Article published on March 28th 2012 | Weddings

With the growing popularity of weddings abroad, more couples than ever before are considering the option of jetting away and celebrating their wedding in a unique and fabulous location.

I know from personal experience the decision to get married abroad is not one you make lightly and there definitely are both advantages and disadvantages in having your wedding abroad.

So how do you know if getting married abroad is right for you?

Firstly, the most important factor to remember is that the decision to get married abroad is very personal and itâ€™s not something anyone else can do for you â€“ you will need to weigh up all the pros and cons and give each a measure of importance to you as a couple.

For Sharon and Simon, the decision to have a destination wedding began after they started planning a traditional wedding in their hometown. As their plans progressed, Sharon commented that â€œit just didnâ€™t feel right to us, neither of us felt overjoyed about this type of weddingâ€•. During planning session, her partner Simon casually mentioned that he would love to get married in a tropical rainforest and immediately they both knew this was how they wanted to celebrate their wedding day.

So after many long discussions, Sharon and Simon made the decision to cancel their big affair in their hometown but were very apprehensive about informing their family and friends of their change in plans. Sharon said, â€œwe had needlessly put ourselves through a lot of anguish, pondering whether cancelling was the right decision, and about the reactions we would receive. Everyone surprised us saying it was a fantastic idea, and gave us their full support, so we worried needlessly about pleasing everyone all alongâ€•.

From her experiences, Sharon advice to all couples is that â€œif the idea of breaking with conformity, and disappointing family and friends is hindering your decision to have a wedding abroad, my advice is go for it. I guarantee you will be pleasantly surprised at the reaction you receive from those you inform. Once you take the plunge, your wedding takes on a whole new magical feel and then your choices are limitlessâ€•.

So what do other couples say thatâ€™ve had their wedding abroad?

The following list of advantages and disadvantages comes from the real life experiences of couples who have had a destination wedding.

The Advantages of Getting Married Abroad.

â€¢ Our choice of destinations and locations was endless.

â€¢ We had our wedding in a unique and spectacular setting. The photos were amazing!

â€¢ The cost of getting married abroad was significantly cheaper than if weâ€™d of had our wedding at home.

â€¢ The planning was easy and stress free because we hired the services of a wedding planner.

â€¢ We didnâ€™t get caught in the conveyer-belt of the traditional weddings, where couples often find themselves having the same format and style as every other wedding simply because there is no scope to do anything else.

â€¢ Our families had a special week on holiday together, it made our wedding more than just a day, and it ensured that only our nearest and dearest attended, rather than the 150 guests at the evening reception made up of the obligatory people from work and our parents' friends.

â€¢ Our friends and family were really relaxed and they enjoyed it so much more as it was a holiday for them. The atmosphere was amazing and the weather was perfect.

â€¢ The entire day & location reflected our personalities. It was also more intimate and a lot more relaxed than it would have been at home.

The Disadvantages of Getting Married Abroad

â€¢ Some loved-ones simply couldn't attend, and their absence was really felt.

â€¢ It may cost your guests more to attend your wedding abroad and you do need to be mindful of this. Some guests may feel a little resentful about this fact.

â€¢ You have to go with the flow a bit more when you get married abroad. If you are using a wedding planner or a tour operator, it is not always possible to be as hands on as you may like.

â€¢ Logistically it can be quite hard. When I planned my table decorations and favours, for example, I forgot that I had to actually ship them all to the venue!

â€¢ If you're using foreign suppliers you may not get EXACTLY what you want. For example, my bouquet was slightly different to what I expected, but it was still beautiful.

â€¢ You may be taking risks with suppliers. I booked our chapel, hair & makeup, photographer and restaurant all over the internet based on recommendations picked up in wedding forums! It was risky but it all came off perfectly. If you can handle the risk then go for it!

Article Source:
http://www.articleside.com/weddings-articles/the-advantages-and-disadvantages-of-getting-married-abroad.htm - Article Side

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Natalie Wingrove successfully planned her own a wedding abroad. In order to share her experiences and offer valuable advice, hints & tips on a destination Wedding Tuscany she has created the website Weddings-Abroad-Guide.com

Article Keywords:
Weddings abroad, wedding abroad guide, getting married abroad, Weddings abroad Advantages, Weddings abroad Disadvantages

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