

-16°C

Forecast | Traffic



Connect with Facebook | Login/Register



thestar.com

Web

find a business

advanced search

full text article archive

Home News **GTA** Opinion Business Sports A & E Living Travel Columns Blogs More ▾ Autos Careers Classifieds Deaths Rentals

HOT TOPICS SUPER BOWL EGYPT PROTESTS CREDIT GONE WILD CITY COUNCIL LEAFS RAPTORS G20 CHINESE NEW YEAR

Home living **Topic: Weddings**

Inside thestar.com




Keyless ignition blamed in deaths




Confessions of a picky eater



The latest social media trend



Subway station gets hip decor



Paul Haggis talks about Scientology

Honeymoon contenders reach for Caribbean's crown

Article

Published On Fri Jan 28 2011

Email | Print | Share 3



The Jade Mountain resort overlooks the Caribbean Sea and St. Lucia's picturesque Piton Mountains.

JOE MCNALLY



By Susan Pligg

Reporter

The magic of St. Lucia may have been short-lived for *The Bachelor*'s Jake Pavelka, but that doesn't seem to have put off a host of brides-to-be.

The upscale Caribbean island, the stunning backdrop for last year's finale of the reality TV show, is fast becoming one of the top honeymoon destinations, wedding planners say.

While almost anything goes at weddings these days, "there's still something timeless about the honeymoon," says Tara Soloway, co-founder of Toronto-based **LUXE Destination Weddings**.

"People still want to do something pretty incredible where they'll blow the bank. Savvy brides these days have done their research. They know there are some really interesting, beautiful places in the world that will make their dreams come true."

St. Lucia came through on that front for Pavelka — at least briefly. His engagement to Vienna Girardi — which took place on bended knee at **Jade Mountain resort** overlooking the Caribbean Sea and St. Lucia's picturesque Piton Mountains — was on the rocks just a few months later.

But the sensual setting did spark a flurry of phone calls from brides-to-be looking for a unique and upscale honeymoon getaway, wedding planners say. It didn't hurt that **TheKnot.com** recently named St. Lucia among "the 50 most fabulous escapes in the world."

But even more exotic spots are gaining ground. Travel agent Isobel Mickiewicz of Toronto's New Wave Travel has seen more couples turning their sights away from the Caribbean to South Pacific destinations such as Tahiti, Fiji and Bora Bora, with dreams of spending their honeymoon nights perched above turquoise waters in huts on stilts.

Greece is also making a romantic comeback, she says, along with far-off-the-beaten-path places such as the coral beaches of the Maldiv Islands in the Indian Ocean.

It seems that South America is also taking off as an affordable, yet exotic, country a quick flight away where you can scale some of the most beautiful mountains on the planet, stroll through sprawling vineyards and toast your new life together with a glass of rich, red Malbec.

Soloway, for her part, has spent more than six years scouring the globe for memory-making getaway spots. Here's what she found:

• The Caribbean is still king among many Canadian brides and grooms, with Mexico — in particular the **Mayan Riviera** area surrounding the delightful fishing village of Playa del Carmen — the top destination. The brightest lights at the end of the aisle are resorts such as **Esencia Estate**, an exclusive 29-room Mayan Rivera resort, famed for its butler service and nine-room "main house," which was once owned by a European duchess. There's also **The Tides**, a lush 70-room garden retreat with calming waterfalls and lagoons that has been called "the classiest resort hotel in the country."

• James Bond has helped make Jamaica big for newlyweds, as well as a recent building boom that has seen a host of new, luxury hotels spring up on its picturesque shoreline. The boutique **Island Outpost** chain has just done a remake of its GoldenEye Hotel & Resort, which includes the villa where Ian Fleming penned his James Bond novels. Sister property, The Caves, with its romantic private dining cave tucked into the limestone cliffs of Negril, is a perennial favourite with newlyweds.

• Beyond the Caribbean, Soloway has seen the ageless romance of Paris make a resurgence. And she doesn't know how much to credit World Cup Soccer, but demand for South Africa, which hosted the sports extravaganza last year, is also up among newlyweds looking to combine a few wild days on safari with the charms of Cape Town, the most popular international tourist destination in all of Africa.

Advertisement

Save 20% on any Porter flight.

Use promo code LOVE20. Book by February 9, 2011.

Minimum 7-day advance purchase required. Travel by June 26, 2011. New bookings only. Cannot be combined with any other promotions or programs.



fly.ing refined



Flights

Vacations

Hotels

Cars

Round Trip: ☒


One way: ☐

From

Enter city or airport

To


Enter city or airport



15.02.2011

Adults

1



22.02.2011

Children

0

powered by TravelAlerts

Show Recommended Sites >>



Compare cars, read reviews and more

Must Reads

- » **What's the top car brand in Canada?**
- » **Hate touching public washroom doors?**
- » **Janet Jackson on her family abuse**
- » **How you can prevent pneumonia**
- » **How big is a single serving?**

Star Columnists »

Ellie: You can't chase your husband's demons for him

by Ellie

Ellie: You can't chase your husbands demons for him

by Ellie

Ellie: Extent of divorce party is a matter of preference

by Ellie

Heartbreak of psoriasis

by The You Docs

More Columnists »

Follow The Toronto Star













Facebook

Twitter

RSS

News Alerts

Mobile

Subscribe

Ads by Google

Cheap Caribbean
As seen on NBC Today Show, Last Minute 50-70% Off Sale Ends Sunday!
www.CheapCaribbean.com/AllInclusive

St. Lucia All-Inclusives
Save up to 50% on all-inclusive hotels and resorts in St. Lucia.
StLuciaAll-Inclusive.com

Caribbean Vacation Deals
Have The Perfect Caribbean Vacation