

BRIDES Honeymoons & Weddings Away

90

SEXIEST HONEYMOON HOTELS!

SECRETS OF A DESTINATION WEDDING

Five real brides
tell their stories

GETAWAY WEDDING HOW-TO'S:

- >> Where to go
- >> What to plan
- >> Who pays for what

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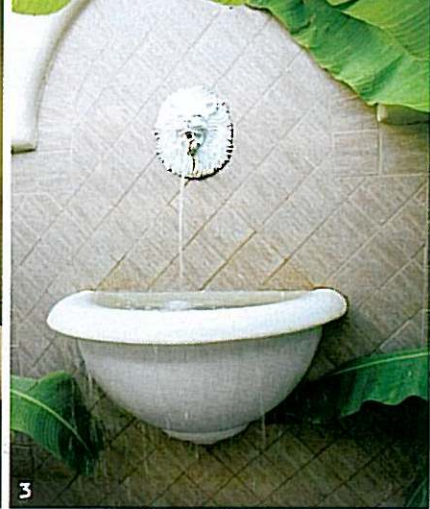
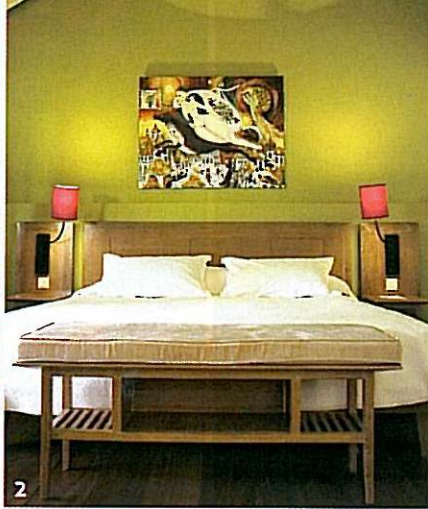
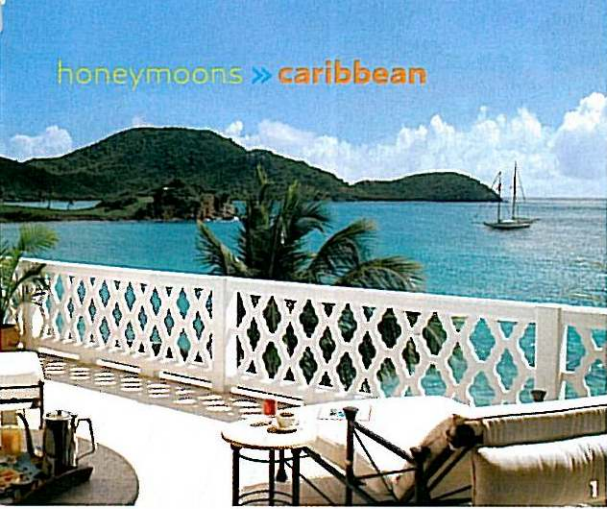
far and away

Whether your fantasy is a private island, a mountain lodge, or a chic urban inn, finding it is as easy as flipping the page. Now, if we could only pack for you, too.

Code pink: In Bermuda, blush-colored beaches set off the clear aquamarine of the sea.

Get the best for less in the **CARIBBEAN**

1. Pass up the hotel's pricey buffet breakfast and pick up fresh fruit at the local market. You'll not only save bucks, you'll also hear all the island gossip. **2.** A sunset is a dazzling display on its own—no need for expensive tickets to a show. **3.** Rent a car—you'll save money by skipping the group tours, and enjoy the time sightseeing on your own. **4.** Ask about local festivals like tours of artists' studios. They're a slice of real culture you won't want to miss. **5.** "Cheat" on your resort and seek out a beach bar. Spend the evening with your feet in the sand and your hair lit by moonlight—all for the price of a taxi and an umbrella drink.



\$\$\$ FOUR SEASONS RESORT NEVIS Mountainscape or ocean view? Room choices don't come easy at this two-story, plantation-style complex. On one hand, you'll love overlooking the smooth, blue Caribbean. On the other, the tropical heights of Mount Nevis make even the air on your patio or balcony smell green. Both room choices come with marble soaking tubs, colonial-inspired decor, and classic louvers that whisk in the floral-scented breezes. Besides, the best vista of all is shared by everyone on the Robert Trent Jones Jr. golf course—a sweeping green panorama of the resort, the Caribbean sea, and neighboring St. Kitts. Doubles from \$325 (low season); 800-819-5053; fourseasons.com.—*B.P.*

\$\$\$ RITZ-CARLTON, ST. THOMAS, THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS Few resorts do service as consistently well as Ritz-Carlton—and this recently renovated property takes the company policy to new spit-and-polish heights. The gold-buttoned bellhops hustle your car away without delay, and the subsequent golf-cart transfer to the rooms, which are located high on a hill, is equally prompt and friendly. Room-service waiters almost whistle while they set up your in-room meals. At check-out, the front desk service is so efficient, you'll blink—then consider kidnapping the staff and bringing them home. Doubles from \$359 (low season); 800-241-3333; ritzcarlton.com.—*Chanize Thorpe*

\$\$\$ LITTLE DIX BAY, VIRGIN GORDA, THE BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS This vestige of the 1960s Caribbean made its name on its prime location. And what a location—it sits on a sheltered crescent beach with a barrier reef, miles of bougainvillea, and a backdrop of sloping red rocks. Though famous folk like Elizabeth II gave this place its original claim to fame, its present remains luminous. The updated hexagonal cottages are sleek, rattan, stylish, and come with outdoor showers and views to drool over. Add a visit to the hilltop spa and be scrubbed with mango sugar into a state of supreme relaxation. Doubles from \$395 (low season); 888-767-3966; rosewoodhotels.com.—*Lexi Dwyer*

\$\$\$ PARROT CAY, THE TURKS AND CAICOS Ever dreamed of staying on a private island? This resort, set on 1,000 secluded, beachy acres, more than lives up to the hype. Wide, white swaths of sand end in turquoise-colored shallows. The resort has only 60 rooms, so you won't have to share at all—except at the super-popular beachfront infinity pool, where the attendants will usher the two of you to the choicest remaining chairs and scramble to open your umbrella as soon as you arrive. Doubles from \$450, including breakfast, with a three-night minimum stay (low season); 877-754-0726; parrotcay.com.bz.—*Sherri Eisenberg*

\$\$\$ HÔTEL GUANAHANI & SPA, ST. BART'S Located on a French island of “haves” and “have mores,” this resort's 68 clapboard cottages evoke the kind of laid-back Caribbean chic suited to a retreat where cutting back means buying the Burberry tote instead of the Yves Saint Laurent hobo. Stroll over the bougainvillea-draped walkways, then treat your sun-stressed tresses at the Frédéric Fekkai salon, located inside the hotel's 5,000-square-foot Clarins Spa. Très sophisticated touches like Le Bartolomeo, a jewel-toned supper club, make you feel like you've gone on a mini jaunt to Paris, despite the sand between your toes. Doubles from \$457, including breakfast (low season); 800-223-6800; leguanahani.com.—*Ellen Klugman*

\$\$\$ LA SAMANNA, ST. MARTIN Sure, celebrities like Oprah and Kiefer rave over the treatment they get at this luxe hotel, but the true test of a resort is how it treats the rest of us. Fortunately, from your customized room selection (La Samanna matches its 81 rooms to guest preferences) to your in-room gift at check-out (chosen to suit your tastes from info gleaned by the staff during your stay), it's all about *vous* at this Mediterranean-style hideaway. Did we mention the mile-long beach? Count on views of it from every room, porch, and chaise. Doubles from \$475 (low season); 800-237-1236; lasamanna.com.—*E.K.*

\$\$\$ SPICE ISLAND BEACH RESORT, GRENADA After a \$12-million upgrade, Sir Royston Hopkin's Spice Island Beach Resort has entered the rarefied ranks of the elegant and unbelievably discreet. Rooms are monuments to pure design—the modern stucco casitas offer all kinds of swank touches, from Philippe Starck faucets to Frette robes, not to mention the cavernous whirlpool tubs. Inventive Caribbean meals at Oliver's restaurant mean that the only thing cheesy about this place is French, imported, and melted into your warm callaloo tart. Doubles from \$635, all meals included, (low season); 800-448-8355; spiceislandbeachresort.com.—*C.T.*
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\$\$\$ SANDALS WHITEHOUSE EUROPEAN VILLAGE & SPA, JAMAICA Like the all-inclusive concept, but aren't ready to join the party scene at a Montego Bay or Negril resort? This property on the otherwise undeveloped southwest coast may just be the answer. Sure, there's a swim-up bar in the pool, but most of the sunbathers are skipping the daytime tequila shots in favor of piña colodas. Evenings, too, are quieter. Most couples head to the lounge for martinis with friends they've made at diving class, or to the café for Jamaican coffee and exquisite handmade desserts and chocolates. All-inclusive doubles from \$760, with a two-night minimum stay (low season); 800-726-3257; sandals.com.—*S.E.*