

TAKE

Tying the knot abroad doesn't need to break the bank. **Isobel Turner** rounds up some affordable alternatives

Whether it's saying "I do" with waves lapping softly in the background, in a sun-soaked garden or atop a cliff against the sun-dappled sky, it seems there's an endless choice of idyllic backdrops for couples dreaming of tying the knot abroad.

With picture-perfect scenery, the promise of better weather and the option of a built-in honeymoon, it's no surprise that many couples choose to jet off for their nuptials.

Destinations synonymous with romance continue to entice – from the charming cliff-top towns of

Santorini to the palm-studded shores of the Seychelles. But such sought-after spots can come with hefty price tags.

Finding duplicates – or 'dupes' – is hugely popular right now (the term has more than six billion views on TikTok), and Expedia predicts that the trend is going to take the travel world by storm this year, with holidaymakers searching for more affordable alternatives to big-name destinations.

So, where should you recommend for clients seeking all the magic of a destination wedding but at a fraction of the cost?



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SANTORINI

There's a certain magic about Santorini. Formed by a volcanic eruption more than three millennia ago, the island is now defined by its whitewashed towns which contrast perfectly with the pink and orange hues of its sunsets. Some of the most popular spots for a bride and groom can be found on the edge of the caldera, against a backdrop of far-reaching ocean vistas.

RHODES

From its vantage point above the glistening Aegean Sea in northern Rhodes, St Sophia's Chapel (pictured) looks as if it's been taken straight from a scene in *Mamma Mia!*.

This endearing, round-topped chapel is a picture of authentic Greek beauty and, thanks to its secluded location, it oozes romance and tranquillity. Ceremonies take place outside the chapel, which is just as well – the panoramic ocean views deserve to be enjoyed at every opportunity.

The chapel is family-friendly and the package allows for 25 guests. For couples dreaming of a slightly bigger affair, extra guests can be accommodated for €10 per person.

Stunning scenery isn't in short supply across the rest of the island, including at the Esperides Beach Resort, which has a beach on its doorstep and is peppered with swaying palms and vibrant flowerbeds.

Book it: Wedding packages start at £3,400, including venue hire, bridal bouquet, photographer, reception and more. Seven nights' all-inclusive at the Esperides Beach Resort starts from £900 per person, including flights on October 1. olympicholidays.com

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THE ALGARVE

For more than 125 miles in the south of Portugal, red-hued cliffs border crystal-clear waters that are interspersed with rocky coves and golden sands. And it's not just the unspoilt coastline that makes the Algarve a wish-list destination for couples – fascinating history and charming, white-walled towns only add to the allure.

CYPRUS

Just a stone's throw from the birthplace of Aphrodite, the ancient Greek goddess of love, the clifftop venue of Ktima Alassos is the perfect choice for couples keen to tie the knot by the sparkling waters of the Mediterranean.

Between Paphos and Coral Bay, Ktima Alassos (pictured) is in a prime position on the pristine coastline of western Cyprus, with turquoise waters stretching as far as the eye can see. Ceremonies take place on the sea-view lawn, while dinner can be enjoyed after sunset under a blanket of twinkling stars.

Just a 10-minute drive from the venue, the Coral Beach Hotel is the perfect base for exploring the history-rich coastal city of Paphos. There are medieval baths, Byzantine monasteries and archaeological sites to discover, as well as several immaculate beaches.

Book it: Wedding packages start at £2,982, based on 30 guests, including a drinks reception, dinner, registrar fee and wedding coordinator. Seven nights' B&B at the Coral Beach Hotel starts from £795 per person, including flights departing on April 19.

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THE SEYCHELLES

For one of the world's smallest countries, the Seychelles packs a punch. Its 115 islands are encircled by the turquoise waters of the Indian Ocean, fringed by verdant jungle. The scenery could have been plucked from a postcard: majestic peaks such as the 905m Morne Seychellois are cloaked by lush foliage, including the coco de mer palm, which grows only in the Seychelles.

ARUBA

For clients keen to say their vows with sand between their toes, it doesn't get much dreamier than Aruba.

The island's powdery white beaches, lapped by the warm Caribbean waters, are the perfect setting for an intimate ceremony and, thanks to its positioning outside of the hurricane belt, Aruba receives comparatively little rain – even in its wet season (September to January).

Aruba's appeal endures beyond the beach too, so there's plenty for couples to explore on their pre or post-wedding holiday. Vast national parks are lined with cacti and are best admired from a 4x4. There are also several ancient caves to delve into, including the aptly nicknamed Tunnel of Love, where erosion has turned the entrance into the shape of a heart.

Book it: Wedding and holiday packages start at £4,077, including a beach ceremony, the services of a minister, keepsake certificate, decorations, on-site coordinator and more, plus seven nights' room-only at the Renaissance Wind Creek Aruba Resort and flights departing on April 21.

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