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**Modern manners:** How to be gracious in an era of Evites. **P4-5**



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# NEW ROMANTICS

This year's big holiday movies evoke style and place with dazzling costumes.

**BOOTH MOORE FASHION CRITIC** » Sherlock Holmes understood the power of details. "Details are the only things that are important," says the super-sleuth (played by Robert Downey Jr.) in a film that opens on Christmas Day. In this instance, Holmes' ability to assess the minutia of appearance (a band of pale skin on a ring finger) allows him to deduce that Watson's fiancée had been married before she met the storied sidekick.

The details of clothing — which can reveal a sense of place or status or desire — are key to any movie, especially the serious "prestige" films that are released around the holidays.

In films such as "The Young Victoria" (in which the British queen popularizes the white wedding dress) and "Sherlock Holmes" (which reinvents the famous detective as a romantic ruffian), [See Costumes, Page P3]

**PERIOD PIECES:** Costumes in films have their own stories to tell, whether it's "A Single Man's" '60s sophistication, clockwise from top, natty old London in "Sherlock Holmes," the royal power plays of "Young Victoria" or muses musically come to life in "Nine."

# Paradise Found

Fiji's private-island resorts provide honeymooners sensual seclusion



1. The Point at Vatuale Island Resort offers two private plunge pools and beach views. 2. A cottage at Qamea Resort and Spa offers a welcoming setting for newlyweds. Photo by Mark Callanan. 3. The panoramic view from the Peninsula Residence is a great way to end a day on Laucala Island. Photo by Klaus Lorke. 4. Uniquely designed chairs look out to sea off Laucala Island. Photo by Klaus Lorke. 5. Newlyweds enjoy a dinner on the sand at the Vatuale Island Resort.

**A** lone together on a South Sea island paradise. It's the most romantic of dream honeymoons. But it doesn't have to be just a tender fantasy.

"It is a dream come true for the many couples who honeymoon on one of the private-island resorts of Fiji," said Lynette Wilson, co-owner of Destination World, a Hemosa Beach-based travel agency specializing in Fiji travel. Located in the blue South Pacific, Fiji contains more than 300 emerald isles — many of them home to just one luxurious resort.

"Absolutely, it was a dream-come-true honeymoon," said Erica Lefflang, 30, of Scottsdale, Ariz., who with her husband, Justin Lefflang, 28, flew to Qamea Resort and Spa, one of Fiji's single-resort islands, immediately following their Oct. 17 wedding. "After all the craziness of planning the wedding, we wanted a place where we could stay in one place, and enjoy each other and the scenery."

As a veteran travel writer who visits Fiji frequently, I have also enjoyed the dream-come-true quality of this island nation. And though I reprinted the following three private-island resorts ads, it was easy for me to imagine how their exotic settings could spell honeymoon bliss for the Lefflangs and other newlywed couples.

### Laucala Island

Of the many Fiji resorts I've visited, the new Laucala Island Resort is the most lavish. Once the private island of magazine publisher Malcolm Forbes, the 3,000-acre isle is now owned by Red Bull founder Dietrich Mateschitz.

Opened in early 2009, it has 25 sumptuous villas offer indoor-outdoor luxury and posh privacy. Some are tucked within private

### FJI

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walled gardens along the beach and others cling to the rocky sea cliffs, while Hilltop, the owner's residence, which is available to rent, is a 118,400-square-foot compound with three one-bedroom villas, a pool, library and sprawling living areas. It crowns the highest peak, offering 360-degree ocean views.

Private swimming pools and lush landscaped patios, master bedrooms overlooking the ocean, Balinese-inspired indoor and outdoor baths, casually elegant indoor and outdoor dining areas (ideal for in-water dinners) make each villa a honeymoon haven.

Golf carts are included, so couples can drive (or be chauffeured) through the palm groves for sunset cocktails at the five gourmet bars and

Eskatrum, Qamea's owner, said with a smile. The year-old Qamea Jungle Spa provides Eden-like pampering in five individual Fiji-treehouse-style stone-and-etched-wooden treatment suites perched at the edge of the jungle.

Newlyweds can live the Polynesian dream with a champagne picnic alone together on Honeymoon Beach, a private beach just a short boat ride away; when it's time to mingle, foot paths lead to the bar and an open-air restaurant, where organic cuisine and freshly caught fish are paired with fine wines. Activities include world-class diving and snorkeling, Haka! Cat sailing, windsurfing, sea canoeing and guided nature hikes.

Qamea ([www.qamea.com](http://www.qamea.com)) is accessed by an hour flight from Nadi International Airport on inter-island carrier Pacific Sun to Tavuni, Fiji's third largest island. A Qamea shuttle meets guests at the Tavuni Island Airport for the drive to



A couple on their honeymoon enjoy the reef at Qamea Resort and Spa. Photo by Mark Callanan.

restaurants, or to a private beach for a honeymoon picnic.

"We're at

the ready to help couples create memories that will last a lifetime," said Thomas Rodgers, who with his wife, Maja, are the resort's co-general managers. Both European-trained in the hotel business, the couple infuse the resort with tropical indulgences. One example: All Laucala's bath and spa products are created in the Hillside Spa "kitchen" from local sea and island-grown plants, adding to the bliss of massages in the leafy luxury of the spa's couples treatment villas.

Honeymooners reach Laucala Island ([www.laucala.com](http://www.laucala.com)) via the resort's private airline, Air Laucala, on a six-passenger plane. The scenic flight is 35 minutes from Nadi International Airport, on Fiji's main island of Viti Levu.

### Qamea Resort and Spa

Offering honeymooners with an authentic Fijian feel, the luxurious Qamea Resort and Spa is the only resort on the white sands of 6-mile-long Qamea Island. "Like being on a Robinson Crusoe island but with all the amenities is how many honeymooners describe Qamea," Wilson of Destination World, said.

"No clocks, no phones, no Internet. It's glorious — almost indescribable. Time just escapes, and you just get to be with each other all the time," said Erica Lefflang, who enjoyed an eight-day honeymoon there with her new husband.

Seventeen beachfront huts (Fiji-style cottages) and three villas are sprinkled throughout the 100 acres of gardens, meadows and rain forest. The high-pitched thatched roofs and Fijian-made furnishings of the rain-forest chic honeymoon retreats, while newlyweds who prefer seclusion can cozy up in the contemporary-styled villas.

Tucked away by a private beach within the rain forest, each villa is enclosed within a garden and each has a pool, beachfront patio and a combined living and dining room ideal for romantic meals alone together.

"Honeymooners check into a villa, and we don't see them again until they check out," Ron

the Qamea dock, where a motorboat then takes guests to the island resort.

### Vatuale Island Resort

Santa Fe meets Fijian-chic architecture to create an intimate honeymoon paradise at the Vatuale Island Resort, the only resort on 12-square-mile Vatuale Island. Nineteen indoor-outdoor villa beds, each hidden in the dense jungle along the sugar-white sands, give honeymooners an unforgettable escape to barefoot living. Double hammocks, private infinity pools, spa-level living/bedroom spaces with beds draped in romantic netting, indoor and outdoor showers and walls that open to the sea and gardens are among the romantic amenities.

Vale Vigi, the Grand Honeymoon Bure, totals 2,000 square feet of secluded luxury, complete with butler service. The Point, a two-story marvel overlooking the sea, is the most opulent villa, with two pools, gardens, patios, living and dining spaces and butler service.

En-villa dining, romantic interludes on a private rise and candlelit dinners for two on the beach make honeymoon dreams come true. The main bar and open-air restaurant, overlooking the breathtaking lagoon, are equally romantic. Revered by the Fijians as a mystical island, Vatuale offers boat trips to the Cave of the Sacred Red Prawn, jungle hikes to view ancient penicillium and swimming in underground caves.

Vatuale Island Resort ([www.vatuale.com](http://www.vatuale.com)) is 25 minutes by light plane from Nadi International Airport.

— Barbara Beckley

Special Advertising Section Writer

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## Honeymoon Adventures

Tired of biding away? Head to Viti Levu for action

**W**hen it's time to emerge from your honeymoon hideaway, Fiji's main island of Viti Levu presents adventures from mild to wild. The following is a sample of the offerings:

- > Enjoy a romantic sunset cocktail cruise or a fun-filled day sailing to uninhabited isles including the island where the movie "Cast Away," starring Tom Hanks, was filmed. **South Sea Cruises** ([www.ssc.com.fj](http://www.ssc.com.fj)). **Captain Cook Cruises** ([www.captaincookcruises.com](http://www.captaincookcruises.com)).
- > Take a jet ski safari across the ocean to remote mangrove lagoons and serene beaches. **Adrenalin South Pacific** ([www.adrenalinfp.com](http://www.adrenalinfp.com)).
- > Reel in the big one while sport fishing or marvel at the teeming undersea life on deep-sea dives. **Reef Safari Fiji** ([www.reefsafarifiji.com.fj](http://www.reefsafarifiji.com.fj)).
- > Experience the "Ultimate Shark Encounter" on a shark dive in Beqa Lagoon, famous for abundant and diverse shark species. **Aqua-Trek** ([www.aquatrek.com](http://www.aquatrek.com)).
- > Jet-boat down the Nadi River on a wet and wild ride. **Jet Fiji** ([www.jetfiji.com](http://www.jetfiji.com)).
- > Whitewater rafts along the upper Navua River — dubbed "Fiji's Grand Canyon" — and visit a remote Fijian farming village for lunch. **Rivers Fiji** ([www.riversfiji.com](http://www.riversfiji.com)).
- > Zip-line through the thick, ancient jungle



A great way to see Fiji's natural beauty is on a bibi! bamboo raft. This woman travels with her bike on a raft on the Navua River.

canopy over rushing rivers while surrounded by wild parrots. **Zip Fiji Adventures** ([www.zip-fiji.com](http://www.zip-fiji.com)).

> Sky dive over Fiji. Internationally licensed instructors take adventurers along on tandem jumps from as high as 14,000 feet. **Skydive Fiji** ([www.skydivefiji.com.fj](http://www.skydivefiji.com.fj)).

> Explore a remote cave once the hideout of pagan carnival rebels; visit a rural village and ride a bibi!, Fiji's traditional bamboo raft, down a mountain river on the Cave Tour. **Adventures in Paradise Fiji** ([www.adventuresinparadisefiji.com](http://www.adventuresinparadisefiji.com)).

For more information on honeymoons in Fiji, visit [www.fjimes.com](http://www.fjimes.com) or call 800.932.3454.

— Barbara Beckley

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