

# Designing From Afar

Getting married on a tropical beach or alpine mountaintop makes for spectacular photo-ops, but the planning that goes into destination weddings can be daunting. Here, two wedding planners give advice to brides planning their big day from afar.



**Vanessa Van Wieren**  
FOUNDER OF ALCHEMY FINE EVENTS  
CARDIFF BY THE BAY, CA

**WBD:** How can a bride incorporate her destination location without going overboard?

Vanessa Van Wieren: Whatever you do, don't feel that you have to lose *you* to honor the destination locale. Bring it in as an accent, not onto the main stage. For our Tuscan wedding's table, we incorporated modern Louis Ghost Chairs, lucite candleholders, and mirrored cube boxes and then mixed them with a Tuscan style farm table and locally purchased textiles.

**WBD:** What design details should a destination bride focus on to drive home her wedding's style and aesthetic?

VVW: Tablescapes are the perfect canvas to express your designs and tell a story. Design around local flowers to bring in the destination's flair. If you aren't too comfortable with your destination florist's skills, hire one where you live and have them do a test run! Once you perfect your tablescapes locally, take a ton of photos and even sketch out placement of the decor so that when you pass off the design plan to your destination florist, it's a no-brainer. ✨

**Jamie Chang**  
FOUNDER OF MANGO MUSE EVENTS, LOS ALTOS, CA

**WBD:** You had a destination wedding in Paris. Tell us a little bit more about planning your dream nuptials.

Jamie Chang: Paris was the first place we both thought of. We had fallen in love with the city on a trip we took a few years back and it just felt right for us. We also knew exactly where we wanted to get married, the Musée Rodin. It's a little oasis in the middle of the city that is just peaceful and lovely. We really wanted to share an experience beyond a wedding.

**WBD:** What is the most important thing a couple should consider when deciding on a destination location?

JC: I think the absolute most important thing is that you choose a place that means something to you as a couple. Perhaps it is a location that you visit annually, or where you got engaged, or where your grandparents were from. The couple feels totally thrilled to be there, and you can see that on their faces. That kind of excitement is infectious, so everyone ends up being in this state of bliss. ✨



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