

# SIMPLY ADD CHAMPAGNE

BY ROCHELLE LASH



Cheeca Lodge in the Upper Keys partners with sister hotel, the new Marker Resort Key West, for fabulous weddings and honeymoons.

Celebrate your marriage on Mexico Beach.



Florida has unbeatable features for distinctive weddings and honeymoons: a sultry climate, aquamarine waters, fabulous food, spa life and romantic resorts, which are primed to create memorable occasions. Party guests can dine and dance in grand hotel ballrooms, on sun-kissed beachfronts, in tropical gardens, historic mansions or aboard glamorous cruises.

## NEW IN 2014: BE THE FIRST

You will be the first on your block to celebrate at these fabulous, new-in-2014 resorts.

The superb Florida Keys is prime territory for romance simply because of the pure sand, calm waters and stunning sunrises and sunsets. The all-new Marker Waterfront Resort, which opened in December 2014 in the heart of Key West's Historic Seaport district, promises to deliver all this, plus a deluxe boutique-chic experience with poolside privacy and gourmet dining. The exclusive, honeymoon-worthy Marker partners with its sister property, breezy Cheeca Lodge & Spa in the Upper Keys, so you can add golf, cycling, fishing, tennis, sailing and lavish spa life.

New once again, the sophisticated 1930s National Hotel Miami Beach in South Beach has emerged from a major, loving restoration. This treasure of art deco art and architecture is renowned for its long infinity pool fringed by palm trees, attentive service and a unique three-story penthouse where honeymooners enjoy the pinnacle of luxury and privacy, high atop the international party scene of South Beach.

The Waterstone Resort & Marina is a new Doubletree by Hilton in Boca Raton with chic, modern decor and indoor and outdoor dining. Weddings are held in the fashionable penthouse, which has sweeping views of the Intracoastal Waterway and the Atlantic Ocean.

The new Wyndham Grand Jupiter at Harbourside Place, overlooking the Intracoastal Waterway, offers perks such as a complimentary wedding-night suite, but also ask about a free two-night anniversary visit. Plus, your wedding can have its own signature cocktail—with your name. Perhaps a Miller mojito or Jennifer's gin fizz?

FROM THE TOP: AMBROSIO PHOTOGRAPHY; MEXICO BEACH COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

The spectacular new Four Seasons Orlando at Walt Disney World Resort does it all with luxury and panache—the bridal suite, the rehearsal, the spa and a fabulous choice of a fancy, glittering ballroom gala or an elegant, outdoor lawn party.

Your guests will be wowed and brilliantly fed at the Epicurean Hotel, an artful new boutique property in Tampa Bay. Built around gastronomy, the Epicurean curates weddings with gourmet cuisine, premium wines and spirits, rare cheeses and pastries from its divine sweet shop, Chocolate Pi.

## THE MODERN FAMILY

The Westin Diplomat Resort & Spa in Hollywood is big enough to appeal to everyone in the family—golfers, tennis fans, cruisers, youngsters and spa-goers. For the modern family, the Diplomat, as well as the il Lugano in Fort Lauderdale, have introduced LGBT features, including wedding planners who are specialists in same-sex marriages.

A dream honeymoon at Jupiter Beach Resort & Spa in Palm Beach County features oceanfront terrace dining, sexy tropical cocktails and the ultimate indulgence—a couple's massage. If you are blending in kids, they can let loose with everything from scuba and surfing to fishing and cycling.

The Waldorf Astoria in Naples, totally renovated in 2014, is the consummate family getaway, with a kids' club, an adults-only pool and an outstanding beachfront on the sublime Gulf of Mexico. The Waldorf's spa is an exceptional sanctuary for a bridesmaids' party and the groomsmen can go sporty with paddleboarding, golf and tennis. For all guests, the Waldorf holds a champagne evening once a week.

Brides swoon over their wedding photos that have Florida's remarkable Pink Palace as a backdrop. The beautifully appointed Loews Don CeSar Beach Hotel, an icon of historic grandeur on St. Pete Beach, has held society weddings since 1928. Today, experienced consultants will create imaginative bouquets, table decor and dream cakes. And, all the generations will be thrilled: The Don organizes kids' camps and teen fun. Pets are spoiled with toys, bedding and even massages.

## DEFINITELY NOT A BALLROOM

South of Key Largo, Captain Slate's Scuba Adventures holds the Guinness world record for the largest underwater wedding—110 divers. Just bring the ring. Slate supplies the gear, a "Justice of the Pisces" and an award-winning videographer to capture all of the undersea action.

The posh Hawks Cay Resort in the mid-Keys has aced nature with superb, romantic sunsets and gorgeous water panoramas. For honeymoon-style tranquility, the resort has an adults-only pool, a serene spa and luxurious suites and villas. For family wedding fun, all ages of guests will be enthralled with Hawk Cay's unique dolphin lagoon for educational underwater encounters, and the hotel's marina for exciting deep-sea fishing, yachting and scuba.

For a true luxury experience, Windridge Yacht Charters cruises out of Miami, Boca Raton, Fort Lauderdale and Palm Beach and customizes dazzling receptions with gourmet cuisine and lively entertainment.

In Fort Lauderdale, exciting and unusual venues abound for wedding parties with themes—like the Design Center of the Americas and the Antique Car Museum.

At The Sheraton Fort Lauderdale Beach, brides and grooms can take the plunge—literally. The hotel's mermaid weddings are underwater nuptials, held in the rollicking Wreck Bar pool. Yes, there are make-up and hair touch-ups after the big dip and before the reception.

Florida's Space Coast has innovative, romantic choices: The *Indian River Queen* is a paddle-wheel boat that cruises near Cocoa Beach with a full wedding party aboard, including a captain to officiate. And for a heavenly start to your honeymoon, Florida Biplanes will sweep you and your beloved skyward in an open-cockpit craft from the 1940s.

Cowboys and cowgirls can tie the knot at the upscale Creek Ranch in Haines City, about one hour south of Orlando. After the roundup, it's just you, your sweetheart and your prancing horses.

And on the picturesque Gulf coast, Phoenix Rising Kayak orchestrates kayak weddings in a secluded estuary around Charlotte Harbor south of Tampa. **FL**

## FEATURED LINKS

### Captain Slate's Scuba Adventures

[captainslate.com](http://captainslate.com)

### Cheeca Lodge & Spa

[cheeca.com](http://cheeca.com)

### Creek Ranch

[creekranch.net](http://creekranch.net)

### Design Center of the Americas

[dcota.com](http://dcota.com)

### Epicurean Hotel

[epicureanhotel.com](http://epicureanhotel.com)

### Florida Air Tours

[floridabiplanes.com](http://floridabiplanes.com)

### Fort Lauderdale Antique Car Museum

[antiquecarmuseum.org](http://antiquecarmuseum.org)

### Four Seasons Orlando at Walt Disney World Resort

[fourseasons.com/Orlando](http://fourseasons.com/Orlando)

### Hawks Cay Resort

[hawkscay.com](http://hawkscay.com)

### Jupiter Beach Resort & Spa

[jupiterbeachresort.com](http://jupiterbeachresort.com)

### Loews Don CeSar Hotel

[loewshotels.com/en/don-cesar](http://loewshotels.com/en/don-cesar)

### National Hotel Miami Beach

[nationalhotel.com](http://nationalhotel.com)

### Phoenix Rising Kayak Tours

[prkayak.com](http://prkayak.com)

### The Indian River Queen

[indianriverqueen.com](http://indianriverqueen.com)

### The Marker Waterfront Resort

[themarkeresortkeywest.com](http://themarkeresortkeywest.com)

### Sheraton Fort Lauderdale Beach Hotel

[sheratonftlauderdalebeach.com](http://sheratonftlauderdalebeach.com)

### Waldorf Astoria Naples

[waldorfastorianaples.com](http://waldorfastorianaples.com)

### Waterstone Resort & Marina

[waterstoneboca.com](http://waterstoneboca.com)

### Westin Diplomat Resort & Spa

[diplomateresort.com](http://diplomateresort.com)

### Windridge Yacht Charters

[windridgeyachts.com](http://windridgeyachts.com)

### Wyndham Grand Jupiter at Harbourside Place

[harboursideplace.com/wyndhamgrand](http://harboursideplace.com/wyndhamgrand)