



“Sell the wedding and honeymoon packages together. This way the couple will still qualify for any honeymoon offers”

REBECCA EVANS
MARKETING EXECUTIVE, FUNWAY HOLIDAYS



► beach or a champagne breakfast in a private villa are also available.

The group's Enchanted Island Resort in the Seychelles lays on the style in a luxurious hideaway within a designated National Marine Park. Personalised culinary creations inspired by traditional customs and local island produce, bespoke bath menus and couple's spas add further romantic touches.

W Maldives Retreat & Spa (wretreatmaldives.com) puts the focus on pampering with its innovative AWAY Spa, six gourmet eating options and WOW ocean suites combined with a Whatever/Whenever service programme.

What's new

Operators: Since the Civil Partnership Act came into effect a few tour operators have added same-sex weddings to their programmes, although most gay and lesbian couples tend to book with a specialist. Only a handful of destinations offer services that are legally binding in the UK but one company which has found some that do is Perfect Weddings Abroad (perfectweddingsabroad.co.uk), which has its own gay specialist division, Perfect Gay Honeymoons, featuring options in Canada, New Zealand and South Africa.

Commitment ceremonies (no legal status) are an alternative option for this market and can be arranged in most destinations.

Kuoni has them in Central Park, New York, the Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, and at the St Christopher's Chapel in Cairns, Australia.

Planet Holidays' new destinations for 2015/16 include Skopelos and Milos in Greece, the Alentejo region in Portugal, Italy, Madeira, Romania & the Azores. The company highlights smaller or lesser-known Greek islands and island-hopping for honeymoons.

Osborne & Ebel (osborneandebel.com) is active in over 30 countries and has an extensive portfolio of wedding accommodation. If Only (ifonly.net) features wedding experiences in Seychelles, Mauritius, Sri Lanka and Bali and Thailand from £965pp (Sri Lanka)

Destinations: Sri Lanka, Thailand and Mauritius remain in strong positions as perennial favourites for Kuoni, having remained in the operator's top 10 since 1999. Indonesia is now up to sixth place in 2015 with an increasing choice of boutique hotels in Bali and Lombok. Another destination seeing growth in honeymoons is Mexico, showing demand for quality all-inclusive is high.

The British Virgin Islands Tourist Board will unveil its '60 Best-Kept Secrets' campaign late this year, with a series of promotions, offers and incentives. Ginny Hawksley, UK Manager, says: "BVI is a beautiful



honeymoon destination. Encourage guests to venture outside of their resort to discover friendly local restaurants and attractions like Callwoods Rum Distillery on Tortola, or excursions to sample the fresh Anegada Lobster."

Jamaica is well set up for easy-to-arrange weddings which can even be booked last minute. Chloe Cardon, Jamaica Tourist Board, says "We booked a wedding for a busy professional couple who could find only a seven-day gap in both their schedules and originally thought a European destination would be their only realistic option. They were really looking for a beach wedding and we managed to arrange everything with the local resort coordinator so they could get married ASAP after arrival."

Accommodation: Six Senses Laamu (sixsenses.com) has a *Honeymoon Bliss* package, including domestic flights from Male airport, private barbecue dinner on the beach, private sunset cruise on a traditional Maldivian sailing Dhoni, in-room champagne breakfast and a 60-minute couples massage.

Salalah Rotana Resort in Oman (rotana.com) has an Engraved Romance package with guests staying in a deluxe oceanfront room. It includes breakfast in bed, a three-course dinner in Silk Road Restaurant, one spa treatment

and airport transfers (from £272 per night).

High-end Peruvian hotel group [Inkaterra](http://Inkaterra.com) (Inkaterra.com) offers an *Adventure Honeymoon* package including three nights of full-board at Inkaterra Reserva Amazonica lodges, two nights full-board at Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel and two nights' half-board at Inkaterra La Casona. Prices start from £3,880 per couple, based on seven nights' accommodation, including transfer and excursions.

St Lucia boutique villa resort, Cap Maison (capmaison.com), which has featured twice on the US reality programme *The Bachelor*, is offering 10% commission to agents booking its wedding and honeymoon packages.

The family-operated Jamaica Inn (jamaicainn.co.uk), in Ochos Rios, is offering a 'Celebration of Love' package which includes a spa treatment.

Rosewood Little Dix Bay (rosewoodhotels.com), on Virgin Gorda in the British Virgin Islands, is looking to attract the romance market by the introduction of an engagement package. Designed to cut the complexity and nerves of a perfect proposal, the *Just Bring the Ring* package comes with an on-site expert available to help. Adrián Hoteles (adrianhoteles.com) in Tenerife has couples covered through its new online shop



USE A SPECIALIST!

Melanie Salt-Hexter, travel consultant at Gates Travel in Kendal, married Chris Hexter at Alba Villas on a privileged and unspoilt cliff-top setting above Albandeira beach, in Portugal.

She recalls: "Gosh it's almost impossible to single out one highlight of my magical day. Arriving in Alba Villas electric cart... walking towards the gathered family and friends - seeing the pristine white covered chairs, the decorations, the love of my life Chris waiting for me, sun shining, deep blue sky, perfect moment."

"Alba Villas did us proud, I have been selling weddings to the Algarve using specialist Planet Weddings and just love the Algarve as it ticks so many boxes - easy access from the UK, short flight, stunning scenery, huge choice of venues!"

"I'd tell other agents to do their research and book through a specialist."