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## ESSENTIALS

## INSURANCE

Get special wedding travel insurance – this has the same protection as normal travel cover (medical, baggage and so on) but includes things like the photographer not showing up, the venue cancelling, suppliers letting you down, and loss or damage to the dress.

## WEDDING PLANNER

Most hotels have in-house planners, who you may be obliged to use. You are *really* going to depend on yours, so contact them by phone as well as email – it will help them understand you and what you want. Even if you're not getting married in a hotel, you should almost certainly use a local wedding planner, unless you're fluent in the language and have an endless appetite for admin.

## VACCINATIONS AND VISAS

Check these well in advance – some vaccinations need to be spaced over several weeks or even months.

## NAME CHANGE

Don't book in your married name if your passport won't be changed in time – or vice versa. It's a surprisingly common mistake.



## ARM YOURSELF WITH THE FACTS

*Contact the local authorities in your country of choice to find out what is required to marry. We recommend avoiding places with lots of red tape, but most will require the following documents: passport, birth certificate, decree absolute (if one of the parties is divorced), deed poll certificate (if a name has been changed), plus an authenticated translation if required documents are not in the language of where you're getting married. All documents must be originals or authenticated (usually by a notary) copies.*

## THE DRESS DILEMMA

Ask the designer or shop if they will pack your dress ready for a flight. Then, check with the airline (before you buy your ticket) what their rules are: some will insist you put your dress in the hold, which you may or may not be happy about; others will let you pack it in the overhead lockers.

Worried about creases? Buy your dress its own seal (you think we're joking, but people do). Alternatively, on arrival, check if the hotel can have it professionally pressed, or if they have a steamer you can use. If neither option is available, do the steamy bathroom trick: hang the dress clear of the floor, close the door and windows, run hot water for 20 minutes and let the steam go to work.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO ASK

**Can you get married your country of choice?** In some you may only be able to have a blessing, and some won't do civil partnerships or same-sex weddings.

**How long do you need to be a resident?** This can vary from just a couple of days to get a licence, to months.

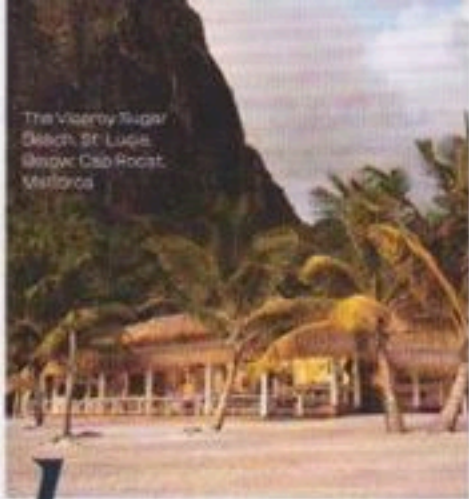


Plan a sunset ceremony in Mallorca

ALL

# abroad

The Viceroy Sugar Beach, St. Lucia. Above: Cap Rocat, Mallorca



## READ IT

How to Organize an Abroad Wedding? [A Comprehensive Guide to Planning a Destination Wedding](#)

BY JESSICA WATSON  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JESSICA WATSON

**Tip** If you go long haul, make sure the hen/stag nights are simpler and cheaper – it isn't fair to expect people to fork out a lot of money twice.

## THE CONS

You'll be very dependant on the local wedding planner and you won't be able to keep popping in for updates, viewings and tastings.

If you go long haul, some of your nearest and dearest might not be able to come, and people who do make it may expect to be there for at least a week. This means that if you are staying on for the honeymoon, it won't be very private and you may feel obliged to lay on activities.

There may be some things you simply can't get at your destination (classic cars, an incredible hairdresser or make-up artist, certain flowers), and you won't be able to try out suppliers beforehand.



*Getting married outside the UK has never been so popular (blame the weather). Here's our guide to the why, where and how of foreign weddings*

## THE PROS

No matter your location or time of year, in the UK you can never guarantee the weather.

Believe it or not, foreign weddings (especially long-haul) often work out cheaper than home events, as you'll probably have fewer guests and getting married on a beach costs less than a high-end venue hire in the UK (average cost is around £7,000, according to the UK Alliance of Wedding Planners).

It is a good way of avoiding the issue of having to invite guests because you feel obliged to (parents' friends or a friend's new boyfriend, for example). Also, a potentially expensive air fare gives peripheral guests a reason to say no without causing offence. Usually there is no excuse good enough for declining a wedding invitation sent months in advance.

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