



Q&A
Ann Petronio, Travel Consultant,
"Escape Artist" and Owner, Annie's
Escapes Custom Travel Planning

THE HONEYMOON CAN BE just as exciting and luxurious as the wedding itself, but who wants to wrangle the extra planning and last-minute details of a getaway with so many other things on your plate? If you've never used a travel consultant, there's no better time to enlist the help, and let's be honest...a customized honeymoon is the perfect way to begin a life as one. **Ann Petronio**, "escape artist" and owner of **Annie's Escapes Custom Travel Planning**, let us in on some of her travel secrets. So, where to?

SNEW: What's the first thing couples should think about when planning their honeymoon?

AP: I think the most important thing is to talk – a lot – about what you both envision for this trip. You need to think about your own individual travel styles (from backpacker to jetsetter and everywhere in between), your priorities for the trip (relaxation, adventure, etc.), the activities that you enjoy doing together (sightseeing, museums, outdoorsy pursuits, fine dining, etc.) and the amount of time and money you're willing to invest in this getaway.

SNEW: What services do you offer your couples, and what are some advantages to working with a travel consultant?

AP: The most important thing that I can offer my couples is peace of mind. My clients all know that they are going to the right destination for them, at a great price, and that someone (a real, caring person) is looking out for them throughout the entire process. I meet with my clients at their convenience (nights, weekends, etc.) to make it as easy as possible, and they get the benefit of my personal experience and connections at many of the most popular honeymoon destinations and resorts.

SNEW: What are some popular honeymoon destinations for couples lately?

AP: On the "quiet and romantic" end of the honeymoon scale, the perennial favorites are always beachy destinations like the Caribbean, Mexico and Hawaii. For couples who are looking for something a little busier and more lively, I've been doing a lot of European honeymoons. Not just Italy, which is always one of the top destinations, but Portugal has also been very big this year. The other great destination for an active honeymoon is Costa Rica, with its volcanoes, zip lines, hot springs, and rainforests.

SNEW: What are some of your favorite budget and splurge locations?

AP: For a honeymoon on a budget, nothing beats a road trip, and we're very fortunate here in New England to have some great destinations that are within driving distance. I've had honeymooners do the Finger Lakes area of upstate NY, Montreal, Manhattan, or even just a beautiful inn on the Cape. If you have some time and money to spare, and want to splurge on a once-in-a-lifetime trip, I love Australia/New Zealand, or maybe South Africa.

SNEW: Do you agree with trip insurance?

AP: Yes, absolutely, 100%. Unless a couple can afford to throw away the entire cost of their honeymoon, they need to have travel insurance. There are simply too many unexpected things that can happen. The travel insurance that I sell also provides concierge service and emergency assistance, so it's a nice back-up for when an unexpected hiccup happens and the clients can't reach me because of time differences, etc.

SNEW: How many honeymoons do you typically organize in a calendar year? How much notice do people typically need to plan their honeymoon?

AP: I book 20-30 honeymoons in an average year, but that's just a portion of the romance travel that I handle. There are also destination weddings, anniversary getaways, "baby-moons," and more. Ideally, couples should start thinking about their honeymoon at least six months in advance; even earlier if they are visiting a popular destination during a peak period. That being said, I've had couples contact me 18 months prior to their wedding, and I've had others that waited until the very last second (two-to-three weeks prior). The couples that plan ahead typically end up with the best range of options and prices.

Annie's Escapes Custom Travel Planning
401-270-4834: anniesescapes.com