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PAGE 6

Beachside Bliss

One Couple's Romantic Getaway in Playa del Carmen

GLAM CAMPING

Australia, Montana, Tanzania, Thailand
Ah, Wilderness

From Montana to Tanzania, we've found pampering properties that offer state-of-the-art tents and loads of amazing views.

By Sandra Ramani

There's something inherently romantic about sleeping under the stars. The sounds, the setting, the vast, carpeted sky. But camping can also bring tinned food, sketchy public restrooms and a major bug factor. Thankfully there is a host of high-end properties around the world that offer all the adventure to set your heart aflutter and all the pampering to make your honeymoon dreams come true. From Australia to Zimbabwe, here's a list of our favorite spots that offer the opportunity to reconnect with nature—without sacrificing upscale amenities (think oversized copper bathtubs) and service (like a "camping butler" to set-up s'mores roasts).
Ah, Wilderness

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Four Seasons Tented Camp Golden Triangle, Thailand

Considered by many travel connoisseurs to be the most unique Four Seasons property, this tented resort sits in a lush, hidden-away part of Northern Thailand, in the so-called Golden Triangle that borders southern Burma and western Laos.

The tents: Spread out over different levels of bamboo jungle, the 15 deluxe tents each feature open floor plans with hammock copper tubs for two, outdoor shower stalls, private decks, WiFi and elegant furnishings. Views vary, and some of the tents are a walk uphill from the main camp area, along stone steps and rope bridges and aren’t accessible by vehicle.

The activities: The property is home to an on-site elephant sanctuary, and at times includes a half-day "training camp," during which guests will don traditional mahout (elephant trainer) outfits, learn simple commands and even how to bathe the animals—and then take an unforgettable elephant-back ride through the jungle. (Sunmoo trees are also available, and from time to time, some smaller pachyderms by nearby elephant reserve make appearances at the main dining position for prises petting and photo ops.) There are also boat rides down the Mekong River, day trips to the museums and temples of nearby Chiang Sen and the intensive Jungle Gym workout, which includes a hike, run and weights session. Or just hang out by the freeform riverside pool, grab a cocktail in the panoramic Burma Bar and enjoy a Thai herbal massage in the spa tent.

Honeymoon highlights: Start the day with a sunrise elephant ride, float down the Mekong on a bamboo raft (accompanied by a bottle of bubbly) in the afternoon, or pick up some kitchen tips with a class in Thai, Laotian and Burmese cooking, followed by a private candlelit dinner (room rates start at $2,700 per night for two and include meals, house wine and beer, mini-bar, WiFi, round-trip airport transfers, one-half-day elephant experience, a spa treatment per person per day, a long-tail boat ride and Golden Triangle day trip. Two-night minimum; fourseasons.com).

Longitude 131°, Uluru, Australia

Dubbed Australia's "Red Center," Uluru is home to some of the continent's most iconic tourist sites and some of its most spiritual spots. Set in the rugged outback of the Northern Territory, the Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park spreads out over 311,000 acres, and houses both Uluru—one of the world's largest natural monoliths, also known as Ayers Rock—and the natural red domes of Kata Tjuta, AKA The Olgas. Both, naturally, are part of an area rich in Aboriginal culture and sacred traditions. The town consists of a couple of hotels, a few shops, and—a set a drive away from the others, overlooking the monolith Uluru—the magical Longitude 131°.

The tents: Named for its navigational position, Longitude 131° features 15 super-sized luxury tents, with peaked white roofs, a mix of contemporary and traditional furnishings and floor-to-ceiling windows with views of either the sunrise or sunset and the red-rock Uluru monolith. Perks include plasma, WiFi, stylish bathrooms with deluxe bathtubs, and plush living beds.

Although seasonal, the Resort at Paws Up in Montana hosts guests at Christmas. Activities include snowmobiling and dog sledding.

The Resort at Paws Up, Montana

You'll be in the heart of Lewis and Clark country at this 37,000-acre Montana working ranch resort, set along 10 miles of the Blackfoot River (made even more famous by the Brad Pitt-Robert Redford movie, "A River Runs Through It"). Legend has it that in 1806, explorer Meriwether Lewis climbed Sentinel Rock (part of what's now the Resort at Paws Up property and the spot where they hosted camping in search of the Marias River. Since then, the grounds have housed everything from gold mining claims and homesteads to sheep and cattle ranches. Accommodations are available in several styles, acreage, and include both upscale cabins and luxury tents.

The tents: Paws Up offers five different glamping areas, each with six one- or two-bedroom tents. Each campground features cozy digs (outfitted with bathrooms, Western chic furnishings, outdoor and indoor showshoes, private plunge pools and decks overlooking the gorge. There are no phones, but each tent has a walkie if you need to contact the staff. WiFi is available in the main tent, which also houses a living room, the bar, a library and seating for meals.

The activities: The Elephant Camp is operated by Wild Horizons, a travel outfitter that also oversees an adjacent elephant sanctuary, and all guests get the opportunity to "meet" the resident pachyderms. But it's also worth signing up for one of the elephant ride sessions, which includes time to interact with the animals during a gorgeous ride through the bush and over rivers. The Camp is also home to a resident cheetah, and guests can take an early-morning or late-afternoon bush walk with him, too. It's also the perfect town in town at the market, can be arranged—as can adventures like rafting or bungee jumping. In the evenings, the staff—led by the vivacious manager/your instant best friend, Jonathan Elwary—will chat about your day over cocktails and gourmet dinners.

Honeymoon highlights: Spurge on a helicopter ride over the Falls to get a true sense of its magnificent scope. Then end the day with a private in tent massage or a romantic dip in your plunge pool, watching the sun set over the gorge (room rates start at $900 per person, per night and include meals and drinks) and an elephant meet-and-greet. Due to logistics of a safari vacation, it's best to book such an experience through an expert Africa touring specialist like Extraordinary Journeys, who can help coordinate all logistics, ejAfrica.com).
Arrival to the **Four Seasons Tented Camp Golden Triangle** is a thrill itself with a ride past villages and rice paddies.

**Four Seasons Tented Camp Golden Triangle, Thailand**

Considered by many travel connoisseurs to be the most unique Four Seasons property, this tented resort sits in a lush, hidden-away part of Northern Thailand. In the so-called Golden Triangle that borders southern Burma and western Laos.

**THE TENTS:** Spread out over different levels of bamboo jungle, the 15 deluxe tents each feature open floor plans with hammpered copper tubs-two for outdoor rainfall showers, private decks, WIFI and elegant furnishings. Views vary, and some of the tents are a walk uphill from the main camp area, along stone steps and rope bridges and aren't accessible by vehicle.

**THE ACTIVITIES:** The property is home to an on-site elephant sanctuary, and at all include a half-day "training camp," during which guests will don traditional mahout (elephant trainer) outfits, learn simple commands and even how to bathe the animals—and then take an unforgettable elephant-back ride through the jungle. (Sunsets are also available, and from time to time, some smaller pachyderms from a near-by elephant reserve make appearances at the main dining position for prasai petting and photo ops.) There are also boat rides down the Mekong River, day trips to the museums and temples of nearby Chiang Sen and the intemperate Jungle Gym workout, which includes a hike, run and weights session. Or just hang out by the free-form Riverside pool, grab a cocktail in the panoramic Burma Bar and enjoy a Thai herbal massage in the spa tent.

**HONEYMOON HIGHLIGHTS:** Start the day with a sunrise elephant ride, float down the Mekong on a bamboo raft (accompanied by a bottle of bubbly) in the afternoon, or pick up some kitchen tips with a class in Thai, Laotian and Burmese cooking, followed by a private candlelit dinner (room rates start at $2,000 per night for two and include meals, house wine and beer, mini-bar, WIFI, round-trip airport transfers, one-half-day elephant experience, a spa treatment per person per day, a long-tail boat ride and Golden Triangle day trip. Two-night minimum; fourseasons.com).

**Longitude 131°, Uluwatu, Australia**

Dubbed Australia’s “Red Center,” Uluwatu is home to some of the continent's most iconic tourist sites and some of its most spiritual spots. Set in the rugged outback of the Northern Territory, the Uluwatu-Kata Tuja National Park sprawls out over 311,000 acres, and houses both Uluru—one of the world’s largest natural monoliths, also known as Ayres Rock—and the natural red domes of Kata Juta. AKA the Olgas. Both, natural wonders are part of an area rich in Aboriginal culture and sacred traditions. The town consists of a couple of hotels, a few shops, and—set a drive away from the others, overlooking the monolith Uluru—the magical **Longitude 131°**.

**THE TENTS:** Named for its navigational position, **Longitude 131°** features 15 super-sized luxury tents, with peaked white roofs, a mix of contemporary and traditional furnishings and floor-to-ceiling windows with views of either the sunrise or sunset and the red-rock Uluru monolith. Pools include Plunge, WIFI, stylish bathrooms with deluxe bathtubs, and plush living beds.

There are plans to add three new honeymoon tents and upgrade all tents with outdoor lounges and fireplaces in late 2014.

**THE ACTIVITIES:** Longitude requires a minimum two-night stay, and with good reason: You'll need that amount of time to enjoy all that the resort offers. A three-night-package typically features a sunset tour of Uluru and Kata Juta; excursions to Kata Juta and Wadija Gorge; a sunrise walk around the monolith and a visit to the Cultural Center. There are also visits to local galleries and townships. All tours have touchy like campfires and cocktails during evening walks. In between tours, relax around the pool, hang out in the main Dune House lodge (with a bar and library of books, movies and games) or book a spa session.

**HONEYMOON HIGHLIGHTS:** All itineraries feature a dinner under the stars. Honeymooners can up the ante by booking upgraded experiences like helicopter flights, camel rides through the red sand dunes or Harley-Davidson rides across the desert (room rates start at $1,100 per person and night and include meals and drinks, signature activities and airport transfers; longitude131.com.au).

**Elephant Camp, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe**

Set on a private reserve near the town of Victoria Falls—bordered by the Masuwe River and with views of the Zambezi gorge and the tops of the Falls misting in the distance—this charming spot is not your typical African safari camp. Here, guests enjoy easy access to the spectacular Victoria Falls, shopping and dining in town and area adventure activities, as well as interactive on-site animal experiences.

**THE TENTS:** Twelve rusty tents feature fluffy beds, colonial furnishings, indoor and outdoor showers, private plunge pools and decks overlooking the gorge. There are no phones, but each tent has a walkie if you need to contact the staff. WIFI is available in the main tent, which also houses a living room, the bar, a library and seating for media.

**THE ACTIVITIES:** The Elephant Camp is operated by Wild Horizons, a travel outfitter, that also oversees an adjacent elephant sanctuary, and all guests get the opportunity to "meet" the resident pachyderms. But it's also worth signing up for one of the elephant ride experiences, which includes time to interact with the animals during a gorgeous ride through the bush and over the river. The Camp is also home to a resident cheetah, and guests can take an early-morning or late-afternoon bush walk with him (for an extra fee). It's also the perfect place to relax in town at the market, can be arranged—as can adventures like rafting or bungee jumping. In the evenings, the staff—led by the vivacious manager/your instant best friend, Jonathan Elward—who will chat about your day over cocktails and gourmet dinners.

**HONEYMOON HIGHLIGHTS:** Spurge on a helicopter ride over the Falls to get a true sense of its magnificence. Then end the day with a private in tent massage or a romantic dip in your plunge pool, watching the sun set over the gorge (room rates start at $900 per person, per night and include meals and drinks and an elephant meet-and-greet. Due to the logistics of a safari vacation, it’s best to book such an experience through an expert Africa touring specialist like Extraordinary Journeys, who can help coordinate all logistics; ejafara.com).

**The Resort at Paws Up, Montana**

You’ll be in the heart of Lewis and Clark country at this 37,000-acre Montana working ranch-resort, set along 10 miles of the Blackfoot River (made even more famous for its run in the Brad Pitt-Robert Redford movie, "A River Runs Through It). Legend has it that in 1806, explorer Meriwether Lewis climbed Sentinel Rock (part of what's now the Resort at Paws Up property and the spot where they host rappelling in search of the Marius River. Since then, the grounds have housed everything from gold mining claims and homesteads to sheep and cattle ranches. Accommodations range from 70 guest rooms to RV acreage, and include both upscale cabins and luxury tents.

**THE TENTS:** Paws Up offers five different glamping areas, each with six one- or two-bedroom tents. Each campground features custom digs (outfitted with bathrooms, Western chic =
You can enjoy lunch in the dining tent at Alex Walker's Serian in Tanzania, but having a picnic during a game drive is unforgettable.

Serengti. From July to mid-October, the camp sits in a hidden valley of the Wogakura near the Lamai Wedge, where rolling savannahs and fig tree groves come together north of the Mara River. Between mid-December and April, the camp is at the southern border of the sprawling Serengti National Park.

**THE TENTS:** The eight to ten tents are designed in classic safari style, with canvas walls, soft floor rugs, colonial-inspired furnishings and the largest and plushest beds around. Tents have adjoining “bush bathrooms,” with plumbing for the toilets and heated buckets of water for the showers. Telephones and WiFi service is reserved for emergencies, so guests get the chance to completely disconnect.

**THE ACTIVITIES:** A special amenity of Serian is the fact that all guests enjoy private game drives with a guide/driver and spotter. The benefit is being able to schedule outings according to your whims. In the northern camp, you’ll cross panoramic riverbanks, open savannah swaths and rocky outcrops.

**HONEYMOON HIGHLIGHTS:** Tucked at the edge of a pine meadow, the resort’s Spa Town is a colony of breezy white treatment tents, each with private baths, heated massage tables, posture views and a soundtrack of the nearby brook. Enjoy the Star Light, Star Bright Twilight Couples’ Massage performed in a candlelit tent as the sun sets—or opt for a latenight, pre-bedtime Sweet Dreams Couples Massage in the privacy of your tent (room rates start at $1,175 and include all meals, most activities, airport transfers and on-property transportation; pawup.com).

**Alex Walker’s Serian, Tanzania**

Alex Walker’s Serian tented camp moves locations according to the region’s seasonal Great Migration, so guests are always in the best position to spot wildlife as the herds (and their predators) make their way across the fabulously diverse landscape. You can enjoy a unique African experience with a stay in a private tented camp, complete with game drives, scenic walks, and access to some of the most beautiful landscapes in Tanzania. The camp is designed in classic safari style, with canvas walls, soft floor rugs, colonial-inspired furnishings, and the largest and plushest beds around. Tents have adjoining “bush bathrooms,” with plumbing for the toilets and heated buckets of water for the showers. Telephones and WiFi service is reserved for emergencies, so guests get the chance to completely disconnect.

**HONEYMOON HIGHLIGHTS:** A special amenity of Serian is the fact that all guests enjoy private game drives with a guide/driver and spotter. The benefit is being able to schedule outings according to your whims. In the northern camp, you’ll cross panoramic riverbanks, open savannah swaths and rocky outcrops. The region is rich with wildlife—amazing herds of wildebeest, zebra and gazelles, along with in-pursuit lions, cheetah and leopards, hungry crocodiles and—most exciting of all—elusive black rhinos. There are also opportunities to take walking safaris through the bush with Alex himself. At Serian South, the camp is in the south during the wildebeest calving season, so you can take delight in the spectacle of tens of thousands of these magnificent beasts descending the Mara River to seek greener pastures. The camp is designed to fit naturally into the landscape, with a natural beauty that is truly breathtaking.

**FLORIDA:** Florida is a state known for its warm weather, beautiful beaches, and a vibrant culture. It is home to some of the most famous cities in the United States, including Miami, Orlando, and Tampa. Florida is also home to Walt Disney World, Universal Studios, and SeaWorld, making it a popular destination for families and tourists.

**VISITFLORIDA.COM:** VisitFlorida.com is the official website for the Florida Travel Association, offering information on travel destinations, activities, and events in Florida. The website features a wide range of resources for planning a trip to Florida, including information on accommodations, dining, attractions, and events. Visitors can also find helpful tips and advice for making the most of their trip to Florida. Whether you’re planning a vacation, a business trip, or just a weekend getaway, VisitFlorida.com is the perfect resource for all your travel needs.