

Rendezvous with Wedding Moguls

A childhood vision, a beautiful tale, a communion bestowed by the Almighty, the wedding day echoes the love song of two souls. In conversation with topmost event planners, who with their ingenuity have spelled magic on weddings by making it extraordinary, we discover the trends in Destination Weddings from the virtuosos' lens...



Noureen Morani (Cineyug)

What inspired you to join the wedding industry?

Cineyug has been at the forefront of larger-than-life experiences for more than two decades. The wedding department was set up 4 years ago with an aim of giving brides and grooms the same extraordinary expertise that we put into arranging events for Bollywood's biggest names.

What are the trending places for Destination Weddings?

It's time for Italy to come to the forefront as an intimate and highly luxurious venue for fairytale weddings. Also, interiors and coastlines of the Kingdom of Oman.

Your favourite wedding destinations in India?

In India, Rajasthan remains a favourite year after year, not only because of the sheer beauty of its palaces but also, because the state has geared itself completely towards

wedding tourism. Also, places like Kerala Backwaters, interiors of Tamil Nadu or the beaches of Orissa and Goa.

Tell us about your stand out works?

Some of our most stand-out works have happened in the most unlikely of venues like the Dome in Mumbai, as we arranged aerial performances, dramatic entrances, comfortably lit and temperature controlled area and more.

What are the changes that you can see in the industry?

Weddings have become more experimental but the main ceremony, on its own, has beautifully maintained its traditional core. The food, the entertainment, the hospitality, the décor, clients are coming up with edgy ideas.

Any suggestions to our readers for planning their destination wedding?

Do check the weather and the guest list because certain destinations aren't suitable for groups bigger than 200. It's important to understand that with planning and an eye for local sourcing, it can work within the budget. Finally, think of the final picture and then go with a planner.



Aditya Motwane (MEW)

What inspired you to join the wedding industry?

Event management, as an organised industry, has taken firm roots across India. The Great Indian Wedding is the most venerated and revered of them all. It's a once in a lifetime dream

for every Indian – and because it is taken seriously in terms of expenditure and experience, it also remains most insulated from economic trends. Adding to that, I have a personal affinity for experiential celebrations. It worked itself out most organically in comparison to finding oneself gravitating towards this space.

What are the trending places for Destination Weddings?

Trends come and go, style is classic! There are no trending places; weddings are about realising a dream; our job is to translate it down to the nuts and bolts. Trend lies in the innovation of experience delivery. Warm hospitality and reaching out to guests on an intimate basis is paramount.

What are the most sought after wedding destinations in our country?

The most sought after Indian wedding destinations are the cities like Mumbai and Delhi. These cities are like magnets for people across the spectrum. However, places like Goa, Udaipur and Kerala have emerged as strong contenders – but the inventories can be a limitation.



Tell us about your milestone weddings? The idea, and concepts behind it and why did you choose these destinations?

There are quite a few that come to mind. In particular, the Agarwal-Chhabria (Chantilly, November 2014) / Hinduja-Mahtani (February 2015) / Grover-Khilnani (Venice, June 2015) / Mehta-Khemlani (Florence, November 2015) / Jindal-Jasani (Vienna, May 2016) and Shah-Manek (Ibiza, October 2016) weddings. The choice of destination is purely an emotional decision. Also, the families had a vision and a budget to match. As planners, we are responsible for making sure our esteemed clientele extract the maximum bang for their bucks and take home well-deserved memories.

Being an expert in this realm, tell us how you expect the industry to transform in the near future?

Right-sizing of guestlists and heightened focus on Hospitality and Entertainment, Décor and Food and Beverage have been the traditional cornerstones of the business; and giant strides in terms of the uniqueness. The ultimate after-taste from a wedding celebration comes from how well the guests are looked after; and how their senses soak in the surroundings!

Any suggestions to our readers for planning their destination wedding?

Avoid trend-trailing and make your wedding your own expression – and speak 'You'. Trust your planners with their experience; focus on enjoying the journey and living through every moment with utmost delight.



Kunal Rai (Tamarind Global)

What inspired you to join the wedding industry?

I have always been very creatively inclined and passionate about events space. Our venture into weddings happened about 3 years ago. The progression was natural mainly because of Tamarind's years of

strength in the hospitality industry and the growing demand for a quintessential 'Big Fat Indian Wedding'. The best and most challenging part about managing turnkey weddings is that each time the project is completely different and you get a chance to create something very significant from the scratch and be a part of something that is so special to two families. It is a very rewarding experience.

What are the trending places for Destination Weddings?

A few years ago, people started doing weddings in iconic destinations in India away from their home city – royal weddings in Jaipur and Udaipur, beach weddings in Goa and so on. The trend then moved towards other places in Asia such as Bangkok, Phuket and Hua Hin in Thailand as well as destinations in Malaysia. Apart from these destinations, the destinations in the Middle East such as Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Oman and Ras Al Khaimah became popular, some of which are still trending. Now people who can afford to venture further west are looking at exotic destinations in Europe like Vienna, Malta, London, Monte Carlo and Valencia. The trend

is essentially to be unique and do something exclusive. Even within Asia, people are opting for newer locations such as Bali, Sepang and Kota Kinabalu in Malaysia.

What are the most sought after wedding destinations in our country?

In this year, Europe and the Middle East have been quite popular. We are doing about four weddings in Ras Al Khaimah in just 2 months. We have also done a large wedding in London and received many queries about unique destinations in Europe such as Valencia and Monte Carlo.

Tell us about your milestone weddings? The idea, and concepts behind it and why did you choose these destinations?

Tamarind's milestone weddings this year were one in London, which was one of the largest Indian weddings executed in London and a large wedding of about 800 people in Bali. Last year, Tamarind organised the first Indian wedding to ever take place in Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia where even the Tourism Minister was present to make sure no stone was left unturned. There are two main factors that are looked into when evaluating and choosing locations for destination weddings by clients from the Indian market – Accessibility and Infrastructure/Hotel. Secondly, Indian weddings need a certain level of infrastructure to execute in terms of Indian and vegetarian food capabilities, great venues for indoor and outdoor functions which need to comfortably house a large number of guests with high hospitality level. This makes the hotel choice important. ■

