

The Concierge

TIPS FOR TOURING HERE AND ABROAD

Headed to the royal wedding? Score a deal fit for a king or queen.

By NEECE REGIS
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All eyes will be on Windsor Castle on May 19 as Prince Harry and Meghan Markle make their wedding vows. Following the nuptials at St George's Chapel, officiated by the archbishop of Canterbury, a horse-drawn carriage will carry the happy couple through the streets of Windsor to the delight of cheering fans. Serious royal watchers who make the journey to witness the spectacular event — located an hour west of London — may want to check out these royal wedding deals designed to make guests feel like a king or queen.

ONE ALDWYCH

Say “Cheers!” to the newlyweds as you arrive at One Aldwych, a contemporary luxury hotel in the center of Covent Garden. As part of the Spring with the Royal Wedding Celebration Package, the hotel's Lobby Bar has crafted an exclusive Royal Cup cocktail, combining Bombay Sapphire, homemade bergamot and chamomile cordial, Elderflower liqueur, and an edible gold leaf. The package also includes accommodations for two; full English breakfast; use of health club (including 18-meter pool and state-of-the-art gym); and more. For an additional charge (\$62), surprise your mate with a hand-tied royal bouquet featuring peonies — said to be Ms. Markle's favorite flower — and a sprig of myrtle, a symbol of love and matrimony used in royal brides' bouquets since Queen Victoria married Prince Albert in 1840. Available weekends in May. Rates from \$477. www.onealdwych.com

DUKES LONDON

Nestled on a historic private courtyard in St. James's Place, a five-minute walk from Buckingham Palace, the luxury Dukes London hotel is offering a special royal wedding package. Couples staying in any modern or classic style rooms or suites will enjoy such royal amenities as a trip to Windsor Castle with a picnic breakfast; afternoon tea in the hotel Drawing Room; bottle of Gusbourne sparkling wine in room on arrival; pick up and drop off from Heathrow and Gatwick airports; three-hour walking tour of Westminster; early check-in/late check-out; three-course dinner for two onsite at GBR (Great British Restaurant); and a royal wedding souvenir. Available April 27-June 3. Rates from \$880 per night with three-night minimum stay. www.dukeshotel.com

CLIVENED HOUSE

Celebrate the newest royal nuptials in high-style at Cliveden House, a country house hotel sprawled across a 376-acre estate. Located 20 minutes from Windsor Castle, this Relais & Châteaux property is offering several ways commemorate the royal wedding in May: a Royal Treatment spa day in the new Cliveden Spa (from \$305); a unique afternoon barbecue in the garden; and a Regal Weekend package for two that includes two nights (May 18-19) in your chosen room category; afternoon tea with champagne; two one-hour spa treatments; three-course dinner in the Astor Grill; seven-course dinner in the André Garrett Restaurant; breakfast each day; champagne river



cruise; and more. If you don't have a coveted ticket to the wedding, you can watch the festivities unfold in the hotel's screening room, or in the privacy of your suite. Starting rate for room only is \$618; Royal Weekend package rate from \$1,799 per person for two nights, based on two adults sharing a junior suite. www.clivedenhouse.co.uk

11 CADOGAN GARDENS

Originally built as four separate Victorian town houses by Lord Chelsea in the late 19th century, 11 Cadogan Gardens is now a posh urban hideaway in the heart of bustling Chelsea. Following a screening of the royal wedding, the property will be serving a champagne afternoon tea with all the royal trimmings in its serene lounge

as well as its garden terrace. The Regal Afternoon Tea (\$76) includes a glass of Pimms on arrival; half-bottle of champagne per person; traditional finger sandwiches; freshly baked scones; delicate pastries; and selection of teas. Rates from \$430. 11cadogangardens.com

MANDARIN ORIENTAL HYDE PARK

What could be more regal than staying at the opulent Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park, the Edwardian masterpiece that harkens back to the early 20th century's Golden Age of travel? The hotel recently unveiled the first phase of extensive restorations to its Knightsbridge facing rooms and suites, and its 24-carat gilded ballroom where Queen Elizabeth II learned to dance with her sis-



Clockwise (from top left): Dukes London, Claridge's, Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park, 11 Cadogan Gardens, and Cliveden House.

ter, the late Princess Margaret. Located near the verdant Hyde Park in Knightsbridge, the hotel is close to Harrods, the Royal Albert Hall, and world-class museums. Rates from \$950. www.mandarinoriental.com/london/hyde-park/luxury-hotel

CLARIDGE'S

At Claridge's, the opulent five-star luxury hotel in Mayfair, you may feel as if you've stepped into a scene from the television series, The Crown. After its debut in 1856 (and a visit from Queen Victoria and Prince Albert), an Art Deco makeover

attracted lords, ladies and dowager duchesses as well as movie stars and statesmen including Winston Churchill, Audrey Hepburn and Cary Grant. (It is said that Queen Mother's reserved dining table was always decorated with sweet peas.) Recent restoration and updates, combining style with comfort, are attracting new generations who appreciate the hotel's timeless glamour. During your royal wedding visit, reserve a table at Afternoon Tea where sweet and savory British specialties are offered along with a selection of 24 loose leaf teas, all served on jade- and white-striped china. Traditional tea \$83. Accommodation rates from \$790. www.claridges.co.uk

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HERE

A SPOT-ON PERSONALIZED ITINERARY

Starting this summer, you can book a flight on Cape Air and then use Utrip's new Soar and Explore program to dial in the perfect itinerary at your destination. Utrip's artificial intelligence technology sifts through your likes and dislikes to come up with a travel plan that's based on your preferences. When booking, choose your budget (on a scale ranging from “backpacker” to “luxury”) and your preferred pace (“relaxed” to “pack it in”), and complete a Traveler Profile indicating your interest in art, shopping, cuisine, museums, and adventure, for instance. The program also takes your travel style into account — whether you're flying solo or with a family in tow — and the purpose of your trip. Utrip then tells you where to eat, sleep, play, and shop, based on what it knows about you, and factoring in local expertise. Cape Air flies to 38 destinations in the United States and Caribbean. www.utrippro.com.

BAR HARBOR HOSTS NATIVE AMERICAN MARKET

Learn about Native American culture in Maine through storytelling, music performances, and art during the Abbe Museum Indian Market, which takes place in Bar Harbor May 18-20. The Wabanaki people and their ancestors have lived in Pesamkuk — now called Mount Desert Island and Frenchman Bay — for thousands of generations.

Between 1840 and 1920, Wabanaki artists and craftsmen traveled to Bar Harbor and other seaside communities to sell baskets and other items. Bar Harbor hosts Maine's first juried Indian arts market next month, drawing more than 75 Native American artists and performers from 40 Nations across North America. See a fashion show, film festival, dancing, and internationally known performers, and buy handmade crafts. Cost: free to attend the market; fees for opening reception and film festival. 207-288-3519, www.abbemuseum.org/indianmarket.

THERE

HIT THE ROAD IN A HIPPIE VAN

Explore the Pacific Northwest or beyond in a hip and thoughtfully restored Volkswagen camper van, thanks to Seattle-based Peace Vans Rentals. The company maintains 16



vehicles, including old-school VW buses, Eurovans with pop-up roofs, and slick new Mercedes vans with all the bells and whistles. Travelers have taken vans as far south as Joshua Tree National Park in southern California, and up to Saskatoon, Canada; the most popular destination? Washington's Olympic Peninsula. Peace Vans welcomes two more vintage Volkswagen buses this spring — 1970 and 1976 models — that can take visitors on daytrips or short overnights in and around Seattle. It also launches a new one-way program that lets renters take a van from Seattle as far south as San Luis Obispo, Calif. Each van sleeps four people, and now has a built-in refrigerator, heater for shoulder season camping, and new battery system for powering cameras, phones, and camping accessories. Rates start at \$215 per night between May 1 and Sept. 30, \$170 per night October 1 to April 30; six-night minimum. www.peacevanrentals.com.

OUTFITTER LAUNCHES NEW WOMEN'S TOURS

Walk the Amalfi Coast, discover Costa Rica, and ex-

plore Peru, Persia, and other destinations on new women's-only adventures around the globe. In the spirit of the #MeToo movement, Exodus Travels has launched nine all-female trips to inspire women to embrace adventure travel, and to get out and explore. The trips, all with female leaders, include between four and 16 travelers maximum. See active volcanoes in Costa Rica, wander around temples in Myanmar, and bike around Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam. Prices range from \$1,435 (an 8-day trip walking the Amalfi Coast, including one of the world's top coastal walks, the “Walk of the Gods”) to \$3,715 (a 15-day journey around Persia's snowy mountains, rugged deserts, and market towns); international flights not included. 844-227-9087, www.exodustravels.com.

EVERYWHERE

A COMPACT BIKE TRAINER THAT TRAVELS

Taking your bike on the road for a race or training while you travel? Colorado-based Feedback Sports makes a super portable and easy-to-use bike trainer that's ideal for everything from warming up at races to spinning in your hotel room. The Omnium trainer fits 16- to 29-inch and 650c-700c wheels, and accommodates quick-release and thru-axle skewers, meaning it works with most road, mountain, and cyclocross bikes. Unfold the trainer, adjust the length to fit your bike, attach your front fork to the stand, and start spin-

ning. The aluminum rollers offer a smooth ride and progressive resistance to create a road-like riding experience yet are quiet enough to keep the peace in your hotel. The trainer fits into a compact tote (included) that protects it whether you carry it onto a plane, pack it in a bike box, or slip it in the back of your car. The company also makes a handy Ride Prep Bicycle Tool Kit with 12 tools for making adjustments to your bike before riding. \$429.99 (trainer), \$109.99 (tool kit). 720-536-2369, www.feedbacksports.com.

A RIDICULOUSLY THIN CHARGER

Xoopar's new portable charger measures just 5mm thick — about the thickness of two or three credit cards — making it virtually unnoticeable in your wallet or pocket. The ultra-slim PowerCard offers 1,300 mAh of charging capacity and one USB port with 1.3A output. The charger comes with a USB to micro-USB cord for charging, and is available in six fun colors. \$24.99. www.lafab.us/brand/Xoopar. KARI BODNARCHUK

