

# 10 of the BEST

## WINTER HONEYMOONS

Newlyweds looking to get away in winter?  
**Laura French** scouts out the options

**1** he mini-moon, the adventure-moon, the all-out, blow-the-budget-moon: there's a host of options for newlyweds jetting away after the nuptials these days, with holidays to suit every type of client – and it's not just about the summer months.

Whether it's a safari in South Africa or a fly-and-flop to Cyprus, a cultural trip to Sri Lanka or an enchanting escape to Lapland, there are plenty of options for those looking to get away in winter too. We've rounded up some of the best to inspire you to sell the season to this dynamic, lucrative market.



### SAFARI IN SOUTH AFRICA

From the game reserves to the Garden Route via world-class wineries and culture-rich cities, South Africa is made for adventurous honeymooners on the hunt for winter sun – and at its heart is Cape Town, with its mountain vistas and burgeoning culinary scene. Premier Holidays suggests combining the city with a stay in Durban and the Elandela Game Reserve in Kruger National Park – home to white rhinos and white lions – then tagging on a beach stay in Mauritius.

**Book it:** A 13-night trip staying at Bantry Bay Suite Hotel in Cape Town (B&B), Elandela Private Game Reserve (full-board), Southern Sun Elangeni & Maharani in Durban (B&B) and Tamassa Mauritius (all-inclusive) starts at £3,299 per person in October 2020, including flights and transfers. [trade.premierholidays.co.uk](http://trade.premierholidays.co.uk)



### 2

### ESCAPE TO SAINT LUCIA

For a romantic escape with a dose of Caribbean flair, few places beat Saint Lucia. Gold Medal recommends the couples-only Serenity at Coconut Bay for newlyweds looking to cosy up in a private plunge pool – think four-poster mahogany beds, personal butlers and gourmet dining in an atmospheric mansion – while Caribtours points to Jade Mountain for those seeking the pinnacle of luxury. Suites at this celeb hotspot do away with the fourth wall so they're half open to the elements, with a gentle breeze waking you up in the morning and private pools looking out over the soaring Pitons.

**Book it:** A week's B&B at Jade Mountain starts at £5,699 per person, based on two sharing a Sky Whirlpool Suite. [caribtours.co.uk](http://caribtours.co.uk)

### 3

### GET CULTURAL IN SRI LANKA

Clients struggling to decide between culture, beach and nature? Tie them all up in one with a twin-centre trip to Sri Lanka and the Maldives. Travel Gallery offers a 14-night trip taking in the Cultural Triangle – home to historic cave temples, ancient cities and the iconic Sigiriya rock – as well as the highlands and Kegalle, where clients will visit a tea factory, get hands on with a cooking class and explore nearby Kandy. It ends with six nights flopping on the white-sand shores of OBLU by Atmosphere at Helengeli in the Maldives, where silver-tipped sharks and giant sea turtles glide back and forth at the house reef.

**Book it:** A 14-night holiday starts at £4,150 per person including flights and transfers, with stays including Vil Uyana, 98 Acre Estate and the Rosyth Estate House in Sri Lanka.

[travel-gallery.co.uk](http://travel-gallery.co.uk)



### 4

### FLOP ON CYPRUS'S GOLDEN SANDS

Winter sun doesn't have to mean flocking to the ends of the earth – "island of love" Cyprus stays relatively warm when the temperatures plunge in the UK, and there's a host of resorts that cater to the honeymoon crowd. For one of the best, Cyplon Holidays highlights the Amavi Hotel, which opened in May and lays claim to being the island's first five-star, couples-only hotel. Set on a sandy beach, it boasts two infinity pools, a spa specialising in couples' treatments and a rooftop restaurant overlooking Paphos' twinkling lights, offering dedicated honeymoon suites that promise private balconies with sea views.

**Book it:** Seven nights' half-board in a honeymoon suite with Cyplon costs from £835 per person, including private transfers and flights from Gatwick on February 25, 2020. [cyplon.co.uk](http://cyplon.co.uk)



PICTURES: Shutterstock/John Alhimaris



Which destinations would you recommend for a winter honeymoon?

“Two of the best places for winter honeymoons will always be the Maldives and Seychelles. These destinations really do offer that ‘once-in-a-lifetime’ feeling that honeymooners look for, and there’s plenty for couples to do, including water sports, spa and wellness experiences, and romantic private beach dinners.

The Maldives’ famous overwater villas make for a secluded and special place to stay, and there are so many new hotel openings there both this year and into the next, with interest in the destination growing.

We can’t forget the Caribbean, either. Always popular with loved-up couples, there’s such a variety of experiences to be had there. We’d recommend sending honeymooners to the ever-popular Rendezvous or the iconic Jade Mountain, both in Saint Lucia, or Palm Island in St Vincent and the Grenadines.”

Rebecca Bryson,  
head of sales, Caribtours



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TOUR JAPAN

With the Summer Olympics on the horizon, everyone’s talking about Japan. But it’s just as magical in winter, when glittering snow caps the mountains, skiers flock to the slopes and hot springs steam and bubble in the misty air. “Japan might not be a typical ‘honeymoon’ destination, but it’s a great option for couples wanting to combine exploration, relaxation and romance on a memorable adventure,” says Emirates Holidays’ honeymoon planner, Nasreen Yousaf. The operator offers a 13-night Romantic Japan trip combining Tokyo, the Japanese Alps, Yudanaka Onsen, Kanazawa, Kyoto and beyond, featuring Japanese tea ceremonies, visits to castle towns and plenty more.

**Book it:** The Romantic Japan tour costs from £6,135 including flights, B&B accommodation, transfers, entry fees, a Japan Rail Pass and guides. [emiratesholidays.com](http://emiratesholidays.com)

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GLIMPSE THE GAMBIA’S WILDLIFE

Postcard-pretty beaches, captivating wildlife, sunny climes and budget-friendly luxury – welcome to The Gambia. For one of the most luxurious spots suggest Coco Ocean Resort & Spa. “It’s arguably The Gambia’s most striking hotel and is a great honeymoon option, with its exquisite surroundings and beachfront location,” says Karen Durham, product manager for The Gambia Experience. For couples also keen to experience an adventure in the bush, she recommends adding a stay at Mandina Lodges, a cluster of jungle abodes that float above the river, where baboons and exotic birds roam.

**Book it:** A week’s B&B at Coco Ocean Resort & Spa starts at £1,038 per person, including flights and transfers. A three-night half-board stay at Mandina Lodges can be added on from £349. [gambia.co.uk](http://gambia.co.uk)



PICTURE: Shutterstock

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SEE THE WORLD ON A CRUISE

For couples after a honeymoon with a difference – and wanting to tick off several spots in one hit – look to a cruise. For an especially romantic itinerary, suggest Celebrity Cruises’ Best of India and South Asia voyage. The trip combines time in Singapore, Phuket, Colombo, Cochin, Goa and Mumbai with two nights in Dubai, where the December departure coincides with the city’s spectacular New Year’s Eve fireworks display.

**Book it:** The 15-night voyage from Singapore starts at £1,324 per person cruise-only, departing February 16, 2020, and based on two sharing an Oceanview Stateroom on *Celebrity Constellation*.  
[celebritycruises.co.uk](http://celebritycruises.co.uk)

BEST OF THE REST

**The Sarojin, Khao Lak, Thailand:** Direct adventurous types to The Sarojin, whose Adventuremoon Package combines six nights’ B&B with activities such as white-water rafting, trekking in Khao Sok National Park and sailing, plus a private jungle dinner and more (from £2,800).

**VARU by Atmosphere, the Maldives:** If Only recommends this new, ultra-luxe resort for its comprehensive all-inclusive plan, which throws in island activities alongside speciality dining and a free spa treatment on selected stays (from £3,419 for a week in February 2020, including flights).

**Secrets St Martin Resort & Spa:** Opening on February 1, AMResorts’ first property in the French Caribbean will offer the brand’s signature honeymoon package, which includes a cocktail breakfast in bed, a private beachfront dinner and two couples’ spa treatments.

**Sandals:** Sandals offers a free honeymoon package across its properties, with a bottle of sparkling wine and breakfast in bed among the highlights. Suggest one of the Love Nest Suites for extra exclusivity including a private hot tub and butler service.

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GO ON A LAPLAND ADVENTURE

It’s not only about far-flung shores and winter sun, of course. For clients wanting to embrace the magic of winter – and jump on the ‘adventuremoon’ trend – direct them to Finnish Lapland. Inghams recommends Levi, where snowshoeing, skiing, snowmobiling, husky sledding and northern lights hunting take place against a backdrop of dusky-pink skies and snow-covered forest. “Lapland is not just for families and it’s not just for Christmas,” says Jess Howell, Inghams’ product manager for Lapland. “From mid-January to late February, the sun bathes everything in a rose-gold glow, and it makes for a stunning winter honeymoon.”

**Book it:** Inghams offers seven night’s B&B at the five-star Design Hotel Levi from £1,798 per person in March 2020, based on two sharing, including flights and transfers.  
[ingham.co.uk](http://ingham.co.uk)



PICTURES: Shutterstock; Steve Beaudet