

EXPERT PLANNING GUIDE



WORLD EXPERIENCES X LA PARA INC.
TRAVEL COMPANY
EST. 1992

Beach Destination Weddings



PLANNING TIPS + STEPS

An all-in-one guide to
finding the perfect setting
for your "I Do's"

COSTS + BUDGETS

Featuring budgets, costs,
planning phases &
destinations

ISSUE 2 2024-2025

Beach Destination Wedding Planning Guide

WELCOME

A word from the President and lead
romance travel specialist

GETTING STARTED

Conversations, inspirations and discovering
your "why"

PLANNING STEPS

Choosing the right destination and resort at the
right time and price for you and your guests

COSTS AND BUDGETS

Costs, budgets, managing guests and
payments, insurances, and more

EXTRA

Real DW Testimonials

Planning worksheet

New resort openings for 2024



A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Anthony La Para Santori
President WEXL Inc.
Romance Travel Specialist

LUXURY
WORLD TRAVELER Ambassador
Member of **ensemble**

As we embrace 2024, the landscape of destination weddings continues to evolve, shaped by the experiences of the past few years. Couples who faced the heartbreak of postponing their weddings during the challenging times of 2020 and early 2021 were finally able to reschedule their dates, inspiring the next couples dreaming of their romantic celebration abroad. The allure of destination weddings is not just rebounding; it's flourishing. After years of restricted travel, there's a burgeoning desire among couples to celebrate their love with an unforgettable journey, surrounded by their nearest and dearest in a breathtaking locale.

The world has reopened, and with it, the doors to destination weddings have as well. The increased confidence in travel, bolstered by ongoing health and safety measures, is encouraging couples to finally plan the day they've been dreaming of. At WEXL Inc, we've spent nearly three decades nurturing our passion for global exploration, understanding the transformative power of new destinations and cultures. Our family business is rooted in connecting our community with extraordinary world experiences, and this ethos remains at the heart of everything we do.

As romance travel specialists, we understand that a destination wedding isn't just a ceremony; it's the romantic vacation of a lifetime. However, organizing such an event can be daunting. That's where our expertise comes into play. We're here to alleviate the stress and complexities of planning your special day. With our seasoned insights, meticulous planning, and creative solutions, we make the journey to your idyllic wedding as seamless and joyful as the event itself.



Looking ahead, we're excited to guide you through every step of this journey. Whether it's finding that perfect beachfront venue, navigating travel arrangements in a changing world, or ensuring every detail reflects your unique love story, we're committed to making your destination wedding more than just an event - we're here to create an unforgettable experience. Let's embark on this beautiful adventure together, making your dream wedding a splendid reality in 2024 and beyond.

'DESTINATION I DO: THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO LUXE BEACH WEDDING PLANNING 2024/2025

Congratulations, you're engaged! As the euphoria of engagement starts to simmer down, you're probably bombarded with a flurry of questions. "Venue or dress first?", "Who makes the cut for the guest list?", or "Is splurging on peonies a must?" We get it, planning a wedding, especially a destination one, can feel like navigating a thrilling but complex maze. Fret not! We've crafted this no-nonsense, let's-get-down-to-business guide to set the wheels in motion for your dreamy day in an exotic locale.



The Middle Stretch - Eleven to Nine Months Out

You've probably picked your squad by now, so it's Save the Dates time! Launch a wedding website too - it's the central hub for all travel, booking, and, yes, the registry details. Your travel advisor will provide you all the details to simply plug and play into a website or easily-shareable documents to pass along to your invitees.

Booking your resort should be next on your list - the early bird catches the best rates, remember? And hey, don't forget the dress or tux. Consider your destination's vibe and climate, and think about jet-setting with your outfit. Garment bag, onboard, you know the drill. Your advisors have decades of destination wedding planning experience!



Countdown Begins - Sixteen to Twelve Months Out

In this phase, reality kicks in. First thing's first - set a budget for your special day (ceremony and reception) and for your travel components (how much would each guest invited be comfortable spending to travel to your wedding). It's the compass that'll guide your choice of exotic locales and luxe resorts. Begin drafting your guest list too, but remember, it's more a work in progress than set in stone.

Time to sync up with a destination wedding specialist who knows the ins and outs of destination I do's - meet our Travel Advisors and Wedding Consultants! They're the gurus who'll fill you in on the nitty-gritty - from legalities of marrying abroad to choosing the perfect all-inclusive paradise that aligns with your vision and budget. Your advisors will evaluate the best group rates with you based on your criteria (dates, style, budget, destination, etc) and guide you through all the possible logistics, perks, payment options and deadlines, travel insurance and more!



Home Stretch - Five to Three Months Out

Chase down the stragglers who haven't RSVP'd. It's ring shopping time too - secure them safely! Remember, your wedding's a highlight of a week-long paradise party, so start planning those extra fun activities. Final fittings? Check. Packing list? Start drafting.



The Final Countdown - Four Weeks to "I Do"

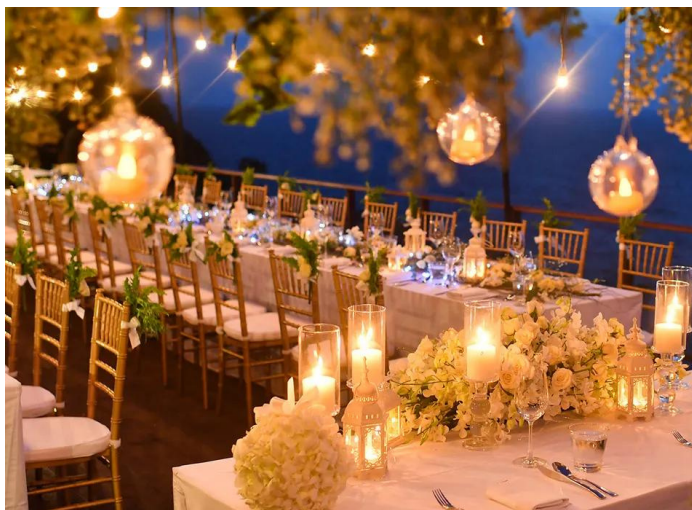
Confirm everything - flights, seating, rooming list, bedding requests, head counts, travel documents, transfers, event schedule

Five Days Before - The Final Lap

Last-minute luggage check - rings, attire, the works. Once you land, meet the coordinators, check out the venues, taste the menu, maybe squeeze in a spa session. And hey, breathe in the moment.

Day of: It's Showtime!

Give yourself ample time to prep. Mingle with your guests - they're here for you, after all. And most importantly, pause, look around, and soak in every second. It's the beginning of a lifetime with your best friend.



WHY WORK WITH US

→ Professional Accreditations



Destination Wedding & Honeymoon Specialists Association (DWHS), Ensemble Destination Vows certified specialist, and a history of planning AND travelling with our groups, our experience is undeniable.

Our relationships with industry partners from airlines, to hoteliers and resorts as well as destination management companies (DMC'S), will secure you great group amenities you simply can't negotiate on your own! We'll make sure your group gets more than just a great vacation, but a true experience! It's YOUR big day, but it's also important to be mindful of your guests as they'll likely be coming from far and wide to celebrate with you!

→ Authority and Experience



Simply put, travelling is our passion turned career. We make it our priority to know and handle everything so you don't have to. We are always up to date with industry trends as our group of professionals attend exclusive seminars and have

connections with a variety of luxury resorts and their chains. We've been guest speakers at romance travel seminars; regularly attended simulated weddings at different resorts, and have even escorted some wedding groups on their trips. **WEXL** provides couples with peace of mind when booking their DW by delivering uncomplicated solutions that save time and money by pairing them with seasoned advisors who use decades of broad, specialized, and personal travel experience.

→ Personalized and Exclusive Services



We have deep knowledge of resorts and what they can offer, as well as which destination itself is most suitable to the needs of the group (nearby shopping and nightlife for the bachelor(ette) parties), and how to match you with the perfect venue.

Whether you want a simple, sophisticated romance or lavish affair, we'll guide you in the right direction. We pride ourselves on the fact that no two weddings are the same. Once we know everything about how you envision your wedding, we can start putting together the pieces of what will be a seamless, beautiful day. Once we find the right location based on your criteria (we will get to that process shortly), we can get into the meat of the project from travel arrangements to ceremony planning and everything in between!



BEACH DESTINATION WEDDING SPECIALISTS

Planning a domestic wedding is hard enough as it is, and typing "destination wedding" into a search engine can lead you down a rabbit hole of generic beach wedding photos and confusing travel jargon. Let us help you organize that mental Pinterest board in your mind!

Before we start planning anything, we want to get to know the couple we're working with. We're not looking to have a business meeting, we want to have real conversations with our couples; we want to know what *you want*. We want to know your love story, we want to know your inspiration, your reason for choosing a destination wedding, the places you long to visit while finding the right setting for your momentous occasion! With this information we will work with you to reverse engineer the details and guide you down the right logistical path with the vision of your special day in mind the entire time.

Logistics however, is not the skill at play here; leveraging our connections, brokering group contracts, this is all 1's and 0's. Anyone can plug dates into a booking website; getting to know you and your goals and making it happen without compromising the experience is our skill. We treat the biggest day of your life as such by asking the right questions, and customizing your experience. We also know that budget plays a huge part for you and especially your guests. We'll make sure your vision remains accessible so you can share this day in the company of your loved ones. How can we guarantee this? With 30 years of experience in the industry, we know how to execute a project of any size in any destination. (REAL testimonials later in the guide!)

Planning Phases

As you set out to begin planning your destination wedding, you may feel a bit overwhelmed and unsure of where to start. Here are some simple steps to follow as we begin the wedding planning process and a tentative timeline:

1

Phase 1:

- We ask a lot of questions that help us create a custom list of destinations and resorts we believe would make a perfect fit for your destination wedding.
- Together, we'll narrow down and select the destination, resort and potential ceremony and reception locations for you to choose.

2

Phase 2:

- Estimate travel costs, wedding expenses, guest budgets
- We negotiate the group room contract with various suppliers, ensuring that you get the most perks, promos and amenities (aka "freebies!") for your wedding group.
- Agree on group prices, terms and conditions, sign contract, make first deposits to hold the group space
- Set up deposits and payment plans for group

3

Phase 3:

- Review your guest list and send out invitations for confirmation/deposits
- Begin booking guests into group and their rooming arrangements
- Introduction to selected resort's wedding coordinator to begin planning the ceremony and reception details.

4

Phase 4:

- Finalize bookings for all guest reservations (90 days before departure)
- Final planning with onsite wedding coordinator the details for the ceremony itself (decorations, flowers, food, music and entertainment)
- Finalize payments and travel insurances (60 days before departure)
- Issue travel documents and send to guests (30 days before departure)
- Pre-departure checklist with your travel advisor

CHOOSING YOUR BEACH DESTINATION

DREAM ROMANTIC SETTINGS

Choosing the perfect beach for your destination wedding is a dreamy affair. Envision exchanging vows on a sun-kissed, white-sand beach, with the soothing melody of waves and a stunning sunset as your backdrop. Whether it's the crystal-clear waters of the **Caribbean** or the serene shores of **Costa Rica**, each beach offers its unique charm, from secluded tranquility to vibrant resort life.

Key considerations in planning include your budget, which shapes the wedding's scale, and the style, from casual to elegant. Seasonality affects the weather, and your guests' travel preferences matter too, from accessibility to exclusive retreats. Ultimately, your beach wedding location should echo your love story, setting a perfect scene for the start of your married life allowing you to focus in on the area where you'd like to recite your "I do's".

Here are some important factors to consider for you and your group when deciding on a destination:

- Weather/season, natural beauty of the beaches, jungles landscapes
- Proximity from Canada/US
- Abundant flight options
- Reasonable prices/ exchange rate, costs
- All-inclusive resorts vs boutique hotels
- Travel time/ proximity to airport
- Surrounding attractions (excursions, culture, shopping, nightlife)
- Legal requirements
- Paperwork (visas)
- Do any guests have special needs/requests (near a hospital, activities, etc.)

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS- TRAVEL INSURANCE

In the world of travel and event planning, especially for something as significant as a destination wedding, the unexpected can happen. With the planning process often extending over a year, it's crucial to be prepared for any unforeseen circumstances. This is where the importance of comprehensive travel insurance comes into play, covering both medical emergencies and cancellations. Before finalizing any bookings or agreements, we will discuss and ensure that you and your guests are equipped with the right travel insurance policies. Our approach involves carefully reviewing each individual's situation and exploring options with our various insurance partners to find the best coverage for everyone involved. This way, we aim to provide peace of mind, knowing that should any issue arise, be it a personal emergency or a need to cancel, you are well protected.

In the event of a potential postponement or cancellation, whether for individual guests or the entire group, we're here to assist. We'll guide you through the process, helping to minimize any financial impact. The terms and conditions of cancellations will be clearly outlined from the start, ensuring transparency and preparedness for any situation. Remember, the sooner a decision is made in these scenarios, the better the chances of reducing or waiving any potential fees from vendors. Our goal is to make this journey as stress-free as possible, even when faced with the unexpected.

MANAGING GUEST EXPECTATIONS

Guests will have questions along the way, especially if they have never attended a destination wedding before. Here are some things that often come up in the process and our advice on how to approach them.

PRICE: Some may believe they have found a cheaper price online than what we've offered. It is important to compare apples to apples. Beware of discount sites; their prices are often missing something we've already accounted for, like taxes or transfers, or is in the wrong currency. When we secure group pricing, this is for the group as a whole. This allows everyone to pay similar prices, versus the book as you go method with so much volatility. Encourage your guests to reach out to us if there is even a doubt. We want everyone booking in the same room block as the bride and groom. Booking in the same block counts towards extra perks (i.e book 30 guests and receive complimentary excursion).

BOOKING: If guests cannot attend, this is completely understandable. Encourage them to let you know so we can adjust the guest list and headcount. Be firm with RSVP deadlines and communicate any changes to your DW planners as soon as you are made aware of them. Guests should want to book the trip sooner rather than later; avoid waiting around thinking you'll find a better last minute deal. That being said, some guests may only be able to confirm later on too. We can definitely make arrangements for them. Last minute add-on's are handled case-by-case and governed by the terms and conditions of your group contract. While we do not encourage last minute bookings, we certainly do not turn them away. We always remain agile, because our experience dictates that we should so you can always benefit!

GIFTS: This is subjective to every guest, but normally, guests do not need to bring a gift to a destination wedding, their presence is the present! Attending the DW will cost guests what it will already. Therefore, it is completely understandable that some may not be willing to disburse anything more. Of course, some will anyways. Maybe it is in the form of money, or a room upgrade. In any case, it is voluntary rather than expected or requested. To avoid ambiguity or awkward moments for guests who chose not to gift, address this with guests beforehand by including this information on your invitations.

DRESS CODE: This will be dependent on the couple! Some couples choose dress codes or themes; this information will be made available to you in advance. Destination weddings are often more casual, you won't need to sweat in a starchy suit. For men, linens and nice sandals, for women a sundress and sandals or strappy heels are appropriate.

TIPS: Even when staying at an all-inclusive resort, certain gratuities will be expected. Advise guests to have small bills in order to tip bartenders and wait staff taking care of you. Airport staff and shuttle bus drivers do not work for the hotel, and they will expect a tip. US bills are often fine, and we'll inform you otherwise.



Tanya + Vito

Zoetry Villa Rolandi
Isla Mujeres
December 2022



Testimonial

“

Being experienced travelers, we were looking for something special for our destination wedding. We wanted to truly impress our friends and family. We had no idea where to even start, however. All we knew is we wanted a wonderful resort on a beautiful beach. Anthony took his time with us to listen and ask all the right questions. Over a year of planning together, and never once did we have any doubt that we were in the right hands. Not only was the wedding beautiful, but spending time with our closest friends and family for a week was an experience we won't soon forget.

”



Vida + Anthony “—————

Lopesan Costa Bavaro
Punta Cana
June 2023



Testimonial

We worked with Anthony who helped us carefully plan our dream wedding at our favorite resort in Punta Cana. He was personable and extremely knowledgeable. My husband and I, including our guests were very impressed with the personalized service, impeccable coordination and excellent communication. We had an incredible time creating unforgettable memories. Thank you WEXL!

—————”



SECRETS[®]

Playa Blanca

COSTA MUJERES

A BEAUTIFUL BEACH WEDDING LIKE NO OTHER

Secrets Playa Blanca Costa Mujeres is located along a secluded strip of the Costa Mujeres shoreline, just 19 kilometres north of Cancun. Situated on a pristine white-sand beach with access to the world's second-largest barrier reef. Each luxury suite is embellished with local art and furnishings and comes with an unlimited luxury package, where everything is included. Guests can enjoy a variety of water sports and activities including snorkeling, kitesurfing, whale shark swimming, scuba diving and sport fishing. Please note, select amenities will not be available until June 2024 including the spa, fitness center and theater.

NEW



Sandals[®] Saint Vincent

SOPHISTICATED ROMANCE IN PARADISE

Tucked away on its own private cove and bordered by a lush forest and gently flowing river is Sandals newest all-inclusive resort in Saint Vincent—where you can step off the beaten path and explore the little-known wonder of the Caribbean. Pure and undisturbed, the island of Saint Vincent is nestled between two seas at the edge of the lesser Antilles—its natural beauty untouched and ripe for discovery. The peaceful azure waters, majestic rainforests, and stunning white-sand beaches are a richly colorful backdrop for exciting new experiences. Stroll along meandering rivers that empty into azure seas. Hike through the rainforest to survey the crater atop La Soufrière. Explore ancient petroglyphs created by long-ago cultures. Or dive into the waters surrounding Anchor Reef to admire the unique black coral found nowhere else. Here among the natural splendor of Sandals St. Vincent, it's these moments of shared discovery that bring you closer together.

Imagine yourself in a paradise of turquoise waters, lush green hills and golden sands. That's what awaits you at our newest all-inclusive resort in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the jewel of the Caribbean. There's a myriad of options to fill your days with discovery at every turn. Walk along the river bordering our resort or step out onto soft sands, gently caressed by warm and inviting waves. Bike to a lookout point and survey unforgettable vistas, dive deep into cobalt waters to explore undersea life, catch a technicolor glimpse of the neighbouring exotic birds, or taste local dishes created with freshly-harvested ingredients.

LET'S GET STARTED TOGETHER

You now have a much better idea of what the destination wedding planning process looks like! Analyzing the details below will allow us to pair you with a Certified Destination Wedding Specialist whose experience best matches your preferences. You can send your responses to info@worldexperiencesxlapara.com and one of our specialists will reach out to you!

WHEN ARE YOU PLANNING TO TRAVEL?

- I know the exact date
- I have a season in mind
- I am still unsure

HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE YOU INVITING?

- Just the two of us
- Small and intimate (1-25 guests)
- Happy medium (26-50 guests)
- Large group (51-100 guests)
- Grand affair (100+ guests)

WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO? (you can select more than 1)

- Mexico Caribbean (Cancun, Riviera Maya, Playa Mujeres)
- Mexico Pacific (Los Cabos, Puerto Vallarta)
- Dominican Republic
- Jamaica
- Bahamas
- Other Caribbean (St-Martin, Aruba, Antigua, etc)
- Costa Rica and/or other Central America
- Europe
- Other (please specify where)

BUDGET - COUPLE AND GUESTS

- How much is the celebrating couple willing to spend on their travel? (air, hotel, transfers)
- How much is the celebrating couple wishing to spend on their wedding package for the special day? (ceremony, reception, extras)
- What is the maximum you want each guest to pay for their travel for 1 week?

GETTING TO KNOW THE CELEBRATING COUPLE

In getting to know the couple better and understanding their vision, this will further help us to best cater our services to you. This information will allow us to design a truly remarkable destination wedding experience for you and your group! You can send your responses to info@worldexperiencesxlapara.com and one of our specialists will reach out to you!

BRIDE /GROOM AND BRIDE/GROOM

- First name/last name
- First name/last name
- Email addresses

TELL US WHY YOU ARE INTERESTED IN A DESTINATION WEDDING

TELL US ABOUT YOUR VISION OF YOUR PERFECT WEDDING DAY

IS THERE ANYTHING SPECIAL YOU WOULD LIKE US TO KNOW BEFORE PLANNING?

HOW DID YOU FIND US?

- Referral
- Social media
- Internet search
- Other (please specify)

