

The Concierge

TIPS FOR TOURING HERE AND ABROAD



ADOBE

BUDDYMOONS — THEY’RE A THING

BY LAURIE WILSON | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

Something old, and something really new — buddymoons, where the bride and groom take along some of their closest friends on their trip-of-a-lifetime honeymoon. Jennifer Aniston and Justin Theroux took a glam Bora Bora buddymoon with their Hollywood pals a couple of years ago. And now it’s a thing.

“Honeymoons for two aren’t going anywhere, but the buddymoon trend has definitely been on the rise,” says Anne Howard, who cofounded HoneyTrek Trips (www.honeytrek.com) with her husband, Mike. They are also the authors of “Ultimate Journeys for Two.”

It’s not for everyone, but there are compelling reasons for newlyweds to take a buddymoon. Let us count the ways.

“A wedding weekend flies by with packed schedules and a hundred people to meet and greet,” Howard says. “Leaving little time to relish in this life-changing moment with your best buds.”

She adds: “Couples are getting married later in life and often already live together, so the honeymoon isn’t this sacred first brush with romance. . . . It’s about celebrating a new chapter in life with the people you love the most.”

It can be a financially savvy option, too. “Buddymoons are also a chance to indulge in splashier experiences that newlyweds might not be able to afford on their own — like chartering

a yacht or hiring a private chef for the week,” says Howard.

Who typically goes on a buddymoon?

“Typically, it is newlyweds traveling with their closest friends,” says Taylor Methfessel, luxury travel adviser at Smartflyer.com. “I have rarely seen it with family, I believe, because families spend a great deal of time together leading up to the celebration. Married couples are typically so busy at their ceremonies that they don’t have much time to relax and talk with their friends, so buddymoons are a great opportunity to do so and continue the festivities of the week.”

Of course, you’d also want to make sure your friends are like-minded. For instance, if the couple longs for a ski honeymoon, they’d probably want to invite along friends who ski. But not everyone might be keen on skiing 24/7, so it’d be just as important to find a ski resort with fabulous après-ski lodges and warming fireplaces — and maybe breweries and other fun options nearby. Along the same lines, you wouldn’t invite a sober friend to your honeymoon in the Napa Valley Wine region.

“It’s one of the most memorable trips of your life,” says Methfessel. “So make sure that those traveling with you are individuals that make you feel happy, recharged, and the most authentic versions of yourselves.”

The most popular buddymoon destinations are those that are “busy and buzzy,” says Methfessel. “I don’t see friends trav-

eling together to romantic, quiet resorts, but if it’s a location with many activities, it is popular.” Methfessel suggests Mykonos, St. Tropez, Ibiza, and the Amalfi Coast because “all certainly have a romantic aspect, but there are many beach clubs and bars to visit together, as well as towns with a lot of atmosphere.”

Howard suggests a cruise as “a common way to whisk away your favorite people while giving everyone the autonomy of their own cabin, choice of activities, and separate tabs.” And for a villa or resort stay, she recommends Thailand. “It’s a tried and true honeymoon destination, but it’s also a great place to incorporate friends of disparate interests with its rich culture, world-class beaches, ancient rain forests, delicious food, and affordable prices.”

And you’ve heard of double-dating? Well, another buddymoon trend is double-honeymooning — with another newlywed couple. Wedaways, a Virtuoso Member Agency specializing in weddings, honeymoons, and romantic getaways, is receiving requests from couples requesting to honeymoon together, especially foodies and adventure lovers, says cofounder and CEO Renée Strauss. “If friends are getting married in the same or close to the same season, they can plan their honeymoons accordingly.” www.wedaways.com

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HERE

A DAZZLING DISPLAY IN MAINE

One spot along the Maine coast grows brighter as daylight wanes: the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens in Boothbay, which has 650,000 colorful LED lights on display during its annual Gardens Aglow exhibit, on show Thursdays through Sundays from Nov. 15 through Dec. 31 (except Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve). Visitors enter the gardens through a corridor of dancing lights, representative of the aurora borealis, and then wander around 14 acres of this dazzling, illuminated wonderland on a self-guided walking tour (complimentary wheelchairs and scooters available, weather permitting). *Tickets: \$8 ages 3-17 to \$36 for a family of four; \$5-\$8 for members. Sign up for one of three entry times per night: 4, 6:30, and 7:30 p.m. 207-633-8000, www.mainebotanicalgardens.org*

A FILM FEST FOR KIDS

More than 50 kids’ films — nearly half made by students — will be screened during the Boston International Kids Film Festival Nov. 16 to 18 at several Boston-area venues. The festival includes professionally made feature-length films and documentaries, and short films geared to children 10 and under, and those middle-school-age and older. The films, drawn from filmmakers in 16 countries, will be shown at the Somerville Theatre, Lesley University, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Highlights include the animated film “Wally’s Opening Day” (watch Wally prep for Red Sox opening day), “Eighth Grade” (a touching film directed by Hamilton-



native Bo Burnham), and “Science Fair” (about the brainy kids who take part in the International Science and Engineering Fair). *Tickets \$10 in advance, \$12 at the door. www.bikff.org*

THERE

NEW ZEALAND TRAIN SERVICE RESUMES

Take a scenic ride along the east coast of New Zealand’s South Island on the KiwiRail Coastal Pacific train, which runs daily from Dec. 1 through April. This scenic journey between Christchurch and Picton will resume after a two-year hiatus due to damage from the Kaikoura earthquake. The 208-mile (six-hour) route passes over 175 bridges and through 22 tunnels, and offers stunning views of the South Pacific Ocean and Kaikoura Ranges. Take advantage of the Flexi and Flexi Plus tickets to stop off at Kaikoura (a seaside town known for its crayfish and its swimming-with-dolphins experiences) and Blenheim (a gateway to the island’s wine region).



One-way tickets start at \$103 for adults, \$72 for 14 and younger. Flexi tickets let you change dates, get a partial to full refund, and enjoy free stopovers. www.greatjourneysofnz.co.nz/coastal-pacific

SNOWMASS’ NEW SLOPE-SIDE HOTEL

Stay at the Limelight Hotel Snowmass and you ski all day and then scale the largest indoor climbing wall in Colorado, reaching up to five stories high. The new 99-room hotel, which has 11 for-sale private residences, offers ski-in/ski-out access at Snowmass Mountain, has a fun children’s game area,

and welcomes pets. Visit the Lounge, the property’s new restaurant, for the large continental breakfast, wood-fired pizzas, and other locally sourced dishes, and for the live après-ski music Thursdays through Mondays. Also take advantage of the resort’s First Tracks and Inside Tracks programs. The new property opens Dec. 15, but book now. *Rates start at \$525 for a deluxe room (two queens or a king bed), based on double occupancy. www.lime-lighthotels.com/snowmass*

EVERYWHERE

ELIMINATE SPAM CALLS WHILE TRAVELING

Cut down on unwanted telemarketer calls when you’re traveling — or at home — with Hammacher Schlemmer’s No-Call-Back-Device. This simple device plugs into your home phone and comes preloaded with 5,000 numbers of the most notorious telemarketers and spam callers. The device can detect spam calls and add them to your no-call list. If you still have spam messages when you return home from a trip, scroll through the incoming calls list and block numbers by simply hitting the Block Calls button. Over time, you can cut down on the number of junk calls you receive. When you get a telemarketing call while home, simply hit #2 and the caller’s phone number will be blocked. The device stores up to 6,500 blocked numbers. \$89.95. 800-321-1484, www.hammacher.com



NOT YOUR AVERAGE TRAVEL CUP

Turn your travel cup into a do-it-all drinking vessel with OtterBox’s new Elevation 20 tumbler. Buy the Elevation 20 tumbler and accessorize it with a variety of new lids, including the Straw Lid, the Closed Lid, the Basic Screw-In Lid, the French Press Lid, or the Hydration Lid, which has a drinking spout and grab-and-go handle. But it gets fancier than that: You can also choose from the Flavor Infuser Lid, which lets you steep a perfect cup of tea or add fresh fruit to your water; the Thermal Lid, which turns the tumbler into a vacuum-sealed thermos (add soup and go); and the Shaker Lid, which enables you to whip up your favorite martini at your destination. \$29.99 for tumbler; \$4.99-\$34.99 for lids. www.otterbox.com

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