

The Destination

The beauty of the destination wedding lies in the setting, which the bride and groom have so carefully chosen. The ceremony should be arranged to highlight the love shared between the bride and groom, and the wedding dress, carefully selected to showcase the bride, should be understated to enhance her elegance.

Wedding Gown

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Ah, the wedding dress. It is the most important article of clothing that a woman will ever buy. However, when planning a destination wedding, the wedding dress is sometimes an afterthought. The bride is so focused on finding the perfect location for her wedding, rates for all of her guests, who will attend and who won't, planning the ceremony from afar and so on, that she doesn't realize that she needs to find a wedding dress appropriate for the location and ceremony site.

Traditional wedding gowns with long trains and a lot of material may cause a bride a lot of grief. Yes, they are beautiful. Yes, they make for great photographs. Unfortunately, they are extremely heavy. All of that material and a tropical climate don't mix all that well. Plus, a long train means dragging on the sand if it is a beach wedding. It's hot. It's uncomfortable. It is not the way a bride should feel on her wedding day.

MATERIAL	The material is very important when choosing a wedding dress for a destination wedding in a tropical location. Find a material that breathes, such as chiffon or cotton. Stay away from silk, as it will show any signs of perspiration. Satin or satin blends are also nice choices for wedding dress material, as satin breathes and flows. Steer clear of taffeta, polyester, and polyester blends. They are quite heavy and tend to cling to any dampness. Think lightweight, regardless of what style dress you choose.
BODICE	The most common type of bodice for a destination wedding gown is sleeveless. This means that there is either a tank top, wide straps, or spaghetti straps. An open back with a halter bodice is also a wise choice, as it is very cool (temperature-wise, that is) as well as very attractive. A strapless bodice can be uncomfortable, as it is very snug in the bust area. However, the lack of material over the arms and neck can mean a cooler upper body. Sleeves can be too hot, unless they are cap sleeves. Beading on the bodice is nice as well, as long as it isn't so heavy that it weighs you down.
SKIRT	There are so many different types of skirts to choose from when it comes to a destination wedding. The A-Line and Ballerina skirt styles aren't very popular, due to the vast amount of material used to make them. The warm air stays under the skirt, thus causing the legs to perspire. Mermaid and sheath dresses aren't popular, either, because they are often difficult to walk in — especially on the beach. A straight skirt with a slit and a slip skirt are the most common skirts for a tropical destination wedding, as they are the most comfortable and easiest to move around in.
LENGTH	When thinking of a wedding gown, people often envision a long train trailing the bride as she walks down the aisle. Unfortunately, long trains are often not conducive to destination weddings — especially those on the beach. First and foremost, they are incredibly difficult to transport to the destination. Unless the resort has an on-site dry cleaner that can press the dress, you will most likely end up with a wrinkled gown. If the wedding ceremony is on the beach, the train will drag on the sand. However, dresses with trains are still a "must" for some brides — regardless of the trouble to get their dress in pristine condition for the wedding. If you have always dreamed of a wedding gown with a long train, definitely go with a lightweight material. Floor-length gowns are not a popular choice because of the drag factor as well. A really great option for brides that want a train for their ceremony is a detachable train, or one that can easily be bustled. Destination wedding brides often opt for ankle-length or tea-length gowns, which leave room for movement while also keeping the bridal look. Brides interested in a more non-traditional approach to their wedding dress can opt for a short skirt or an asymmetrical skirt that is short in the front and longer in the back.
COLOR	Destination weddings leave the most room for color choices in a wedding dress. Of course, white and variations thereof are always appropriate for any bride in any setting. However, since a destination wedding is more of a non-traditional wedding, non-traditional colors and even prints are absolutely appropriate. Pinks and oranges are very popular among destination wedding brides, as are pale blues and purples.

The old adage is true: when you finally find THE dress, you will know as soon as you try it on. ❀