ride from Noumea, Amedee Island is a quintessential Pacific paradise. This protected marine reserve offers the ultimate in eye-candy for snorkellers. There's green turtles – and the lazy fish that catch a ride on their shells, clown fish, reef sharks and magnificent coral to explore on the sheltered reef.

If getting in with the sea creatures is not your thing, you can jump on the glass bottom boat and watch them up close from the comfort of the vessel. The on-board guide provides valuable insights into the Island's marine life and a couple of helpful tips: One: don't touch the precious turtles or you can incur a million franc fine, Two: close your bags in case the venomous striped sea snakes, who are looking for places to lay their eggs, try and hitch a ride home with you. These slippery little suckers are particularly prolific late in the year when they come to the warm shores to breed but do not fear, they are venomous but not aggressive.

The island is also home to two special man-made attractions - the smallest post office in the world where you can send a postcard home and a magnificent historic lighthouse. Climbing the 247 step spiral staircase of the lighthouse is a must for the incredible 360 degree views of the island from the top. The sight of the beautiful turquoise lagoon and the expansive reef are so pretty you'll want to capture them from every angle.

Mary D's day trip includes the 40 minute boat ride, hotel transfers to and from the wharf, an excellent buffet lunch with drinks and a cultural performance plus optional activities. A blissful day out.



AMEDEE ISLAND

ROMANTIC DINING

L'ed Zen is a little gem on a walk around Anse Vata initially attractive for its relaxed outdoor dining and great atmosphere. The restaurant changes its menu regularly using fresh seasonal ingredients and you can choose from three dishes - the salad, fish and meat of the day. Or choose from one of the stars of the menu - foie gras burgers or poutine topped with foie gras and truffle.

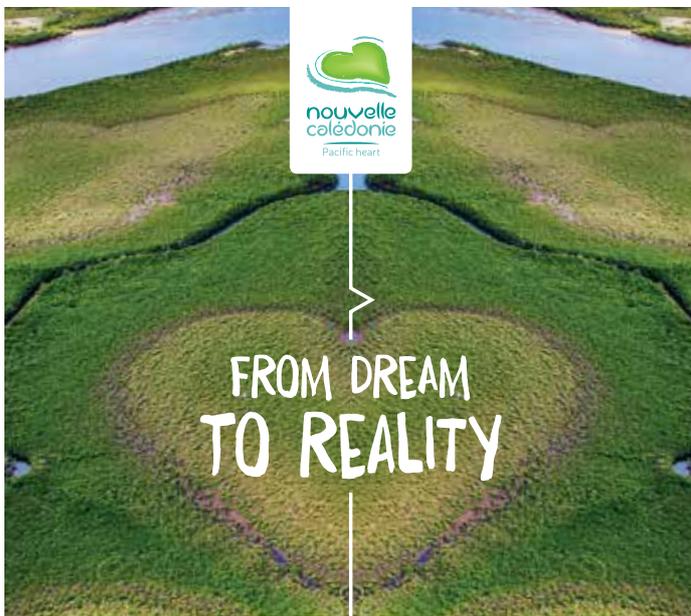
If you are after a hip, romantic setting with wait staff passionate about wine and bistronomic food (casual, fine dining with flair!), pop into Chai de l'HIPPODROME, a new offering in Anse Vata. The wine bar is beautifully decorated, with vibrant paintings and sculptures. The bar is made up of different areas to suit your mood: couches for those wanting to get cozy, oak tables and chairs for more space and a covered outdoor patio. There is also a beautiful private room, where wine tasting classes are held among beautiful oak barrels.

For a romantic fine dining experience, you can't go past Le Meridien's signature restaurant l'Hippocampe. This elegant and intimate restaurant serves locally sourced French cuisine with a South Pacific twist, using fresh local ingredients. Try this refined, creative cuisine for lunch or dinner.

Just off the Anse Vata main strip is New Caledonia's only 360 revolving restaurant. L'Entrecôte au 360. Set at the top of the Ramada Hotel, it offers a spectacular panoramic revolving view of the city and lagoon. Choose from either a steak or tuna option, with salad and fries.



ILE DES PINS © TOKO / NCTPS



FROM DREAM
TO REALITY

IN 2019 SAY "OUI, JE LE VEUX"

New Caledonia, only a few hours away, is the perfect destination for the most memorable wedding or luxurious honeymoon. From the cosmopolitan chic of Noumea, to the heavenly charm of the Isle of Pines, New Caledonia has an abundance of venues and romantic locations to make your day truly special. With same sex marriage legal in New Caledonia, what are you waiting for? 2019 is the year to say "oui, je le veux" (yes, I do).

Start planning, visit www.newcaledonia.travel



NOUMEA © TERRES DE LUMIÈRE / NCTPS



NOUMEA © TERRES DE LUMIÈRE / NCTPS



ILE DES PINS – AN ISLAND ESCAPE

Ile des Pins, a 20 minute plane ride or 2.5 hour boat ride from Noumea, is a beautiful, tranquil romantic getaway for couples and honeymooners. Home to about 2000, mostly Melanesian, people it is named after its abundant pines but it has also been nicknamed ‘the closest island to paradise’. You will immediately see why - Ile des pins is famous for its long, picturesque beaches with powder white sand, and clear turquoise water.

Soak up the sun and the sea at the breath-taking bays of Kuto, Upi, Kanumera and Oro; pack bottle of French bubbles and climb to the highest point of the island at N’ga Peak for a breath-taking view and visit the many special sites around the island.

Be sure to visit the Hortense Queens Cave, a spectacular place with a very special story - this is where the revered Queen Hortense is said to have taken refuge for many months when conflict broke out between tribes in 1885. She is famous for standing up to the French authorities. Wear sturdy shoes to enter the cave, and take a torch to explore the ancient stalactites.

To learn more about the history of the Island take a Mana Island guided tour. They run from 10-2pm and include lunch. There is also a two hour island bus ride available to explore the special sites unguided.

To explore the island by sea take a ride on a glass bottom boat and view the colourful coral and tropical sea life. If you fancy a traditional sailing experience, jump on board a traditional outrigger and sail the sparkling waters of Upi Bay. Or simply grab a kayak from your resort and paddle the calm turquoise waters at your own pace.



PLACES TO STAY

Chateau Royal Beach Resort & Spa

Chateau Royal Beach Resort & Spa is a four-star resort nestled in two hectares of tropical gardens on Anse Vata Bay. Enjoy beautiful views of the lagoon, direct beach access, on-site restaurants and dining, a fitness room and pool and the Aqua Royal Spa, home of the Aquatonic Pool.

Hotel Oure Ile Des Pins

These lovely natural bungalows are situated on the serene Kanumera beach. Couples can choose from a beachfront villa with ocean views, or a garden villa set in a lush tropical garden. View the incredible sunsets from the west facing pool, eat freshly caught seafood and the famous Isle of Pines lobster at the delicious Kanumera restaurant, or relax on the private beach where you might just see dolphins swimming by.



ILE DES PINS © TOKO / NCTPS



CHATEAU ROYAL BEACH RESORT & SPA © TERRES DE LUMIERE / NCTPS





Le Méridien Noumea Resort & Spa

Le Méridien is an exceptional place for your romantic New Caledonian escape, located on its own special corner of Anse Vata beach, with views to Amedee island and Duck Island, and just 10 minutes from the city centre. The resort offers guests a fresh, luxurious, modern décor with all the little details taken care of following an extensive renovation.

You'll immediately breathe out the stresses of the outside world and breathe in Le Méridien's incredible landscaped gardens made up completely of local fauna and flora. Sip a cool drink by the pool (with a good book in the other hand), and enjoy a cocktail while watching the sunset from the beachside restaurant and loungers.

There are over 200 rooms at Le Méridien Noumea from classic and superior rooms to a range of suites - including a presidential suite which recently housed the French President. All rooms have floor to ceiling windows and a private balcony with views of the landscaped gardens and the lagoon. The décor is clean, modern and inviting with a Pacific influence and each room has naturally lit bathrooms with separate bath tubs and showers. There is high speed internet and flat screen TVs and complimentary tea and coffee making facilities.

Depending on your level of motivation, there's a modern cardio-fitness room including state-of-the-art cardio machines, or you can always relax and rejuvenate in the Deep Nature Spa with its private treatment rooms, sauna, a steam room and indoor and outdoor jaccuzzis. Bliss!

Le Méridien Ile des Pins

Bordering Oro Bay, Le Méridien Ile des Pins offers spacious, luxurious guestrooms and bungalow suites. Each guestroom and suite has floor-to-ceiling windows and a private balcony, with views of the coconut grove, beach, pool or lagoon.

With fresh, minimalist décor, and a private, peaceful ambience the guestrooms provide the ideal accommodation for a romantic escape and are popular with honeymooners. Superior and deluxe rooms have a generous private loggia (a covered open room) and the bungalow suites have a separate living room, master bedroom and outdoor terrace.

Rejuvenate your skin and relax your mind with Deep Nature Spa's deluxe treatments, using Algoritherm products. Make the most of the canoes, paddle boards, pedal boats and snorkelling gear available to explore the tropical wonderland on your doorstep. Grab a complimentary bike and explore the many sights the island has to offer, or get your game on with table tennis, petanque and beach tennis at the resort. Or simply stretch out on the powder white sand or by the lagoon-style pool and enjoy the peace and quiet of this very special place.

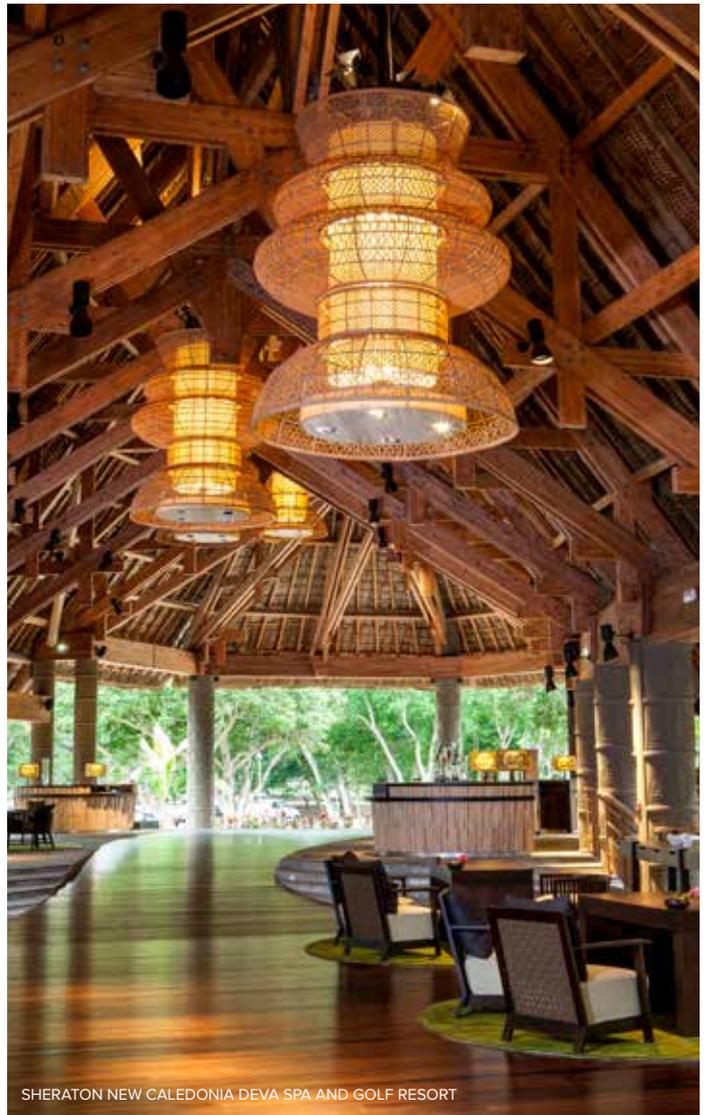
La Pirogue serves delicious French/Melanesian cuisine using fresh island produce and seafood. Have a romantic dinner on the outdoor terrace with a view of the ocean at night, or enjoy a casual BBQ lunch by day. Enjoy a Le Méridien signature sparkling cocktail at Longitude 167 bar before heading to dinner, or have a night cap over a game of billiards or chess.

Sheraton New Caledonia Deva Spa and Golf Resort

Noumea has a fine selection of resorts and hotels for visiting couples, but if you head out of town, you can also find some hidden gems. And one of the standouts is Sheraton New Caledonia Deva Spa and Golf Resort. A touch over two hours drive north of Noumea, this spectacular resort sits inside the Deva Domain – an 8000 hectare regional park with 13 kilometres of white sand beach and a vast network of hiking and biking trails.

With a clever design that's kept much of the natural environment in its original form, Sheraton Deva fits into its surroundings like it's been there all along. Needless to say, couples that love peace and quiet will be in their element. The facilities are equally impressive. There are 180 rooms, three restaurants, a 90 metre swimming pool and an 18 championship hole golf course, should you both fancy a leisurely round.

A bride and groom can choose from the outdoor terrace, poolside area or resort gardens for a dreamy wedding ceremony, followed by a reception at the elegant ballroom. There are food, beverage, music, venue and accommodation wedding packages on offer. And if a honeymoon is the reason for staying, a couple could not be in a better place to celebrate their love. 🌸



SHERATON NEW CALEDONIA DEVA SPA AND GOLF RESORT



SHERATON NEW CALEDONIA DEVA SPA AND GOLF RESORT



LE MÉRIDIEN NOUMEA RESORT & SPA

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REAL LIFE PROPOSAL

Andrew Carallarao

Ile des Pins

Was this your first time in New Caledonia?

Yes, for both of us. In fact neither of us had been to the South Pacific previously!

How much time did you spend there?

We went for one week, spending three nights in Noumea, four nights on the Ile des Pins, and a final night in Noumea on the way home.

Where did you stay in New Caledonia?

In Noumea we stayed at the Chateau Royal Beach Resort & Spa – we loved it there, being right on the beach, within easy walk to great restaurants, and the swim-up pool bar at the resort. On the Ile des Pins we stayed at Le Meridien (Ile des Pins) in a luxurious beachfront bungalow – such an incredibly beautiful spot and a really special resort.

Had you planned your proposal there?

Yes. I arranged it with Le Meridien (Ile des Pins) prior. They were so wonderfully helpful and helped to make it such a special occasion for us.

What did you do?

I arranged for a champagne picnic at the Piscine Naturelle (natural pools), which are a short walk from Le Meridien (Ile des Pins). We started with a relaxed walk to the pools (through the forest), and once there found a secluded spot on the beach overlooking the water. After laying out our picnic blanket, we both lay there looking out across the water, and after a while I nervously plucked up the courage to get up on one knee and propose to Charlie.

Did the hotel help? How?

The hotel were simply wonderful the entire time. They were the ones that came up with the idea for doing a champagne picnic at the Piscine Naturelle. We were just so impressed with how well they looked after us.

What did he do?

It truly took him by surprise – he was not expecting it at all. After a few seconds he said a big YES, and we popped our bottle of champagne to celebrate.

Why did you choose Ile des Pins?

It just looked so stunningly beautiful in pictures. It truly looked like what you would imagine of an idyllic South Pacific island. We also loved the fact that it was small enough to feel like you were in the middle of nowhere (true escapism), while also big enough to leave the resort and explore. The French-factor added to the romantic feel.

What advice would you give other couples who intend to spend their honeymoon or a romantic time on Ile des Pins?

Go for longer. Four nights definitely wasn't enough. We'd suggest at least a week – that way you have enough time to really relax, as well as explore the island (it's actually bigger than we were expecting).

