

Jamaica offers wedding and honeymoon concierge

Often ranked one of the top places for weddings and honeymoons, the island of Jamaica never falls short on romantic offerings for travelers.

For a seamless journey through Jamaica's wide-ranging wedding and honeymoon options, the Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) has an online concierge service for couples to utilize when planning their dream trip to the island. The online concierge is called "Wendy" and her role is to ensure visitors receive the best match for every taste and budget. Couples can get to know the Jamaican love guru at visitjamaica.com/weddings or on Twitter at twitter.com/weddingsinja. "While other islands may offer sun and sand, Jamaica presents a fantastic diversity of options for couples in search of rich cultural experiences in addition to a setting of extraordinary beauty," said John Lynch, Director of Tourism for the Jamaica Tourist Board. "The destination's distinct flavors and island vibe ensure that travelers have a memorable experience that will last a lifetime." The following are suggestions for tying the knot in Jamaica.

Top Five Places for a Wedding in Jamaica:

- 1) **Sunset Beach:** A spectacular sunset from the cliffs off Negril's Seven Mile Beach is just one of the breathtaking waterfront scenes offered across the island. Montego Bay and Treasure Beach are also great locales.
- 2) **Love Boat:** Choose a sunset ceremony on a sailboat bobbing on tropical waters, complete with reggae band and traditional Jamaican cuisine. Several tour companies invite couples to plan their wedding and reception onboard a catamaran.
- 3) **Tropical Garden:** Jamaica is home to many gardens with colorful tropical flowers and lush greenery providing a beautiful wedding backdrop. A top garden pick is Shaw Park Gardens – located high in the hills overlooking Ocho Rios with a stunning view of the seaside town below.
- 4) **Lovers' Leap:** A 518-metre cliff overlooking Cutlass Bay on Jamaica's rugged South Coast offers one of the most picturesque views on the island. Legend has it that two young slaves jumped to their deaths from this cliff after their secret love affair had been exposed, rather than being separated.
- 5) **Blue Lagoon:** Port Antonio's "Blue Lagoon" is a small, secluded lagoon renowned for its vivid blue colour. This location makes for a perfect "tropical paradise" setting for an intimate ceremony, and can only be accessed via a narrow lane off the coast road or by boat.

Top Three Jamaican Wedding Must-Dos:

- 1) **Jamaican Flavors:** Couples do well spicing up a reception menu with Jamaican flavors – from jerk seasoning and local seafood to traditional "festival" bread and world-renowned Blue Mountain coffee. "Matrimony," a fruit salad made with otaheite apples and soursop then bound with condensed milk, makes for a well-themed dessert. And no Jamaican wedding would be complete unless spiked with a little island rum.
- 2) **Reggae Beats:** Jamaica is the birthplace of reggae music. Once you're there, you'll find it's no wonder that the island inspired Bob Marley's One Love. Couples can easily add a little Jamaica to their ceremony and reception with some seductive reggae beats.
- 3) **Island Attractions:** Jamaica offers more attractions than any other Caribbean island, making it the perfect place for a romantic excursion or great way for entertaining friends and family pre/post nuptials. Snorkeling tours, river rafting, horseback riding, zipline canopy tours and breathtaking waterfalls are all in close proximity to most of the major resort areas.

Wedding Accommodation and Packages Couples can just relax and enjoy the journey when they walk down the aisle or honeymoon in Jamaica, choosing from a range of property types from exquisite villas and inns to luxurious resorts and boutique hotels. Many properties offer all-inclusive packages that include accommodations, meals, drinks and even the wedding ceremony. The following is a small sampling of wedding packages offered at various resorts across the island.

- **Breezes Resorts & Spas** have three resorts in Jamaica and have recently announced the new "Breezes Dream Wedding and Honeymoon Collection". With a choice of three wedding packages and five colorful "Island Inspirations" themes (aqua, tropical, seashell, flora and blossom), couples can tailor their big day to best fit their personalities. breezes.com
- **Half Moon, A RockResort**, was recently listed on CNN Go's "World's Best Wedding Venues" list and offers several wedding packages ranging from "Just the Two of Us" to "The Iconic," a wedding complete with all the tropical trimmings – Moët toast to post-wedding brunch & they've got you covered. Half Moon also offers the option to "go green" for your wedding, in keeping with their commitment to the natural environment. halfmoon.com
- **Riu Hotels & Resorts** has four properties in Jamaica and offers several wedding packages – from "free" (when booking five or more rooms at the resort) to "Caprice," that includes all the bells and whistles, even a mani-pedi and wedding day hairstyle for the bride. weddingsbyriu.com
- **Sandals Resorts** has seven properties on the island and has partnered with Martha Stewart Weddings to offer six signature wedding themes for couples – from "Island Paradise" to "Chic & Natural," these packages create an elegant day from start to finish. Sandals also have a honeymoon registry that allows guests to contribute to a dream trip – everything from a bottle of wine to a honeymoon massage. sandals.com
- **The Ritz-Carlton Golf & Spa Resort, Rose Hall** is offering a complimentary wedding ceremony and two-night anniversary stay for couples who book reservations with 25 rooms or more through December 20. The resort also has several wedding packages, such as the "Sunset Serenity" that includes a ceremony on the resort's private East Beach, string duet, round of golf or massage for the bride and groom, and brunch for the bridal party. ritzcarlton.com