

weddings with a

# BEACH VIEW

caribbean



These island resorts make wedding dreams come true with seasoned event planners, top-notch cuisine, upscale accommodations and more. More importantly, with their proximity to the U.S. and plenty of hassle-free packages available, saying “I do” has never been easier.

ciara lavelle

**half moon** ♦ So if your clients are planning a big wedding—and in the Caribbean, groups of 20 or more are considered “big” destination weddings—then convenience is key. That’s what makes **Half Moon**, an expansive, country club-like property on Jamaica’s north coast, such a perfect spot for large family gatherings. Wedding party and guests alike have a wide range of accommodations to choose from. After the wedding, they can retire to its private, standard rooms, or upgrade to its oceanfront *Hibiscus* suites. Alternatively, the whole party can stay together in one of the resort’s villas—most of which have private pools and full kitchens. An added bonus: when they’re filled, the villa pricing is a steal. And the wedding itself won’t suffer for convenience’s sake. The well-manicured lawns and pristine stretches of sand offer plenty of picturesque ceremony venues. Packages like the *Half Moon Wedding Plan* include setup of their chosen venue, reception decor and entertainment, and one wedding event—such as a rehearsal dinner—per day, with menu and bar options. Wedding guests

are pampered as well, with included meals and premium drinks, a bottle of champagne on arrival and transfers to and from the airport. Upgrade to the *Ultimate in Luxury Wedding* package to include unlimited greens fees at the Half Moon golf course, horseback riding, and motorized watersports for guests. The *Half Moon Wedding Plan* starts at \$190 pp per night; *Ultimate in Luxury* starts at \$240 pp per night. Room rates start at \$205 per room per night. Contact: (888) 830-5974; [halfmoon.com](http://halfmoon.com)

**ritz-carlton, grand cayman** ♦ It’s hard to find a better place in the Caribbean than Grand Cayman to pull off unique or unusual wedding ceremonies. The resort-heavy infrastructure and diverse population here, give clients access to all sorts of perks, including varied choices in entertainment, decor and other details. Whether they want to come down the aisle in a horse-drawn carriage, a vintage car or in full scuba gear, planners in Grand Cayman can make it happen. One of the most elegant spots in the Cayman Islands for

Opposite page: Beachside wedding at The Ritz-Carlton, Grand Cayman.

weddings is the **Ritz-Carlton**, set right on Grand Cayman's Seven Mile Beach—one of the island's most popular wedding venues. Clients planning their wedding here work with their personal wedding planner, with experience in turning even the most high-end wedding dreams into reality. Together, they can plan anything from a basic beachfront ceremony, to a long weekend filled with bridesmaids' teas, bachelor and bachelorette parties, golf and spa outings and more. The resort can provide food and beverages from its award-winning chefs; plan setup and decor for the reception and venue; flowers, music and more. And for those unique details, they'll know which outside vendor to ask. Wedding packages include the *Complimentary Wedding Offer*, starting at \$399 per room per night, which includes accommodations and a daily \$100 resort credit in addition to all the ceremony basics and a 3-night first anniversary stay at any Ritz-Carlton in the Caribbean or Mexico. More involved packages add florals, cabanas or gazebos, photography, music and more.

Contact: (800) 542-8680; [ritzcarlton.com](http://ritzcarlton.com)

**peter island resort** ♦ Nothing says romance quite like a private island. And that's just the first reason to book wedding couples at **Peter Island Resort** in the British Virgin Islands. Its varied topography and amenities give clients a wide range of venue options—from a traditional Caribbean ceremony on the sand, to saying their vows on a bluff looking out to the sunset. And though the island may seem remote, wedding planners here have access to every scene-setting, mood-making amenity required on that special day—flowers, food and drink (and cake), photography, music and decor. Small wedding parties here should consider renting one of the island's three villas of up to six bedrooms. Each includes the services of a valet, chef, housekeeper and attendant on duty, ensuring all guests are focused on enjoying the day. Large parties, meanwhile, can spread guests out among Peter Island's bungalows, many of which offer direct beach access. Big spenders can even buy out the entire island. But regardless of the size of the party, Peter Island's facilities ensure there's plenty of fun to be had. Before tying the knot, brides can spend some quality time with bridesmaids at *The Spa at Peter Island*, an expansive facility with a serene pool deck looking out to sea that's sure to calm any pre-wedding jitters. Grooms have a variety of ways to work off that stress, from deep-sea fishing to exploring the surrounding islands by boat. Peter Island's wedding package starts at \$2,500; rates start at \$590 per room dbl, and include all meals.

Contact: (800) 346-4451; [peterisland.com](http://peterisland.com)

**sandy lane** ♦ This resort in Barbados has been home to some of the most high-profile weddings in the Caribbean, and it's not hard to see why its wedding planners have catered to the stars. Its expansive property offers brides and grooms spectacular locations for ceremonies as well as receptions, with both traditional beachfront venues and regal event spaces with balconies that look out across its manicured gardens, pools and waterfalls. After the ceremony, wedding guests can indulge in meals from the same team that's given **Sandy Lane** a reputation for fine cuisine—an especially impressive feat on an island renowned for its fine dining options—with wedding menus that combine European classics like foie gras, with Bajan flavors like blue marlin and rum cake. Sandy Lane weddings are in themselves beautiful events, but it's the facilities for pre-wedding prepping and relaxing that really give the resort an edge. The *Sandy Lane Villa*—accommodating up to 14 in its five bedrooms—offers guests their own private pool, jacuzzi and service staff like butlers and chefs. The resort's *Green Monkey* golf course makes for a perfect groomsman's afternoon, while the 47,000-sq.-ft. spa offers brides and their attendants soothing treatments, as well as a hydrotherapy pool, ice cave and crystal laconium. It's the perfect spot for a girls' getaway with manicures and pedicures, or even for a pre- or post-wedding couple's massage to soothe away the stresses of any overbearing in-laws or crazy great aunts. Rack rates start at \$1,000 per room per night.

Contact: (866) 444-4080; [sandylane.com](http://sandylane.com)

**sandals royal caribbean resort & private island** ♦ On any given day, at any given **Sandals** resort, you're likely to find a picturesque wedding taking place. So what makes the **Royal Caribbean** property in Montego Bay, Jamaica, so special? It's the exotic feel of its exceptional amenities. Brides, grooms and guests alike can book suites with steps descending right into the swimming pool, or rooms with patios that sit right on the beach. Clients find day beds at every turn—along the beach, around the pool—for the ultimate in waterside relaxation. And when it comes to the wedding itself, few properties in the Caribbean boast as many venues—two gazebos set on piers above the ocean, a long stretch of beach, and, of course, the property's private island, accessible only by boat. With its own private beach, pier, restaurant, pool, bar and live entertainment, the island is an ideal place for the ceremony, the reception, the after-party—or all three. Complementing Sandals Royal Caribbean's natural assets is Sandals' new additions to its wedding packages, designed by Martha Stewart. Similar to the packages designed by event designer Preston Bailey, the new packages ►►