

Ring the changes

Find out how to turn Valentine's Day vibes into a marketing opportunity with the perfect proposal package, writes **Alice Barnes-Brown**

1 here's more than one big day when it comes to weddings: another moment couples will remember forever is when they first commit to each other. Whether that means getting down on one knee or presenting a ring over a candlelit dinner, it's an excellent excuse for a romantic trip abroad.

Plan a holiday around the proposal and couples can share their joy in a spectacular location, from tropical shores to Nordic moors. While many hotels

will work with agents to help set the scene, some suppliers have also devised ready-made engagement packages you can sell to loved-up clients. Here's a round-up of some inspirational options.

LUXURY LOVERS

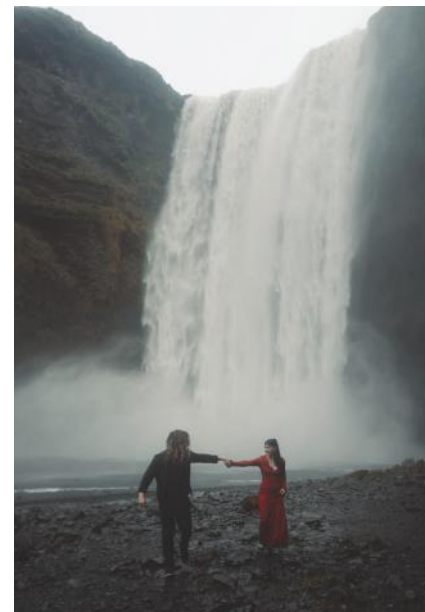
A beachfront proposal in Barbados would be difficult to get wrong, but the O2 Beach Club & Spa resort offers a proposal concierge service so clients can make the most of a little extra help to get it ➤

PICTURE: Shutterstock/Daniel Corbitt



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: The Inn at the Spanish Steps, Rome; waterfall near Hotel Rangá, Iceland; proposal at Sydney Opera House; O2 Beach Club & Spa, Barbados

FACING PAGE: Underwater proposal
PICTURES: Max Littera; Winter Park Photography; Shutterstock/wavebreakmedia, Mark S Johnson; Christian Trustrup



just right. Proposals range from a simple-but-effective bottle of bubbly and a bouquet in their room to a three-course Bubble on the Beach private dinner with a violinist, photographer and prosecco.

Book it: Caribtours sells a seven-night all-inclusive stay at the O2 Beach Club & Spa in a Luxury Pool View Junior Suite from £2,849, based on two sharing, with flights departing Heathrow on June 10. The Bubble on the Beach package can be added via the hotel for £405 per couple, while in-room champagne and flowers costs £135. caribtours.co.uk

COOL IDEA

Proposals need privacy, and the Hotel Rangá in Iceland's sparsely populated rural south offers that in spades. Even if clients don't see the northern lights, the romantic atmosphere is all but guaranteed at this ranch-like hotel, where a two-night proposal package includes thoughtful details such as 12 red roses with champagne on

arrival, a four-course dinner, visits to local attractions including the Blue Lagoon and Katla ice cave, a private guide, access to the hotel's stargazing observatory and even a half-day helicopter ride.

Book it: Elegant Resorts offers a two-night stay at Hotel Rangá from £8,850, based on two sharing a Master Suite. Includes breakfast, the proposal package above, some meals, transfers, UK lounge passes, luggage and flights departing Heathrow on September 28. elegantresorts.co.uk

EUROPEAN ELEGANCE

An evening of romance in Roma is sure to woo, so why not suggest a stay at one of the Italian capital's most coveted locations? The Inn at the Spanish Steps offers rooftop proposal packages with exclusive use of the terrace (panoramic views come free), plus plenty of candles and prosecco. Other lavish proposals can also be arranged, including a horse-drawn carriage through the streets of Rome.

Book it: Jet2CityBreaks sells a three-night stay at The Inn at the Spanish Steps from £879, including breakfast and flights departing Stansted on May 19. The rooftop proposal package can be added directly via the hotel for €450. jet2citybreaks.com

UNDERWATER ENGAGEMENT

Sandals is known for its destination weddings and honeymoon stays – but did you know it can arrange commissionable proposal packages too? For one that goes as deep as their love, suggest Treasure under the Sea, where Padi-certified couples can have their big moment while diving amid Caribbean coral reefs. The proposer will get a sign that reads 'Will you marry me?', while an underwater photographer is on hand to capture the moment. Back at the couple's room, rose petals, chocolate, music and sparkling wine await.

Book it: Sandals offers a seven-night stay for two adults at Sandals

Grenada Resort & Spa in a Lover's Lagoon Hideaway Walkout Junior Suite with Patio Tranquillity Soaking Tub from £2,162. Price includes all-inclusive accommodation, return flights from Heathrow and transfers on September 23. The Treasure Under The Sea proposal package can be added from £715. sellingsandals.co.uk

ALL AT SEA

Cruise fans needn't feel left out of the loving. Book clients on any P&O Cruises itinerary and they can add on an engagement package to complete their romantic getaway. They'll get a photographer, champagne, sweet treats, dinner at one of the speciality restaurants and breakfast in bed the morning after the proposal. Should they want to return to the ocean for their nuptials, the engagement package also gives them £100 credit towards a wedding at sea with P&O Cruises.

Book it: P&O Cruises' engagement package is priced at £399. pocruises.com

top TIPS

Ring it in: Clients should pack their engagement ring carefully – advise them to insure it before departure and bring in hand luggage. Alternatively, suggest taking a ‘dupe’ ring, so they don’t have to worry about the real one.

Stay in contact: Keep in touch with suppliers to ensure everything is ready for your clients, making sure they are informed of any accessibility needs or special diets to avoid any hiccups.

Back-up plan: In case the weather isn’t favourable on the day, suggest clients have a Plan B such as having their room sprinkled with rose petals while they go out to eat.



Snap shots: Even if clients don’t have a photographer, remind them to take a selfie in their chosen location: they’ll undoubtedly want to look back at it for years to come.



OPERA PROPOSAL

Australia-bound clients can see a Sydney Opera House show with a loved-up twist. Cultural Attractions of Australia sells a commissionable package to a show called Great Opera Hits – a medley of stirring arias performed regularly at the venue. At select performances,

clients can get down on one knee on stage and pop the question in the most memorable of settings.

Book it: Cultural Attractions of Australia sells the Not-so-Modest proposal package from £1,300 per couple, including tickets to the show and a congratulatory bouquet. culturalattractionsofaustralia.com **TW**



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