

Where you tie the knot

With myriad options available across hotels, resorts and banquet halls, you are truly spoilt for choice for your wedding venue. Here are our top picks. **BY BINDU GOPAL RAO**



JW MARRIOTT MUSSOORIE WALNUT GROVE RESORT AND SPA

JW Marriott Mussoorie Walnut Grove Resort & Spa is a splendid location for an unforgettable wedding celebration. The 4,200 sq ft of banquet space embodies opulence. With a variety of entertainment options, a majestic spread of delectable cuisines and outdoor venues offering a splendid view of the Garhwal range of the Himalayas, this is an ideal place for a resplendent ceremony. Expansive indoor ballrooms, picture-perfect outdoor venues, artistically crafted rooms and intricate décor options to add special touches ensure fascinating wedding revelry. The culinary team offers various menu options for the wedding and preceding functions. For cocktails and pre-wedding functions such as *haldi* and *mehendi*, the team can recommend numerous specialty and bespoke setups for different meals at various locations. JW Terrace, a walnut grove, offers breathtaking views of the resort and is perfect for *phasas*.



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THE LEELA AMBIENCE CONVENTION HOTEL, DELHI

The USP of this hotel is that it has India's largest pillar-less banqueting hall in a luxury hotel (25,000 sq ft), located on the ground floor and capable of hosting up to 6,000 guests as floating crowd and 2,500 guests in a theatre-style setup. The beautiful outdoor venues add the much-needed charm to every function. A private concierge that co-ordinates with both sides of the family ensures each individual's needs are looked after. The two towers of the hotel, namely the Club Tower and the Hotel Tower, have a pre-lobby and a main lobby that are available to provide assistance to guests at all points in time. Apart from accommodation and decoration, they have a dedicated team that creates a special and unique theme-based menu. The ballrooms offer the perfect background to play around with different themes and colour schemes.



OXFORD GOLF RESORT, PUNE

A quintessential private club spread across 400 acres, Oxford Golf Resort offers a range of hand-picked amenities to suit any event. Its unique location on the Mumbai-Pune highway, coupled with a beautiful golf-course backdrop, makes it a great wedding destination. Couples can also plan their pre-wedding shoots at the property and select from six different venues for their big day. Catered venues are available for weddings, *sangeet* parties and *mehendi* functions by the pool. "Our spacious banqueting halls and sophisticated boardrooms are ideal for indoor events, and our outdoor venues offer breathtaking views that surround our plush lawns and helipad," says Rohan Seolekar, Director at Oxford Group, Pune.





JAGMANDIR ISLAND PALACE, UDAIPUR

Weddings are about experiences and memories. And if it is at one of the world's most exclusive wedding destinations – Jagmandir, a palace on an island in Lake Pichola – it takes the experience several notches higher. Jagmandir Island Palace is a historic 17th-century palace. Refurbished into a heritage hotel, the palace has contemporary and world-class amenities such as an all-day café, a stylish dining restaurant, bar and spa. In terms of facilities, their specialty is the warm hospitality and customisation in arrangements. Be it the flowers, the lighting or folk arts, their team has dedicated heritage venues that challenge your creativity in pampering guests. According to Lakshyaraj Singh Mewar, HRH Group of Hotels, "The property itself is our USP. With our hospitality, we create experiences that are nothing less than magical. The destination is located in the middle of the lake surrounded by beautiful mountains, which makes it a naturally enticing destination to tie the knot."



MLR CONVENTION CENTRES, BENGALURU

MLR Convention Centres are located in two prime areas in Bengaluru, namely JP Nagar and Whitefield. The venues are designed to suit all your needs and requirements. These have free-flowing spaces, open courtyards and spacious banquet halls with great parking facilities. "We have a well-trained staff that understands what needs to be done for a wedding," says Ramesh Kumar, Senior Operations Manager. "With 8-10 years of experience in the wedding industry, the MLRs are sought-after wedding destinations. These are state-of-the-art venues that are designed to meet international standards." Catering services include buffets, plated meals, cocktail fares, barbeques and banquets. They also have bridal care services through a well-equipped and professional unisex salon.





Over the Moon on Your Honeymoon

The beginning of a new life is a memory to be cherished for a lifetime. Choosing where you spend your honeymoon is something that must be done with care. Here are a few suggestions.

BY BINDU GOPAL RAO

TAJ FALAKNUMA PALACE, HYDERABAD

The epitome of luxury is the Nizam Suite at Taj Falaknuma Palace. The Nizam Suite, which was once the abode of the world's richest man, continues to revel in its former glory, with immaculately done, ornate interiors. This extravagant duplex suite leaves you speechless as you step into the shoes of the Nizams. It comes with a private swimming pool and offers guests decadent creations by the masterchefs. The Nizam Suite also has a private butler, a private elevator, 24-hour laundry, in-room dining and on-call doctor and nurse. But, it is the Sufi session each night coupled with the champagne palace walk that makes this a magical experience.





CONRAD, PUNE

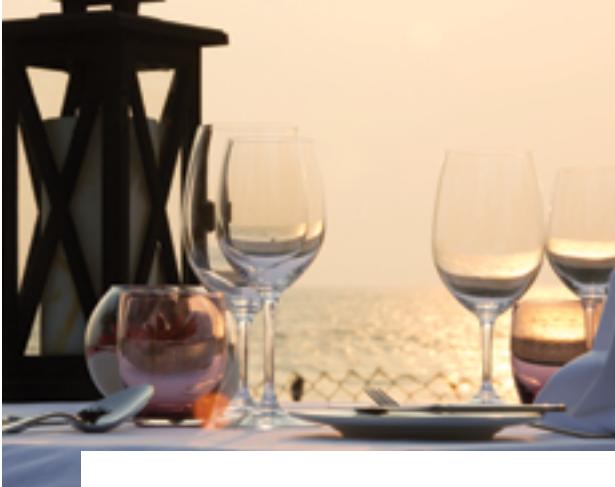
Conrad Pune has 310 uber luxurious guest rooms and suites with the latest in-room technology; spacious, warm gold marble bathrooms with a bathtub and separate rain showers; three specialty restaurants; a chic bar and a deli, making it an ideal honeymoon destination. A dedicated lifestyle floor with the city's first outdoor temperature-controlled pool, whirlpool, 24-hour fitness centre, Conrad Spa and a salon makes it the perfect place to rejuvenate. "We have a range of spa packages especially the Conrad Signature Day Spa package, a very indulgent and luxurious experience to gift a couple on their honeymoon. The Conrad Day Spa, includes specially curated luxury offerings such as an Audi pick-up and drop-off service from anywhere in Pune, a day's stay in a Conrad Deluxe Room, and an expansive buffet lunch at Coriander Kitchen," says Amit Midha, General Manager.



GRAND MERCURE, MYSURU

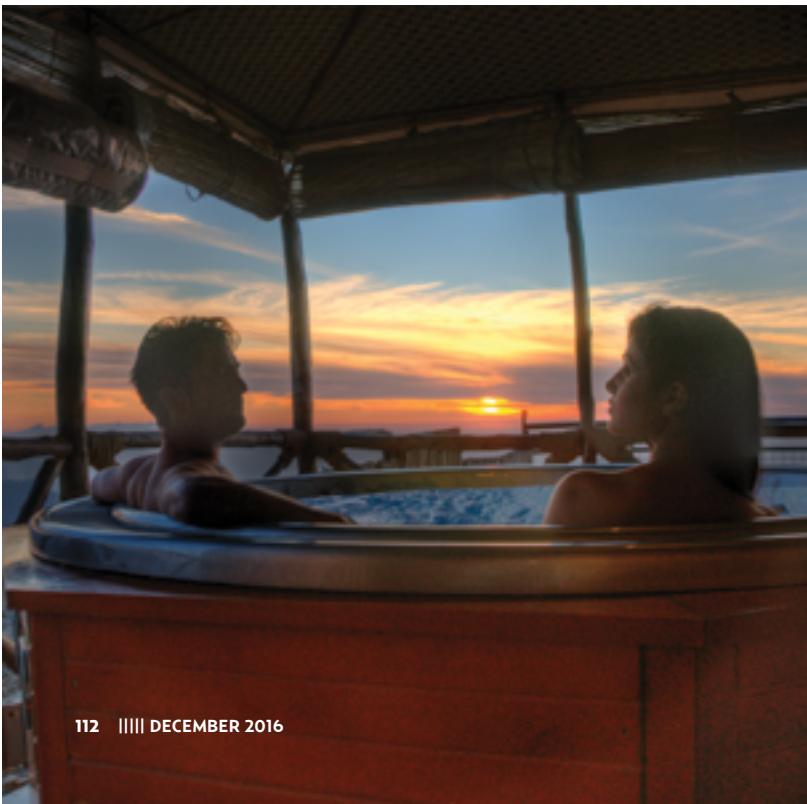
Grand Mercure Mysuru offers a bouquet of experiences for honeymooning couples to discover and enjoy the magic of a new relationship. A contemporary set-up with an array of cuisines and services wrapped in French hospitality are some of the elements offered by them. The hotel also offers delightful surprises such as special couple spa treatments and exotic dining experiences. "We have a specially designed romantic getaway package for couples who would like to indulge in a rejuvenating holiday. Valid until December 31, 2016, this package comprises a night stay with complimentary breakfast and dinner with a signature couple massage from the Zazen spa at the hotel," says Sachin Malhotra, General Manager. You can enjoy the serenity of nature and an old-world charm and return with a lifetime memory of a scintillating honeymoon experience.





PLANET HOLLYWOOD BEACH RESORT, GOA

A honeymoon in Goa is the perfect way to raise the curtains on a new beginning. Spread across 10 acres of land, Planet Hollywood Resort, Goa, is an upscale property with a stunning collection of rooms, each with its own, one-of-a-kind touch of Hollywood memorabilia and richly appointed amenities. With two niche restaurants to satiate your taste buds, you must spend time at the Pink Room Salon & Spa that offers an extensive choice of body and beauty treatments. Charmaine Moraes, Associate Director of Sales, says, "A basic package for stay is always on offer, and it is also customised with a limousine pick-up, room décor with towel art, fresh floral arrangement and rose petals, a bottle of vintage champagne, personalised amenities and linen and hand-crafted chocolate and fresh strawberries delivered to the room. The resort is entirely Hollywood-themed and our in-house activities consultant can offer various options such as aqua zorbing, paddle boating, water sports, cycle treks with picnic baskets, barbecues at the beach and a range of exciting alternatives to enhance your honeymoon experience."



AAMOD AT SHOGHI, SHIMLA

With 20 cute cottages and lots of privacy around the hillside, Aamod at Shoghi in Shimla is a great choice for your honeymoon. Pristine greens and cosy spaces across the resort offer lots of opportunities for couples to spend time with each other. There is a plethora of on-site activities for couples to enjoy and also test their adventurous streak. Long and romantic nature walks are also a great way to bond with each other. "You can choose any spot at the resort, and we guarantee you a star-studded feast," says Gaurav Jain, MD. "Trust our chefs to whip up anything you want. Our spa and Jacuzzi is the epitome of the honeymoon trip thanks to its location. Unwind, relax and gaze into the cloudy peaks and valleys while you spend precious time with your loved one. In fact, we customise the honeymoon package for all our guests. We believe every experience is special and it cannot be the same for all."