

# Stress-Free Honeymoon Planner

Contributed by Jennifer Prymula  
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Most brides and grooms spend countless hours, days, weeks and months planning for the "Big Day". Unfortunately, planning for the honeymoon seems to be added as an afterthought! So, I've taken it upon myself to write my own "Stress Free Honeymoon Planner".

## 9-8 months prior

- Start discussing what each of you want in your dream honeymoon. This is a great way to add some snuggle time and fun into wedding preparations!

- Determine how long your honeymoon can be and schedule the time off of work. Remember that honeymoons to distant destinations such as Tahiti & Fiji will require more than a week because of travel time & time zone differences. Be sure to plan a day or two to recuperate once you arrive home no matter where you go!

- Budget realistically ( ok- I agree this part isn't fun!) ? you'll need to include airfare, transportation once at the destination, accommodations, sightseeing, gratuities, meals and souvenirs.

- Keep in mind when setting your budget that your wedding last only one day, your honeymoon a week or more! Don't short change yourselves by putting all of your funds into the wedding day. Which do you think you'll both remember more in 5 years? the centerpieces on the tables or a private candlelit dinner on the beach? The unique placards for your guests or the in room Jacuzzi? And don't kid yourselves that room category doesn't matter, you will be newlyweds after all! A view of the sunset over the ocean will be immensely more romantic and memorable than one of the parking lot!

## 8-7 Months

- Contact travel agents and interview a few to see who you click with. A great way to do this is at bridal shows. The travel professional should ask a lot of questions about what the two of you want for your dream honeymoon. Be honest about budget and let the travel professional get to work for you!

- Review the options presented and decide on a honeymoon package. Place your deposit and relax- one more thing off the wedding to do list! Booking this far in advance will provide you the best pricing, the best options in room categories and flights. Plus as an added bonus, when the wedding plans start to get hectic and you feel stressed out, you can daydream about your fantastic honeymoon knowing it's just waiting for the two of you! Don't forget to purchase travel insurance.

## 6 Months

- Apply for passports if you don't have them already. If you both have passports check the expiration dates to be sure that they will be valid when you travel. A good rule of thumb is that they should be valid for 6 months after you return- check with your travel agent if you have any questions or [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov). Check to see if Visas are needed for your

destination(s).

### 3 Months

-Review what luggage you have available and double check carry-on luggage dimensions for your airline carrier. Current travel rules say that for carry-on luggage each traveler can only bring a clear quart size bag of liquids & gels. These liquids must be 3oz containers or less. Write up a checklist of what you'll need to pack & purchase.

-Sunscreen is a must! While a nice tan can be very sexy there is nothing romantic about a sunburn! ( I usually bring two-one high SPF for the first few days and then a slightly lower SPF for the rest of the week) Bug spray with DEET should be high priority if you are traveling somewhere tropical as well as Aloe Vera!

-If you have any questions on the dress code at your honeymoon destination contact your travel agent. Be sure to include a sweater or light jacket as indoors the air conditioner can get chilly and sturdy shoes for that long romantic walk on the beach or for sightseeing! I also recommend at least two swim suits for both men and women. It's uncomfortable putting on a damp swimsuit and in tropical climates they may not dry as quickly as at home? trust me on this one. If you plan on horseback riding a pair of blue jeans is a must!

### 2 Months

-Make final payment.

-Determine who will be your house sitter / per sitter. Have a backup plan just in case.

### 3 weeks

-Make a copy of travel arrangements and passport & distribute to a trusted family member or friend. Be sure to leave your travel agents contact information.

-Contact post office and newspaper to stop delivery if no one can pick them up daily for you.

-Double check that camera is in working condition and pick up extra batteries and memory card(s) or film.

### 2 weeks

-Use your list to pack. This will give you plenty of time to pick up anything that was forgotten. Pack an extra bag or bring an extra suitcase for those souvenirs your bound to bring home!

-I recommend cross packing- put half of your clothes in each others suitcase. This way if the airline misplaces a suitcase for a day or two neither of you are completely out of clothes! Pack a few gallon size zip lock bags for damp clothing for on the way home.

-Be sure all medication(s) are in their original labeled bottle(s). Pack medication(s) as well as a change of clothes, personal items, tickets, money & passports in your carryon bag.

-Call bank and credit card company to let them know that you'll be out of town, where and for how long. You'd hate to have them put a hold on your credit card when you want/ need it the most! This may also provide protection in case unauthorized charges show up.

#### Day Before

Confirm flight schedule. Double check carryon bag.

#### Day of Departure

-Arrive at the airport early to allow for security. International flights are typically three hours prior.

-Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated both before and during travel.

-Relax and go with the flow.

The wedding is over and now you can enjoy each other! Have a Mai Tai for me!

About the author: Jennifer Prymula, specializes in Honeymoon and Destination Wedding travel and is certified as a Honeymoon & Destination Wedding Specialist by The Travel Institute. A few of Jennifer's other certifications include Certified Sandals Specialist, Hawaii Destination Specialist and an Accredited Cruise Counselor. Jennifer is also a member of the West Michigan Wedding Association and also the Kalamazoo Bridal Association. You can contact Jennifer at 269.686.0595 or visit her website at [www.sandsunandsavings.com](http://www.sandsunandsavings.com)