



# L'art de VIVRE

MARINA DE COATGOURDEN *knows a little something about parties. Here she lifts the veil on the perfect destination wedding*

**There is something about a destination wedding:** effortlessly romantic, with a sense that you are somehow eloping from the ordinary to the exotic. Personally, I always feel that sense of gleeful liberation when brides mention marrying abroad – you are not constrained by the same must-haves of the traditional do. While you may dream of bikinis, iced cocktail receptions and endless sunshine-filled lazy days, the pitfalls and stresses are multiplied when organising remotely. Besides predictable language barrier issues, you may find yourself battling a lack of local knowledge and awareness of business customs. Tip: never try negotiating with an Italian just before lunch. If

possible, buy them lunch, then barter. Not to mention the interesting and unexpected interpretations of what you mean when you say 'stylish' to someone in a remote French village whose last experience of wedding trends was circa 1999. My advice if you want your wedding to make a style statement – invest in someone who knows the area and local suppliers like the back of their hands. To make it easier, I've compiled my top tips for tackling the planning of your destination festivities. **Give yourself time.** The best destination venues get snapped up months in advance during peak periods. Allow for complicated arrangements. The sourcing of flights and a wide range of accommodation to suit different pockets can be a total nightmare. Issue your invites as



A few simple touches can echo a paradise isle setting, against a simple nuptial palette of white and grey. Easy and beautiful.

soon as your location is decided, so guests can plan holidays, find babysitters and book time off. **Embrace local traditions.** Not only will a Thai feast from your caterers taste infinitely better than any attempt at 'haute European' cuisine, but bohemian, vibrantly coloured touches can really lift your aesthetic. Take inspiration from the landscape and materials in the vicinity. Kate Bosworth's ranch wedding took horseshoes and made them look chic, whilst Andrea Casiraghi and Tatiana Santo Domingo served wedges of Emmental at their Swiss wedding and decorated with abundant green and white floristry to emulate the snowbound Alpine setting. **Opt for a concierge service for your guests.** This ensures they will be well looked after. Trying to arrange airport connections and entertaining or feeding them throughout the entire time is exhausting for you and your budget. **Consider**

**the climate at the time of year and time of day that you plan your wedding.** Sunburn looks good on no-one. Organise fans and parasols for your guests if in a hot country, plan your day around cool periods or opt for a shady environment. Pop facial mists in their welcome packs and think about having 'cooling stations' where they can access ice, cold drinks and chilled facial towels. Cooler settings call for baskets of blankets and pashminas, fun takes on hot chocolate and cosy furnishings. **Don't compromise on the details.** Work with an event designer and dresser at the wedding location who can accurately source what you want (or arrange shipping it in if not readily accessible) removing the headache of lugging over suitcases of candles and props.