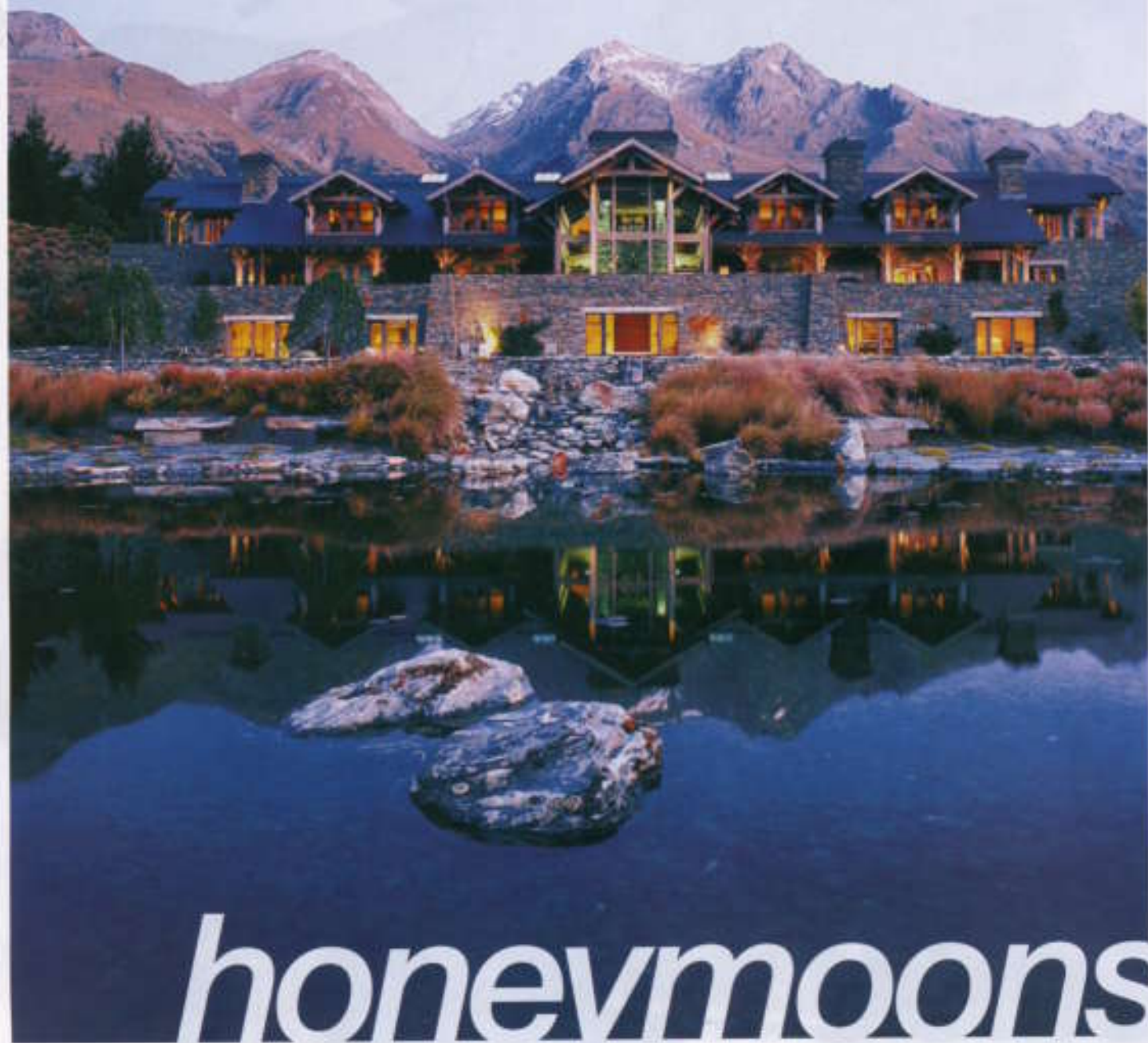


You'll fly in, swim across
the lake and alight in
paradise when you visit
the stunning alpine retreat
of Summit Sky Lodge in
New Zealand's Glenorchy.



honeymoons

After the main event, you'll need a blissful 'do not disturb' destination for your first night as Mr and Mrs. We've also hand-picked the best loved-up honeymoon locations, or perhaps you need a mini break beforehand...



loved-up locales

Remember all those ultra-romantic destinations you avoided when you were single? Rachael Oakes-Ash shares her top 10 places to discover as a blissed-out honeymooner

BLANKET BAY LODGE GLENORCHY, NEW ZEALAND


According to Maori legend, Lake Wakatipu was formed when a warrior saved his princess from the clutches of a sleeping giant. The warrior surrounded the giant with burning kindling, melting the snow from the Southern Alps and forming a lake in the shape of the sleeping giant. Today the inland lake rises and falls every eight minutes, which is said to be the beating of the giant's heart. Blanket Bay Lodge is the lake's second

legend. Fly in low over the lake before alighting to paradise. You'll be greeted with a cocktail in the lodge's stone and wood den before being shown to your private chalet.

It's all cosy Kiwi hospitality with award-winning gourmet chefs, a wine cellar to die for and open fires, inside and out. In winter the pilot picks up guests for heli-skiing in the back country. In summer he choppers in to unchartered river waters for fly fishing.

For bookings contact Small Luxury Hotels of the World www.slh.com or call 1800 251 958





CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT: New Zealand's Blanket Bay Lodge is the ultimate in private luxury. A beachfront bure at Vomo Island Resort in Fiji. Laze by the pool at Vomo. Picnic on your own private Fijian island. Every room at the Oberoi Amarvilas in Agra, India has stunning views of the Taj Mahal. Built like a palace, the Oberoi Amarvilas features fountains, Persian design, Moorish influences and five-star service.



VOMO ISLAND RESORT, FIJI

The warmth of the Fijian people melts the coldest of hearts. It's not just their beaming smiles – the soulful melodies of island songs accompanied by a ukulele has been known to reduce grown men to tears. Combine this hospitality with aquamarine waters and rose-coloured sunsets and you have the postcard-perfect Vomo Island Resort.

An hour by boat, 20 minutes by seaplane or 10 minutes by helicopter from Nadi airport, Vomo is a world away from city living. Think settings to dine by – if it's not a picnic on the uninhabited Vomo Laka, it's dinner on a secluded beach lit by torch flames. Breakfast is served at sunrise on the island's mountain top, where both the view and the strawberry pancakes make it worth the hike. If you don't feel like mingling, relax on the deck of your beach front bure and let Fiji come to you. Be warned: the islanders' goodbye song requires tissues. **For bookings see www.vomofiji.com**



OBEROI AMARVILAS AGRA, INDIA

The Taj Mahal is all about love. Built by Shah Jehan as a monument to his dead wife, Mumtaz Mahal, it took more than 20,000 workers and craftsmen 22 years to complete. Finished in 1648, it still stands today. What better place to celebrate your love?

The Oberoi Amarvilas sits just 600m from this wonder of the world. Amervilas is Sanskrit for 'eternal haven', and when you step into its pools and gardens you will understand why. Built like a palace, Amervilas is both mysterious and majestic. Mosaics and inlaid floors abound and nowhere more so than in the spa with its cobalt blue pool. Consider yourself royalty from the moment you arrive. The staff do. **To book see www.lhw.com or call the Leading Hotels of the World 1800 222 033**

TOP TO BOTTOM: The 16 luxury suites at the Madikwe Safari Lodge in South Africa have private plunge pools and perfect decks for watching wildlife. The Little Nell in Aspen, Colorado, is the choice of celebrities such as Steven Spielberg, who come as much for the first class service as they do for the topnotch skiing.



MADIKWE SAFARI LODGE SOUTH AFRICA

Africa is said to be the heartbeat of the world. Madikwe Safari Lodge sits between two rolling hills surrounded by 76,000 hectares of game reserve. Here, the rhythm of African life can be seen and heard in the majestic sway of the elephant's gait or the roar of the lion searching for prey. Giraffes and impala mingle with oryx, springbok and red hartebeest and the big five flourish.

Three intimate camps make up Madikwe Safari Lodge. Each of the 16 suites has its own private plunge pool to defuse the midday heat and decks for whiling away the African twilight. Dining is in the nearby boma, an open building under the stars. To experience Madikwe when you are in love is the icing on the wedding cake.

For bookings visit the Conservation Corporation Africa at www.ccafrica.com

THE LITTLE NELL ASPEN, USA

If it's good enough for Steven Spielberg, it's good enough for you. The Little Nell in Aspen, Colorado is the celebrity's choice when it comes to skiing North American style. Little Nell is the town's only ski-in, ski-out resort with an average of two staff for every guest. Service is top of the range, meaning your skis will be tuned, your bed warmed and your champagne chilled before



you can say "don't you know who I am?" Meats at the on piste restaurants can conveniently be charged back to your room so no need for cash in your Dior ski suit. Sofas are stuffed with goose down and intimate grandeur is the order of the day.

The Master Sommelier, Richard Betts oversees a cellar of 15,000 wines and chef Paul Wade serves up the finest seafood as part of his "ocean to plate" programme.

Honeymooners can enjoy an indulgent couple's spa treatment at the hotel's spa or simply celebrity watch at the bar.

For bookings see www.relaischateaux.com or call Relais & Chateaux on (02) 9299 2280

LA MAMOUNIA MARRAKECH, MOROCCO

The gardens of La Mamounia once belonged to Prince Mamoun, the fourth son of Sultan Abdellah who ruled the city the 18th Century. Now they make up the grounds of this decadent hotel, a favourite for the world's elite since 1923. Past guests have included Charles de Gaulle, our Nic and their Tom, the Rolling Stones, Yves Saint Laurent, Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu. You may also recognise the hotel's elaborate facade from the Marlene Dietrich film *Morocco* or Alfred Hitchcock's thriller *The Man Who Knew Too Much*.

A true oasis, Marrakech will capture you with its magic. There are colourful markets of textiles to explore by day and steamy Arabian nights to follow. Even the view of the snow-topped Atlas Mountains from your room's private terrace is sure to captivate.

For bookings contact www.mamounia.com or www.lhw.com or call 1800 222 033





TAJ EXOTICA RESORT & SPA WOLMAR, MAURITIUS

There's simply no reason to leave your villa at Taj Exotica Resort & Spa. Why would you when you have your own personal swimming pool, al fresco dining terrace and surround-sound entertainment system to keep you amused? Did we mention the butler?

Should you feel inclined to step out the front door, you won't roam far before the Jive Grande Spa calls your name. Relax in the hydrotherapy cascade pool with cabana seating, stretch out in the yoga and meditation pavilion or de-stress with an Ayurvedic treatment before snorkelling in the crystal-clear lagoons among coral reefs.

Soak under the stars in your outdoor shower and when you can't relax any more, head to the 18-hole golf course for a few rounds or play a game of tennis to work up an appetite. "Jeeves, dinner on the beach please!" Your wish is Taj Exotica's command. For bookings visit www.tajhotels.com

FOUR SEASONS RESORT LANGKAWI MALAYSIA

It's not the 1.5km of white sandy beach or the tropical sun that makes Four Seasons Langkawi unique. Nor is it the shingled Malay villas with gated entrances or the views of the Andaman Sea from your deck. It's the people. The Four Seasons has built its reputation on service and quality and in Langkawi they have outdone themselves.

One of the 99 islands that dot the surrounding emerald-green sea, Langkawi is a place where you can spend the day exploring coral reefs or gazing at the jungle canopy. Bliss out with dual massages in your villa's private spa room and then float into dinner. Or lovers can hire a private perahu (that's Malaysian for 'boat') and drift along in the moonlight with champagne in hand.

For bookings visit www.fourseasons.com



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:
The Taj Exotica Resort & Spa in Mauritius. Villas have their own personal pools and a butler attends to guests' needs. Villas at the Four Seasons Resort in Langkawi Malaysia have stunning baths and the service is top notch. Nicole Kidman and Yves Saint Laurent are among La Mambouia's famous guests.





CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:

The pool at Le Sirenuse in Positano, a charming town on Italy's Amalfi Coast. View of the Mediterranean from a balcony at Le Sirenuse. L'Hotel's grand entrance is the height of Parisian elegance. Decorator Jacques Garcia created a unique design for each of L'Hotel's 22 rooms.



**LE SIRENUSE
POSITANO ITALY**

The Amalfi coastline is made for lovers, and since 1951 the Senale family in Positano have been entertaining lovers from around the world with their Italian charm and delightful 'summer house'. Le Sirenuse started with just eight rooms and a large terrace overlooking the islands of the Sirens. It now boasts 62 rooms clinging to the cliffs of Positano, with a private pool at sea level below.

The gilded dome of the village's Mother Church is close enough to touch and whitewashed walls prevail with colourful mosaic tiled floors to cool the feet. Stay in the luxurious suites in the original house for bathrooms overlooking the Mediterranean and balconies on which to breakfast.

The Sant'Antonio is the hotel's boat; it's all exposed timber and Italian style for daytime cruising. If you prefer land to sea then explore nearby Ravello, a mountain top village.

For bookings contact Leading Hotels of the World at www.lhw.com or 1800 222 033 or visit La Sirenuse at www.sirenuse.it

L'HOTEL, PARIS

Paris has got to ultimate honeymoon destination. L'Hotel is an intimate 22-room hotel on the Left Bank that was designed by Jacques Garcia. Enter the hotel's plush blue-velvet lift and head skywards for room 62, a Parisienne-style apartment with a terrace that overlooks the belly of St-Germain des Pres.

Each room is designed in a unique fashion, from the Chinese Antiques of room 26 to the purple and gold brocade of room 24.

You'll find fellow lovers having *tete-a-tetes* in the bar and the bartender serves up whiskey sours to Francis Ford Coppola, Johnny Depp and Mel Gibson when they come to stay.

Tip: For the ultimate indulgence, head to the basement and spend some time in the thermal Roman baths carved from sandstone. For bookings contact Small Luxury Hotels of the World at www.slh.com or 1800 251 958