

destination weddings

THE TRAVEL MAGAZINE
FOR BRIDES AND GROOMS

& honeymoons

THE NEW
Etiquette
Rules
SEE PAGE 29

150
TRAVEL
IDEAS

HOW TO
THROW A
MEXICO
FIESTA

REAL
BRIDES
SHARE
TIPS THAT
WORK

ROCK
& ROLL
BRIDAL STYLE

Hawaii
I Do's

Vineyard
Vows TOP PICKS
ACROSS THE USA

10 COOL HOTELS
FROM LOW-KEY
TO LUXURIOUS

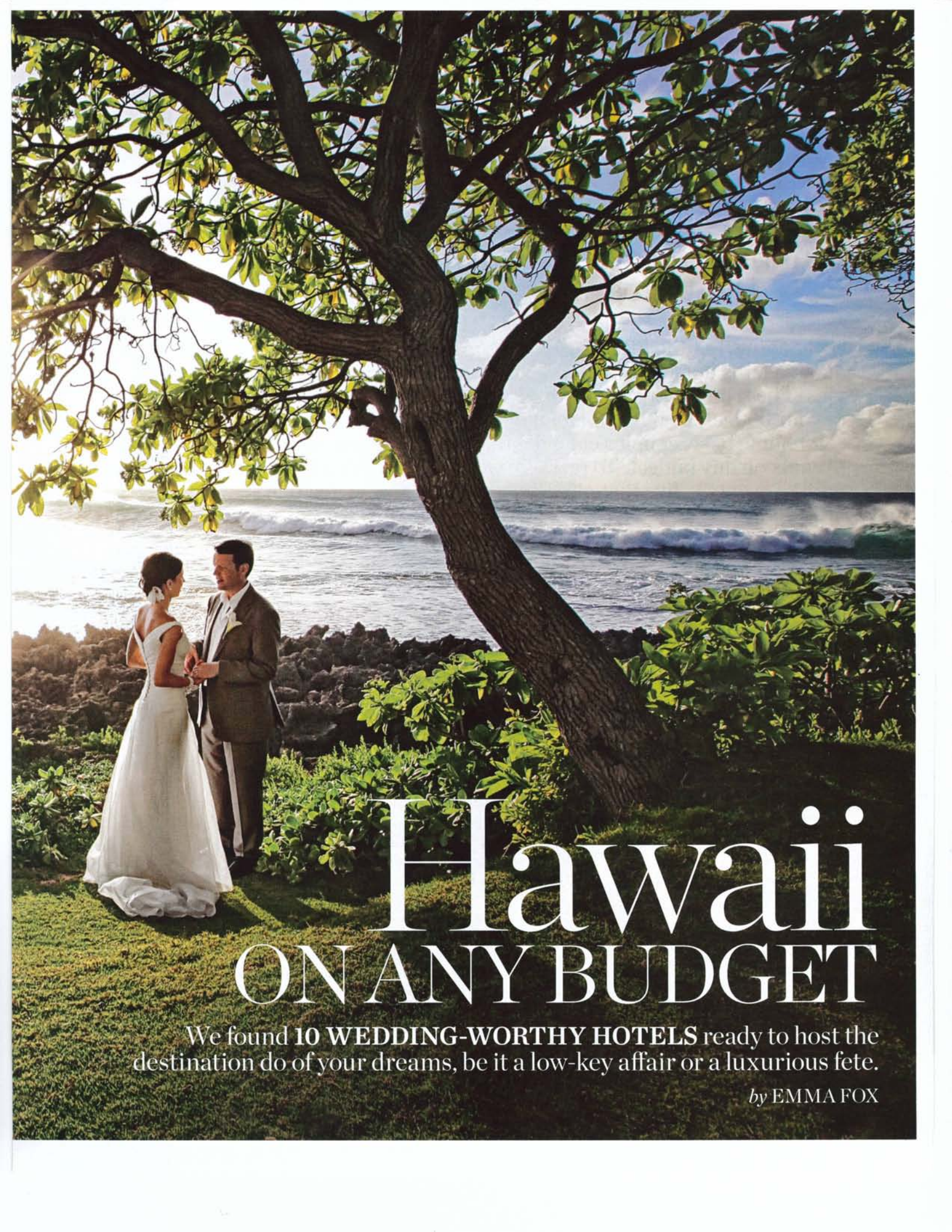


SEXY HOTEL POOLS,
COUNTRY INNS AND
GORGEOUS WEDDINGS

DISPLAY UNTIL DEC. 14, 2009 US \$4.99



DESTINATIONWEDDINGMAG.COM



Hawaii

ON ANY BUDGET

We found **10 WEDDING-WORTHY HOTELS** ready to host the destination do of your dreams, be it a low-key affair or a luxurious fete.

by EMMA FOX

Put some aloha into your ceremony with traditional floral leis

the small, secluded beach out front, you'll find it the perfect peaceful oasis. Stay in one of the new junior suites, with kitchenette and private courtyard, or splurge on the two-bedroom oceanfront cottage, whose spacious open-air lanai makes a perfect gathering spot — there's even a grill. Bonus: Inn guests receive a 15 percent discount at the restaurant.

THE WEDDING The Inn doesn't offer any formal wedding packages, but general manager Tami Joslin will gladly reserve its oceanfront wedding site, set up a gazebo (\$200 site fee) and recommend local vendors to cut down on your legwork. Whatever your ceremony style, your seafood-laden reception menu will wow. Think contemporary Polynesian dishes like fresh mahimahi baked in ti leaves, ginger-seared ahi tuna or rib-eye steak seasoned with Hawaiian red salt. The restaurant can handle receptions of up to 50, and site fees are reduced for inn and restaurant guests. *Rooms from \$175.*

Kaanapali Beach Hotel

MAUI

Visitors flock to Maui's drier western side for reliable beach weather, emerald-green golf courses and meticulously planned resorts. But they also come for the three-mile stretch of Kaanapali, named best beach in America by Dr. Beach in 2003. The hotel sits in the middle of it all, bringing warm Hawaiian hospitality and ambience at a better price than its big-brand neighbors. Complimentary cultural activities, including nightly hula performances and sunset cliff-diving shows at nearby Black Rock, are perfect for families. Guests will love the proximity to Lahaina for shopping, history (it was once Hawaii's major whaling port) and nightlife.

THE WEDDING Four wedding packages make planning easy, but the onsite coordinator can also create a custom experience. The 430-room hotel prides itself on its cultural authenticity, so accent your ceremony with floral leis, a ukulele band — even custom-made wedding sarongs. The hotel's lush oceanfront lawns are favorite combo



ceremony/reception sites; hosting up to 350 guests, they don't need much in the way of decoration — a petal path, some pretty linen-clad seats and a beaming bride should suffice. After the reception, sneak off to their intimate sister property, the 19-room Plantation Inn, in Lahaina, for some post-wedding privacy. *Rooms from \$199.*

King Kamehameha's Kona Beach Hotel

BIG ISLAND

Who knew? One of the most significant sites in all of Hawaii is also one of the most affordable. During King Kamehameha's reign in the 1800s, he established his home

on the grounds of what is now the classic hotel. The 460-room hotel has been a landmark for more than 30 years, and rooms in the West Tower recently underwent a massive overhaul — new lava-motif carpet, coffee-bean-print upholstery and soothing rainforest hues. The lobby, pool and public areas are up next, with renovation slated to be complete by New Year's Eve. This stretch of Kailua-Kona coastline is the island's best spot for shopping, restaurants and nightlife. And there's no place more convenient for a sunset cocktail cruise; Body Glove's 65-foot catamaran departs Kailua-Kona Pier, just steps from the hotel.

THE WEDDING Proving their dedication to

(for both the bride and groom) and a ukulele instrumentalist.

marriage-minded visitors, the hotel recently snagged ace wedding planner Vital Demonti from pricey Kona Village Resort down the road. Demonti brings an enviable roster of vendor contacts generally reserved for high-end properties, as well as an eye for making shoestring-budget weddings (starting at \$500) look swank. Barefoot couples clad in tuberose and ti-leaf leis can exchange vows on Kona's largest white-sand beach, with views of Kamakahonu Bay and Ahuena Heiau, the personal worshiping site of King Kamehameha. Receptions accented with local plumeria blossoms are held in the hotel's three gardens or in the air-conditioned ballroom. There's no site fee, and catering starts at a super-reasonable \$34 per person. *Rooms from \$179.*

SMART SPLURGES

Kona Village Resort

BIG ISLAND

Retro-minded couples seeking big-resort service in a stunning natural setting have a match in Kona Village — it's kinda like a luxe, grown-up version of Gilligan's Island. Guests shack up in 125 individual thatched-roof *hale* (bungalows); the best are oceanfront with private whirlpool spas on the lanais. Built in 1965 (it predates the airport!), this old-school escape puts the emphasis on exclusivity and unwinding, with no in-room telephones, TVs or radios (though you'll find Internet in the concierge office if you need to connect). A/C is *verboten* as well; if that's an issue for anyone, tell them to request a hale closer to the ocean, where

trade winds keep things nice and cool. Guests will bond over a full slate of activities, including snorkeling, kayaking and tennis. Tuesday is Paniolo Night, when the cowboy life is celebrated with an outdoor barbecue and entertainment.

THE WEDDING Get your gang in the mood with a welcome party timed to the twice-weekly luau, hands-down the best on the island. For the main event, tie the knot on the sand beneath a giant carved tiki at the southern end of Kahuwai Bay — its unobstructed ocean views and amazing Kona sunsets make it a top ceremony site. Get some black-and-white snaps with a lava-rock promontory as backdrop, then head to a pupu-filled reception on the grassy Kahua Lawn. Most guests opt for Kona Village's all-inclusive meal plan,

Continued on page 120



Above: Couples love the views from the glass-walled chapel at Turtle Bay Resort. Opposite: Kona Village Resort offers 82 acres of photo ops.

What did your dream look like?



This is how it should feel.
THE WESTIN
ST. JOHN
RESORT & VILLAS

The toasts will be inspiring. But the feelings will be indescribable. Begin your journey at The Westin St. John Resort & Villas, where new beginnings are always celebrated.

To plan your St. John destination wedding or honeymoon, please e-mail Mary.Heath@westin.com or for additional information visit westinresortstjohn.com or call 1.888.627.7206.

- Experience the charm of St. John, US Virgin Islands and the romance of an elegant oceanfront ceremony.
- Explore the natural beauty of the islands' crystal waters, white-sand beaches, green hillsides and purple-hued sunsets, as well as its pure privacy.
- Refresh yourself as our professional staff treat you and your guests to renowned and personalized service, gourmet catering, endless activities and luxurious amenities, all carefully selected to reflect your individuality.

Hawaii on any budget

Continued from page 73

which makes group meals easy, though you will need to pay extra for parties and receptions. *Rooms from \$660, including meals.*

Turtle Bay Resort

OAHU

Think of the North Shore as a quieter alternative to the hustle and bustle of cosmopolitan Honolulu. There are no major towns in this big-wave mecca; instead, you'll find beautiful beaches frequented by longtime locals and a handful of luxury resorts. Situated on five miles of private coastline, luxe Turtle Bay was featured in the 2008 flick *Forgetting Sarah Marshall*. The most romantic digs are the oceanfront Beach Cottages, which feature 15-foot ceilings and private lanais overlooking the water. But the resort has a whopping 447 accommodations running the gamut in price and style from standard hotel rooms to multi-bedroom villas ideal for families. Good news for golfers: Hotel guests get discounts on both the Arnold Palmer and George Fazio courses.

THE WEDDING Have a short lead time? Wedding planner Pura Martinez-Stephen recently pulled off MC Hammer's vow renewal for the A&E series *Hammertime* with 24 hours' notice (though she suggests nine months or more to ensure availability). Turtle Bay combines the holy trinity of Hawaii wedding wishes: sand, surf and sun. Whether you have two wedding guests or 500, it's easy to customize, thanks to four full-time coordinators, five wedding sites and 15 reception areas. The most popular ceremony site is the glass-walled Wedding Chapel, set on the rocks above the ocean. Say your vows here before 150 guests, then retreat to Bayview Beach Lawn for your alfresco reception. For something totally unique, wed on the 18th hole on the Arnold Palmer Course, where the golf great played shortly after tying the knot in 2005. Site fees throughout are generally waived with a \$120-per-person food-and-beverage minimum. *Rooms from \$264.*

Four Seasons Resort Maui at Wailea

MAUI

The chic boutiques, hotels and dining *boîtes* of Wailea provide endless pampering

touches to its well-heeled visitors (think Britney, Paris, Lindsay and Nicole). But it's the intimate beach, open-air *hale hau* couples massages and brand-new \$9 million adult-only Serenity Pool that make Four Seasons Resort Maui at Wailea stand above the swank crowd. Group rates save guests 15 percent on rooms, and wedding-night upgrades based on occupancy are a possibility. It's the perfect beginning to a multi-isle adventure when you honeymoon at one of FS's three other Hawaii resorts, one on the Big Island and two on Lanai.

THE WEDDING The most basic package here begins at \$5,900, but you get what you pay for. Details are arranged to perfection, from guest accommodations to requested personal touches (though they can't guarantee the garden bougainvillea will always be in bloom, as one bride desired). The hotel hosts only one wedding per day, be it an intimate gathering at Plumeria Point or a lawn party for 300 overlooking Wailea Beach. Receptions start at \$200 per person, and you can take over virtually any space you want, including Spago, for the right price. To trim costs, time your event right: A weekday ceremony between April and October avoids site fees, while prices peak for holidays such as Valentine's Day and New Year's Eve. *Rooms from \$425.*

Koa Kea Hotel & Resort

KAUAI

Shuttered for more than a decade following Hurricane Iniki, the former Poipu Beach Hotel reopened with a new name and to new acclaim this year. The 1960s property underwent a total overhaul, redesigned as a mod retreat reminiscent of vintage Hollywood hangouts. Interior designer Anita Brooks styled the 121 guest rooms in hues of cool ocean blues and chocolate browns, with beds kitted in custom feather bedding and Anichini linens. Outdoor amenities include a scalloped pool and lava-rock hot tub. The prime location in sunny Poipu allows for plenty of surfing, snorkeling and sunbathing, and you're just five minutes from the historic town of Koloa, the site of Hawaii's first sugar plantation.

THE WEDDING The simplest option starts at \$900, but the premier package, beginning

STARWOOD PREFERRED GUEST*

©2008 Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc. All rights reserved. Westin is the registered trademark of Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc., or its affiliates.