

Your Guide to Weddings Away • Honeymoons • Romance

WIN A FREE
HONEYMOON!
SEE PAGE 83

Destination Weddings & Honeymoons

PREMIER ISSUE

Spring 2005

Jamaica

Great Places
to Tie the Knot

Best Beach Gowns

Dream Weddings
to Inspire You

High-Seas Romance

10 Hideaways for
the Wild at Heart

Plus: Expert Advice,
Bride Ideas, and
6 Tips for the
Sexiest Honeymoon Ever!

Destination: Hawaii
Kapalua Bay, Maui

DISPLAY UNTIL APRIL 2005
\$4.95/CANADA \$6.95



DESTINATIONWH.COM





GOOD NATURED:
The island's varied wedding sites range from wet and wild at Dunn's River Falls (opposite) to sandy and serene at Ocho Rios (left).

Heart & Soul

The land of One Love overflows with options for your dream wedding. By Joe Yogerst

in Jamaica



Last year The Learning Channel scouted the Caribbean for the perfect place to tape a segment for its popular reality series, *A Wedding Story*. The TV channel's bridal team selected Couples Ocho Rios resort on Jamaica's north shore, where they found Matthew Engel and Rommy Muller of Aurora, Illinois, planning a fairy-tale wedding on a pier stretching out from the main beach, followed by a reception on nearby Tower Isle.

"We use Tower Isle as our nude beach during the day," says Gary Stephens, the resort's director of operations. "But at night, when we transform it with twinkling lights, a steel-drum band, and white-linen tablecloths, it's absolutely stunning."

So stunning that Couples decided Matthew and Rommy's creation should be available to other guests. "The wedding was so beautiful and such a hit on TV," Gary says, "we turned it into a wedding package available to all couples marrying here."

Jamaica has always been an incredibly romantic place, the island where Stella got her groove back and that inspired Bob Marley to compose some of the world's best love songs. But only recently has it become a destination-wedding mecca.

Jamaica's all-inclusive Sandals, Beaches, Breezes, and Couples resorts alone organize thousands of weddings a year. Add that to other all-inclusive resorts on the island—plus hundreds of hotels and rental villas that also host weddings—and you come to see that marriage is nearly as big as Rastafari and reggae in the land of Red Stripe.

Come One, Come All

"It seems like everyone wants to get married here these days," says Nadia Fagan, catering sales manager at Montego Bay's swank Ritz-Carlton Golf & Spa Resort, Rose Hall. "I think couples are drawn by our fabulous beaches, our romantic locations, and the fact that we cater to all religions. But Jamaica also offers a personalized touch. We can basically create any sort of wedding you want—casual, elegant, even artistic. I think that's why we've been so successful."

Winchester, Massachusetts, residents Jeff Macklin and Shannon Reed—who married on Jamaica's south coast at the Villas on Bluefields Bay—are typical of the couples who choose the island for their big day. "We liked that Jamaica isn't just a resort island," Jeff says, "but rather a country with





JOY TO THE WORLD: Michael Russell sweeps his bride, Angie Ward, off her feet (opposite) at Sandals Grande Ocho Rios Beach & Villa Resort; their five-course feast (above) fetes 50 friends and family. Flower power boosts the impact of a Ritz-Carlton rum cake (above right); angelic attendants (right) make another divine addition to a wedding at Rose Hall.





I Do, I Do....

How four couples tied the island knot

JANELE BUTCHER Weds TIM HOWELL

O a h u , H a w a i i

FULL MOONS AND LITTLE boys brought this California couple together. Janele Butcher, an elementary school teacher, was still in college when she accepted a job as a nanny for two small boys. The family took her with them on a month-long vacation to Hawaii, where she met and, under a full Hawaiian moon, fell in love with Timothy Howell, the boys' uncle.

Three years later it was Tim, an assistant tennis director, who brought Janele back to Oahu, planning to propose under a full moon at the exact spot where they met. When it came time to marry—November 8, 2003—there was only one place: Oahu.

"Planning a wedding so many miles away was challenging," Janele admits. "But through a mutual friend my mom and I discovered Social Butterfly, an Oahu-based planning company. For nine months we exchanged hundreds of e-mails and phone calls. It was worth it. Social Butterfly found the absolute perfect reception venue—a private home tucked away off the Kalaniana'ole Highway in Honolulu."



Social Butterfly helped spread the aloha spirit to the couple's 67 guests, welcoming each to the island with a Hawaiian *lauhala* box filled with flip-flops, sunscreen, Hawaiian snacks, a personalized map, and a list of things to do and see on the island.

On the long-awaited day, Janele, in a strapless Maggie Sottero gown and carrying green cymbidiums, met Tim at the altar of Honolulu's Holy Trinity Church. Following the 2:30 P.M. wedding, everyone returned to the private beachfront home to celebrate under the sun and stars.

Draped in orchid leis by Yvonne Floral Designs, guests helped themselves to hot and cold food stations catered by Indigo, featuring island flavors like lemon-grass-cured salmon with capers and wasabi cream. They marveled at the lifelike sugar orchids atop the cake by Carmen Emerson-Bass of Cake Couture. And they danced the night away to tunes spun by local DJ Raymond "Keoni" Ward. Few even noticed when the newlyweds slipped off for quiet time alone under—you guessed it—a full Hawaiian moon. ♦

BY SHARI MYCEK • PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRISSEY LAMBERT RHODES

The marriage process has been streamlined to the point where in some cases it's easier—and often cheaper—than tying the knot back home.



RHYTHM NATION: Romantic terraces at The Caves (opposite) reflect the laid-back pace of Negril. Reggae dance tunes fill the air (above) at one of Angie and Michael's prewedding parties; a local drummer (right) keeps it going all night long.

a thriving local culture. Shannon and I love the music, and music is everywhere you go in Jamaica.”

Like many couples, Jeff and Shannon had each visited the island during college and after graduation. It was during a weekend trip about three months before their marriage that they realized Jamaica would provide exactly what they wanted for their wedding in terms of atmosphere, logistics, and price. “By taking advantage of the off-season rates,” Jeff says, “we were able to make the trip reasonable for everyone.”

Two months before the August 2001 event, they got wedding guests into an island mood by mailing their invitations in bottles filled with sand and shells. Some of their friends expressed concerns about the island's safety, but Jeff and Shannon quickly soothed those fears.

“We felt 100 percent safe the entire time,” Jeff says, “and many of our best times were interacting with the staff and locals.”

Sweetheart Deals

Nearly every major Jamaican resort has a dedicated wedding planner. Thanks to the hotels, local tourism authorities, wedding suppliers, and government policies, the marriage process has been streamlined to the point where in some cases it's easier—and often cheaper—than tying the knot back home.

Speed, ease, and economics were three of the main factors that Paula McClendon of Rockwall, Texas, took into consideration in planning a destination wedding for her eldest daughter, Kelly, and Kelly's fiancé, Brian Cannon.

“They had finished school,” Paula says, “they were just getting started in their careers, and they didn't want to sit on a waiting list a whole year to pay \$30,000 or \$40,000 for an ordinary church wedding and reception at home in Dallas.”

They looked at resorts in Mexico and the Bahamas before finally settling on the Mais Oui Tennis & Spa Villa overlooking Discovery Bay—thought to be where Christopher Columbus first stepped ashore in Jamaica. With six bedrooms, the villa was large enough to house the dozen people in the wedding party. Other guests stayed at nearby bed-and-breakfasts and the all-inclusive Breezes Runaway Bay Resort & Golf Club, Grand Lido Braco Resort & Spa, and Portside Resort & Villas.

The ceremony, performed by a local minister, took place in a breezy gazebo at Mais Oui. The villa's ocean-view terrace held the reception.

Paula worked with Sherry Woodhouse, the co-owner and wedding planner from Mais Oui, until everything was perfect. “And it really was perfect,” Paula says, “down to the little things like the flowers and the (Continued on page 100)

(Continued from page 51)

photographs. It was organized in very little time and for very little money compared to what we would have spent back home. We would do it again in a heartbeat—the same way.”

Kathryn Wong of Ontario, Canada, had a specific vision in mind long before she married Israel Crooks at SuperClubs' Grand Lido Negril Resort & Spa in December 2003.

“I wanted red as my theme,” Kathryn says. “It was close to Christmas, and red has always been my favorite color. Picture trying to convey that idea from 3,000 miles away. But just to show how good the wedding planner was, she hit it dead on—red runners on white tablecloths, red votive candles, red flowers, and fairy lights that created a canopy over the reception area.”

After choosing their date online at the SuperClubs Web site and working with Grand Lido's wedding coordinator,

Sophia Haughton, the ceremony took place in the late afternoon in a hotel garden overlooking the sea. “Just as we were pronounced man and wife, a wave kicked up and gave us all a sprinkle,” Kathryn recalls fondly.

They opted for a classic Jamaican wedding banquet—jerk pork and chicken, curried goat, rice and peas, sweet-potato pudding, and a traditional island wedding cake of black fruitcake laced with white rum.

“Even though it was a big resort, and all-inclusive, they gave us a lot of flexibility,” Kathryn says. “And we didn't have to think about what we had forgotten—they took care of everything.”


Great & Small

Some of Jamaica's smaller, more intimate properties host only a handful of weddings each year. “I'd rather pass on a wedding than do something we're not

sued for,” says Greer-Ann Saulter, who owns and operates The Caves, an exclusive ten-cottage Island Outpost resort in Negril. “We'll do weddings with up to 70 people, but weddings of 30 or less are the most amazing—every moment is fabulous.”

Greer-Ann and her husband, Bertram, designed and built The Caves from scratch. “We run it sort of as an extension of our home,” she says, “and we extend that into our weddings—a very personal touch.”

“Instead of flying in flowers from overseas, we like to use what's available in Jamaica—heliconias, ginger lilies, banana flowers, and orchids. We create the wedding banquet menu from the wonderful things you can get here—lots of fresh seafood and fruit. I like to decorate the tables with conch shells. And we're really into bamboo backdrops and batik or African prints. We like to



I want a wedding even my mother-in-law can't find fault with.

WHAT'S YOUR REQUEST?SM Do you want to have your wedding where other people have honeymoons? Or to throw 25 bouquets so all your single friends can catch one? We'd like to hear about it. Tell the wedding coordinators at Wyndham your idea of the perfect wedding and they'll make it happen. Call or log onto the special wedding section of our web site. **1.888.WYNDHAM** www.destinationweddingsbywyndham.com

remain true to who we are—a small property, very discreet, very Jamaican.”

At the opposite end of the Jamaican wedding spectrum are blowout affairs at the grand old luxury resorts like Montego Bay’s Round Hill Hotel and Villas; Half Moon, Montego Bay; and Port Antonio’s Trident Villas & Hotel, where numerous celebrities have married and honeymooned over the years.

JoAnn Gregoli, owner of New York City-based Elegant Occasions, recently created a fantasy wedding at Round Hill for Barbara Deli and Neeraj Bewtra, who lived in New York and Washington, D.C.

“The wedding took place at sunset in the hotel’s spa area,” JoAnn says. “Flute, violin, and cello music greeted the bride as she made her entrance. The aisle was strewn with rose petals and orchids, and we gave guests large palm fans to cool themselves.”

After the ceremony came cocktails



Yeah, Mon, We Do

Jamaica, the Caribbean’s third largest island, holds infinite options for couples seeking to tie the knot. Whether the sky’s the limit on your budget or a ceremony included in the price of your stay better suits your needs, Jamaica can fill the bill.

The legal requirements are simple. You can marry 24 hours after a weekday arrival, providing prior application for a license has been made to the

Ministry of National Security and Justice. The ministry requires certified copies of your birth certificates, listing fathers’ names; proof of divorce or death in the case of a second marriage; documentation of any name changes; and documented parental consent if either of you is less than 18 years old. The license costs about US\$65.

For more information, call the ministry at (876) 906-4908. Even better, let your resort or a wedding coordinator do the work for you. For more information on the island itself, call the Jamaican Tourist Board at (800) 233-4JTB or check out www.visitjamaica.com.

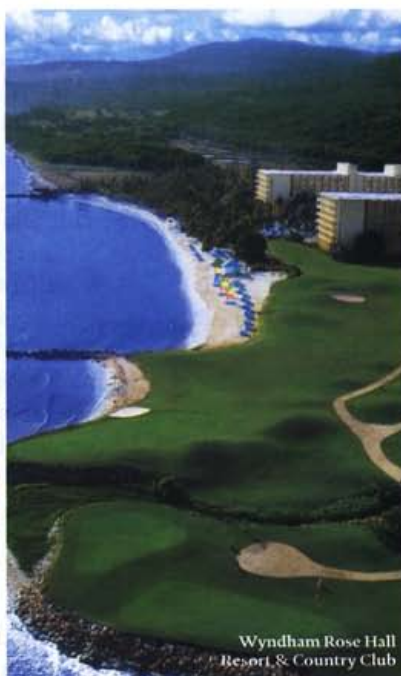
by the pool and then a sit-down dinner on the hotel’s lower terrace. A local steel-pan band performed at the cocktail party, and a professional DJ flown in from Los Angeles provided the after-dinner dance music.

Places in the Heart

Another aspect of Jamaica that attracts so many wedding couples to the island is its wealth of romantic sites for ceremonies. You can tie the knot at Dunn’s River Falls & Park, especially popular



Wyndham Aruba Resort, Spa & Casino



Wyndham Rose Hall Resort & Country Club



Wyndham Sugar Bay Resort & Spa



Wyndham Bermuda Resort & Spa

WYNDHAM ARUBA RESORT, SPA & CASINO Aruba, Dutch Caribbean

WYNDHAM BERMUDA RESORT & SPA Southampton Beach, Bermuda

WYNDHAM ROSE HALL RESORT & COUNTRY CLUB Montego Bay, Jamaica

WYNDHAM SUGAR BAY RESORT & SPA St. Thomas, U.S.V.I.



Here Come The Brides™

W E D D I N G E X P O

THE ELEGANT BRIDAL EXPERIENCE

THE #1 CHOICE OF BRIDES-TO-BE!

I found everything I needed for my wedding and won our honeymoon too! My fiancé was ecstatic!
Carla M. - Venice, CA

I really liked the show size...I didn't feel like I had to rush through it and could spend time with the exhibitors I wanted to talk to.
Sandie G. - Glendale, CA

The fashion show was great! And I even won a trip to Sandals Resort from Sandy at Carlson Wagonlit Travel in Woodland Hills.
Michelle K. - Reseda, CA

Your show really took a lot of stress out of my wedding planning.
Vanessa P. - Santa Barbara, CA

Get New Ideas,
Sample Cakes,
Gourmet Catering & More!

- **Two Spectacular Fashion Shows** (12:30 & 2:30pm) showcasing local bridal salons & designer fashions



- **Meet Marcia Vidal, PWC, ABC** Crystal Clear Weddings, as seen on *The Knot*. Get Wedding Planning Tips and Expert Advice
- **Live Entertainment**

- **Seminars & Live Demonstrations**
- **Shop & Save!** • **Win Prizes Given Away at the Show**
- **Bring the largest wedding party & win "Top Bride" Prize**



Win Your Honeymoon!

Register to win 7 beautiful days and 6 glorious nights at the most unique resort in the Caribbean.

SunVillageBeachResort.com

3 Lucky couples will win...it could be you!

SUN VILLAGE
BEACH RESORT - COPPER - DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

WINTER-SPRING 2005 SCHEDULE (11am-4pm)

January 23	Fairplex - Pomona (New Location!)
February 13	Hilton Los Angeles North/Glendale
February 27	Hilton-Woodland Hills
March 6*	Inland Empire-Riverside Conv. Center
March 13	Radisson Los Angeles Westside
March 20	Quiet Cannon - Montebello
April 17	Marriott - Ventura Beach (New Location!)

*Tentative date subject to change. Please visit website for updates.

HereComeTheBrides.net



ADMISSION
\$5 per person with ad

For Exhibitor Opportunities Call:
323-930-2657
877-930-2657

ISL11-04

HEART & SOUL

for cruise-ship passengers. You can say "I do" at the drop-dead gorgeous Blue Lagoon near Port Antonio, on bamboo rafts floating down the Martha Brae River, or at the shorefront Goldeneye, another exclusive Island Outpost resort, where British author Ian Fleming created superspy James Bond.

Beautiful Shaw Park Botanical Gardens and Coyaba River Garden and Museum in Ocho Rios draw lots of couples for wedding ceremonies. Ocho Rios's Sans Souci Resort & Spa offers a wide variety of sites, from beach, lawn, and gardens to a romantic gazebo on a rock cliff high above the Caribbean.

The Ritz-Carlton's options include a reception on a green at the White Witch Golf Course and a ceremony on the sprawling lawn in front of the historic Rose Hall Great House. Half Moon can arrange for a ceremony on the cobblestone terrace outside a 200-year-old sugar mill or on horseback along the shores of Montego Bay.

The Caves in Negril gives couples the option of saying their vows inside one of the resort's namesake sea caves, with the floor strewn with tropical flowers and lit by scented candles, or at a cliff-top ceremony site.

"We've even had couples jump off the cliff and into the sea as they say 'I do,'" Greer-Ann recalls with a smile.

Whether the event is wild and crazy or something much more mainstream, nearly everyone who marries in Jamaica seems intensely satisfied by the experience.

"We simply wanted our wedding to be the culmination of a fantastic week together for family and friends," says Jeff Macklin, the groom who tied the knot at the Villas at Bluefields Bay. "We had a wedding that represented who we are, surrounded by the people who mean the most to us. It couldn't have been more perfect, as carefree as you could imagine."

Or, as they say in Jamaica, "No problem, mon." ♦

See *Resources*, page 109, to contact sources mentioned in this article.