

Newlywed couple and Annie's Escapes clients Tonya and Travis Hess on their honeymoon in Bali.



# Honeymoon DREAM WEAVER



**Award-winning Rhode Island travel agent Ann Petronio of Annie's Escapes spins couples' dreams into honeymoon magic.**

By Laura DeSisto

**W**hen most couples first meet with Ann Petronio of **Annie's Escapes**, they claim to want some sort of "relaxing beach honeymoon."

What they end up with is almost always very different.

After interviewing brides- and grooms-to-be and learning about their special interests, hobbies, likes and dislikes, Petronio distills the information to curate a once-in-a-lifetime trip unique to that couple.

While meeting with Kevin and Lauren Pallotta, the travel agent learned that Kevin had a lifelong dream of visiting Prague—and that both Lauren and Kevin are "foodies." Petronio combined both interests into a trip that also included stops in Venice and Mykonos.

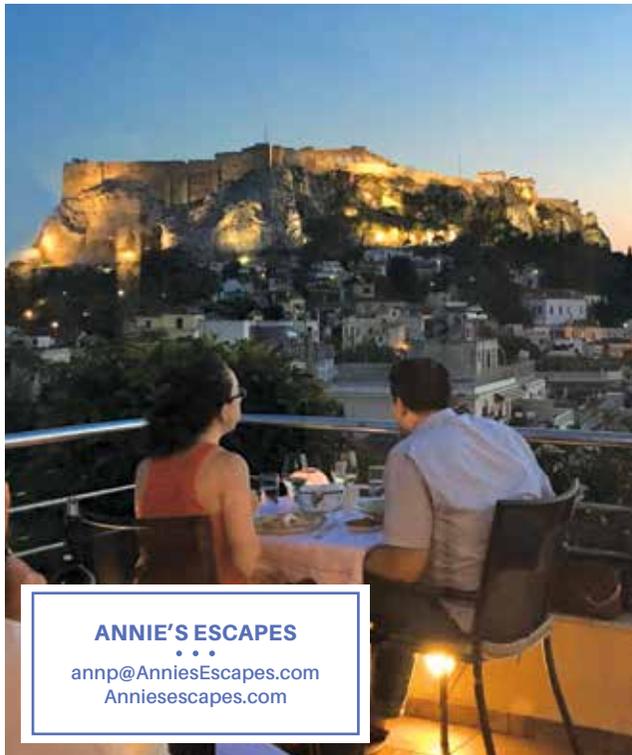
"We loved every small detail Ann planned..." says Lauren, "... the food and wine festivals, pub crawls, the Taste of Prague. One standout was 'Row Venice' where we learned how to row a gondola and even got to steer it ourselves. This is something we never would have thought to do without Ann's guidance."

Says Petronio, "What I have consistently found is that what couples will remember years from now is not laying on a beautiful beach. It's the experiences they have. And I use my knowledge and connections to make sure they have unusual and extraordinary ones."

The two-week trip throughout Bali she planned for newlyweds Tonya and Travis Hess included private



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elephant rides, lunch with lions, a visit with a local healer descended from Bali royalty and a private tour with a driver who escorted the couple to four locations in the country and taught them all about Hinduism.

Even with an endless supply of self-serve online travel planning sites like Tripadvisor, business is booming for Annie's Escapes. Petronio says the reason for that is simple: for no added cost to the couple, she can provide services these sites cannot.

"If something goes wrong, I am the first line of defense," she says. "During the recent crazy hurricane season, I was on the phone around the clock coming up with plans A, B and C for my clients. If you check in and don't like your room, I know who to call to get it changed while you go out and enjoy your day. Expedia isn't going to do that for you."

Says the new Mrs. Hess, "We are so happy to have worked with Ann. She arranged for everything, and was always quick to respond to questions. She is truly devoted to her clients and wants your trip to be perfect."

If after meeting with Petronio, couples still insist they want to just lie on a beach, she is happy to accommodate them. "But after a few days of that, I will still most likely have them zip lining, diving with sharks or taking a rum tour," Ann jokes. 



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