



The Official
Magazine
of the IADWP

ÉPICA

Issue
Number 25
January
2026

WEDDINGS & EVENTS

2 Years

24 EPIC EDITIONS



Index

- Editor's Note **03**
Adrián Pavía
- Destination Weddings in Iconic Settings with the Forbes Seal **06**
A note for the wedding planner community
- ¿Why is Paris the city where most couples choose to propose? **12**
- When True Luxury is Being Authentic: Returning to the origin of the "I do" **18**
- Elopement at Hotel Casa Palmela: "Where the dream touches the earth" **23**
- Professionalize to Transcend: A key purpose **31**
- 2026: Between What Evolves and What Remains: An editorial reflection on trends, timelessness, and the silent power of elegance **35**
- Florea CR: Architecture, color, and organic luxury for 2026 **41**
- Cloud Dancer: When the color of the year invites us to create from a place of calm **45**
- Ping Pong: Meet Kristi Zalesky, IADWP Regional Chapter Leader for Colorado **51**
- Starting the Year with Purpose: When a promise becomes a life project **55**
- The New Way of Saying "Thank You for Coming" Personalized gifts in destination weddings **61**



ÉPICA
WEDDINGS & EVENTS



TWO YEARS OF HISTORY, A COMMUNITY THAT NEVER STOPS GROWING

Editor's Note

January 2026 | By Adrián Pavía

Director of ÉPICA | Director of IADWP Latin America
and Spanish-Speaking Caribbean Islands Chapter

Turning two years old might seem like a short time on a calendar... but in the soul of a magazine, two years are an entire lifetime. Today, **ÉPICA Magazine** celebrates its **second anniversary** and its **24th edition**. As I write these lines, I cannot help but feel a profound mix of pride, gratitude, and an emotion that still overwhelms me. We are not just talking about printed pages or digital editions; we are talking about a community that dared to dream, a voice that decided to exist, and an industry that needed a space to see itself reflected with dignity, beauty, and vision.

When we launched ÉPICA, we did so with a clear idea: to create a magazine that honored the universe of romance, weddings, and events with the same level of aesthetics, content, and depth as major international publications. We wanted to tell real stories, showcase true talent, raise the standard, and build a bridge between professionals across Latin America and the Caribbean. Today, looking back, we can say it without false modesty: **we achieved it**. And we did it together.

In these 24 issues, we have traveled to destinations, showcased extraordinary projects, celebrated careers, gave space to new voices, supported launches, and driven trends. Above all, **we created an identity**. Each issue was an act of faith in our industry.

Every cover was a manifesto. Every interview was a conversation that left a mark. ÉPICA became a platform where wedding planners, designers, florists, photographers, videographers, venues, and brands found a stage to shine, to be seen, and to be valued.

None of this would have been possible without the immense commitment of the **IADWP Latin America and Spanish-Speaking Caribbean Islands Chapter**. To our **Chapter Leaders, ambassadors, speakers, and members**: thank you for believing and for never settling. The strength of this magazine is a direct reflection of the strength of this network. And to the **IADWP**, our institutional home: thank you for giving us the global vision to think big.

I am also deeply grateful to every ÉPICA collaborator: the writers, photographers, designers, editors, producers, partner brands, and creative teams who made each issue a collective masterpiece. A magazine isn't created in isolation. It is built through diverse perspectives, joining hands, and talents in dialogue. And ÉPICA is exactly that: a symphony of voices telling the story of the world of romance from every angle.

Two years later, what excites me most is not just what we have published, but what we have provoked. We have inspired, connected, and elevated the conversation. We have demonstrated that Latin America has a leading role in the global romance industry. This anniversary is not a finish line; it is a starting point. We look to the future knowing that the best is yet to come.

This anniversary isn't a finish line; it's a starting point. We look to the future with the certainty that the best is yet to come: more issues, more stories, more destinations, more awards, more professional growth, and more community. Because if these past two years have taught us anything, it's that when talent meets passion, boundaries simply cease to exist.

Thank you for being part of this story.

Thank you for reading, for sharing, and for believing.

Thank you for making ÉPICA something much greater than just a magazine.

Twenty-four issues.

Two years of dreams come true.

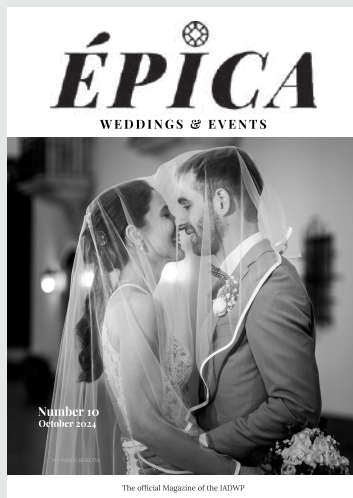
And we're just getting started.

With excitement, gratitude, and a huge smile,



Adrián Pavía

Director ÉPICA | Director IADWP Capítulo Latinoamérica
y de Islas del Caribe de habla hispana
Fundador y Director Editorial – **ÉPICA Magazine**



A bride with dark hair, wearing a white lace gown and a long, flowing veil, stands in a grand, arched hallway. She is looking back over her shoulder towards the camera. The hallway features white columns and arches, with a bright, sunlit area visible through the arches in the background. The floor is polished and reflects the light.

Destination Weddings in Iconic Settings with the Forbes Seal

A note for the wedding planner
community



Dear colleagues and friends of the destination wedding world:

It is a true joy to connect with you through this space in ÉPICA. With some I have had the privilege to collaborate, and to others I hope to welcome very soon. Through this platform, I am honored to present the two properties I proudly represent: Conrad Punta de Mita and Hilton Los Cabos, located in two of Mexico's most inspiring and exclusive beach destinations.



Both resorts offer a refined luxury experience under the European plan, where impressive views of the Sea of Cortez, thoughtful design, and genuine service unite naturally.

From intimate ocean front ceremonies and gardens overlooking the sea to elegant terraces and majestic ballrooms, every space is designed to become the perfect setting for celebrations full of meaning. With a commitment to performing only one wedding per day, every couple receives our full attention, privacy, and dedication.







Our teams possess extensive experience in multicultural celebrations, including LGBTQ+, symbolic, Jewish, Persian, and South Asian weddings, always honoring every tradition with sensitivity and respect. We proudly offer an open vendor policy, welcoming your trusted creative partners, while providing a dedicated internal Wedding Coordinator and exclusive benefits for planners, ensuring a smooth collaboration from start to finish. Both properties are also pet- friendly.

Above all, what really defines our approach is the people. Behind every celebration, we have a group of professionals in constant training, united by excellence, teamwork, and a shared purpose: to fill the earth with the light and warmth of hospitality. Through this message,

I cordially invite you to discover these exceptional wedding destinations. To those who have already placed their trust in us, thank you for allowing us to be part of your story. And to those who are still dreaming and deciding, I encourage you to take that step: here you will find not only extraordinary settings, but also an ally committed to making your vision a reality.

With affection and gratitude,

Ambar Molina

Director of Weddings,
Complex Hilton Los Cabos
and Conrad Punta de Mita



Why is Paris
the city where
most couples
choose to propose?

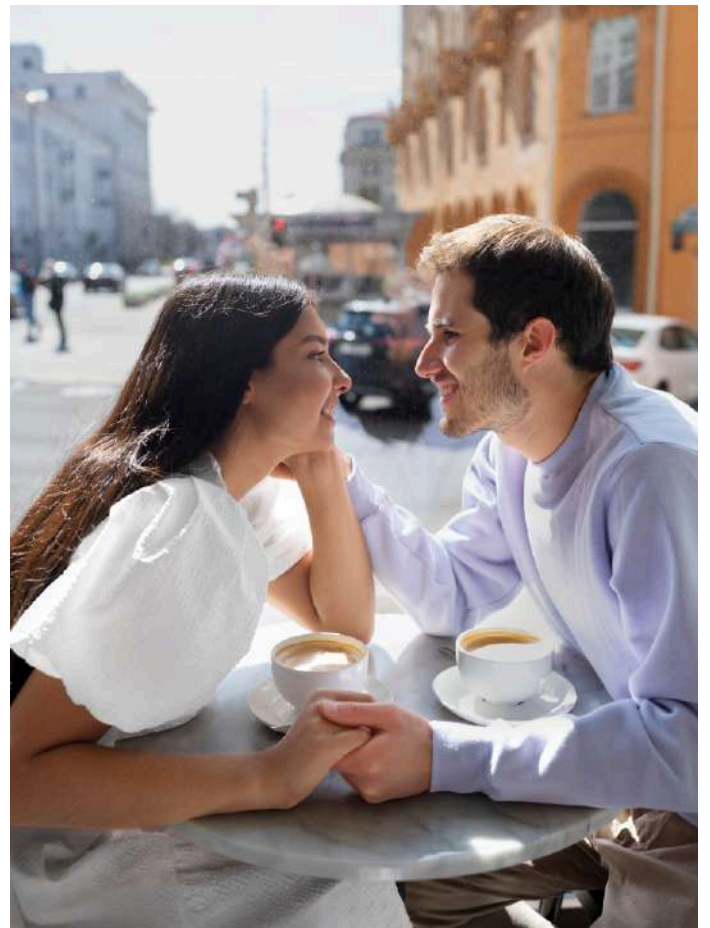


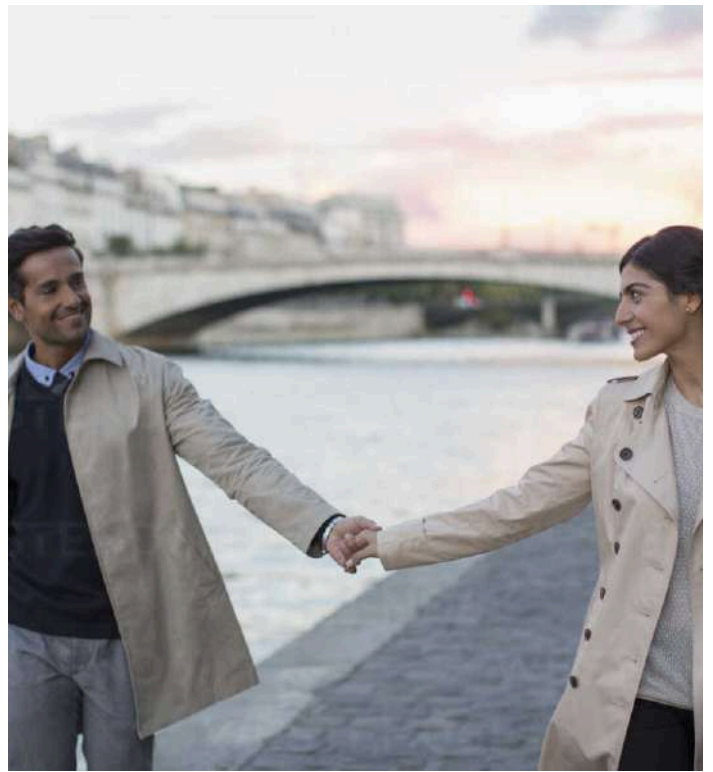


Paris is not a city: it is a promise

Every time I walk through its streets—whether under a gentle mist by the Seine, among the iron bridges, or past a glowing terrace—I feel something settle in people's hearts. Here, love doesn't need an explanation; it's simply in the air you breathe. And perhaps that's why, every few blocks, the same silent and powerful ritual unfolds: someone drops to one knee, someone catches their breath... and a story changes forever.

I see it all the time. In Montmartre, on the Pont des Arts, at the Place du Trocadéro with the Eiffel Tower as a backdrop, in a tucked-away café in the Marais, or on a stone stairway along the Seine. Sometimes they are young tourists; other times, they are couples who have been together for decades and decided that this was the moment. But it's always the same: a question, a tearful gaze, and a 'yes' that rings louder than any bell. Paris isn't just the backdrop for these proposals; **it is the catalyst.**





And this is no coincidence. Paris is the city the entire world associates with romance. Its architecture, history, literature, cinema, and even its daily rhythm are designed for love. From Victor Hugo to Edith Piaf, from Coco Chanel to Woody Allen, Paris has been culturally constructed as the ultimate shrine to love. Proposing here isn't just a travel choice; it's a symbolic statement. It's telling the world: our love deserves to be in the place where love was invented.

But behind every marriage proposal we see, there is much more than just a beautiful photo. There is an entire industry operating with near-invisible precision.

Paris generates millions of euros annually solely from the marriage proposal and elopement segment. There are photographers who specialize exclusively in 'surprise proposals,' videographers who edit in real-time, florists who deliver bouquets by motorcycle to exact spots in the city, planners who organize the moment with surgical precision, musicians waiting for their cue to start playing, and even chauffeurs who coordinate routes to reach the perfect location just as the sun sets.

Many of these proposals cost between **500 and 10,000 euros**, depending on the production: a professional photoshoot, a private boat cruise along the Seine, a luxury picnic, a live violinist, rose petals, champagne, lighting, and a hidden photographer waiting for the perfect instant. What the world sees as a spontaneous romantic scene is, in reality, a meticulously designed experience, crafted to last a lifetime.



And the photographers... oh, those Paris photographers.

They are practically story hunters. Some work for agencies, others independently, and many have schedules booked months in advance for marriage proposals alone. They live for the small gestures—the trembling hands, the shock of surprise, the single tear that falls before the 'yes.' They don't just photograph poses; **they document the birth of a promise.**

But the most interesting part is that the economic ripple effect doesn't stop there. After the 'yes' come the dresses, the hotels, the travel, the celebratory dinners, the 'save the dates,' the engagement shoots, and the wedding planners who begin working on the big day. Paris doesn't just sell an image; **it sells a story that's only just beginning.**





As a professional in the wedding industry, I observe this with fascination. Because this phenomenon proves something fundamental: people aren't just looking for a beautiful place. They are looking for **meaning**. They want their love to be associated with something larger than themselves. And Paris offers that like no other city on the planet.

I've seen men spend an hour rehearsing how to get down on one knee. I've seen women cover their mouths to keep from crying too soon. I've seen photographers hide behind lampposts, behind cafés, and behind distracted tourists. And I've seen couples who, after the 'yes,' remain in each other's arms for minutes, oblivious to the city still spinning around them.

Paris is not a postcard.
Paris is a rite of passage.

That is why more proposals happen here than anywhere else in the world. Because here, love doesn't seem naive; it seems **inevitable**. And when a couple chooses this setting, they aren't choosing a city: **they are choosing the first chapter of their story.**

And in the world of romance, that is worth more than any diamond.

Adrián Pavía

Director of IADWP Latin America Chapter
Founder of **ÉPICA Magazine**

Travel the world WITH IADWP IN 2026

The IADWP is characterized by providing innovative and inspiring education, as well as being a global business generator with a community spanning over 40 countries in the Americas and Eurasia.

Join the spectacular events that we are preparing for you

Jamaica | May 11 - 14, 2026 | Program in English



Sell the Caribbean with confidence, strategy, and real market knowledge

Love Caribbean **is a professional training experience created for wedding planners and travel advisors who want to move beyond inspiration and truly understand how to sell** the Caribbean for destination weddings and group celebration travel.

This event goes deeper than venues and visuals. **It prepares you to operate confidently in a complex, high-demand destination market** where logistics, pricing, culture, risk management, and guest experience truly matter.

What makes this event different:

- **Learn** how to design and sell multi-day destination weddings with confidence
- **Understand Caribbean culture** and regional differences beyond the brochure
- **Develop smart pricing strategies** that elevate perceived value
- **Gain tools** to manage risk, safety, and crisis scenarios
- **Apply innovation**, technology, and AI to scale your business
- **Build real connections** with Caribbean partners that lead to long-term opportunities

This event is for professionals who want to sell the Caribbean like experts

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When True Luxury is Being Authentic

Returning to the origin of the "I do"





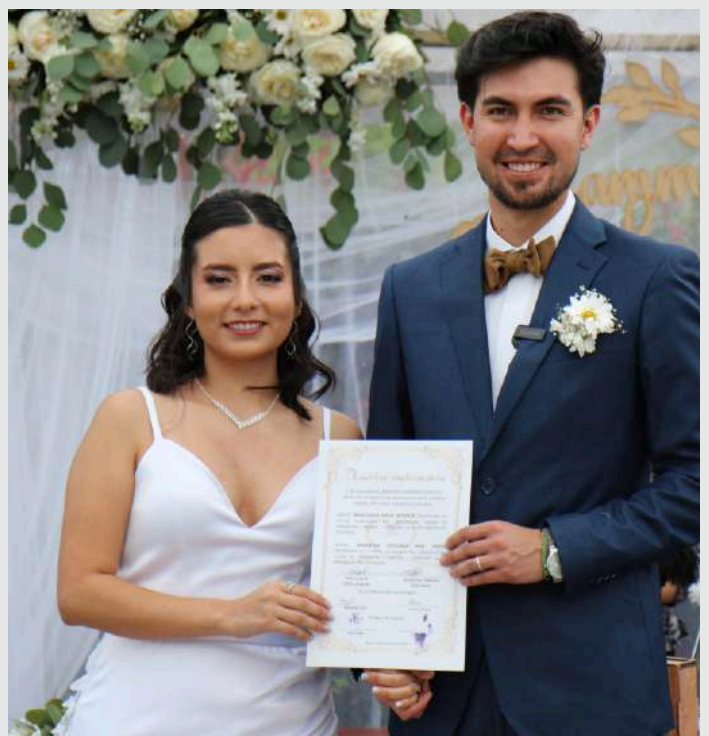
I'm starting this year by looking back. Not just evaluating recent projects, the weddings we've pulled off, or the destinations we've traveled to, but remembering something much more intimate: that eight-year-old girl who dreamed of creating events without knowing that one day, it would become her profession.

I remember spending hours crafting, decorating with whatever I had on hand, and transforming small spaces for my siblings' birthdays or my own. There were no budgets, no trends, and no social expectations. There was just excitement, a desire to create something beautiful to share, and above all, a very clear intention: to celebrate.

Today, after more than twelve years as a wedding planner, I am consciously returning to those roots to remind myself why I do what I do. The answer has never been about luxury, spectacular decor, or producing magazine-cover images. It's about the feeling—what it feels like when people gather to celebrate with the ones they love.

When we were children, happiness didn't depend on grand productions; a cake, a soda, and some candy shared with the friends we played with every day was enough. No one was competing, no one was comparing; we were just celebrating being together. Interestingly enough, that isn't so different from what a wedding should be.

Couples get married because they want to celebrate their love with their family, their friends, and the people who have been a real part of their story. That's where the planning begins: choosing the venue, the food, the invitations, the attire... it's all born from excitement. However, somewhere along the way, that excitement is often clouded by social pressure.



When wedding planning stops being about 'what makes us happy' and starts revolving around 'what will people think,' comparison, competition, and the pressure to meet someone else's standards creep in. The celebration becomes a showcase, and what should be a deeply human moment is transformed into an event seeking external validation.

Yes, as planners, this is our business—but it is also our responsibility. It's not just about planning; it's about guiding. It's about helping couples understand that they don't need to fit in, prove anything, or compete with anyone for their wedding to have value. The true value lies in being able to enjoy their big day without the burden of 'what people might say,' without frustration, and without going into emotional or financial debt just to please others.

I have seen couples lose the joy of planning their wedding because of the pressure generated by social media. They compare themselves, they feel like they aren't enough, and they believe everything has to look exactly like what they see on a screen. That is where, from my role, the true magic happens: when I help them see that every couple is unique, and that true style isn't copied—it's built.





A style that stems from your own tastes, your preferences, and the details that make you happy—because when a wedding doesn't reflect the couple, it becomes just another social event, lacking memorability. For me, the most beautiful part of a wedding is exactly that: **authenticity and identity.**

Getting married is about creating a new family; it's saying 'I do' with intention; it's celebrating values, decisions, and a shared vision for the future. When a couple focuses on that true meaning, their guests feel it, and the celebration becomes even better. Genuine love inspires, connects, and leaves a lasting mark.

Throughout these years, I've learned that the couples who choose to work with me do so because they are looking for something more than just flawless planning. They want their wedding to have a soul—for every element to tell their story. They want a process that is calm, secure, and enjoyable. Creating from their essence has been the key to building connection, trust, and real happiness.

When we talk about destination weddings, that connection runs even deeper. It's not just people coming together; it's the union of places, cultures, and sensations. The destination becomes part of the narrative, and the





experience is lived through every sense. This is where I confirm that evolving professionally doesn't mean losing your essence—it means protecting it.

Today, at the start of this year—which feels like a blank canvas—I want to invite couples to rethink what true luxury really is. To me, luxury isn't in what is shown; it's in what is felt. It's the freedom to celebrate without fear, the alignment between who we are and what we create, and the peace of knowing our 'I do' comes straight from the heart. As a wedding planner, my greatest satisfaction remains that moment when a couple looks at me and says, 'Yes, we want to work with you,' because they know they will be supported, understood, and respected. To me, that is priceless.

"Because when a wedding is created from the essence, it stops being just an event and becomes an experience that is felt, remembered, and honored forever."

Lissner Ortiz García

Destination Wedding Planner
National Chapter Lider IADWP Ecuador
www.lissnerweddingplanner.com
@my_sweetliss



Elopement at Hotel Casa Palmela

"Where the dream touches
the earth"



In the heart of the Arrábida mountains, among vineyards, rolling hills and silence, a young woman steps into a sunlit room at Hotel Casa Palmela.

The delicate scent of fresh flowers and the distant sounds of the countryside envelop her like a gentle caress. There is something magical in the air: a quiet vibration that awakens a memory she has not yet lived.

Alone, yet whole, she feels deeply connected to the space: to nature, to history, to the carefully preserved details. It is as if the place itself whispers ancient stories of love and freedom. With her eyes closed, she allows herself to dream. In that dream, she is dressed in white, riding an elegant horse, a flowing veil dancing with the wind. This is not a fairytale.

It is more visceral. More real. She is not waiting to be saved, she chooses love.

And there he is, at the edge of the vineyard, beside a centuries-old tree, her chosen one. When their eyes meet, everything else dissolves. What remains is nature, love, and the freedom of choosing one's own path.





← SALA MARQUÉS
DE MONTEAÑA
← CANALES
← PUENTE

Aesthetics & Inspiration

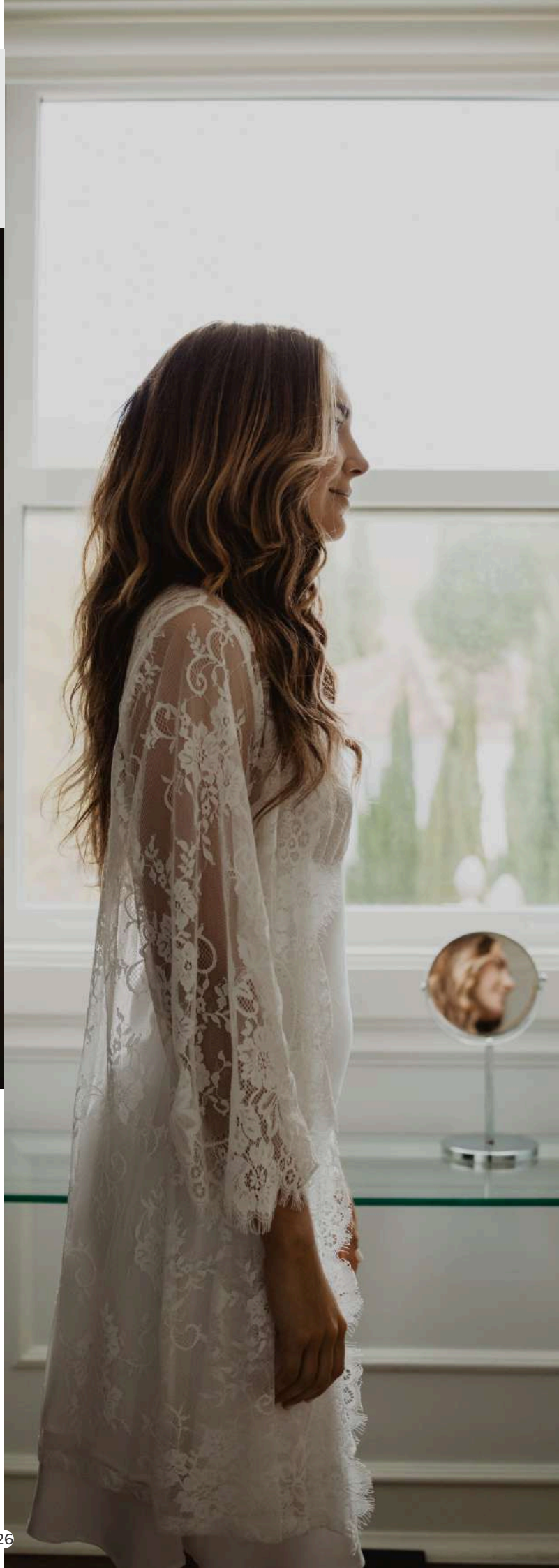


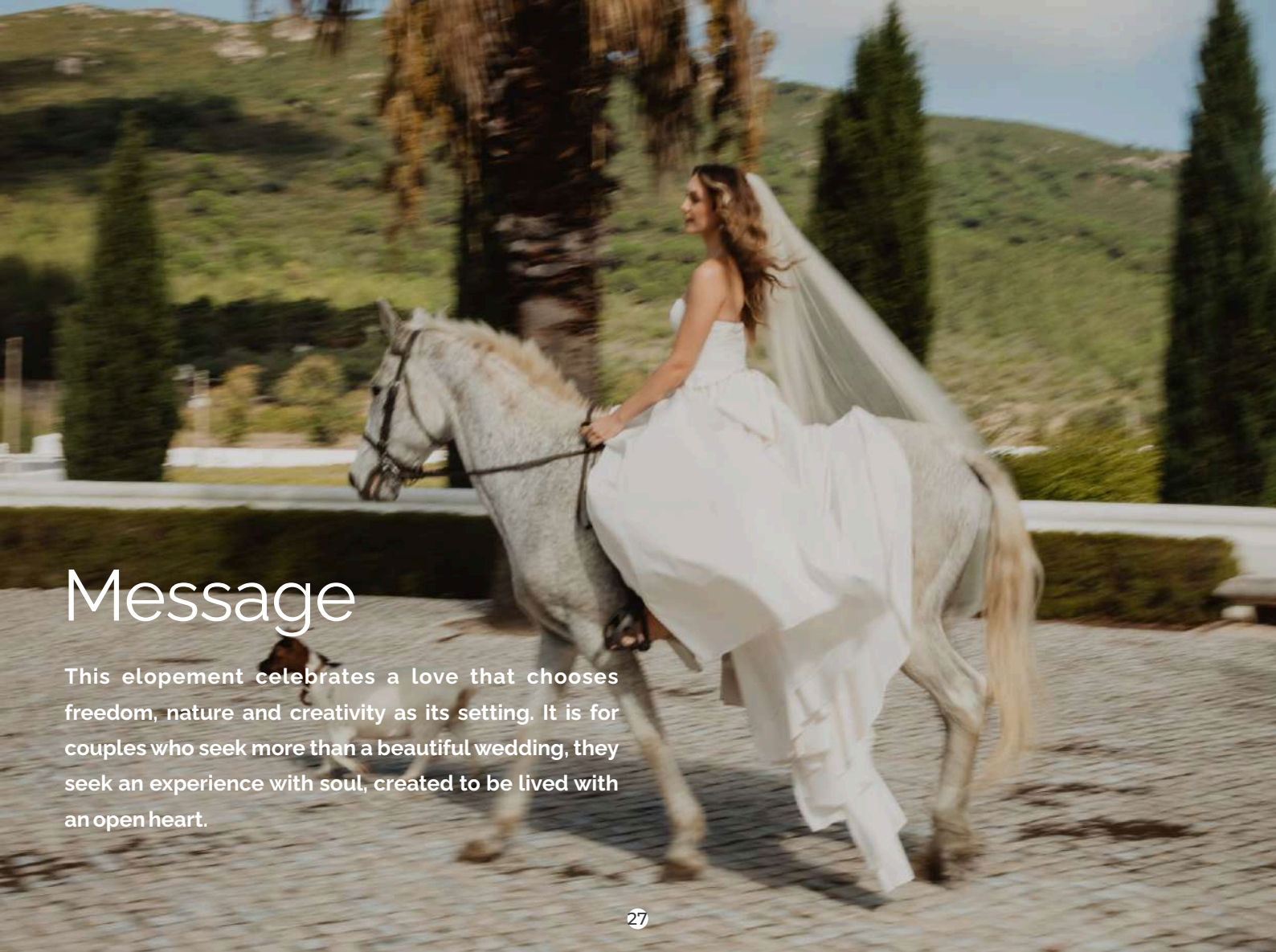
The editorial unfolds through a cinematic and refined atmosphere.

Visual elements are inspired by the fluidity of dreams, the strength of nature and the raw beauty of unfiltered love.

Soft tones with golden and wine-colored accents, flowing fabrics, horses, fresh grapes and an outdoor table set reflect the essence of the region.

Along with a veil carried by the wind, a bride walking through the fields, a groom with a relaxed yet sophisticated presence everything invites movement, authenticity and passion.





Message

This elopement celebrates a love that chooses freedom, nature and creativity as its setting. It is for couples who seek more than a beautiful wedding, they seek an experience with soul, created to be lived with an open heart.





Narrative Summary

A woman rests in an enchanted room, wrapped in soft light and delicate textures. She dreams of her wedding day and within that dream, she becomes every version of herself: the lover, the heroine, the explorer.

The editorial reveals this dreamlike journey, where the bride experiences her wedding as an inner, sensual and courageous rite. Love leads her to the earth, to the other, to the present moment.

Among vineyards and autumn breezes, a love with roots is born... "Where the Dream Touches the Earth"

Concept @oursandbeyond.events

Venue @hotelcasapalmela

Photography @pinha_pinhao

Video @sirklafilms

Content @thebond_weddingcontentcreator

Cake designer @fox_sophia

Florals @flowerlovedwedding

Stationery & table styling @thesukses.weddings

Jewels @salomefariajewelry

MUA @alexandra.p.maquilhagem

Hairstylist @brunabelfo

Groom suit @mister.man1972

Dresses @ritaalvarespereiraatelier

Bridal robe @camillabridal

Model agency @fashionstudioagency

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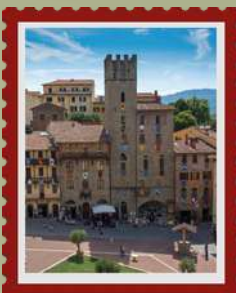
An exclusive journey designed to connect you, inspire you, and grow your business



SINGLE USD 6,050 | DOUBLE USD 4,950 PP

UPGRADE YOUR JOURNEY

PRE-FAM | VERSILIA,
NOV 2nd - 4th



- Carrara caves
- Bocelli's world & Forte dei Marmi.

SINGLE: USD 1,675
DOUBLE: USD 1,350 PP

POST-FAM | PUGLIA,
NOV 11th - 13th



- Reflect, connect & celebrate.

SINGLE: USD 1,875
DOUBLE: USD 1,675 PP

A man with a beard, wearing a white dress shirt and a black bow tie, and a woman with blonde hair, wearing a white dress and a long orange necklace, are both smiling as they decorate a multi-layered cake. The man is wearing blue gloves and is using a brush to apply something to the cake. The woman is also wearing blue gloves and is using a brush to apply something to the cake. The cake is topped with white frosting and fresh berries (raspberries, blackberries, and blueberries). To the left of the cake is a clear glass container filled with berries. The background is dark and out of focus.

Professionalize to Transcend

A key purpose



Every start of the year brings new resolutions, but some go beyond the individual and become a collective commitment.

One of the most relevant for the destination wedding, events, and romance travel industry is clear: **advancing toward a more professional, solid industry recognized for its quality.**

For years, the sector has grown rapidly, driven by the creativity, passion, and talent of hundreds of professionals worldwide. Today, **that growth demands a next step: raising standards, strengthening trust, and giving visibility to real excellence.**

Professionalization is not just about a career path or experience. It is about **demonstrating quality, commitment, and consistency**, and having tools that back that work up in front of clients, allies, and international markets.

Excellence is worked on, quality is recognized



In this context, starting the process to obtain the **Quality Recognition: Wedding Tourism Specialist** becomes a strategic decision. It is not just a badge, but a seal of trust that makes visible those who work under standards of quality, ethics, and professionalism within the wedding and event tourism industry.

*Excellence defines your work.
Recognition defines your legacy.*

To whom is the Wedding Tourism Specialist directed?

The **Wedding Tourism Specialist** is aimed at professionals and companies that are part of the romance tourism, events, and travel ecosystem, including:

Hotels & resorts

Wedding planners & event designers

Venues & locations for celebrations

DMCs & tour operators

Travel agents specialized in Romance

Tourism boards

If your work is focused on creating **memorable, high-level experiences**, this process is designed for you





A recognition with international reach

Currently, the **Wedding Tourism Specialist** has already been obtained by professionals and companies in more than **10 countries**, confirming that the industry is moving toward a new common language: that of **recognized quality**.

Being part of this international network brings visibility, credibility, and the opportunity to connect with a global community that shares the same values of excellence, trust, and professionalism.

The beginning of a new standard for the industry

Starting this process is not a final point, but the beginning of an evolution. It is a way of telling the market and the industry:

Be recognized where quality matters.

The **Wedding Tourism Specialist** represents a clear vision: building a stronger industry, more respected and prepared for the future.

Because excellence defines your work... but quality recognition is what builds your legacy.

Start today!

We thank Nazaret Ramirez Weddings and Events for the #ProudWTS photos.

www.weddingtourismspecialist.com

Natalia Bejarano

nat@weddingtourismspecialist.com
[@weddingtourismspecialist](https://www.instagram.com/weddingtourismspecialist)



2026: Between What Evolves and What Endures

An editorial reflection on trends,
timelessness, and the quiet
power of elegance



Every new year in weddings comes wrapped in the same question: what's next?

And while trends are exciting, even necessary, I find myself entering 2026 with a different lens. Less urgency to chase what's new, and more intention to protect what lasts.

2026 feels like a year of refinement rather than reinvention. A year where couples are no longer asking for more, but for better. Better thought-out experiences. Better materials. Better storytelling. And above all, weddings that feel personal without feeling performative.

This year is not about spectacle for the sake of spectacle. It's about discernment.

The Tendencies Shaping 2026

There are clear movements emerging, but they are quieter, more intelligent, and deeply rooted in meaning.

1. Quiet Luxury, Fully Embraced

Logos disappear. Excess fades. What remains is quality you can feel rather than see.

In 2026, luxury is expressed through:

- . Natural stone, limewash textures, raw silks, handwoven linens
- . Furniture that feels architectural, not decorative
- . Lighting that creates atmosphere instead of dram

Nothing screams. Everything whispers and that whisper is intentional.

2. Design with Architectural Thinking

Décor is no longer about filling space. It's about understanding it.



We're seeing:

- . Clean sightlines instead of crowded setups
- . Installations that respect scale and proportion
- . Ceremony layouts inspired by galleries, courtyards, and sacred spaces

Weddings are being designed, not decorated.

3. Experiences Over Moments

Couples are shifting away from isolated —Instagram moments— toward cohesive, emotional journeys.

In 2026:

- . Welcome events feel as intentional as the wedding day
- . Transitions between ceremony, cocktail, and reception are choreographed
- . Sound, scent, lighting, and pacing are considered as part of the narrative

The question is no longer "what will people photograph?"

It's "what will they remember?"





4. Personal, Not Thematic

Themes are dissolving. Identity is taking their place.

Rather than —Italian summer or —bohemian chic, couples are leaning into:

- . Their shared history
- . Cultural nuances handled with respect and depth
- . Subtle references only they fully understand

The most elegant weddings of 2026 won't be obvious to decode — and that's precisely the point.

What Remains Timeless (And Always Will)

Trends will come and go. These will not.

Good Taste

Good taste is invisible. It doesn't need explanation. It shows in restraint, proportion, and knowing when to stop.





My Personal Outlook for 2026

Intentional Design

Every element should earn its place. When something is there —just because, it shows.

Human Connection

The most unforgettable weddings are not the most elaborate — they're the most emotionally honest. A meaningful vow. A thoughtful seating arrangement. A pause in the timeline to breathe.

Elegance

Not as an aesthetic, but as a way of doing things.

Elegance is punctuality. Elegance is clarity. Elegance is making guests feel considered, not impressed.

After years of producing weddings across cultures, countries, and styles, I feel strongly about this:

2026 is not asking us to be louder.

It's asking us to be wiser.

To design less, but design better.

To edit without fear.

To trust that timeless choices will always outlive trends.

The future of weddings doesn't belong to what's new.

It belongs to what is well done.

And that, to me, will always be the most modern approach of all.

Diana Sciarrillo

National Chapter Guatemala
@idoguatemala

Travel the world WITH IADWP IN 2026

The IADWP is characterized by providing innovative and inspiring education, as well as being a global business generator with a community spanning over 40 countries in the Americas and Eurasia.

Join the spectacular events that we are preparing for you

Antigua, Guatemala | July 13–16, 2026 |
Program in Spanish



Deep Luxury, multicultural mastery,
and global positioning

Congreso de Bodas LAT *is IADWP's flagship Latin American congress, designed for professionals ready to elevate their business*, mindset, and international presence.

This is not basic education. *It is a strategic business congress* focused on how the wedding industry is evolving toward Deep Luxury, multicultural celebrations, and global clients with higher expectations.

What you gain at this Congress:

- **A deep understanding** of Deep Luxury: authenticity, intention, and meaningful design
- **Tools** to design and manage multicultural and interfaith weddings
- **Strategies** to charge higher fees and attract international clients
- **Education** on global trends and professional positioning
- **Practical knowledge on AI**, marketing, content, and systems
- **High-value networking** with professionals shaping the Latin American market

This Congress is for those who want to lead the
future of weddings in Latin America.

USD 587
(limited time)

Valid until April 30, 2026

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Florea CR

Architecture, color,
and organic luxury for 2026



In the fascinating world of destination weddings, where Costa Rica stands as the premier stage for high-end romance, the visual narrative has shifted toward authenticity. We are no longer simply talking about decor; we are talking about emotional scenography. In 2026, luxury floral design has moved beyond being a mere accessory to become the common thread that defines the very soul of an event.

As a professional Wedding Planner at the helm of a floral company, my constant pursuit of perfection—and years of collaboration with floral partners across Costa Rica—has led me to understand that this isn't just a world of flowers; it's a world of art and floral aesthetics. This is where FLOREA CR sets the standard in the luxury market of the 'Pura Vida' country. Their approach isn't just aesthetic; it's a curation of textures and origins that transforms conventional spaces into dreamlike gardens.

Trends 2026: The new "Quiet Luxury"

For this year, the concept of luxury moves away from rigid opulence and embraces dynamic floral architecture. We are seeing a final goodbye to perfect symmetry. The trends dominating our tables and ceremonies focus on:

- 1. Sculptural Minimalism:** The use of high-impact individual flowers, like Orchids or Anthuriums in unusual tones, arranged with an almost museum-like intention.
- 2. Movement and Fluidity:** Structures that seem to sprout from the floor or descend from the ceiling, mimicking the natural growth of Costa Rican flora.



3. The Flower as a Fashion Accessory: Flower clutches and bag-style bouquets are redefining bridal styling, merging haute couture with botany.

The 2026 color palette: Vibrancy and earth

While neutrals like pearly white and sand remain the safe canvas, 2026 invites us to be bold. We are exploring three chromatic routes:

Deep Sunset: A transition of burnt oranges, terracottas, and canary yellows reflecting coastal sunsets.



Ethereal Aura (Dusty Pastels): Lavenders, serenity blues, and "makeup" pinks evoking modern and fantastic romanticism.

The Return of Muted Jewel Tones: Emeralds and deep burgundies combined with raw linens, ideal for mountain or cloud forest weddings.



FLOREA CR: The Seal of Exclusivity

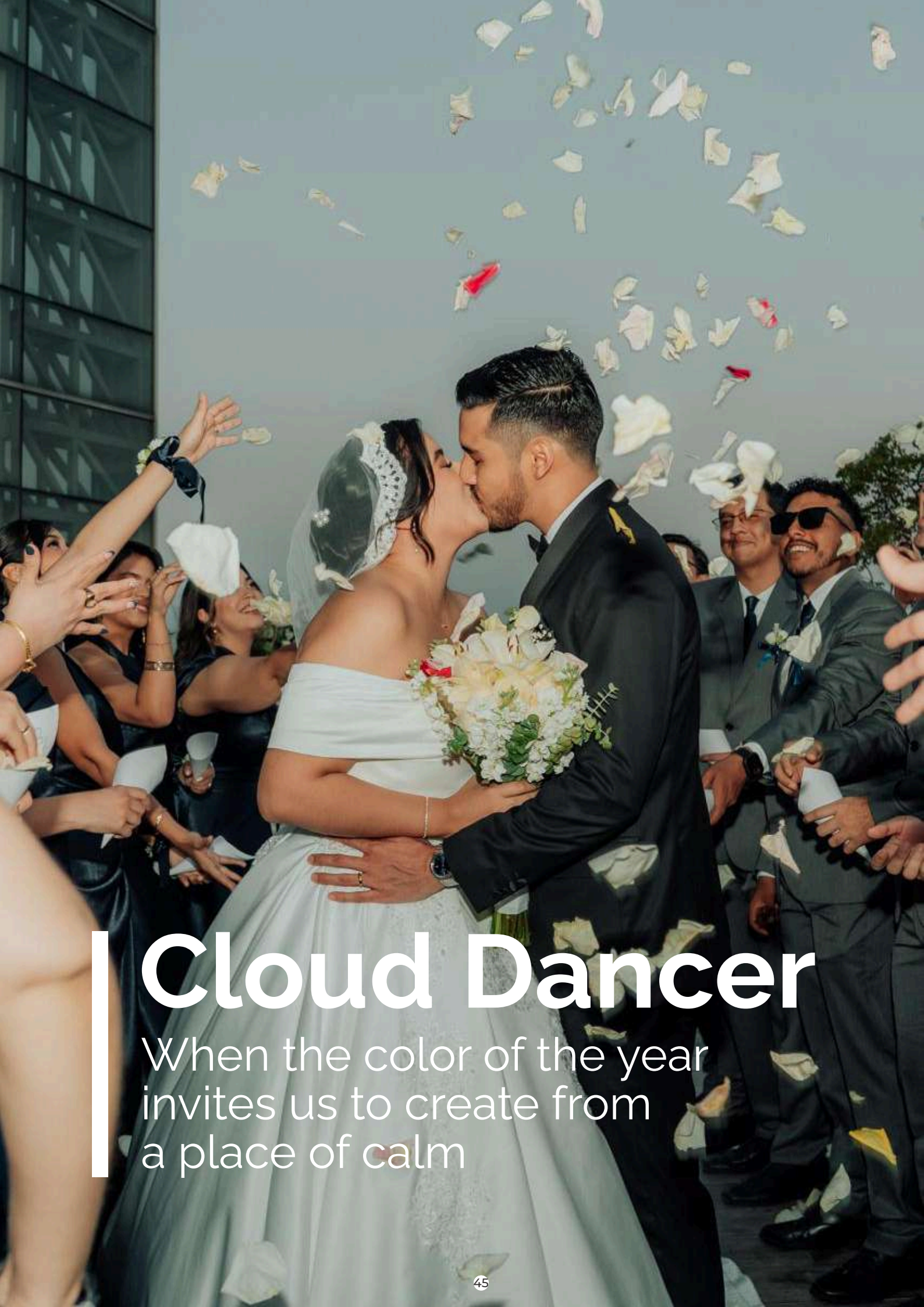
What makes FLOREA CR the top choice for luxury events is its commitment to freshness and innovation. In a country with such rich biodiversity, they successfully blend local export-quality flora with exotic species from around the world, ensuring that every arrangement doesn't just look beautiful—it tells a story of exclusivity.

Designing a wedding in 2026 requires sensitivity. It requires understanding that luxury isn't about what shines, but about what is felt. Walking down a floral aisle designed by FLOREA, you can sense that artisanal intention, where every stem has been placed to evoke emotion.

Costa Rica continues to be the epicenter of romance, and with the fresh and powerful concepts we are currently developing, the future of our weddings isn't just bright—it's flourishing.

MSc. Jeffrey Cervantes Calderón

Wedding Expert
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Cloud Dancer

When the color of the year invites us to create from a place of calm

Every year, when Pantone announces its Color of the Year, I don't see it as just a trend. To me, it's a silent conversation with the world—an attempt to give a name and a tone to what we are collectively feeling.

The Color of the Year isn't born from a random whim or a passing fad. It is the result of observing how we live, how we connect, what worries us, and what we are searching for. Pantone listens to the world—to the way we dress, design, consume, create, and dream. From that insight, they propose a color that acts almost as an emotional mirror of our times.

For 2026, that mirror is Cloud Dancer: a soft, serene, ethereal white. It is a color that, rather than demanding attention, **whispers**.

A white that doesn't scream, but says a lot

I've read many reactions to this color. Some see it as the closing of a chapter, others as a necessary pause, and many agree on one thing: the world is asking for calm.



Cloud Dancer isn't a clinical, cold, or distant white. It's a white with depth. It's a color that conveys clarity, order, and peace. To me, it represents that moment when we stop filling everything with noise and start asking ourselves what we truly want to build.

I feel it as a blank canvas—not an empty one, but one full of possibilities. It's a space that invites us to start over, to break through old patterns, to let go of behaviors that no longer serve us, and to create with more intention.

In the midst of such a fast-paced era, this color seems to tell us: breathe, make space, reconnect. And I don't just see it in design or fashion. I see it in conversations, in personal decisions, and in the way so many people are rethinking their professional, emotional, and creative lives.



Cloud Dancer and its echo in different industries

This shade has begun to resonate across different worlds: fashion, interior design, color psychology, and wellness. Not as a loud protagonist, but as a foundation—the neutral backdrop that allows what truly matters to stand out.

It is a color that supports processes, brings harmony, and connects.

And perhaps that is why it has sparked so many conversations; we aren't all used to visual silence. Sometimes, we mistake impact for excess. Cloud Dancer reminds us that you can also make an impact through stillness.

The perfect canvas for the wedding industry

From my perspective as a Destination Wedding Planner, this color holds a very special meaning, both locally and internationally.

Weddings and events have always started with a blank canvas: a couple's story, their values, and their unique way of loving. Cloud Dancer reinforces exactly that—it brings us back to our roots.

This particular white allows us to create **weddings that are timeless, clean, and minimalist**, yet deeply personalized at the same time. It serves as the perfect foundation, allowing each couple's essence to be expressed without having to compete with their surroundings.





What I'm seeing is clear: couples are moving away from the traditional. They are exploring colors like blue in various intensities, lilacs, mints, and nature-inspired greens—even burgundy, which remains a staple but now carries more character and depth.

When these colors dialogue with a base like Cloud Dancer, the result is powerful. It doesn't feel forced; it feels authentic. Textures take center stage, contrasts become intentional, and the palette stops being just a trend and transforms into an identity.

Trends yes, but with criteria

As professionals, we look for references and observe trends. It's part of our job, but I also believe one thing is very clear: **trends should never overshadow a couple's identity.**

There are couples who follow guidelines and others who break them entirely. When that happens, real weddings are born—not commercial ones. These are weddings that don't seek to replicate what they see on social media, but rather to express who they truly are.





Our role is not to impose a color, a style, or a trend; our role is **to guide, to listen, to suggest, and to support.**

In that sense, Cloud Dancer invites us to turn down the volume and return to what is essential: creating from the truth of every story.

10 reflections from the color of the year.

To wrap things up, I want to share a few ideas for both couples and colleagues who are creating throughout this 2026:

1. Cloud Dancer is a base, not a rule.
2. Using it as a canvas lets identity stand out.
3. Less visual noise can generate more emotion.
4. Vibrant colors tell stories when used with intention.
5. Textures are as important as the palette.
6. Not every trend must be applied.
7. Calm is also an aesthetic decision.
8. Every couple deserves a unique proposal.
9. Creating from harmony generates more memorable experiences.

10. Accompanying with sensitivity is as important as designing.

A year to create with purpose

Cloud Dancer isn't just a Color of the Year; it's an invitation to create with calm, to design with intention, and to remember that, in the end, the most important thing isn't what is seen, but what is felt.

And if 2026 gives us a blank canvas, let it be filled with stories that are authentic, profound, and true. The kind of stories that truly deserve to be celebrated.

"Because when everything goes silent, the essential appears. And from that place, creating becomes an act of truth."

Lissner Ortiz
Wedding Planner
National Chapter Lider IADWP Ecuador
www.lissnerweddingplanner.com

Photgraphy: Boda Melisa and Jean Pierre Ecuador

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Ping Pong

Meet Kristi Zalesky, IADWP
Regional Chapter Leader for Colorado



Kristi Zalesky is an internationally recognized and award-winning luxury travel specialist and destination wedding expert. As the founder of **Explore Your World Vacations** and **Destination Weddings Designer**, she has dedicated over 15 years to specializing in destination weddings, honeymoons, and luxury travel. Her career is defined by long-term client relationships, solid expertise, and her role as a mentor within the travel industry.

When did your journey as a travel advisor begin?

"Travel has been a part of my life since childhood. My mother worked for a major international airline, and from a very young age, I knew I wanted a career in travel. After graduating from college, I started in the hospitality sector of the industry, planning events and activities. I launched Explore Your World Vacations in 2012 and later established Destination Weddings Designer, which focuses specifically on my destination wedding and honeymoon market."

What has been one of the greatest achievements of your career?

"My greatest professional achievement has been building a business where couples feel confident trusting me with some of the most significant moments of their lives. I take great pride in the reputation I've forged

based on calm leadership, meticulous planning, and a genuine advocacy for my clients' interests. One of my greatest satisfactions comes from those couples whose destination weddings I planned 10 or even 15 years ago, who now return to have me design their anniversary trips along with their children. That kind of long-term relationship and trust is the achievement that means the most to me."





How would you describe yourself professionally?

"I am a travel and destination wedding designer who creates carefully curated international wedding celebrations and honeymoons. I specialize in managing the complex details behind a destination wedding so that my clients can be present and fully enjoy the experience.

Having planned my own destination wedding, I understand both the emotional weight and the practical challenges involved. I am known for my calm leadership, clear communication, and for anticipating needs before they even arise. Couples trust me not only to design beautiful celebrations but also to protect their time, their investment, and their guests' experience.

As the founder of **Explore Your World Vacations** and **Destination Weddings Designer**, I have built a reputation for professionalism, integrity, and deeply personalized service. I believe the most memorable celebrations are those that feel effortless, even when the planning behind the scenes is anything but simple."





What advice would you give to new destination wedding professionals?

"My advice for travel advisors entering the industry is to partner with professional organizations that support them and to invest in training that prepares them for the level of detail required to efficiently manage destination weddings. Surround yourself with people who encourage you and inspire you."

If you had to choose your top 5 wedding destinations, what would they be?

The most requested are Riviera Maya (Mexico), Puerto Vallarta, Costa Rica, and Italy.

What do couples look for most in a destination wedding?

"The majority of the couples I work with are busy professionals. They want a wedding that is beautiful and reflects their style, but they don't have the time to research endless resorts, compare contracts, coordinate guest travel, or worry about whether they are making the

right decision. What they want most is to spend quality time celebrating with their closest friends and family. They value being able to trust that I will handle every detail so they can fully enjoy the experience, rather than stressing over logistics or problem-solving."



Kristi Zalesky

Destination Wedding Designer
IADWP Regional Chapter Leader for Colorado
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A black and white photograph of a bride and groom kissing. The bride is on the left, wearing a white wedding dress with a long veil and a floral hairpiece. The groom is on the right, wearing a dark tuxedo with a bow tie and a boutonniere. They are standing under a canopy of white flowers and sheer fabric. The background shows a wedding reception area with tables and chairs.

Starting the year with purpose

When a promise becomes
a life project

*Rafael
Castillo*



January doesn't begin when the calendar changes. It begins when something inside of us decides to believe again—in new beginnings, in new promises, in challenges that push us... and in emotions that transform us.

As a wedding planner, I experience this month not only through professional goals but also through personal and family ones. Because life—just like a wedding—doesn't stand still; it evolves, it rearranges itself, and it invites us to grow. But a new year isn't sustained by beautiful intentions alone. It requires something deeper: the willingness to execute what we dream of, even when it's difficult.

Within each of those decisions, there is a silent but powerful support system: family. It is the space that grounds us, reminds us of who we are, and brings us back to the real world when hurry or pressure try to pull us away from what truly matters. As wedding professionals, we work with emotions every day, but it is our own family that sustains us so that we can sustain others.





For many couples, this new year brings a phrase that changes everything: "We're engaged." And with it comes the excitement... but also the questions, the fears, and the deep desire to do it right.

Because a wedding isn't just an event. It's the first major project of a new family.

It's the point where two stories begin to intertwine to become one.

From the perspective of the wedding planner

Supporting a couple at this beginning is a privilege. It's not just about picking a date or a beautiful location. It's about protecting a moment that will mark the rest of their lives.

A wedding planner is, without a doubt, the most important vendor a couple can hire. Beyond coordination, we understand the timelines, the weather, the vendors, and the true rhythm of a wedding—above all, we know how to anticipate what you cannot yet see. Experience and

sensitivity make the difference between an event that just happens and an experience lived in peace.

Our work begins when we ask about the why, not just the how.

What unites you?

What do you want to honor on that day?

What story do you want your children, your parents, and your family to remember?"



After 18 years of marriage, I can say this with certainty: the most important decision a person makes in life is who they choose to marry. Because you aren't just choosing someone for a single day; you are choosing someone to build everything with—the years, the challenges, the silences, the joys, and the dreams.

The wedding is one day. Marriage is for a lifetime.

Plan your event with excellence, but build your relationship with intention, rooted in love. Because love, more than just a feeling, is also a decision we choose to make every single day.

We are celebrating something much larger than a party. We are celebrating the courage of choosing someone to walk alongside for the rest of our lives.

Start-of-year guide for engaged couples:

Small steps that build a great story

Getting engaged is saying "yes" to a person... but also to a life that doesn't yet exist. That's why starting the year with intention is one of the most important things a couple can do.

Here are some principles for navigating this process with clarity, love, and purpose:

1. Start with the why, not with Pinterest

Before thinking about colors, locations, or dresses, sit down and talk about the essentials.

Why do you want to get married?

What does this step represent in your lives?

When the purpose is clear, every subsequent decision finds its coherence.





2. Define your non-negotiables as a couple

Not everything is for everyone. Some things matter more than others. For some, it will be family; for others, faith, the guest experience, the venue, or intimacy. Having this clarity prevents conflict and allows you to plan with peace.

3. Organize your wedding as a team, not as individuals

This process is the first major project you will build together. Learn to listen, to compromise, and to make decisions from a place of "we." The way you plan says a lot about how you will support each other throughout life.

4. Surround yourselves with professionals who respect your story

A wedding planner does more than just coordinate timelines and vendors. They help you protect your investment, your energy, and your peace of mind. Look for teams with experience, sensitivity, and vision—those who understand that behind every wedding, a new family is born.

5. Don't neglect your relationship while planning the event

Keep going on dates. Keep laughing. Keep praying, dreaming, and talking about life beyond the big day. The wedding is a chapter; the marriage is the entire book.





6. Remember that love is also something you build

There will be moments of stress, exhaustion, or disagreement. That doesn't mean something is wrong. It means you are learning to choose one another even when it's not easy. And that, in the end, is true love.

The true beginning



La boda es un día. El matrimonio es para toda la vida.

After 18 years of marriage, I can tell you that the most important decision you will ever make isn't where you get married or how many guests you have. It's who you decide to build a life with.

That is what we are truly celebrating: the courage of choosing someone to walk alongside for the rest of the way.

Plan with intention.

Love with purpose. And that, without a doubt, is the most beautiful purpose with which to start a new year.

With love,

Rebeca Jerez

Destination Wedding & Event Planner
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National Chapter Leader El Salvador IADWP
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The new way of saying "thanks for coming":

Personalized gifts in
destination weddings





In destination weddings, it is no longer just about the location, but about the complete experience. More and more couples understand that their guests have invested time, money, and emotion to accompany them, and they seek authentic ways to make them feel special. One of the trends that has gained the most momentum is giving personalized objects featuring the image of the couple or the visual identity of the event; items that transcend the wedding experience and become useful keepsakes to take home afterward. Some groups have even used these elements to celebrate reunions or anniversaries of those epic moments in their lives.

Reusable glasses, coolers, hats, tote bags, personalized fans, thermoses, or even welcome kits become small jewels that accompany every moment of the trip. More than "souvenirs," they are details designed to be used during wedding activities: at the welcome party, the pool party, the boat trip, or the next day's brunch.

From a "pretty detail" to a shared experience

The magic of these elements lies in how they transform guests into a visible extension of the wedding's concept. Whether everyone is wearing matching hats with the couple's logo, raising the same glass for a sunset toast, or carrying the same cooler to a beach gathering, it creates a sense of tribe and belonging—a feeling of 'we're all in this together.'

Beyond that, the design evolves from a mere graphic element into the common thread of the couple's story. Colors, typography, destination-inspired illustrations, inside jokes, or nods to milestones are woven into every object, ensuring each piece tells a part of their beautiful story and brings a smile to everyone's face.



A gesture that guests don't forget

In the context of a destination wedding, guests especially value feeling cared for, pampered, and above all, special. Arriving to find a welcome kit with a personalized cocktail tumbler, a hat for the next day's sun, or a cooler for an excursion sends a clear message: 'We thought of you, your comfort, and we want you to have an incredible time.'

Since destination weddings often bring together the couple's closest family and friends, there's a wonderful opportunity for personalized touches with each guest's name. Imagine arriving at your table to find a place card with your name and a heartfelt note from the couple—those are the kind of gestures that no one ever forgets.



Personalization with purpose: style, functionality, and sustainability



Another reason this trend is booming is the perfect balance between aesthetics and functionality. These items are designed for real-world use: durable, reusable tumblers; practical coolers for outdoor activities; fans for the heat of the day; and versatile, comfortable hats. They aren't just trinkets left in a suitcase—they become an essential part of the travel experience.

Depending on the location, you can even source locally-made goods that blend the celebration with local colors and customs while supporting the local economy. Many destinations feature artisans who create unique, symbolic pieces. Today, customizing these items is highly versatile thanks to textile vinyl, laser engraving, and modern graphic design techniques, making it easy to incorporate a wedding monogram or a signature event slogan.

That level of detail:

- . Strengthens the emotional bond with the couple.
- . Turns every wedding activity into a photogenic moment full of identity.
- . Leaves behind tangible keepsakes that remain part of guests' daily lives long after the trip is over.
- . If every guest has a personalized tumbler with the wedding monogram and everyone toasts together, it creates a truly special moment that will be captured in photos and cherished in everyone's memories.

Later, every time they use that glass at home, they won't just remember the wedding—they'll remember how they felt: included, celebrated, and part of something special.

Placing thoughtful touches in guests' rooms also creates a wonderful sense of hospitality and shows how much you value them. For example, a kit with sunscreen, bug spray, a hat, or flip-flops for the pool. These small gestures send a clear message about how much their presence means to you in this celebration.



Furthermore, many couples are opting for sustainable materials and long-lasting products, elevating the traditional 'wedding favor' into something both responsible and practical. The primary goal is to be eco-friendly by reducing the use of single-use plastics and disposable materials. This resonates deeply with a new generation of couples and guests who value style just as much as the impact of their choices. Sustainability in events is a growing movement, focused on generating less waste and prioritizing functional elements, especially when it comes to decor.

The perfect signature for a destination wedding

Destination weddings are immersive experiences. In this context, personalized items act as the signature of the celebration: they set the tone, unite the group, and make every memory unique. Achieving unforgettable experiences and giving a detail that lasts will strengthen bonds and surely draw a smile when those beautiful moments are remembered.

In a world where almost everything can feel fleeting, these details achieve something powerful: they make guests feel truly valued, loved, and



special to their hosts. The best gift is a beautiful keepsake that connects someone back to the feeling they had during a specific moment of the celebration. In the end, that is what distinguishes an unforgettable wedding from one that is simply pretty. If the destination has a signature drink, a bottle of that local spirit makes for a wonderful souvenir.

It's also a deeply appreciated touch to serve a traditional local dish during the festivities, perhaps even enhancing the moment with folk dances and performers in traditional attire. It becomes a magical experience for the guests—one that can be made even more special by gifting a small memento at that exact moment to help them relive that beautiful memory.

In the graphics below, we've shared some examples of these elements. You'll see some from our own brand, Juan Salvador Event Planner, which we offer to pamper our hosts. A great example is our insulated tumblers, which we personalize with the couple's monogram or names. We use them to serve their drinks during the party, and afterwards, they get to keep them as a memento—a gift from us. In every celebration we organize for our hosts and their guests, we strive to include details that highlight the event's identity, strengthen bonds, and create a deep connection centered around the joy that brings everyone together.

With this post, we hope to inspire you to invest in these details. Remember, it's not about luxury or superfluous items; it's about elements that connect, pamper, and last far beyond that special day. Sustainable and meaningful pieces that guests can take home to remember that epic experience. That is why we say: We plan experiences that tell stories.



Did you enjoy this content? Our contact information is at the bottom of the page. Feel free to reach out and let us know your thoughts! Also, tell us which topics you'd like us to share our experiences on in a future edition

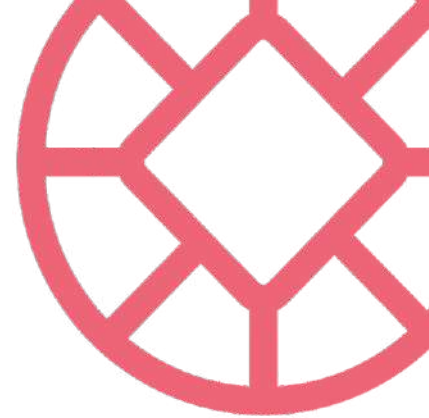


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María Eugenia Oriani Ucros

Meetings Tourism Management

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Ars Nova Photobooth CR creates unforgettable experiences with premium, interactive, and cutting-edge photobooths for weddings and events in Costa Rica. They offer up to 7 latest-generation options, in addition to complementary services such as "Dancing on the clouds" and cold spark machines. Their goal is to guarantee fun, elegance, and unique memories.



Hugo Ramirez

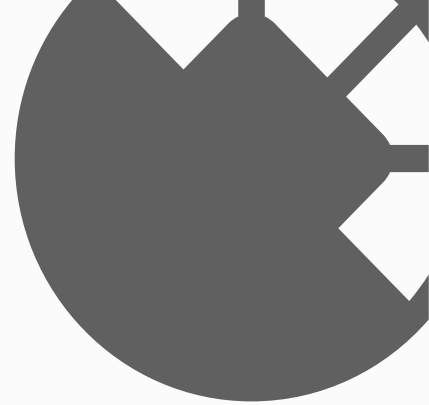
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Brenda O'Neale

With This Ring
Destination
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@withthisringromancetravel

Her weddings have spanned the Caribbean and Mexico and have been featured in several national and global publications. She has completed several destination wedding specialist training courses and has been a featured speaker at several events. Brenda has been selected to attend the GTM Flagship and West. She was also a member of Female Leaders in Travel.



Solange Franca do Carmo

Ours & Beyond
Bespoke Weddings and
Events

@oursandbeyond.events

My company is a wedding-planning firm based in Portugal, founded on the belief that every love story deserves to be approached with intention, calm, and emotional truth. The name reflects our philosophy: "Ours" symbolizes what is personal and meaningful to each couple — their memories, traditions, and connection — and "Beyond" represents everything that happens after the wedding day, the legacy of shared moments.



Marianna Aguirre

Marianna Aguirre
Planner

@marianna_planner

Marianna Aguirre Planner is a firm specializing in destination weddings in El Salvador. Since 2018, we have been designing and coordinating personalized, romantic, and stress-free experiences for local and international couples, offering expert support in planning, design, and logistics.



Leslie Padilla Tostado

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2026

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Design:
Velvet Hell Estudio
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