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PROJECT RUNAWAY

10 DIVINE HONEYMOON DESTINATIONS: FROM ASIAN CITIES AND ART ENCLAVES TO ZESTFUL TROPICAL PARADISES AND WINE COUNTRIES



Venture to the great outdoors in Canada's Jasper Natural Park

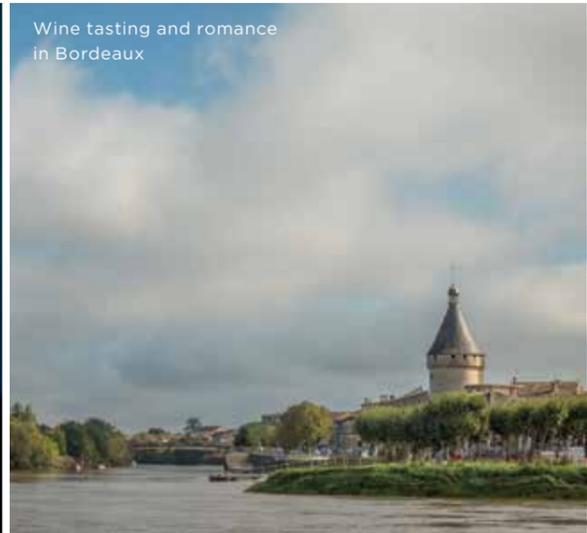
AFTER SPENDING MONTHS CONSUMED by dress fittings, menus, flowers and seating charts, the honeymoon can't arrive soon enough. These wanderlust-worthy spots will help you both get your groove back, whether you seek fun in the sun, cultural immersion, fine food or a winter wonderland. And best of all, these locations are easily accessible from Los Angeles or San Francisco whether your transportation is by plane, train or automobile.

Alberta

Canada has the ideal solution for pairs whose dream honeymoon involves the open road and the great outdoors. The province of Alberta offers four seasons of fun and is home to both big cities and pristine stretches of wilderness, namely Banff and Jasper national parks, which are connected via the Icefields Parkway. (Hardcore nature lovers should add trip days for Kootenay and Yoho parks.) Opt for whatever woody experience floats your boat, including rafting, snuggly sleigh rides, wildlife photography, skiing and horseback riding. Relax like royalty with a pit stop at "The Castle in The Rockies," aka the **Fairmont Banff Springs** (fairmont.com/banff-springs). After attending the epic afternoon tea, log time in the wood-and-water-themed spa's mineral pool and get a glacial mud body mask. Historic Fairmont properties, found all along the route, always deliver lavish lodgings and notable architecture. Traveling by train to Alberta is also a very romantic option (amtrakvacations.com).

Bordeaux

Venture to Bordeaux, France's largest wine-growing region and home to prestigious vintners such as Château Margaux and Château Lafite Rothschild. To truly enjoy the



Wine tasting and romance in Bordeaux

bold reds and sweet whites with abandon, leave the navigating to **AmaWaterways' Taste of Bordeaux seven-night cruise** (amawaterways.com). The wine-themed river cruise includes tastings, vineyard explorations, iconic châteaux, expert lectures, city tours (La Cité du Vin and the postcard town of Saint-Émilion are highlights), farmers' market excursions, bike rides through the countryside, unlimited Wi-Fi and meals that showcase local specialties, such as entrecôte à la bordelaise, Blaye asparagus, lamprey and canelés. Bonus: passengers skew a decade younger on these voyages than on the average cruise. Balconies and oversized bathtubs help guests avoid cabin fever. Extend the trip for a few days in bustling Bordeaux to shop the Triangle d'Or and Saint-Pierre districts, stroll the green belts along the Garonne River and stare at hundreds of architectural feats rescued by a massive restoration project, such as the Gothic Cathédrale Saint-André.

Cartagena

If the Colombian colonial city's impressively preserved centuries-old walls could talk, they'd speak of romance and riches, pirates and piqueteaderos (rustic eateries), Bolívar and books by Gabriel García Márquez.

LEFT: COURTESY OF FAIRMONT BANFF SPRINGS; RIGHT: COURTESY OF AMAWATERWAYS



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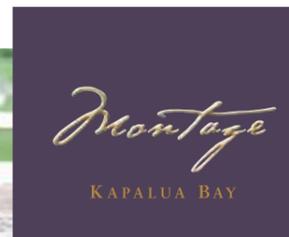
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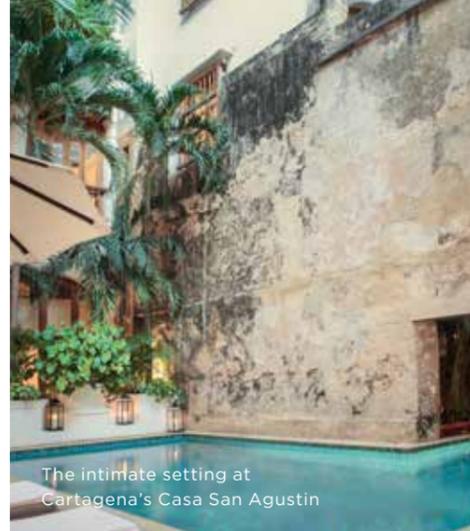
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The intimate setting at Cartagena's Casa San Agustin



Skyline views of Tokyo at The Ritz-Carlton



Overwater bungalows at Sandals South Coast in Jamaica

Wander without a checklist, eating arepas and sipping fresh fruit juice, through the UNESCO World Heritage site, composed of a maze of narrow cobblestone alleys, dominating churches, bougainvillea-draped balconies, colorful buildings and lively plazas. Then climb the northern ramparts to watch the sunset and dance the night away at a salsa club. Catch some respite at **Casa San Augustin** (hotelcasasanagustin.com), which feels like an intimate home (three white-washed houses, to be precise). Contemporary conveniences such as Frette linens and air conditioning blend with the Old World charm of beamed ceilings and authentic frescos. The pool, built under the ruins of an aqueduct, is one of the prettiest in the world. Pump up the passion with roses, candles and chocolate-covered strawberries for the suite. Take a taxi to Bocagrande, a miniature Miami, or go on a day trip by boat to the Rosario Islands for a beach fix.



Find crystal clear water, sandy beaches and romance in Fiji

Fiji

Aspiring mermaids will want to steal away to this archipelago, composed of more than 333 islands, stunning coral reefs and blue lagoons. Fiji boasts postcard-perfect whitesand beaches with swaying palms in the Mamanuca Islands and along the main island of Viti Levu's Coral Coast, home to **Royal Davui Island Fiji** (royaldavuiifiji.com), an adults-only hideaway on a tiny island that accommodates only 32 guests. Still too crowded? Staff will drop newlyweds on a temporary sandbar in the Beqa Lagoon for a private picnic and snorkeling. Vanua Levu, the second largest island to the north, is sleepier and more traditional, but still offers plush resorts, such as **Namale Resort and Spa** (namalefiji.com), that organize amazing waterfall hikes and saltwater drifts. If scuba diving with sharks tops the to-do list, there's no better place than the **Jean-Michel Cousteau Resort** (fijiresort.com), headed by a member of the famous ocean-exploring clan with a full-time marine biologist on staff. And couples can experience the ultimate South Pacific staple, the overwater bure. Choose one of the overwater bungalows at the newly opened **Fiji Marriott Resort Momi Bay** (marriott.com), which boast big decks and soaking tubs.

Jamaica

Sandals Resorts has a new trick up its sleeve to maintain its reign as the Caribbean's romance expert—overwater bungalows—and the bespoke on-the-water experience will cause anyone to rethink their aversion to all-inclusives. Twelve such bungalows recently opened at **Sandals South Coast** (sandals.com), just pass the “kissing tree,” on the secluded side of the property at the end of a heart-shaped pier. After being retrieved from the airport in a BMW, you'll check in at the VIP lobby and be introduced to your butlers, who are on call

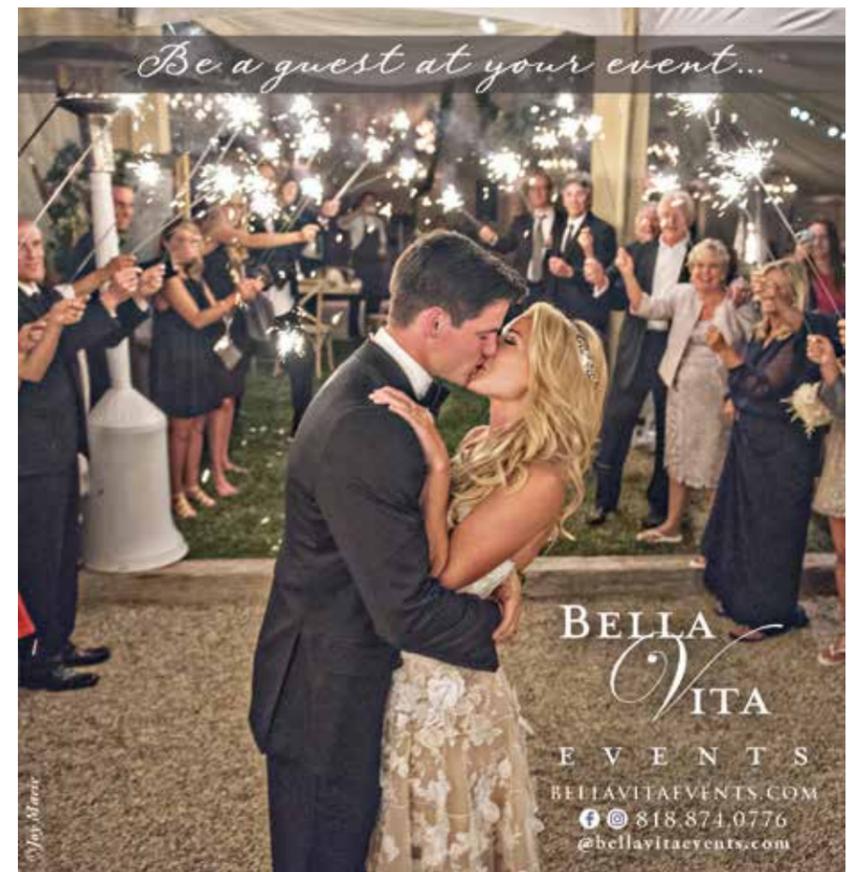
24/7 to draw baths in the outdoor tub for two, schedule tours or unlimited scuba/snorkel trips (included), pop Champagne and fetch food from an exclusive in-room menu or one of the resort's nine restaurants (don't miss The Jerk Shack!). Enjoy the meal in your king bed while watching fish pass under the glass floor panel, the deck's hammock or your cabana, back on land. If you'd prefer conch and rock-wall climbing to Bob Marley and Blue Mountain coffee, check out the suites on stilts at **Sandals Grande St. Lucian**.

Japan

Thanks to an awesome package jointly offered by the **Ritz-Carlton hotels in Tokyo and Kyoto** (ritzcarlton.com), your honeymoon hashtag game will be strong (#taleoftwocities, #capitalgains, #landoftherisingfun, to coin a few). The One Journey, Two Capitals experience comes with breakfasts, resplendent accommodations, bullet train tickets, airport transfers and the Ritz-Carlton's renowned service standards. It exposes couples to the ancient riverside cultural heart of the country, with its Zen temples, geisha districts, shrines, fiery festivals, samurai legends and mysterious bamboo forests, as well as to Japan's modern hub, with its cat cafés, neon signs, culinary superstars and wild nightlife. Some activities are included, such as a guided tour of Tsukiji fish market, morning tai chi, bicycle rentals and a soap-making class. Other experiences (sushi-making lessons, Dassai premium sake tasting and geisha/samurai dress-up) are worth the additional charge. If possible, time your trip to coincide with ephemeral cherry blossom season (usually late March–April) or the late fall foliage change.

Mexico

Our neighbor to the south offers plenty of places to please seekers of sun and sand, perhaps none more so than Baja's Los Cabos, which is a quick plane ride from California. The Sea of Cortés,



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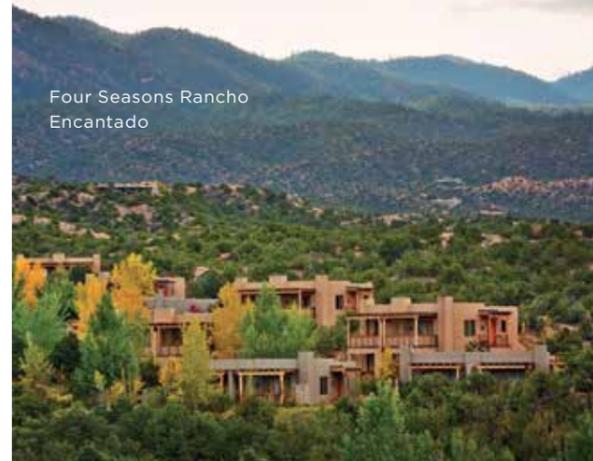
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Four Seasons Rancho Encantado

aka the aquarium of the world, is home to whale watching, sand falls, wreck dives and sport fishing. On land, there are art walks, dune buggies, cliffside golfing, great mezcal bars (such as Drift) and a growing dining scene committed to all the buzzwords (e.g., farm to table, hook and cook). And there's just as much variety when it comes to lodgings. The Thompson Hotel's gorgeous modern boutique hotel **The Cape** (thompsonhotels.com) sits beachfront on a popular surf break and features expansive rooms with copper soaking tubs, porch swings, complimentary tequila and views of the iconic rock arch. The hardest decision during a stay here will be whether to spend more time at The Rooftop bar, the spa (best steam room ever), the saltwater plunge carved into rock or Enrique Olvera's Manta, a Pacific Rim fusion joint.

Santa Fe, New Mexico

The Land of Enchantment doesn't require a passport, yet the nation's oldest capital city feels like a different world, thanks to the lasting influence of indigenous tribes, Spanish missionaries and multiple waves of Anglo settlers, including frontiersmen, artists like Georgia O'Keeffe and wellness-minded outdoorsy types. This unique



Wine tasting at Santa Margherita winery in Tuscany

TOP: COURTESY OF FOUR SEASONS RANCHO ENCANTADO;
BOTTOM: COURTESY OF SANTA MARGHERITA



Panoramic views of Mexico's Sea of Cortes from The Cape hotel's lobby bar

blend can be seen in the adobe architecture, the year-round Indian Market, chile-centric cuisine (La Lecheria even puts it in ice cream!) and more than 100 galleries on Canyon Road. Treat yourself to a lux casita at the **Four Seasons Rancho Encantado** (fourseasons.com/SantaFe), a tranquil property in the middle of nature just 10 minutes outside of town. There's nothing more romantic than falling asleep by the light of the wood-burning kiva and waking up to piñon trees dusted in snow. After a hike with the hotel's adventure architects, and a blue corn-and-honey wrap at the spa, borrow the house convertible to grab Frito pies at Five and Dime, hit the practically in-town slopes, wander the central plaza and trippy Meow Wolf, and sip hot elixirs at Kakawa Chocolate House.

Tuscany

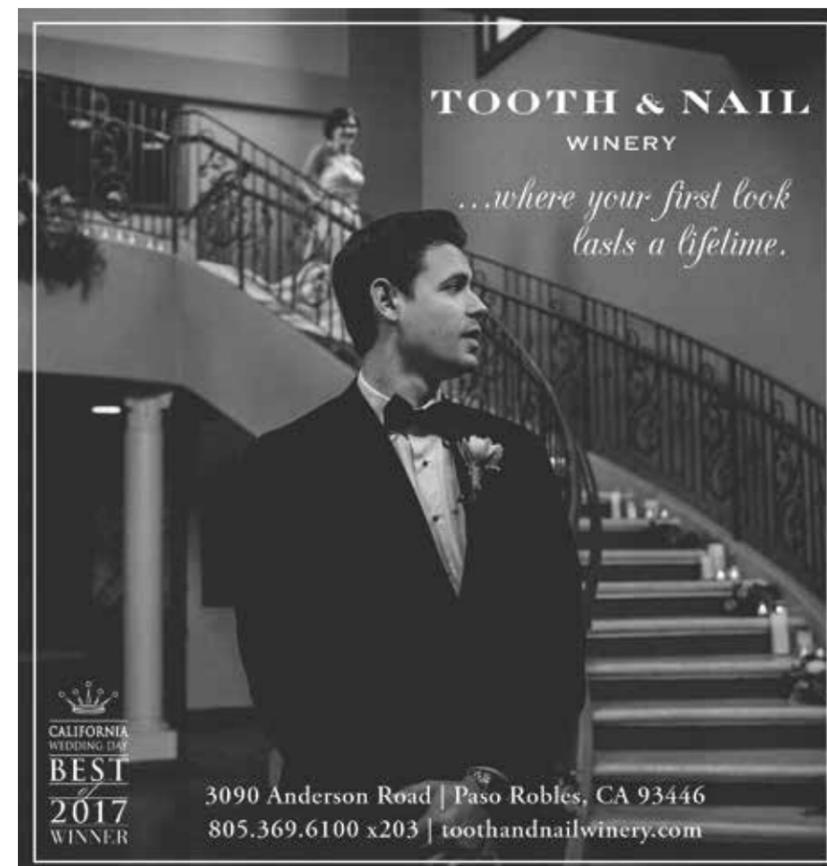
Tuscany is a perennial pick for pasta perfectionists, wine enthusiasts and art lovers. Start with an urban experience in Florence to take in all the stunning sights (the Duomo, humming piazzas, the Ponte Vecchio, the Uffizi, Boboli Gardens, Arno River paths) and eat gelato. Save room for the personal cake that welcomes you to your 18th-century palazzo pad, **Relais Santa Croce** (baglionihotels.com). Then, head for the hills of Chianti country, which are so beautiful that photographs don't do them justice. Set up your home base at an old estate such as **Villa Le Barone** (villalebarone.com) in the heart of Chianti Classico (about 20 miles outside Florence) and pass your days meandering through vineyards and olive groves, scooting to quaint villages for espresso. Taste everything made here, such as the berry breakfast cakes, goat cheese and the rich olive oil pressed at Greve's Lamole di Lamole winery. Stop at its sister winery, Santa Margherita Tenimenti Toscani, to learn about modern winemaking techniques, such as concrete fermentation tanks. Splurge on a tour that pairs the best Sangiovese-based vintages and crisp whites with a mouth-watering four-course lunch at Vitique, a bistro and market that opened in 2017

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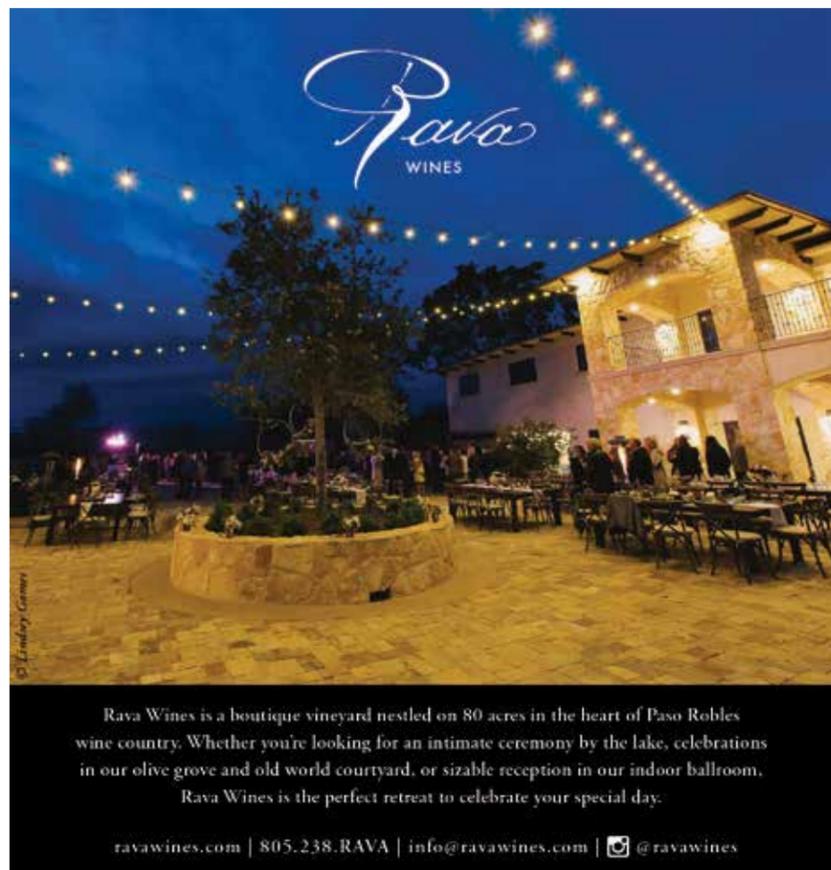
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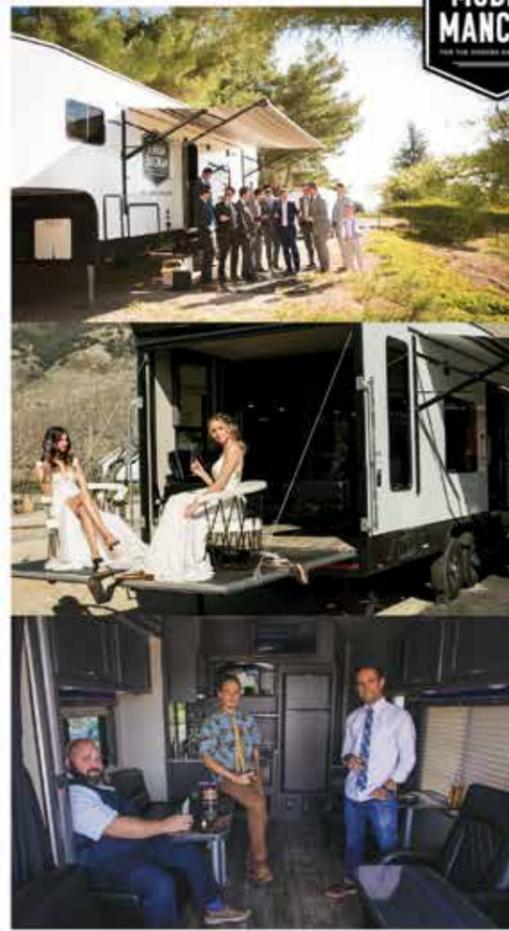
Beach and endless views at Vietnam's InterContinental Danang Sun Peninsula Resort

Vietnam

Curving along the shores of the South China Sea, Da Nang offers honeymooners a travel trifecta of fresh and flavorful food, sensational shopping and beautiful beaches. The humming central Vietnam city has emerged as the country's tech hub, which is evident in its mesmerizing LED-lit cityscape at night. Settle into the finest luxury at the five-star **InterContinental Danang Sun Peninsula Resort** (danang.intercontinental.com), nestled on tropical Son Tra Mountain—also known as Monkey Mountain because of its feisty residents, among them the rare red-shanked douc langur. With panoramic views of the East Sea from every room, the 200-bedroom resort boasts an award-winning spa and Michelin-starred chef Pierre Gagnaire's restaurant La Maison 1888. The grounds are a work of art, featuring Vietnamese- and colonial-inspired architecture, with 200 rooms, suites and villas nestled among two infinity pools and multiple restaurants sprinkled from the mountaintop down to the beach, all accessed by jungle-lined paths or the resort's wooden funicular. Get a feel for the bustling beach town of Da Nang by taking a street food tour (request a stop at Xio Ga, the city's oldest chicken and sticky rice stand) with local celebrity chef and *New York Times* food blogger Summer Le. Warning: Wear loose clothing and be prepared to eat as the tour hits as many as six eateries. Don't miss Le's new venture, Nen Restaurant (restaurantnen.com), tucked along the Han River featuring a refined exploration of Central Vietnamese dishes, such as mi quang and bun bo. Get your shopping and historical fix by visiting nearby Hoi An, an ancient seaport known for its bevy of tailors and silk shops.

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