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destination *weddings &  
honeymoons*  
issue

**BRAZIL**  
TRAVEL PLANNER

# HONEYMOONS

that stir the soul



Canvas cabin accommodations at Siwash Lake Ranch in British Columbia.

Not that we are inciting anyone to get tied-up lasso style during their honeymoon or anything, but you'll notice that in choosing our top honeymoon resorts in North America, we got a little enamored with ranch-style resorts. To complement that, we threw in a historic seaside inn in New England as well as a charmer down on the Gulf coast of Florida.

paloma villaverde de rico

## post ranch inn, california

This Big Sur property might be best known for its Sierra Mar restaurant that sits high on a cliff and offers breathtaking views of the Pacific Ocean, but everything else about this property is just as breathtaking. With just 39 guestrooms and two private houses, enveloped by towering redwoods, majestic mountains and endless ocean vistas, intimacy is key here. From the 960-sq.-ft. ocean-facing *Cliff House*, with a deck suspended over the cliffs and an enclosed garden courtyard, to the *Tree Houses* that are built on stilts nine feet off the forest floor with a skylight for watching the stars from one's bed, these accommodations are made for getting cozy. Of course, the amenities are just as extravagant, all neatly included in the *Heavenly Honeymoon* package. As the resort says, "it's as close to heaven as you can get on earth," and what better way to start off one's marriage than in the clouds?

This 5-night honeymoon package includes accommodations in 960-sq.-ft. *Upper Pacific Suite* accommodations—featuring a private deck with hot tub overlooking the ocean—champagne, artisan cheese plate and chocolate-dipped strawberries upon arrival; a champagne

breakfast in bed the day after arrival; daily gourmet breakfast at Sierra Mar on the other days; two 4-course dinners for two at Sierra Mar; two 1-hour spa treatments in guestroom or the spa's couple's suite; champagne picnic lunch for two; Post Ranch signature embossed-leather photo album; diverse activities and amenities including yoga, guided nature walks, stargazing, pool, two oceanview basking pools, fitness room and more, as well as use of a Lexus for one day, if available, to explore Big Sur, Carmel & Monterey, or the Central Coast & Hearst Castle. Couples can also dip into optional enhancements (for an extra fee) such as a couple's shaman experience; helicopter ride; 18 holes of golf at a choice of Pebble Beach golf courses; and wineries tour, among other offerings. The *Heavenly Honeymoon* package is priced at \$9,850 per couple.

Contact: (888) 524-4787; [postranchinn.com](http://postranchinn.com)

## the bishop's lodge ranch resort & spa, new mexico

This gem of a property located in Santa Fe, within the Tesuque Valley,

is made for a secluded honeymoon with experiences such as horse-back riding, nature walks, birdwatching and drum & journey circle sessions that help in creating intimate moments for couples. Twosomes can choose from 111 guestrooms—that range from renovated historic to contemporary and luxurious—located in 15 separate lodges. For honeymooners, we recommend the *Villas*, set within the hills above Bishop's Lodge and providing seclusion, luxuriously authentic pueblo-style design, and commanding views of the surrounding valley. When the pair venture out of their guestrooms—hard to do, we know—they can spend time at the onsite *ShaNah Spa*, which offers indigenous treatments for couples, including the *Authentic Teepee Massage*, set in a luxurious Native American teepee.

Honeymooners will luxuriate in the resort's *Honeymoon Escape*, with accommodations in a private villa; a bottle of Bishop's Lodge Heritage wine and chocolate-covered strawberries at check-in; intimate couple's spa experience at *ShaNah Spa*; and dinner for two at Las Fuentes Restaurant (recommend they choose to dine on the patio, with sunset views of the nearby mountain ranges and Santa Fe National Forest). Rates start at \$339, based on availability and season. And for couples looking to tie the knot in Santa Fe, the resort offers an array of wedding venues, including a chapel built in the mid-1800s.

Contact: (800) 768-3586; [bishopslodge.com](http://bishopslodge.com)

#### siwash lake ranch, british columbia

A loving duo that doesn't want to leave their green lifestyle behind will completely embrace the eco-conscious practices at Canada's **Siwash Lake Ranch**, a luxury dude ranch and wilderness resort surrounded by 80,000 acres of pristine British Columbia rangeland and a bounty of wildlife, including black bears. The ranch offers organic cuisine and runs almost exclusively on solar power with no noisy generator to disturb the tranquility of wilderness life, making this the idyllic place to get away from it all and reconnect after what can be an exhausting wedding day, not to mention the months leading up to it. Couples who love the outdoors will embrace the myriad activities, including safaris on horseback, hiking the numerous walking trails, canoeing on the lake, river rafting, skeet shooting, fly-fishing, and one of our favorites, a wilderness survival experience, where the pair can learn all about backwoods basics and how to survive in the wild.

Accommodations here are just as unique as the surroundings, with *Ranch House Suites* and the private and luxurious *Cariboo Suite*, located separately from the lodge in the loft of the resort's hand-hewn log barn. But really, the accommodations to choose for honeymooners are the 1,000-sq.-ft. canvas cabins, located on the resort's ridge and offering a master bedroom with a curtained doorway, which when tied back, offers sweeping views of the forest, meadows and lake beyond—right from the king-size bed.

The resort emphasizes that they specialize in tailor-made experiential vacations for guests, especially honeymooners. In fact, they request detailed information from their guests, everything from their shoe size to their dietary likes and dislikes weeks before their arrival. Honeymooners can opt for candlelight dinners on their private balcony, on the dock or in the meadow, and if they are comfortable in the saddle, they can ride off on their own to enjoy an elegant picnic lunch. A sample 6-night *Wild Romance* package that includes all of the resort's goodies, including a massage in a tented spa, starts at approximately \$9,500.

Contact: (250) 395-6541; [siwashlakeranch.com](http://siwashlakeranch.com)

#### weekapaug inn, rhode island

This historic quintessential New England seaside inn—which will re-

open its doors in October after a \$20 million transformation—should definitely be on your client's radar. It's a world apart from the aforementioned ranch-style properties, but certainly offers its own style of intimacy with a barefoot elegance ambiance and with sweeping views of Quonochontaug Pond and the Atlantic beyond. Originally built in 1899, the Cape Cod-style inn will showcase the ever-popular farm-to-table style of dining as well as 27 cozy guestrooms and four 2-bedroom *Signature Suites* with dens featuring fireplaces for couples to wile away a cozy afternoon, king-size feather-top beds and needless to say, those inspiring views.

The resort likes to highlight that it's a great place for sporty couples, with kayaking, hiking, star gazing, and birdwatching, as well as sailing, of course, on the resort's own *Beetle Cats*, 12-ft. catboats that go along the 3-mile inlet affording a beautiful view of the Rhode Island coastline. Adding to all the experiences to be had, couples will also have access to all the amenities of the inn's sister property, the five-diamond **Ocean House**, including Rhode Island's only Forbes five-star *OH! Spa*, five restaurants, croquet, squash courts and a 650-ft. private white sand beach.

At press time, the resort had not put together a honeymoon package, but couples getting married in the fall can take advantage of the opening package that will run from Oct. 1 to Dec. 30, 2012. Twosomes who reserve luxuriously appointed accommodations will receive 30 percent introductory discount off best available rate; a one category upgrade based on availability upon arrival; and \$50 resort credit available for use at Weekapaug Inn or at any restaurant outlet or spa service at the Ocean House.

Contact: (401) 322-0301; [weekapauginn.com](http://weekapauginn.com)

#### casa ybel, florida

In one of South Florida's prettiest areas in the Sanibel/Fort Myers area, couples will find **Casa Ybel Resort**, a 23-acre lushly landscaped beachfront island retreat. It's the perfect place along Florida's Gulf coast for celebrating newfound married life. It offers a beautiful unique location on the Sanctuary of Sanibel Island, and the resort likes to accentuate that here "privacy is key."

It's so fabulous, in fact, that *Conde Nast Traveler* has named Casa Ybel Resort one of the "Best Places To Stay In The World." Here, couples can jump on their bikes and talk about their life plans while biking through 20 miles of island bike path, they can go boating or fishing, or they can dine at the romantic beachfront Thistle Lodge, a large Victorian mansion that offers a great deal of history and charm. Or, couples can stay tucked away in their 1- or 2-bedroom suites and enjoy an in-room spa treatment, and then laze on their private lanai absorbing serene views of the sea and beach.

This is the epitome of Old Florida style and couples with a penchant for delving into Florida's yesteryears can explore myriad historic museums, including one of our favorites in the area, the Sanibel Historical Museum & Village.

Although the resort does not offer a specific honeymoon package, they do have a *Bring Your Love* package that tosses in champagne and chocolate-covered strawberries upon arrival for the happy couple for a mere \$50 on top of regular accommodation rates. Sample rates for a 1-bedroom *Beachfront Suite* in August start at \$289.

Contact: (800) 276-4753; [casaybelresort.com](http://casaybelresort.com) ■

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**One Bal Harbour, Florida** (February 2012)