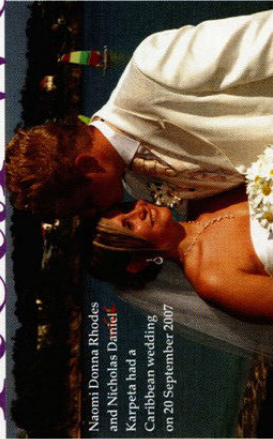


yourweddingabroad

Real weddings



Naomi Donna Rhodes and Nicholas Daniel Karpets had a Caribbean wedding on 20 September 2007

Caribbean

Where on earth

We were extremely lucky as we won our wedding on the Caribbean island of St Lucia through a competition with Sandals and Y&YV. We completely forgot about it until we got a phone call in January 2007 telling us we'd won! We were so happy as we wouldn't have been able to afford to get married until 2009.

Saying 'I do'

We had a civil ceremony overlooking the sparkling Caribbean Sea at the Regency Sandals Resort and Spa. It was really intimate and included a beautiful bible reading from Corinthians. I had one of my closest friends walk down the aisle with me, while family and friends who couldn't be there had given us gifts to open on the day, which was wonderful.

Party time!

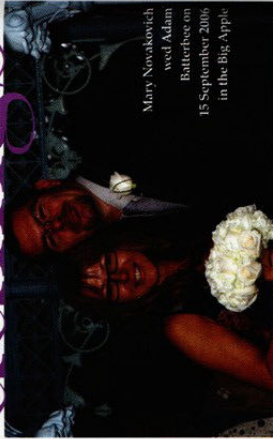
We decided to have a reception when we returned from St Lucia, which was great as it meant I was able to wear my wedding dress again! We hired a projector and showed our wedding photos on a wall for all our friends and family to see, so they didn't feel as though they'd missed out.

First night

Our first night was spent in the Butler Suite at the Regency Sandals Resort and Spa (sandals.co.uk). The suite had amazing views of the ocean and was a fantastic place to watch the sun set. It felt really decadent to have butlers wait on us, and whenever we came back to the apartment the bed was always covered in flowers with champagne on ice.

Plan it

Most of the organising of the big day took place when we arrived at the resort. Prices start from £1280 per person, staying in a Deluxe room at the Sandals Regency La Toc Golf Resort and Spa, in St Lucia. Sandals offers complimentary weddings for stays of seven nights or longer.



Mary Novakovich and Adam Batterbee on 15 September 2006 in the Big Apple

New York

Where on earth

We decided to get married in New York because it was easier for close family in Canada to join us. It was the second time for both of us, and we wanted something quite intimate. After doing a recess of Central Park, we stumbled on a delightful Victorian pavilion overlooking the lake at Hearnhead.

Saying 'I do'

Before the ceremony, we had lunch at a fantastic deli on the Upper West Side and it's where Carrie from *Sex And The City* went rowing with Mr Big! In the evening, we had a delicious three-course meal at the Trattoria dell'Arte on Seventh Avenue, followed by delicious cocktails.

Party time!

After the ceremony, we had champagne at the Boathouse which overlooks a beautiful boating lake. It's one of the most romantic restaurants in New York and it's where Carrie from *Sex And The City* went rowing with Mr Big! In the evening, we had a delicious three-course meal at the Trattoria dell'Arte on Seventh Avenue, followed by delicious cocktails.

First night

We spent our first night at the Wellington Hotel (wellingtonhotel.com) on Seventh Avenue, which is close to Broadway, Central Park and Times Square!

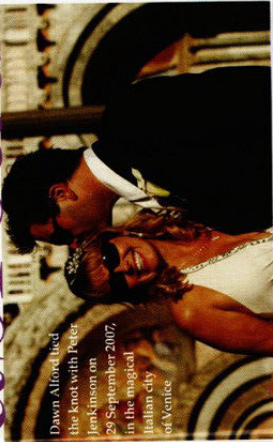
Plan it

Getting married in New York was made even easier for us by Kuoni's (kuoni.co.uk) wedding planner. For 2008, Kuoni offers a Romance Central Park wedding ceremony in New York from £630 per couple, which includes wedding coordinator, ceremony, horse and carriage ride and minister's fees.



yourweddingabroad

abroad



Dawn Alford tied the knot with Peter Jenkins on 29 September 2007, in the magical Italian city of Venice

Venice

Where on earth

Venice was the first place we visited together. I remember thinking when we were there, "If Peter ever proposes, I want to get married here!" Of course, I kept that from him at the time - we'd only been dating a few weeks!

Saying 'I do'

We had a civil service at the town hall, the Palazzo Cangini, which overlooks the Rialto Bridge, with 50 friends and family. The service was quite formal and in Italian but we made it fun by adding readings from friends, saying our own vows and hiring a harpist. Post-ceremony, we booked two Venetian singers - they were great, very Italian and got everyone dancing in the streets!

Party time!

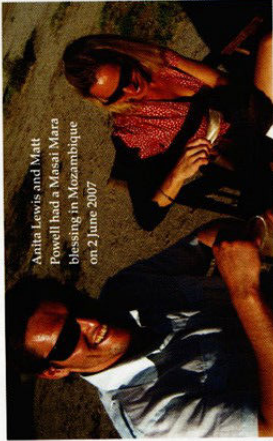
We booked with tradition and had pre-wedding drinks on the terrace of the Bauer Hotel (bauervervezia.com), which overlooks the Grand Canal. We were then led by two actors in Venetian costume and masks through the streets to the town hall. After the ceremony, they led our party back to St Mark's Square where we relaxed at a café for an hour or so with a glass of Prosecco, took photos and enjoyed the view. Our reception was at the Metropole Hotel (Vivaldi wrote *The Four Seasons* here). Welcome drinks were in the ornate garden and dinner was held inside the Vivaldi dining room.

First night

We stayed at the Metropole (hotelmetro.com) for our first night - in the Queen Anne Suite - a four-poster suite overlooking the canal. The following day we caught the train to Florence to stay at the Villa Massa.

Plan it

Our wedding planners - Alberto and Tina from weddingah.com - did all the planning, legal work and booking, so it simple... for us!



Anita Lewis and Matt Powell had a Masai Mara Blessing in Mozambique on 2 June 2007

Kenya

Where on earth

We first met in Kenya six years ago and I was keen to stay in lodges that practised responsible tourism, so a Kenyan safari followed by island hopping around northern Mozambique was the perfect solution.

Saying 'I do'

One of the stops on our amazing tour of Kenya was Shompole Lodge in the Rift Valley. I had secretly booked a Masai blessing here as a surprise for my husband. A witch doctor started the blessing ritual by reading our fortune and testing to see whether our spirits were compatible - fortunately they were! So we knelt down in front of him while he chanted and held sacred stones against our hearts for health, our heads for mental strength, my lower stomach for fertility and against Matt's arms for strength. We then stood while he circled us chanting, asking the gods to bless our marriage and life together.

Party time!

With 25 Masai tribesmen and women singing and dancing in the shadow of the setting sun and the stunning Shompole Mountain, it was an incredible spiritual experience that we'll never forget.

First night

We stayed in Little Shompole, the exclusive sister property of Shompole. Our palatial bed was nine-foot square with incredible views of the Great Rift Valley. Our room was huge, with a private lounge and 35m pool. We felt like royalty with the private guide, game viewing and full butler service.

Plan it

To Escape To (foescapeto.com) organised our itinerary. A similar trip (with blessing included) starts from £3725 per person including accommodation, flights and transfers.



Dreaming of an overseas day you'll never forget? Be inspired by couples who've tied the knot all around the world...