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# THE BIG THRILL

## 10 of the Hottest Adventure Honeymoon Destinations **By Eric Hiss**

Now that you've begun life's greatest adventure together, why settle for a honeymoon that's anything less than exhilarating? If you've flipped through brochures of the usual suspects only to be left less than inspired and with a "been there done that" malaise, we've just the remedy. Culled from some of the world's greatest adventures, we've collected 10 coveted, off-the-beaten-path experiences that would make Indiana Jones green with envy. Ready to start your new life with a bang? Lights, camera, action!

### **Destination: "Glamping" in California**

**Best suited for:** Savvy couples for whom "roughing-it" means cedar cabins, private decks, heated swimming pools and a quick jaunt to wine country. **What you won't find anywhere else:** Nestled alongside El Capitan Creek in coastal Santa Barbara County, these "nature lodges" not only offer amenities such as fine linens and Jacuzzis, they provide access and guided hikes to winetasting. **Don't go home without:** Indulging in an "en-cabin" foot massage and salt scrub after a day on the trails. **Rest your tired feet here:** El Capitan Canyon offers you the choice of cedar cabins (with king bed and kitchenette) and more laid-back safari tents (with screened windows and private firepit). **Book it at:** [elcapitancanyon.com](http://elcapitancanyon.com)

### **Destination: Whale-watching in Baja California**

**Best suited for:** Soft adventure lovers who want to experience one of the natural wonders of the world without jetting halfway around the globe. **What you won't find anywhere else:** A rich and diverse ecosystem that John Steinbeck called "Mexico's Galapagos." It's in this region of Baja that more than 20 species of whales and dolphins congregate, including the largest in the world, the blue whale. **Don't go home without:** Hitting the water in a local panga, or skiff, to photograph nature's gentle giants. **Rest your tired feet here:** The Las Animas Wilderness Retreat, reachable only by boat and featuring just eight private beachside casitas with bathrooms, solar showers and covered decks. **Book it at:** [bajaairventures.com/bajawhaletours.htm](http://bajaairventures.com/bajawhaletours.htm)



### **Destination: Adventure cruising in Ecuador**

**Best suited for:** Those who were seduced by the Jungle Cruise ride at Disneyland when they were kids, and vowed to one day do the real thing. **What you won't find anywhere else:** Freshwater pink dolphins, scarlet macaws and a textbook's worth of other exotic flora and fauna in their element in a rarely seen part of the Amazon. **Don't go home without:** Watching the sun rise over the Amazon before taking a skiff ride to the remote village of Puerto Miguel to meet the locals. **Rest your tired feet here:** Forget mega-ships and sit-down dinners for 3,000; the Aqua is an intimate, 130-foot vessel with just 12 suites. The tri-deck river cruiser also features en-suite bathrooms, expansive stateroom windows to take in the views and a top-level bar for those sundowner cocktails. **Book it at:** [thetravellab.com](http://thetravellab.com)



Costa Rica

COURTESY OF PURA VIDA ADVENTURES

**Destination: Diving and snorkeling in Micronesia**

**Best suited for:** Newlyweds who like their adventures wet and wild and want to explore some of the world's most pristine reefs. **What you won't find anywhere else:** Jellyfish Lake, a prehistoric sea where you can take part in a snorkel adventure allowing you to drift silently amid millions of stingless jellyfish as they pulse gently around you. **Don't go home without:** Diving Blue Corner, a world-class dive that left Jacques Cousteau breathless, and sea kayaking through the hundreds of uninhabited coral islands dotting Micronesia's calm seas. **Rest your tired feet here:** Idyllic Palau Pacific Resort sits on 64 acres of lush grounds fronting a sugary sand beach. **Book it at:** [boundlessjourneys.com](http://boundlessjourneys.com)

**Destination: Surfing in Costa Rica**

**Best suited for:** Water babies who are either diehard surfers or gung-ho beginners anxious to learn a new sport together. **What you won't find anywhere else:** A super laid-back atmosphere (what Costa Ricans call "pura vida," or pure life) matched with evocative tropical surroundings, endless, empty beaches, and perfect breaks for both beginners and experts. **Don't go home without:** Taking a break from the waves to do a rainforest hike in one of the region's excellent nature preserves, such as Cabo Blanco National Park. **Rest your tired feet here:** Just steps from a white-sand beach, jungle-chic Tropico Latino

hotel features teak and mosaic floors and accents, indoor/outdoor decks, an open-air yoga studio and full-service spa. **Book it:** [puravi-daadventures.com](http://puravi-daadventures.com) (They specialize in surf adventures for women, but also offer coed packages well suited for honeymooners.)

**Destination: Game watching in Namibia's Skeleton Coast**

**Best suited for:** Adventurous souls who want to find a mystical place that feels like the edge of the world. **What you won't find anywhere else:** Extremely rare African game animals such as the desert elephant, oryx and cheetah. **Don't go home without:** Hiking the signature massive dunes of this hauntingly beautiful tableau. You'll even have the chance to meet members of the nomadic Himba tribe, who still lead a traditional way of life. **Rest your tired feet here:** Skeleton Coast Camp, featuring six tented luxury rooms with en-suite bathrooms. **Book it at:** [mtsobek.com](http://mtsobek.com)

**Destination: Trekking and exploring in Mongolia**

**Best suited for:** Overachievers determined to have the last say when "most exotic honeymoon" topic comes up at the next cocktail party. **What you won't find anywhere else:** The haunting Gobi Desert with its Flaming Cliffs, where the armies of Ghengis Khan once marched and dinosaur eggs were first discovered. **Don't go home without:** Participating in a yak trek to the seemingly endless Jalman meadows