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 DESTINATION WEDDINGS

More and more couples are choosing to have their weddings away from their hometowns at exotic destinations. Such weddings have different needs and requirements from weddings planned for local settings. Destination weddings offer the special option of two weddings: one for guests who are able to travel to the destination, and one for guests at home who are unable to travel. The couple should choose a destination in the same way they would choose a honeymoon location. Travel agents and the Internet are essential resources for scouting foreign destinations. When contemplating the location, the bride and groom should consider travel costs, weather, activities, and venue atmosphere.

Once the couple has decided upon the location, they may now take steps to cement their plans for the special day. Personally contact the resort/hotel to plan the details of the ceremony and reception. Be sure to discuss decorations, flowers, food, beverages, ambiance, and venue options. Ask for options and contracts to be sent via electronic mail or facsimile to ensure all details are written on paper and a verbal guarantee is not relied upon.

Some countries have different requirements for a marriage to be considered legal. Allow adequate time to ensure all documents are in order for the marriage. Choose wedding attire that complements the local weather. A long gown with layers of tulle will be very uncomfortable on a beach in Mexico. If travelling on an airplane, do not check the wedding attire. Pack the clothing in a carry-on bag, or make other arrangements with the airline for carrying the garments on board.

Give family and guests plenty of time to book accommodations and transportation. It is not likely everyone will be able to attend the wedding; nevertheless, send an invitation, as the guests will appreciate the gesture. Try to be considerate of costs when asking family and friends to travel for a wedding. Investigate different hotels and group rates.

Ensure all passports, identification, and vaccinations meet travel requirements. Some destinations require photo identification only; whereas, others insist upon a passport.

Consider incorporating local traditions into the wedding. A wedding which is authentic to the destination will be entertaining and a new experience for everyone.

