

SECTION 2

Working With Key Destination Wedding Suppliers

Destination wedding agents have planned almost every imaginable type of ceremony for their clients – from vows pledged while the couple stands inside wine-stomping vats in France or jumps with parachutes from a plane over Australia to nuptials scheduled at the end of a Mt. Kilimanjaro trek or during a Bahamas sightseeing submarine dive!

However, many agents specializing in this niche report that they've observed one steadfast "80/20" rule that works in their businesses day in and day out:

**Eighty percent of their
destination wedding clients
end up picking 20 percent of
the available suppliers and destinations!**

For every fully customized destination wedding trip that you plan, you will probably handle six to a dozen clients who select a pre-packaged wedding package offered by a leading resort operator, hotel company, or cruise line.

That's why **you should take an exhaustive look at your market area** – whether it's your local neighborhood, your town or city, your state or province, or your region – **with a special focus on your nearest air gateways**. Think about the most popular vacation destinations local travelers pick when they fly from those airports. Then, you can draft a list of top three to five destinations that local couples always seem to pick when they depart your market area for destination weddings. In turn, that list of destinations will help you narrow down a short list of the top three to five suppliers (all-inclusive resort operators, hotel chains, and cruise lines) that serve these spots.

Once you have these lists in hand – **the top three to five destinations and the top three to five suppliers for each destination** – you can collect complete details about these key destinations (from climate and airlift to tipping customs and legal marriage requirements) and those suppliers (the wedding services and packages they offer, including all of the fine print such as the types of flowers included in the basic packages, the range of officiants available locally, etc.).

Drilling down into your local market area and collecting these details will help you immensely in building a strong, steady supply of clients (and referrals).

And, this knowledge will greatly streamline the way you handle these bookings, because you can quickly qualify prospects and identify the pre-

packaged wedding options that best fit their needs (without spending a lot of time doing extra research).

In the following pages, **we've collected complete descriptions of the leading cruise lines and all-inclusive resort operators that work actively with destination wedding agents and their clients.** Each listing features the supplier's ships or properties, its wedding policies and services, and links to their web pages that focus on destination weddings.

We will update this information continually at www.DWAgents.com – but, please email us (john@dwagents.com) if you find information that's outdated! Our goal is to keep these listings as fresh and current as possible.

Azamara Club Cruises

1050 Caribbean Way
Miami, FL 33132
Phone: 877.222.2526

General web site: <http://www.azamarclubcruises.com>

Travel agent site: <http://www.cruisingpower.com>

Wedding-specific web site/page: http://browse.azamarclubcruises.com/beforeyourcruise/faq/home.do?faqSubjectName=Special+Occasions%2FBon+Voyage&faqId=598&pagename=faq_answers

Available wedding locations: Onboard its ships or shoreside in numerous ports (Aruba, Barbados, Cozumel, Fort Lauderdale, Grand Cayman, Key West, New York, Ocho Rios, San Juan, and St. Thomas)

Officiants: Ship captains may not perform ceremonies onboard the ship or shoreside.

Packages and rates:

Preferred/exclusive wedding planning company: The Wedding Experience

Wedding policies: Both members of the couple must be booked on the cruise. The number of weddings permitted on each voyage is limited. Wedding packages may include up to eight non-sailing guests (beyond that, your clients must book a reception).



Carnival Cruise Lines

3655 NW 87th Avenue
Miami, FL 33178
800-327-5782 (groups) or 800-327-7276 (TA support)

General web site: <http://www.carnival.com>

Travel agent site: <http://www.goccl.com>

Wedding-specific web site/page: <http://www.carnival.com/cms/fun/weddings/weddings.aspx>

Available wedding locations: Onboard its ships in Miami, Fort Lauderdale, Tampa, Jacksonville, Port Canaveral, Key West, New Orleans, Galveston, Long Beach (Calif.), Catalina Island (Calif.), San Diego, New York,

Baltimore, Mobile, Seattle, Honolulu, Maui, Charleston (S.C.), Nassau, San Juan (P.R.), St. Thomas, Ocho Rios, Grand Cayman, Barbados, and Half Moon Cay; shoreside in Key West, San Juan, St. Thomas, Ocho Rios, Grand Cayman, Barbados, Cozumel, and Half Moon Cay

For its onboard ceremonies, Carnival has identified several wedding-friendly locations, so ask the Carnival wedding planner with whom you are working to identify those on any specific ship. (Only four ships at present - the "Carnival Legend," the "Carnival Miracle," the "Carnival Pride," and the "Carnival Spirit" - have onboard chapels.)

Officiants: Ship captains may not perform ceremonies onboard the ship or shoreside. Instead, local wedding officiants typically perform the ceremony.

Packages and rates: Carnival offers four basic shipboard packages:

- "Just for the Bride and Groom" - an intimate ceremony for the bride and groom (plus six other guests), followed by a Champagne toast and cake cutting (includes a local wedding officiant, a photographer's services [the actual photos are extra], the ceremony [with recorded music, a bridal bouquet, and a groom's boutonniere), a Champagne toast with two keepsake "Our Wedding" etched flutes, a two-tier cake with a keepsake topper, and a bottle of sparkling wine plus chocolate-covered strawberries for the couple's cabin (other wedding elements such as flower upgrades are available at extra costs - starting from \$1,195
- "Welcome Aboard Package" - the ceremony as described above (in terms of music, flowers, the toast, and the cake), followed by a 60-minute reception (including open bar and selected hot and cold hors d'oeuvres) for 18 guests plus the bride and groom (additional guests may come for \$22 per person, up to a maximum head count of 50) and the wine and strawberries in the couple's cabin - starting from \$1,635
- "Deluxe Romance Package" - the ceremony as described above, followed by a 90-minute reception (as described above, plus an ice carving) for 18 guests plus the bride and groom (additional guests may come for \$30 per person, up to 50 people maximum) and the wine and strawberries in the couple's cabin - starting from \$1,795
- "The Ceremony and Wedding Luncheon" - the ceremony as described above, plus a sit-down luncheon in the ship's dining room for the couple plus six guests (additional guests may attend for \$34.50 per person [\$17.25 for kids 12 and under] and the wine and strawberries in the couple's cabin - starting from \$1,475

Note: In addition to these fees, surcharges apply during Carnival's busiest wedding periods: Dec. 24-Jan. 4 (\$150 extra), Feb. 11-18 (\$150), and any

dates in May and June (\$100). Weddings scheduled over Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day carry a \$200 surcharge.

Carnival also offers shoreside packages that include the ceremony (with a local officiant, recorded music, a bridal bouquet, a groom's boutonniere, the cake with a keepsake topper, a Champagne toast with two keepsake flutes, and photography service [the actual photos are extra]) and the wine and strawberries for the couple's cabin. Prices vary by port, and they include the bride and groom only (other guests may attend, but per-person costs vary by port).

Additionally, Carnival has vow renewal ceremonies, starting from \$385.

Preferred/exclusive wedding planning company: The Wedding Experience, A Wedding For You, Island Dream Weddings, and Royal Ocean Events (depending on the specific port) can arrange upgrades and additional services for shipboard and shoreside weddings (above and beyond what's offered in Carnival's packages above).

Wedding policies: Weddings must be booked no later than 60 business days prior to the sailing date. You must lock in the cruise portion of the trip before working the Carnival's wedding department to book the wedding package. The wedding party should plan to arrive in the embarkation city at least one day prior to sailing. If your clients are being married on the day of embarkation, they will be given priority boarding once the ship has cleared U.S. customers. Non-sailing guests must disembark the ship at least one hour before sailing. You must submit your clients' final guest list along with payments to Carnival at least three weeks prior to sailing (and cancellations made within the week of sailing will be considered nonrefundable no-shows). Shipboard ceremonies are performed in port before the ship sails. You and your clients are responsible for obtaining legally binding licenses if desired (though Carnival will advise you on the procedures if needed). A maximum of 50 non-sailing guests will be allowed per wedding. You may not bring balloons, bird seed, bubbles, cake servers/knives, candles, confetti, fresh flowers, food items, or rice for shipboard weddings. If your clients bring their own minister, the ceremony is limited to 20 minutes. If they bring their own music, they're limited to three songs. You cannot bring any professional entertainment, equipment, photographers, or videographers onboard for the ceremony (unless they are literally just wedding guests, not acting in their professional capacities). Typically, each ship allows only three weddings per day, so plan ahead as far as possible.



Celebrity Cruises

1050 Caribbean Way

Miami, FL 33132

800-437-4111 (groups) or 800-327-2056 (TA sales support)

General web site: <http://www.celebritycruises.com>

Travel agent site: <http://www.cruisingpower.com>

Wedding-specific web site/page: http://www.celebritycruises.com/onboard/tabLanding.do?pagename=onboard_special_occasions&tab=onboard_weddings_tab

Available wedding locations: Onboard all of its ships except "Celebrity Xpedition" (in the library, in a lounge, or on deck), or shoreside in more than 200 different ports

Officiants: All ceremonies are civil ceremonies performed by a government-approved official. Weddings at sea are performed by the ship's captain.

Packages and rates: Celebrity offers numerous shipboard wedding packages (performed in the ship's library or one of the ship's lounges), as well as deck wedding packages. Due to the line's recent re-registration of its ships (except "Celebrity Xpedition") in Malta, its captains may now perform legally binding marriages at sea (the "Nautical Nuptials at-sea package is \$2,500). Also, Celebrity can arrange shoreside weddings in more than 200 destinations around the world. One new option is an Alaskan Cruisetour wedding set at The Hotel Alyeska or the Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge (from \$2,600). You can also book two different vow renewal packages officiated by the ship's captain (from \$475). Celebrity offers four unique add-on packages: a "Test the Waters" site inspection for the couple (\$275), a "Welcome Reception" for the wedding party (from \$32 per person for a 60-minute open-bar reception plus hot and cold canapes), a "Bridesmaid Tea Party" (from \$18 per person), and a "Cigar and Cognac Party" (from \$28 per person).

Preferred/exclusive wedding planning company: Celebrity operates a very supportive in-house planning operation called Celebrity Weddings that will work with you on all of the arrangements for your clients.

Wedding policies: You must finalize your wedding plans at least 60 days prior to the sailing date. Wedding parties may have up to 10 non-sailing guests in attendance at the ceremony; beyond that number, you must book a reception package (beyond simply buying more cake and Champagne!). In some ports of call, non-sailing guests are not permitted to board the ship due to security restrictions. Wedding parties with a reception may have a maximum of 150 non-sailing guests onboard the ship for the ceremony. Wedding parties with 25 to 50 guests require the services of an additional Celebrity wedding coordinator (for a fee starting from \$150, depending on

the port), and you must add another coordinator for every additional 25 guests. If your clients book a shoreside ceremony, they may book an onboard reception afterwards, but those reception require the hiring of at least one Celebrity coordinator. Priority boarding is available for couples being married on the embarkation date (plus their guests). \$100 surcharges apply to May, June, September, and October weddings in many cases.



Costa Cruises

200 South Park Road Suite 200
Hollywood, FL 33021
800-327-2537

General web site: <http://www.costacruises.com>

Travel agent site: <http://www.costaclick.com>

Wedding-specific web site/page: <http://www.costacruise.com/B2C/USA/AboutCruising/weddings/wedding.htm>

Available wedding locations: Onboard its ships, or shoreside

Officiants: Local non-denominational wedding officiants

Packages and rates: Costa offers two basic wedding packages:

- "Caribbean Island Wedding" - roundtrip transfers from the ship to a beach or garden ceremony location, the ceremony (with a tropical-style bridal bouquet and groom's boutonniere, recorded music, and a 45-minute photo session [including a free 8"x10" portrait]), a keepsake certificate, a bottle of sparkling wine, and a congratulatory letter from the ship's captain
- "Italian Shipboard Wedding" - the onboard ceremony (with a Venetian-style bridal bouquet and groom's boutonniere, recorded music, and a 45-minute photo session [including a free 8"x10" portrait]), a keepsake certificate, a bottle of sparkling wine, an Italian vanilla cream sponge wedding cake for two, and a congratulatory letter from the ship's captain

The line also offers a "More Amore" honeymoon anniversary package with a bottle of sparkling wine, a keepsake photo portrait in an 8"x10" sliver frame, a keepsake certificate, a cocktail party hosted by the ship's captain, and his/hers Costa robes to take home.

Prices for these packages vary - see The Wedding Experience for complete details.

Preferred/exclusive wedding planning company: The Wedding Experience

Wedding policies: The rules are bound generally by The Wedding Experience's arrangements, so consult your planner at this firm with any questions about Costa's wedding policies.



Crystal Cruises

NOTE: Crystal Cruises does not allow weddings on board and, in general, does not coordinate wedding arrangements or encourage wedding-related bookings.



Cunard Line

**24303 Town Center Drive Suite 200
Valencia, CA 91355-0908
800-728-6273**

General web site: <http://www.cunard.com>

Travel agent site: <http://www.onesourcecruises.com>

Available wedding locations: Onboard its three ships

Officiants: The ship's captain or his/her senior representative

Packages and rates: Currently, Cunard offers only an onboard vow renewal ceremony that includes the bridal bouquet, the groom's boutonniere, a bottle of Champagne (with two free flutes), the ceremony conducted by the captain, a single-tier iced cake, photography services (with one free portrait photograph in a silver-plated frame), and a commemorative certificate (priced from \$400 to \$425, depending on the departure date).

Note: In September 2011, Cunard's president revealed in a U.K. interview that the line is investigating the idea of re-flagging at least one of its vessels from the United Kingdom to a different registry such as Bermuda, in order to allow the ship's captain to perform legally binding weddings at sea.

Preferred/exclusive wedding planning company: Cunard's in-house staff

Wedding policies: Vow renewals are available on voyages of at least six nights, subject to availability. Two weeks' notice is required (though your clients can ask to see the Renewal of Vows Coordinator if they decide once

they're onboard their cruise to do the ceremony, with no guarantees that the request can be accommodated).



Disney Cruise Line

P.O. Box 10210
Lake Buena Vista, FL 32830
800-511-6333 (groups) or 800-939-8265 (sales support)

General web site: <http://www.disneycruise.com>

Travel agent site: <http://www.disneytravelagents.com>

Wedding-specific web site/page: <http://disneyweddings.disney.go.com/weddings/cruise/collections/overview>

Available wedding locations: Onboard its ships, or shoreside at Castaway Cay (Disney Cruise Line's private Caribbean island)

Officiants: The captain or another officer for onboard ceremonies or a Bahamian officiant at Castaway Cay (though the couple will be married legally before the ship departs on that current cruise)

Packages and rates: Disney's packages onboard its ships start from \$2,500 with a Florida marriage license, the ceremony (including a bridal bouquet, a groom's boutonniere, a solo live musician [typically a pianist], a Champagne toast, a two-tier cake with a keepsake topper, a Disney wedding gift and certificate, an 8"x10" color portrait, a \$100 onboard credit, Champagne and strawberries served in the couple's cabin, and dinner for two at the Palo adults-only restaurant on the ship. You can set up a similar package at Castaway Cay starting from \$3,500. These packages do not include a reception for guests - but, you can book one separately. Vow renewal packages may be booked with the same amenities as the packages above (except the marriage license) for up to eight guests, starting from \$2,500 onboard or from \$3,500 at Castaway Cay.

Preferred/exclusive wedding planning company: Disney's in-house staff

Wedding policies: Non-sailing guests may attend the ceremony, but ceremonies with more than 10 guests must secure permission in advance and pay a fee for each extra guest. Ceremony locations are based on availability, are subject to change, and may vary based on the itinerary.

