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GREAT ESCAPES

Where in the world to wed, honeymoon, and more

TEXT BY Kelly Lack



LOCATION SCOUT:
CAVALLO POINT
SAUSALITO, CALIFORNIA

Go west, young lovebirds, and exchange vows at this historic lodge with the Golden Gate Bridge as your backdrop. (Fun fact: San Fran's favorite landmark celebrates the big 7-5 this year!) A former Army fort that now sits on national parkland, the property offers plush rooms in revamped officers' quarters and one-of-a-kind event spaces like a 1901 gymnasium turned stately ballroom with sky-high ceilings. Then there's the lawn; with such stellar views, you can skimp on décor and no one will notice. Flip the page for more ways to fill a wedding weekend here.

GREAT ESCAPES

>>LOCATION SCOUT



SAUSALITO

BOOK A ROOM at Cavallo Point, and urge your guests to do the same—it'll be like one big ole sleepover (from \$339, cavallopoint.com).

FIND IDEAS for amazing favors, nifty bridal-party gifts, clever decorations, and more by scouring the website *SFMade*, a collection of awesome local companies (sfmade.org).

BUILD EXCITEMENT for the main event by gathering friends and family together for a welcome meal of wood-fired, sourdough-crust pizza at nearby *Bar Bocce*. Schedule it for the afternoon and, after several rousing rounds of bocce ball, you'll find that heaven is sitting on the restaurant's bay-front patio with a house-made fudgsicle in hand (barbocce.com).

TREAT YOUR ATTENDANTS to a kayak trip with *San Francisco Kayak & Adventures*. You'll have your pick of itineraries, but our vote goes to the voyeuristic paddle through Sausalito's colorful floating-home community (\$100 per person, sfkayak.com).

GIVE YOUR GUESTS a great time and a memorable takeaway by hiring *The Laugh Box* to create flip books at your wedding. They'll assemble a photo booth-style setup, shoot your loved ones for seven seconds acting goofy with signs and props, then turn the video into a keepsake right then and there (price upon request, thelaughbox.com).

PASS OUT individually wrapped, chocolate-covered gelato bites from *Bacetti* at the end of the night. It's hard to say which is cooler: the graphic checkerboard packaging or the frozen treats inside (\$53 for 48, bacetti.com).

GOOD BUYS

Whether you're a clotheshorse or a home designophile, here are four unexpected, but incredible, places to get your shop on. Just be sure to bring an extra suitcase—you're going to need it.



<< FOR UNIQUE DÉCOR TLAQUEPAQUE, MEXICO

Galleries and showrooms like *Antigua de México* (antiguademexico.com), housed in old mansions, line the cobblestone streets of this charming Guadalajara suburb. Go for pottery, art, and metalwork.

FOR FAB FASHION >> SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA

This bustling metropolis has some seriously chic stores, such as *Boon the Shop* (boontheshop.co.kr), as well as a hot crop of young designers, including *Hanii Y* (haniy.co.kr) and *Sang A* (sanga.com), whose purse is shown at right.



<< FOR SUMPTUOUS TEXTILES SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS

It's all about the cashmere, tartan, and tweed in this craggy coastal region. Buy bolts of fabric, sweaters, socks, throws, or scarves (those at left are from *Johnstons of Elgin*, johnstonscashmere.com).



FOR OFF-THE-HOOK ANTIQUING >> BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

The area near Grand Sablon is a treasure trove of wonderful old things. Lose yourself in shops like *Costermans Antiques* (costermans-antiques.com), and delight in weekend flea markets.



GOOD TO KNOW Roll up your delicate silk tops and dresses before packing them, and you'll be left with an unwearable creasefest. Instead, keep them in their plastic dry-cleaning bags, remove the hangers, and lay them flat in your suitcase. Taking along a travel-size wrinkle-release spray won't hurt, either.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: KODIAK GREENWOOD, COURTESY OF CPTM/RICARDO ESPINOSA; COURTESY OF BOON THE SHOP; COURTESY OF VISITSCOTLAND/SCOTTISH VIEWPOINT/PTOMKINS; COURTESY OF THE BELGIAN TOURIST OFFICE; EMILY KATE ROEMER (PRODUCT STILLS)

GREAT ESCAPES



BY SEA OR BY TREE

Put a spin on the standard honeymoon suite by booking a room at one of these dreamscapes, where you'll be sleeping with the fishes or nesting with the birds, and loving every minute of it.

OVERWATER BUNGALOWS

MANIHI PEARL BEACH RESORT, FRENCH POLYNESIA

You know you're in an OWB when you can have breakfast delivered by outrigger canoe. And, trust us, nothing goes better with eggs than a side of sea views. This flight of fancy (above) is elevated atop the lagoon of Manihi, part of the Tuamotu Archipelago. Inside the rustic-luxe rooms, glass panels in the floor serve as peepholes to the water world below, home to tropical fish and black-tip sharks. After lazy days of snorkeling, spend evenings sipping mai tais—*maita'i*, fittingly, means "good" in Tahitian (from \$295, spmhotels.com).

WHEN TO GO Late spring and early fall have fewer crowds and peachy weather.

HOW TO GET THERE Jet into Papeete, Tahiti, then take the one-hour flight to Manihi.

PUNTA CARACOL ACQUA-LODGE, PANAMA

This retreat (inset), in the Caribbean off Isla Colón, gives you license to chill. The nine colorful suites are crowned with palm fronds and powered by the sun. (Surprisingly, each is two stories with a four-poster bed on the top floor.) Right when you arrive, throw open the doors to your deck, breathe in that fresh sea air, and slip into your bikini. Cannonballs are in order (from \$344, puntacaracol.com).

WHEN TO GO Target February to March or September to October to avoid the rainy seasons.

HOW TO GET THERE Fly into Panama City, transfer to Bocas del Toro, then take a short boat ride.



HOTEL PALAFITTE, SWITZERLAND

But Switzerland's not on the ocean, you say, and right you are. But these suites (opposite, top) sit over fresh water, poised on stilts in Lake Neuchâtel, on the outskirts of a French-speaking town of the same name. The light-filled rooms are kitted out with decadent extras like hot tubs. A ladder leads directly from your balcony into the H₂O, if you fancy a dip. And the views? Breathtaking. Across the lake, the snowcapped Alps cut a formidable figure against the sky (\$725, palafitte.ch).

FROM LEFT: COURTESY OF SPM HOTEL MANAGEMENT COMPANY; COURTESY OF PUNTA CARACOL

WHEN TO GO Aim for the summer. It'll cost a bit more but be warm enough to actually swim.

HOW TO GET THERE Hop a plane to Geneva, then take the train to Neuchâtel.

TREE HOUSES

BANGKOK TREE HOUSE, THAILAND

As far as Asian capitals go, Bangkok is one of the buzziest. Nestled into one twist of the Chao Phraya River that runs through it, however, is a jungly, barely developed section of the city known as the "green lung." And this oasis has just seen the arrival of a cool eco-friendly hotel. Built among mangroves, its accommodations are called "nests," save for one special "view with a room," an open-air platform (inset) ingeniously hidden away from prying eyes (from \$149, bangkoktreehouse.com).

WHEN TO GO February and March have the most agreeable weather.

HOW TO GET THERE Take the train from the airport to Bang Na Station, and then grab a cab to the pier for a ferry to the resort.

INKATERRA RESERVA AMAZONICA, PERU

There's something very romantic in a "me Tarzan, you Jane" way about shacking up 90 feet above the wilds of the Amazon. The perch (middle right) is connected to a web of walkways that link to observation platforms where you can sip pisco sours at twilight, courtesy of a "canopy butler." Make it an early night because your new neighbors, the howler monkeys, are definitely morning people (two-night lodge package from \$492 per person; tree house is an extra \$300 a night; inkaterra.com).

WHEN TO GO The months of December through May average a comfortable 85 degrees.

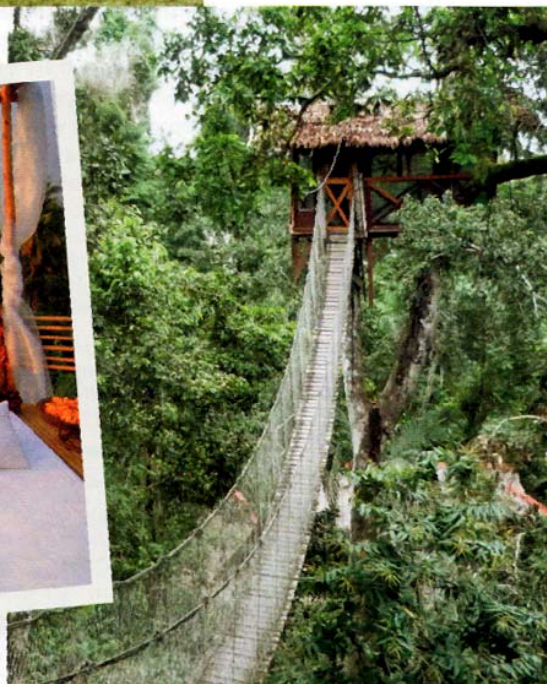
HOW TO GET THERE Daily flights are available from Lima, via Cusco, to Puerto Maldonado. From there you'll take a 45-minute boat ride to the lodge.

NGONG HOUSE, KENYA

Every boho-gypsy fantasy you've ever had can play out in this sanctuary (bottom) located in a tony suburb of Nairobi. Stilted houses, flanked by acacia trees, have a louche elegance: Canopied daybeds are piled with pillows, antique kilim rugs cover the floors, and wrought-iron chandeliers dangle from peaked ceilings. The city is a jumping-off point for safaris (the famed wildebeest migration happens in Kenya), but drop by the shop featuring the owner's clothing line before you leave (from \$840, all-inclusive, ngonghouse.com).

WHEN TO GO Shoot for the dry seasons: January to March, and then from July through October.

HOW TO GET THERE Simply fly into Nairobi and the lodge will collect you at the airport.



GREAT ESCAPES

HONEYMOON DIARY:

SINGAPORE & MALAYSIA

TWO DAYS AFTER their August 2011 nuptials in Provence, photographer Aneta Mak and garden designer Philip Hopper jetted off to Langkawi, Malaysia. "The island was where we took our first holiday together, and it held so many wonderful memories for us," says Aneta. "This time we started in Singapore. I'd been there once before, but Phil had always wanted to go." Especially because he got to catch the preparations for what was an epic Formula 1 night race. The result was a picture-perfect trip that already has these two Londoners eager for the next round.

THE LOGISTICS

TRIP LENGTH 12 days: three nights in Singapore and eight on Langkawi

AIRLINE Singapore Airlines (singaporeair.com)

TRAVEL TIME 13 hours from London to Singapore; another 90 minutes from there to Langkawi

HOTEL BOOKING Mr & Mrs Smith (mrandmrsmith.com)

Favorite hotel? We can't decide!

"In Singapore we chose the new **Fullerton Bay Hotel**, which has an amazing rooftop bar and pool—really the ideal place for a city break," says Aneta (fullertonbayhotel.com). "On Langkawi, we stayed at **The Datai** in a villa surrounded by trees; it felt as if we were sleeping in the rain forest (thedatai.com.my). Then we switched it up at a beach villa with its own hot tub and private garden at **The Four Seasons** (fourseasons.com). Utter relaxation."

If you go to Singapore, don't miss ...

"Sentosa Island," says Phil. "It's essentially a huge amusement park, and we were like little kids trying out every ride. We loved the wave machine, where you attempt to surf a strong jet of water on this tiny board."

Best tip for taking on the city

"Don't forget to stay hydrated—seriously. Singapore is unbelievably hot and humid," Aneta says. "Also, the taxis were cheap, plentiful, and super-air-conditioned. We took them everywhere."

The meal that still makes our mouths water

"Pretty much every time we ate it was an event—we love food," says Aneta. "That said, the mixed-fish curry at **Ikan-Ikan** inside The Four Seasons was by far the best dish of the whole trip. And The Datai had the most incredible French pastries, like mini pain au chocolates and croissants."

One local you've got to meet

"**Aidi Abdullah** is the resident naturalist at The Four Seasons," Phil says. "We went on a mangrove boat tour with him during our first trip to Langkawi, and this time we hired him to take us up in the mountains to a more secluded part of the island. He describes everything with such passion and enthusiasm, which made us fall in love with all that we saw."



TROPIC WONDER 1. The newlyweds spent many an afternoon lounging on the settee outside their suite at The Four Seasons. 2. Together, these two snapshots add up to one happy couple. 3. From their room at the Fullerton Bay Hotel in Singapore, the couple had a dead-on view of the famed Marina Bay Sands resort. 4. Aneta picked up this blue scarf with metallic tassels at a roadside stand on Langkawi.

ANETA MAK PHOTOGRAPHY