



How deep is

You might be wondering why *Divestyle* is devoting several pages to choosing a perfect honeymoon destination. Well, why not? It is probably the one holiday for which a couple will push its budget to the limit and go for broke. They will want that fantasy, tropical-island getaway with candlelit dinners, white beaches and glorious sunsets. And if they're divers, they'll want warm water and endless visibility too.

Exactly where the whole honeymoon tradition really started is anyone's guess, although it's rumoured to go back to Viking days, when young women were kidnapped by local warriors on the hunt for a wife. Although things are very different now, tradition still dictates that the bridegroom plans and pays for the honeymoon, but it's certainly safer and wiser to include your future bride when researching your options. If you are considering a sporty and adventurous affair, just remember that a diving holiday is a yes, but a tour around the UK with your rugby

club is a definite no. And remember that even though most independent women would like control over everything in their lives, whisking her away on a fantasy holiday where luxury and romance are the order of the day – as long as she was forewarned and had packed the right gear of course – is sure to earn you bonus points.

To make for a successful honeymoon, first decide what kind of holiday you both would like. An action-filled paddling, hiking and diving extravaganza might leave one couple sunburnt, tired and grumpy, but another couple rejuvenated and all set for married life in the fast lane.

If you are planning a diving honeymoon, it is best to go for resorts that offer service, privacy and luxury, and go the extra mile. You should have the flexibility to plan your days and not be tied into three dives a day as part of a group with no chance to sleep in if you choose. If one of you is new to the sport and learning to dive on the honeymoon, one of you is going to be spending a whole lot of time

on your own, so do the course beforehand and finish the open-water portion at your destination, allowing you to dive together.

With time out from work becoming more and more difficult to organise, many couples are planning 'away' weddings. This is a great idea if the wedding party is small and all those invited have the time and money to get to the destination. But check the rules if you are planning a wedding on a Caribbean island, for example – many have time limitations and strict procedures to follow before a marriage is regarded as legal.

Choosing a liveaboard as a honeymoon holiday is not advisable unless you book the entire boat – what newly married couple wants to spend their first few days in close proximity to total strangers with an inflatable boat as the only means of escape?

Our recipe for a perfect diving honeymoon is to plan together, in advance, and to pack essential equipment and paperwork, including logbooks and C cards. Do all the boring stuff at home (anti-malaria medication, visas,



your love?

Planning an unforgettable honeymoon means getting the holiday right – absolutely perfect. Adventure, privacy, romance, luxury and a whole lot more are expected, so why not combine it with an activity you both enjoy and go diving?

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Flamingo Bay Water Lodge is the ideal
honeymoon destination

Mafia Beach sunset

travel insurance etc), and make sure you pack sun block.

For the groom who's out to make an impression, remember to organise plenty of Champagne, good music and chocolate, and if I haven't said it already, flowers wouldn't hurt either.

We've put together a selection of resorts to suit a variety of budgets, and while the list is by no means comprehensive, it does give you an idea of what's available from the exotic to the endearing. Here's hoping it's what the bride ordered.

MALDIVES

The Maldives must be everyone's idea of a romantic tropical island. With a huge number of resorts to choose from – most of which cater for honeymooners – every couple's wildest dreams can be accommodated, and desires fulfilled. If you want a spa in an underwater treatment room, to watch the fish swim by while enjoying your massage, or a real Champagne bath and genuine Beluga caviar, then Maldives is the place for you – if you've got the bucks!

However, for South African honeymoon divers, the curtailment of direct flights to the Maldives has made enjoying the high life a little tricky. The only flights to the Maldives are via Singapore, Dubai or Doha, and after all the wedding preparations, stag nights, hens parties, and the wedding itself, the thought of 18 hours of flying – at best – to your honeymoon destination is not a pleasant one (and enough stress to dampen even the most passionate of relationships...).

But for those that still want to pay this beautiful destination a visit, despite the travel hassles, here are two options to choose from:

Velidhu Island Resort

Bungalows are situated over the water on stilts, and have glass floors in the lounge areas so you can spot the fish below. At night, spotlights light up the stingrays and nocturnal creatures coming into the shallows to feed. Make sure you book a bungalow with a Jacuzzi, and order a romantic, candle-lit lobster dinner for two on the beach or your own private deck.

The diving is fantastic – either in your own time on the house reef or further afield by boat twice daily.

Dhoni Mighili

The *Dhoni Mighili* is a luxuriously fitted, 65-foot, traditional Maldivian sailboat, on which your every need will be met by your own personal captain, chef



and butlers, while you enjoy exclusive use of your own private island including a seaside bungalow with pool. The diving? The boat is yours – all, every day if you so desire.

(Remember to book well in advance) **LD**

TANZANIA

The East African island destinations of Pemba and Mafia are conveniently located, with direct flights from Jo'burg to Zanzibar daily on Air Tanzania, and twice weekly on SAA. Flight time is a mere five hours, so you can be comfortably settled in your honeymoon suite in the same time it takes you to drive from Jo'burg to Sordies. Another advantage is that visas are obtainable on arrival at the airport. The islands offer a huge selection of world-class hotels, a vibrant nightlife and a host of other activities, surely making them the destinations of choice for honeymooning South Africans.

Matemwe Beach Village

This resort's exclusive honeymoon suite – the Asali Suite – is a large, thatched chalet centered around a small, private, plunge pool, and is situated on its own above the beach. The unit also has its own chef and is completely self-contained.

The dive centre is located in the adjacent resort and dive trips to the nearby Mnemba atoll launch daily.

Blue Bay Beach Resort

Blue Bay Beach Resort is situated on the finest wide, white, sandy beach on the east coast of Zanzibar. The resort offers two super-deluxe Sultan Suites, located literally a few metres away from the private beach. The suites are superbly furnished, very private, and attended by butlers.

A dive centre is situated in the resort, with launches to the famous Mnemba atoll taking place from the beach in front of your room.

Pole Pole Island Resort

If I ever decide to get married, this is definitely the place I will choose. Pole Pole is a small, intimate, exclusive resort comprising only seven chalets, situated on the beach on Mafia island. Each unit is tastefully designed and built using local materials and genuine Zanzibari antiques. It's classy and sophisticated – not a place for those seeking the nightlife.

With connecting flights available from Tanzania's most famous game parks, Pole Pole offers is the ideal bush-and-beach combo.

Underwater activity takes the form of superb yet relaxed daily dives in the adjacent marine park from the decks of a traditional dhow. **LD**