

ASK THE operator

With couples spending 13% more on honeymoons this year, according to the National Wedding Survey, **Laura French** finds out how to sell add-ons

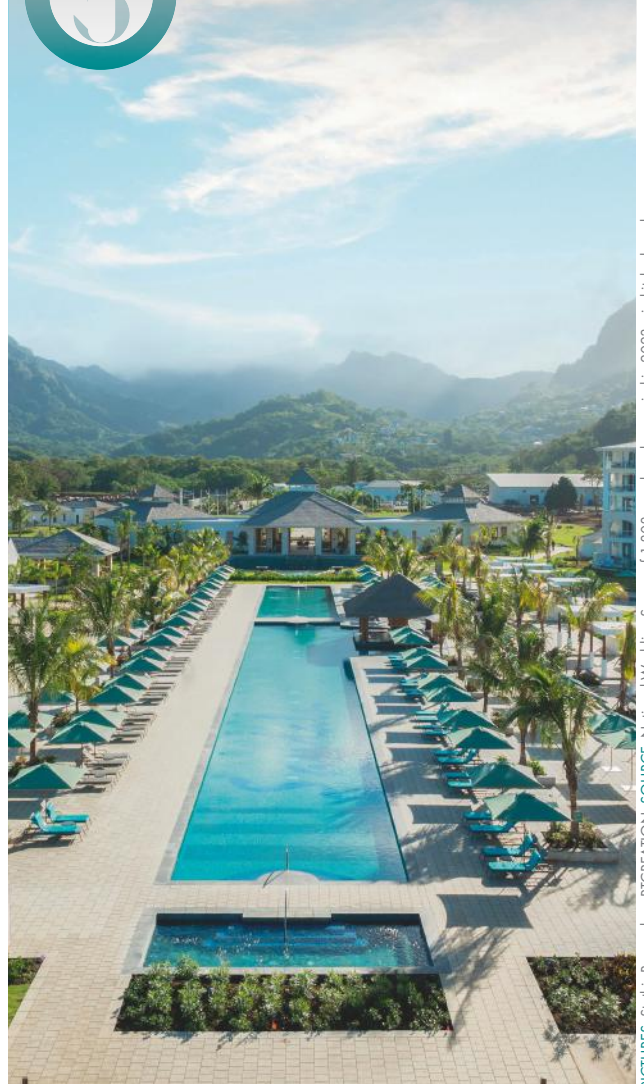
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Lindos Grand Resort & Spa, Greece



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Sandals Saint Vincent and the Grenadines



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Clayoquot Wilderness Lodge, Canada



PICTURES: Stathis Bouzoukas; RTCREATION SOURCE: National Wedding Survey of 1,808 couples who married in 2023, via hitched.co.uk

1 SHORT-HAUL HONEYMOON

WHAT'S THE BRIEF? A couple on a mid-range budget want to book a short-haul honeymoon and add on special extras that won't break the bank – from active excursions in nature to romantic dinners and spa treatments.



Rachael Marron
project development executive,
Olympic Holidays

For couples looking to honeymoon in Greece, I recommend Lindos Grand Resort & Spa in Rhodes. The resort offers a wide range of activities and experiences, from sailing trips to horse riding, private scuba diving lessons to 4x4 safari excursions, plus the spa offers romantic couples' massages that are perfect for honeymooners.

The property also has a private cellar, Enoteca Da Giovanni, which guests can book for an exclusive, wine-paired dinner. Other add-ons include a local cooking class to learn how to make Rhodes' most famous dessert, *melekouni*.

Going above and beyond for the couple and taking the time to suggest and book add-ons like these goes a long way to securing guest loyalty, overall customer experience and the chance of repeat custom. Olympic Holidays can often secure added extras too – room upgrades are always popular with honeymooners, alongside board-basis upgrades and a complimentary welcome gift. These extra benefits can help clients get optimal value for their money while making the honeymoon extra special.

Book it: Olympic Holidays offers seven nights at Lindos Grand Resort & Spa from £814 per person, based on two sharing a Deluxe Double Garden View room with daily breakfast and flights from Gatwick, departing October 12. olympicholidays.com

2 MULTI-CENTRE ADVENTURE

WHAT'S THE BRIEF? A couple are looking for an adventurous honeymoon in North America. They want to explore several places in one trip, as well as book standout activities to make the honeymoon memorable.



David Pointer
senior product manager,
North America and Australasia,
Inspiring Travel

Canada is an excellent option for an adventure-themed honeymoon, with so much to do and see in British Columbia in particular. For luxury adventure, I recommend a stay at Clayoquot Wilderness Lodge, which offers signature experiences such as whale and bear spotting on Clayoquot Sound – plus add-ons like horse riding, rock climbing and heli-hiking.

We often suggest pairing Clayoquot Wilderness Lodge with a stay somewhere equally outdoorsy, such as Three Bars Guest Ranch, where visitors can book horse riding, fly fishing, all-terrain vehicle tours and white-water rafting, or Echo Valley Ranch & Spa, which offers hiking, cycling, yoga and bushcraft.

My top tip is to encourage clients to book extra experiences early – we find conversion rates are higher when we include experiences at the first quote stage, and this gives you a chance to showcase your expertise.

Book it: Inspiring Travel offers a 16-day Ranch and Southern British Columbia Package, with six nights at Three Bars Guest Ranch (with all meals and activities), a seaplane flight from Vancouver to Victoria, whale watching, horse riding, a full-day wine tour and more from £6,559 per person, including flights, departing September 22. inspiringtravel.co.uk

3 CARIBBEAN GETAWAY

WHAT'S THE BRIEF? Two honeymooners are looking for a relaxing long-haul beach holiday that offers plenty of inclusions plus the option to purchase high-end add-ons, from butler suites to private exclusive experiences for couples.



Leah Marshall
director of sales,
Unique Vacations UK (representative
for Sandals and Beaches Resorts)

My tip when selling honeymoons is to highlight the added value clients can get. Sandals already includes several perks in its free honeymoon package (valid for newlyweds who travel within 30 days of their wedding date), such as a complimentary bottle of sparkling wine, a special turndown service, a fresh flower delivery and a decadent breakfast in bed. For those who want to pull out all the stops, a selection of extras can be booked – from a private candlelit dinner on the beach to various Island Routes excursions.

For a standout option, I recommend Sandals Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Optional add-ons include hiking up an active volcano and island-hopping. In terms of accommodation, the Vincy Overwater Two-Story Villas (a Sandals first) offer a great upselling opportunity.

Last year, Sandals Dunn's River resort opened in Ocho Rios, Jamaica, offering the brand's first open-air rooftop Rondoal villa suites, which come with butler service. Here, couples can book a stargazing experience on their private rooftop.

Book it: An all-inclusive seven-night stay at Sandals Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in a Bamboo Palm Room with Balcony Tranquility Soaking Tub, departing September 11, costs from £2,389 per person, including flights and transfers and a £200 saving when quoting 'sale' at time of booking. sellingsandals.co.uk