



Start OUT

IN Style

AFTER THE CEREMONY AND THE RECEPTION COMES THE ICING ON THE CAKE: YOUR HONEYMOON. HERE ARE 4 DISTINCTLY DIFFERENT, DELIGHTFUL OPTIONS.

By **Shayne Benowitz**

Still dreaming of that perfect honeymoon escape? Picture this: carving fresh powder in the Swiss Alps, discovering Incan antiquities in Machu Picchu, reveling in the sun and sea in Champagne-splashed St. Barths, or escaping to a private island off Key West. Whatever fantasy fits, we've got four luxury resorts to tempt your newlywedded wanderlust.

LE SERENO St. Barths

THE RESORT:

What's not to love about a piece of the French Riviera floating in the Caribbean? Le Sereno boutique hotel is located on the east end of the island of St. Barths on 600 feet of secluded beach overlooking the Grand Cul-de-Sac, a sailboat-laden bay protected by a thriving coral reef and marine reserve.

With 36 private suites and villas by Parisian interior designer Christian Liaigre, the Villa du Pêcheur is the ultimate honeymoon nest. The one-bedroom villa opens up to an expansive garden-lined wooden deck on the ocean with private pool, daybed and dining table. The design is contemporary beach house with glass French doors, a four-poster king-sized bed, Liaigre signature mirrors and sexy bathrooms of exotic wood with a soaking tub and granite sink.

At the open-air spa, reserve the dreamy couples suite framed by bougainvillea with sublime ocean views for a duo of warm seashell massages as the sounds of the ocean and cool sea breeze lull you into deep relaxation. The restaurant at Le Sereno is conceived by the same team behind South Beach's Juvia, serving French cuisine with pan-Asian influences and local Caribbean ingredients in a romantic, open-air setting on the beach.

THINGS TO DO:

On the west end of the island, Gustavia is the bustling center for designer shopping by day and fine dining and revelry by night. Amidst Chanel and Cartier, duck into the original Calypso St. Barth for island chic staples. When you're ready for dinner, Champagne and dancing, Bagatelle (which just opened a South Beach outpost) is a hotspot in Gustavia and Le Ti is a St. Barths institution located closer to home at Le Sereno. From \$542 per night; visit lesereno.com.

TRAVEL TIP: St. Barths is accessible by jet or ferry transfer from St. Martin/St. Maarten where you'll fly into from Miami. It's also an island-hopping hub in close proximity to Anguilla. Consider a daytrip to this idyllic British West Indies isle for lunch on a seaside cliff at the newly restored Malliouhana, an Auberge resort. Indulge in conch and spiny lobster pizza with a grilled kale stonefruit salad, and homemade coconut yogurt with tropical fruit for dessert.

* FROM TOP LEFT: Take in the Caribbean from a poolside perch; French cuisine with pan-Asian influences and breathtaking views are served at the property's restaurant; sleek, simple furniture draws attention to the main event: what's waiting for you outside.



JW MARRIOTT EL CONVENTO CUSCO Peru

THE RESORT:

Journey to the heart of an ancient civilization and one of the greatest wonders of the world in Cusco, Peru. Once the center of the Inca Empire circa 1100 A.D., it's also home to magnificent Machu Picchu, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in the Andes Mountains. The JW Marriott El Convento Cusco embodies a piece of that history through the restoration of a 16th-century San Agustín Convent to create the 153-room luxury hotel.

Located just two blocks from Plaza de Armas, Cusco's historic main square, restoration of this Pre-Incan site unearthed Killke remains (a style of pottery distinct from those characteristic of Inca), a ceremonial burial site and chapel. The hotel preserved these findings with portions of the original Incan walls integrated into the design, a cloister arcade opening up to the central courtyard and archeological exhibitions on view. Book the 970-square-foot Imperial Suite with separate dining and living rooms featuring an oversized marble bathroom and floor-to-ceiling windows with views of Cusco and the colonial wall that was once the entrance to the convent.

The 3,330-square-foot spa is a tranquil retreat for a couple's massage with a whirlpool, sauna, steam room and relaxation pool. On site, Pirqa Restaurant will satisfy your Peruvian dining cravings in an elegant setting with everything from *causas* (a whipped potato dish) to *tiraditos* (raw fish sashimi) to

lomo saltado (beef tenderloin sautéed with peppers and onions) on the menu. From \$299 per night; visit marriott.com/hotels/travel/cuzmc-jwmarriott-el-convento-cusco.

THINGS TO DO:

Machu Picchu is an hour and a half from Cusco, accessible by train via Inca Rail. There's plenty to explore on a day trip, but intrepid honeymooners may wish to embark on a two- to four-day hike up the mountain with an expert guide. In Cusco, there are plenty of architectural wonders to marvel over, from the Cathedral Qoricancha to the picturesque San Blas neighborhood. For an upscale dinner out, reserve a table for two at Chicha by Gastón Acurio, the star Peruvian chef who's also at the helm at La Mar in Miami's Mandarin Oriental.

TRAVEL TIP: At 11,154 feet above sea level, Cusco's elevation is actually higher than Machu Picchu's 7,970 feet. To counteract altitude sickness, drink coca tea, stay hydrated and eat slowly. The JW Marriott is equipped with in-room oxygen-enriched systems to further assist with acclimation.



* **CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:** The JW Marriott sits on the site of a 16th-century convent; in-room oxygen-enriched systems help guests acclimate to Cusco's extreme elevation; the property's sizable spa includes an indoor relaxation pool; enjoy an al fresco evening in the hotel's courtyard, located a couple of blocks from the city's historic main square.

GSTAAD PALACE

Switzerland

THE RESORT:

Nestled in the Swiss Alps, the chic, chalet-lined village of Gstaad has been a playground for the rich, famous and royal for over a century, with illustrious visitors ranging from the British Royal Family to French Prime Minister Jacques Chirac and a bevy of American movie stars, with Madonna counted as a regular. Standing sentry on a hilltop overlooking the picture-perfect village and cradled by rugged mountain peaks, Gstaad Palace was built in 1913 as the area's first luxury hotel and it's been the center of this glitzy social scene ever since.

With turrets climbing the corners of the castle walls, Gstaad Palace makes a regal first impression. With just 104 rooms, the Tower Junior Suite is a whimsical option for a honeymoon stay. At 640 square feet, outfitted in soft plaids and warm wood paneling, the suite features a balcony overlooking the mountains and an oversized bathroom with a soaking tub inside the tower for panoramic bay window views. For a one-of-a-kind experience during winter season, you can also arrange to spend the night in an igloo hotel on the slopes of Saanenmöser.

Back at the Palace, however, all the creature comforts await you, including a world-class spa with indoor-outdoor heated swimming pools. Couples can opt for a two-hour hydrotherapy hammam journey and indulge in a Jardin des Monts treatment using products made from flowers and herbs grown in the Alps. Book the Private Spa Suite featuring a sauna, steam bath, pool, shower and lounge area. For a romantic dinner, Le Grill is a white tablecloth, fine dining affair with magnificent dishes like red tuna canelloni with lobster and veal escalope paired with Swiss wines that you won't find back in the States.

THINGS TO DO:

With two distinct seasons: winter (mid-March to mid-December) and summer (mid-June to mid-September), the great outdoors is the main attraction here. In winter, hit the slopes with elevations as high as 6,500 feet. In summer, hike through lush green trails to Schönried. Of course, make time to visit the village's luxury shops from Moncler to Hermès, and dine at Michelin-star restaurants like Leonard's and Chesery. The après-ski scene is just as sought-after in Gstaad, with the Palace's GreenGo nightclub amongst the hottest in town. From \$527 per night; visit palace.ch.

TRAVEL TIP: Fly into Zurich and spend a night or two at the Widder Hotel's penthouse suite with a cozy fireplace, blue cloud marble Jacuzzi tub and private rooftop terrace with sweeping views of the Swiss banking capital before taking the two-hour train ride to Gstaad.

DID YOU KNOW...

French, German and Italian are spoken in Switzerland. Gstaad and Zurich are in the German-speaking portion of the country. However, you'll hear French spoken in Gstaad almost as often because of its proximity to the French-speaking region. For American travelers, English is also widely spoken in both cities.



* **CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:** Hitting the slopes, along with the requisite après-ski activities, are favorite winter pastimes; spacious rooms at Gstaad Palace offer a bird's eye view of the nearby Alps; relax in the spa lounge following a hydrotherapy treatment; soak in all the views from the oversized tub in the Tower Junior Suite.



SUNSET KEY COTTAGES

Key West

THE RESORT:

For a honeymoon closer to home that still feels worlds away from everyday life, escape to Key West and Sunset Key Cottages located on a private island accessible only by ferry. Newly minted as a Starwood Luxury Collection Resort, Sunset Key is a 27-acre island just 500 yards west of Key West.

With 40 spacious private cottages ranging from one to four bedrooms and 900 to 2,500 square feet, select the size that suits your needs. All feature spacious outdoor verandas with Adirondack chairs or private outdoor living areas, while the four-bedroom cottage boasts a private pool.

Canoodle in a hammock on the island's private beach or sunbathe by the lagoon-style pool. Book a couples' therapy massage in a spa suite featuring a private patio and full bathroom with ample Key West charm. As the name implies, Sunset Key is the ultimate destination for unobstructed sunset views, so align your dinner reservations at Latitudes accordingly. Enjoy a romantic meal of fresh spiny lobster or Wagyu skirt steak on the outdoor patio as the sunset paints the sky brilliant shades of pink and orange. From \$914 per night; visit sunsetkeycottages.com.

THINGS TO DO:

Arrange a romantic evening on the town starting with a sunset sail sipping wine aboard the Schooner Hindu, a 79-ft., square-rigged wooden sailboat originally built in 1925. Make dinner reservations at Santiago's, an intimate, dimly lit, tapas-style restaurant off the beaten path in Bahama Village. End your evening with a nightcap at The Other Side, a sophisticated craft cocktail bar in a historic Victorian mansion overlooking Duval Street.

TRAVEL TIP: With Aura Jets, you can arrive in style with a Champagne flight of fancy aboard a private jet from any airport in Florida direct to Key West. A driver will chauffeur you to Sunset Key where you can arrange to stay just for dinner at Latitudes or let this be the indulgent start to your honeymoon getaway.

* **CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT:** Located on a private island 500 yards away from Key West, Sunset Key Cottages are accessible only by ferry; opt to enjoy your spa treatment al fresco for a true Key West experience; spa suites include private patios and full bathrooms; available chaise lounges aren't hard to find with only 40 cottages on property.

