

Destination Wedding Checklist

A planning checklist for a destination wedding covering travel, legal requirements abroad, guest logistics, vendors, packing, and timeline.

Choose the Destination

- ☐ Pick a location that fits your budget, season, and travel reach.
- ☐ Research the weather and avoid storm or monsoon seasons.
- ☐ Estimate the total cost for you and a realistic guest count.
- ☐ Check entry requirements and visa rules for you and your guests.
Some countries require passports valid for at least six months beyond travel.
- ☐ Visit in person or hire a local planner before committing.
- ☐ Confirm a venue and lock the date.

Legal and Marriage Requirements

- ☐ Research the destination's marriage laws and residency rules.
- ☐ List every required document, such as birth certificates and passports.
- ☐ Arrange certified translations and legalization or apostille if needed.
- ☐ Confirm any waiting period or in-country days required before the ceremony.
- ☐ Decide whether to marry legally abroad or sign paperwork at home.
A symbolic ceremony abroad plus a legal signing at home avoids most red tape.
- ☐ Verify how to register the marriage back home afterward.

Travel and Lodging

- ☐ Book your own flights early for the best fares.
- ☐ Reserve a hotel room block at a group rate for guests.
- ☐ Arrange airport transfers and local transportation.
- ☐ Build in extra days before the wedding as a buffer.
- ☐ Confirm travel insurance for you and recommend it to guests.
- ☐ Research local currency, tipping customs, and SIM or data options.

Guest Logistics

- ☐ Send save-the-dates much earlier than a local wedding.
- ☐ Build a wedding website with travel, lodging, and schedule details.
- ☐ Share cost estimates so guests can budget for the trip.
- ☐ Provide lodging options at several price points.
- ☐ Assemble welcome bags with local maps and essentials.
- ☐ Plan a group activity or welcome dinner to gather everyone.
A welcome event helps guests who traveled far meet before the big day.

Vendors From Afar

- ☐ Hire a local planner or rely on the venue coordinator.
- ☐ Book photography, florals, music, and catering early.
- ☐ Review portfolios and read reviews from international clients.
- ☐ Confirm contracts, currency, and payment methods in writing.
- ☐ Schedule video calls to align on the vision and timeline.

- ☐ Ask vendors about local marriage officiant options.

Packing Essentials

- ☐ Carry attire, rings, and vows in your carry-on, never checked.
- ☐ Pack all legal documents and printed confirmations together.
- ☐ Bring a steamer, sewing kit, and stain remover for attire.
- ☐ Pack comfortable shoes and weather-appropriate clothing.
- ☐ Include a small first-aid and emergency kit.
- ☐ Carry adapters, chargers, and backup power banks.

Final Timeline

- ☐ Confirm all vendor details and payments before you travel.
- ☐ Reconfirm flights, transfers, and lodging for you and the party.
- ☐ Arrive early to recover from travel and complete any paperwork.
- ☐ Do a venue walkthrough and rehearsal once on site.
- ☐ Distribute the timeline to vendors and the wedding party.
- ☐ Plan how to bring gifts and personal items home afterward.