

THE UK'S NO.1 BEST-SELLING BRIDAL MAGAZINE

CONDÉ NAST

Award
Winning
Editor

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OUR AWARDS SPECIAL

And the WORLD'S BEST honeymoons are...

... these! We've judged our first awards – and the winners? Those special places that don't just offer a five-star experience but something even better

OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS, THE BRIDES TEAM HAS PERSONALLY VISITED AND REVIEWED THOUSANDS OF THE HOTTEST HOTELS in our annual Honeymoon Guide and across the glossy pages of this very magazine. We've travelled with numerous tour operators, taken hundreds of flights on just about every major airline and experienced all types of trips, from snow-trekking across Iceland to sleeping solo under the stars in Namibia – in the name of bringing you the best of the best in the world of honeymoons. Now, it's time finally to reveal the ones that have soared above them all.

We started with hundreds of suggestions from the entire *Brides* team (and our writers around the world) and whittled the list to 20 winners and 20 runners-up (plus a sprinkling of 'special mentions' which were hot on their heels). The hotels, companies and destinations ultimately chosen by our Editor and travel editors for these accolades were not simply picked for their five-star finesse, fluffy towels or luxury stamps. This is about the intangible details: the above and beyond service, the atmosphere – that 'can't quite put your finger on it' magic you can only get from visiting and vetting these special spots. And don't forget – we also wanted to hear from you! We asked which travel company gets you excited about booking that trip-of-a-lifetime – and more than 2,000 of you voted. Find out which came top of the pile in our Readers' Choice Award on page 308. So, what are we waiting for? Turn the page for our rundown of the most fabulous trips around... →



NEW DESTINATION TO WATCH

Winner: THE PHILIPPINES

The 7,000 glorious islands that make up the Philippines are fast becoming the go-to for honeymooners with a conscience. As much as we love those flat sandy discs of perfection in the Indian Ocean, the Philippines delivers so much more than screensaver beaches. For starters, many of its islands are yet to be discovered by tourists. As one of the last untouched tropical archipelagos, it offers diving and snorkelling in some of the clearest waters on the planet, plus an abundance of fascinating wildlife. But venture inland, and beautiful lakes, pristine mangrove swamps and even African safari animals – including giraffes and zebras – brought to the country under President Marcos in the '70s, await you in the third-largest English-speaking country in the world.

RUNNER-UP BHUTAN

SPECIAL MENTION CHINA



BEST AIRLINE

Winner: BRITISH AIRWAYS

BA comes out on top for its long-term commitment to service in the sky, its safety record and its generous free baggage allowance (at least one bag of up to 23kg per person). These days, it's a novelty to get free food and drink at altitude, but BA has served complimentary refreshments on all flights since its inaugural take-off 96 years ago. Fly business or first and get access to perks including lounges; if you jet off from Heathrow T5, you'll get a free Elemis spa treatment. Ultimately, what it comes down to in this category is flight paths, and BA and its Oneworld alliance partners offer a global network of nearly 1,000 destinations.

RUNNER-UP AIR NEW ZEALAND

SPECIAL MENTION VIRGIN ATLANTIC



BEST HONEYMOON HOTEL IN AFRICA

Winner: CAPE VIEW CLIFTON, CAPE TOWN

The secret is in the name. The vistas from this ravishing property simply can't be beaten. Each of its five gorgeous rooms and two apartments come with sublime decks delivering breathtaking panoramas of South Africa's Cape Peninsula, with sweeping beaches to one side and the huge Twelve Apostles mountain range to the other. Offering easy access to all the city's attractions, these elegant, breezy Cape Town crashpads combine five-star luxury with a wonderful back-to-nature feel. But above all, it's owner Jess Latimer who elevates this place to 'winner status' with her beautiful Malibu Beach-style interiors flooded with light. Wonderfully serene, the sunsets from here are worth rushing back for, no matter how great the sightseeing is going – and you can be sure there'll be a chilled bottle of South African Chenin Blanc waiting.

RUNNER-UP THE RESIDENCE, ZANZIBAR

SPECIAL MENTION NKWICHI LODGE, LAKE MALAWI →

