

Atlanta weddings

THE
ESCAPE
ISSUE

Destination Weddings!

*Private Islands, Secluded Lakes
and Beach Retreats*

FROM THE PUBLISHERS OF

Atlanta
MAGAZINE

News from...

NJFPR
NANCY J. FRIEDMAN PUBLIC RELATIONS

Circulation: 40,000

Idyllic Locales

FOR WEDDING TRAVEL

The days leading up to the wedding are the ultimate whirlwind—a combination of nervous excitement with a seemingly never-ending to-do list. Apart from the big day, though, there are numerous excuses (post- or pre-nuptials) to get away and unwind. From girl-centric respites to quality time with your other half, here are six destinations that—like your life partner—are a perfect match for wedding bells.

BY GIANNINA SMITH BEDFORD

The Mini Moon

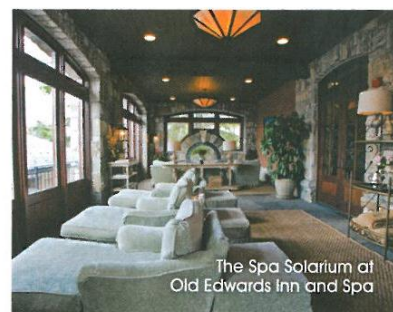
Elizabeth Pointe Lodge,
Amelia Island, Fla.

Months of planning and preparation for the big day can leave many couples time- and budget-strapped. Enter the “mini-moon” trend, where couples are opting to forgo the lengthy honeymoon in favor of something a little shorter and sweeter. Whether work obligations prevent couples from traveling or wedding-day spending makes a week-plus vacation seem like an unnecessary extravagance, the South offers plenty of retreats within driving distance that seem worlds away. Our favorite: The oceanfront Elizabeth Pointe Lodge in Amelia Island, Fla. Nothing spells stress-free romance like a few days at this luxurious, Nantucket-style bed-and-breakfast. Snuggle with your hubby on the Lodge’s sprawling porches or walk hand in hand on the 13 miles of unspoiled (and uncrowded) beach. For complete privacy, rent the Miller Cottage, complete with galley kitchen, living and dining areas, and a deck with rocking chairs. And remember: You’ll always have an excuse to plan a traditional moon in the future! elizabethpointelodge.com



Elizabeth Pointe Lodge

knot, or forgoing the bachelorette entirely? Treat yourself and your fiancé (or your sister and your mom) to a relaxing spa weekend. But you don’t have to hop on a plane to indulge in a five-star spa getaway. Just a short road trip from Atlanta, the Old Edwards Inn and Spa in the Blue Ridge Mountains offers the best of the best in pampering spa treatments. After spending a day enjoying a Bliss for Two massage, botanical-inspired treatments and lounging in the solarium, you’ll see why the 25,000-square-foot European-style retreat was voted No. 1 hotel spa in North America by Condé Nast Traveler. Serious spa-goers will want to book one of the hotel’s six spa suites—complete



The Spa Solarium at
Old Edwards Inn and Spa

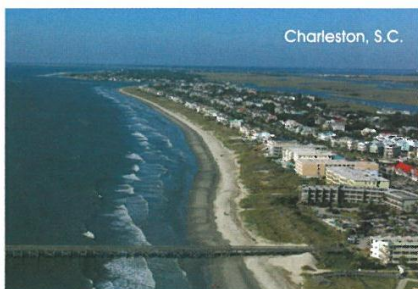
with rainfall showers and heated marble floors. These plush accommodations offer a private elevator taking you directly to the spa for the ultimate “robe-and-slipper access” to all its amenities, including a spa cafe. oldedwardsinn.com

The Spa Weekend

Old Edwards Inn and Spa,
Highlands, N.C.

Time to take a breather before tying the

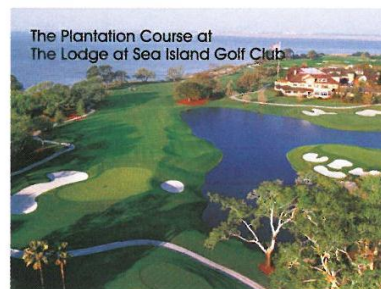
DESTINATIONS



Charleston, S.C.



Forsyth Fountain



The Plantation Course at
The Lodge at Sea Island Golf Club

The Girls Getaway

Charleston/Folly Beach, S.C.

Charleston has always been a popular weekend getaway, but combine the charm of this historic Southern city with plush accommodations in a nearby beach town and you have a recipe for the ideal girls getaway. Just 20 minutes from downtown Charleston, Folly Beach offers tons of beachfront rentals and a laid-back vibe that is immediately apparent driving through the charming downtown, dotted with casual eateries, beach shops and watering holes. Continue on East Ashley Avenue to find a gorgeous weekend rental just steps from the ocean. When your girly tribe is itching for some retail therapy, hop in the car and head toward King Street in downtown Charleston to browse a fabulous mix of independently owned boutiques, from Hampden Clothing to Biton. Shop until you drop, then take a breather at the Pavilion Bar (marketpavilion.com) or Vendue Inn (vendueinn.com/rooftop-bar) for stunning harbor views from the rooftop.

The Engagement Weekend

Savannah, Ga.

The romance of Savannah intoxicates most couples the moment their feet hit the cobblestone streets and they stroll through beautiful, historic squares and past Spanish moss swinging from towering live oaks. Offering some of the most charming scenes in which to pop the question, Savannah's historic public squares (ideal for a dreamy engagement picnic) will transport you back more than 275 years. Historic district

landmarks like the Forsyth Fountain, steps from the luxurious Mansion on Forsyth Park (mansiononforythpark.com), also provide magnetizing locations to profess your love. At sunset, take the public water ferry across the river to Esplanade at the Savannah International Trade Convention Center to propose with the Savannah skyline as your backdrop, or hop on a horse-drawn carriage to savor the big moment. At the end of a memorable evening, retreat to The Kehoe House (kehoehouse.com), an old-world bed-and-breakfast or AVIA Savannah (hyatt.com/hyatt/avia/default.htm), a modern boutique hotel.

The Golf Retreat

Sea Island, Ga.

Tee off in stunning scenery at Sea Island Golf Club, rated No. 1 in the U.S. among the "World's 50 Best Golf Hotels" by Golf Digest Index. Offering not just one, but three 18-hole championship golf courses, this private coastal resort is a golfer's utopia. Begin with couples instruction from top-of-the-line trainers at the Golf Learning Center before tackling the courses—the Seaside Course features gorgeous ocean views, while the Plantation Course meanders through marsh and forest. For variety, golfers can also sink a few at the challenging Retreat Course. Whether staying at The Cloister or The Cottages—year-round rentals offering lovebirds an private retreat—guests have use of the golf amenities. Die-hard, low handicappers will want to book a room at The Lodge at Sea Island Golf Club. This intimate, English country manor-like hotel is encircled by all three of Sea Island's legendary courses, ensuring the green is

never more than a stone's throw away. seaisland.com/golf

The Day-After Photo Session

Seaside/Santa Rosa Beach, Fla.

Fitting in all the desired photos of the new Mr. and Mrs. can be tough on the day of the wedding, especially when the newlyweds are itching to party it up with their guests. In an effort to curtail the rushed portraits of the bride and groom and capture the newlyweds in their bridal best, day-after photo sessions have become the hottest new trend in wedding photography—particularly in picturesque beachside communities like Seaside and Santa Rosa Beach, Fla. "Day-after shoots really allow you to relax and take advantage of the amazing setting," says Genya Garrett of Vue Photography, which shoots day-after sessions on northwest Florida's Gulf Coast. Garrett suggests resting up and getting full hair and makeup done for the session, which lasts about an hour and a half. "It's fun to add in details from your actual wedding to make the shots cohesive—like thank-you or bride and groom signs." What's more, the day-after shoot provides the perfect excuse to spend another day in paradise. vuephotographyonline.net

Day-After Photo Session

