



CJ AND CAMERON

WHERE Samoa. We flew two days after our wedding, honeymooning for five nights.

WHY Samoa is a destination where you can relax and unwind, but also have access to plenty of fun activities like the local flea markets, golf, quad biking and scenic nature walks on land, while on the ocean there's deep sea fishing, water sports, diving and snorkelling right at your fingertips.

HOW We booked our travel ourselves, online. It was easy because all we needed to do was book our flights and accommodation, with airport pick-up. Everything else we arranged once we were there.

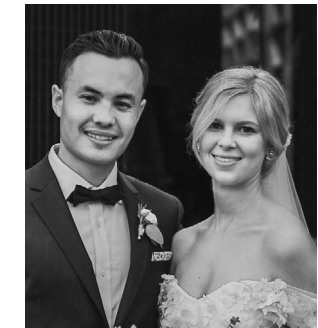
WHERE TO STAY We stayed at the luxurious Sinalei Reef Resort and Spa and were given a complimentary room upgrade to their Presidential Suite – we were stoked! We may have indulged in a massage or two at their spa as well.

THE FOOD Samoa has plenty of great restaurants. Our favourites were Giordanos Pizza, Paddles Restaurant for the fresh fish, and KokoBanana Bar & Grill for their surf and turf. If you want to try something traditional, try Umu (traditional underground cooking similar to a hangi), roasted pig and taro. Cam loved the locally brewed beer, Vailima, while I found cocktails all around the island, my favourite was a fresh coconut mojito served inside a coconut shell, from our resort.

BEST BITS If you like water there are a bunch of fab swimming spots. We visited To-Sua Ocean Trench – a picturesque, crystal clear natural swimming hole complete with a diving board, the Papase'ea Sliding Rocks – natural rock waterslides (lots of fun, but I scratched my new wedding band on the rocks here, so take off any jewellery before sliding), and Piula Cave Pool – a fresh water pool, right by the sea. Other highlights included a hike to the Robert Louis Stevenson Burial Site and the Fia Fia Evening at our resort – a cultural performance with singing and dancing, finished with a buffet dinner with roasted suckling pig.

TOP TIPS Public transport (the bus) can be unreliable, so we would recommend renting a car. And don't forget to pack the mozzie repellent!

THE BILL ₤



Above CJ and Cam on their wedding day. They honeymooned in Samoa for five nights, enjoying turquoise-tone waters and crystal clear swimming holes.



FLY ME TO THE MOON

Do you imagine yourself honeymooning close to home, or far afield? *Whether you're after the bustling streets of Vietnam or the warm shores of Samoa.* We talk to four couples who have been there, done that.



KEY:
₤ = UNDER \$5000
₤ ₤ = \$5000 TO \$10,000
₤ ₤ ₤ = \$10,000 TO \$20,000
₤ ₤ ₤ ₤ = \$20,000 +

PHOTOGRAPHY GETTY IMAGES HALCYON HOUSE
(NEXT PAGE) KARAR ROSEN LUND CJ & CAM
KIRSTY PETA STONE JEANIE & DESMOND JESSICA
PHOTOGRAPHY HOLLY & LEIGH HOLLY WALLACE
CHRISTINE & CRAIG GREY AREA PRODUCTIONS.

“Visiting the *ancient sites* from thousands of years ago in *Rome* was a *huge highlight* and such an eye-opener.”

JEANIE AND DESMOND

WHERE Our one-month honeymoon began in Hong Kong to see Jeanie's extended family and have a mini celebration before beginning our big city-hopping Europe adventure, where we visited London, Amsterdam, Prague, Paris, Barcelona, Venice, Florence and Rome.

WHY Neither of us had ever been to Europe before, so this was the perfect opportunity to travel to that side of the world.

HOW We planned and booked everything ourselves. I did a lot of Google research and talked to friends for their top tips. Planning your own itinerary allows you to travel at your own pace and to see the things you really want to see.

THE FOOD Our favourite spot was this little Michelin-star restaurant in Venice called La Zucca. We'd Google searched it and thought if we got there earlier in the evening we might get in without a reservation. However, when we got there we were told because of its popularity we had to book at least a month in advance! We were just about to leave when a lovely German group approached us and told us to join them, as two of their friends couldn't make it. We felt so lucky and grateful! And of course, the food was absolutely delicious.

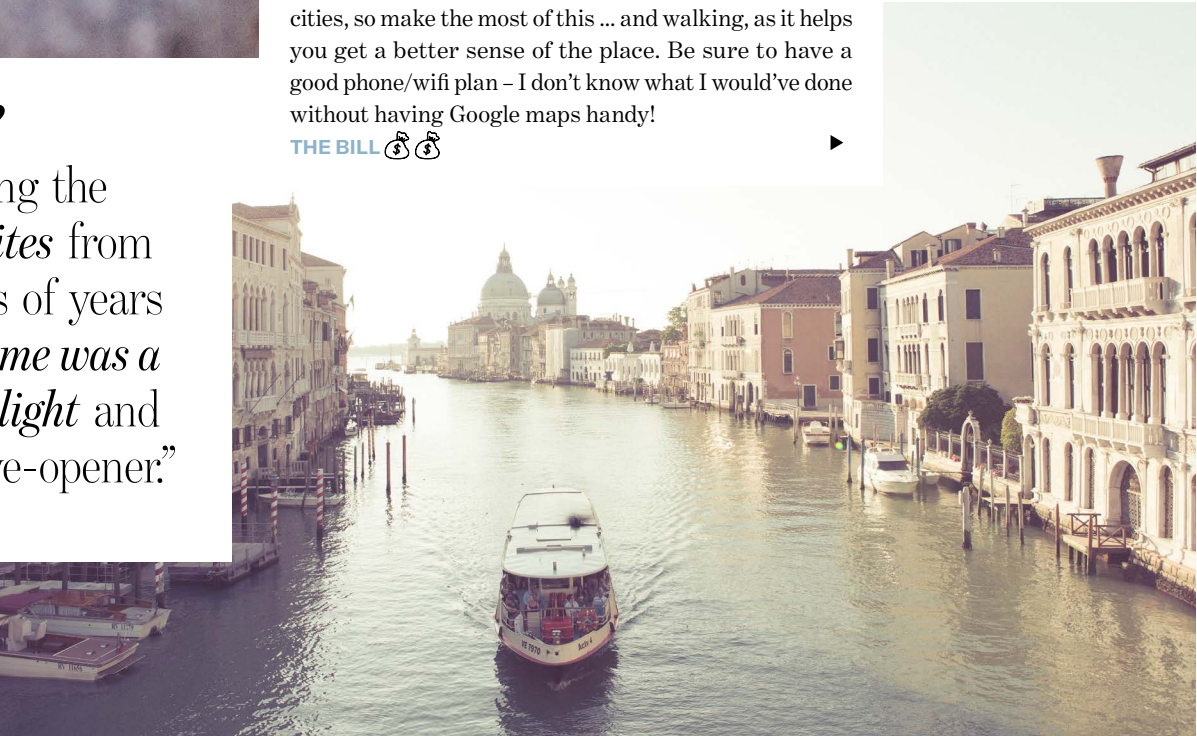
BEST BITS There were exciting moments at every destination but my absolute highlight was getting lost in Venice and just aimlessly strolling around, admiring and taking in all of our breathtaking surroundings. The architecture and streets were beautiful and the people were incredibly friendly. Visiting the ancient sites built thousands of years ago in Rome was amazing and such an eye-opener.

TOP TIPS If you're planning your own itinerary I'd recommend booking a few local tours at particular destinations, because you can get so much out of it. Public transport is very easy to use in a lot of European cities, so make the most of this ... and walking, as it helps you get a better sense of the place. Be sure to have a good phone/wifi plan – I don't know what I would've done without having Google maps handy!

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Left Views of the iconic Eiffel Tower in Paris. Above Jeanie and Desmond blissed out on their wedding day. Below The magnificent Colosseum in Rome. Bottom The Canals of Venice, Italy.



HONEYMOONS



HOLLY AND LEIGH

WHERE Leigh and I embarked on a honeymoon road trip along the east coast of Australia for three weeks, seven months after our wedding.

The journey began from our home in Melbourne, travelling around the coast to Jervis Bay, known for having some of the whitest sand beaches in the world. From there we travelled to Killcare, Byron Bay, Fraser Island (where we spent a few nights camping) and finally up to Brisbane where we flew up and stayed at both Hayman and Hamilton Island in the Whitsundays.

WHY A few years back Leigh and I went on a spontaneous road trip one summer to Robe in South Australia which we loved so much we wanted to emulate it again, but this time, on a grander scale.

HOW I booked everything myself. This way we were able to adjust our itinerary on-the-go if needed and had the leisure of travelling along at our own pace.

WHERE TO STAY Our absolute favourite place we stayed at was Halcyon House, a boutique hotel at Cabarita Beach. Right by the ocean, their rooms were luxurious and the food at their restaurant Paper Daisy was divine. We enjoyed our stay in Jervis Bay at a safari-style glamping site called Paperbark Camp. Set under soaring gum trees and twinkling stars, our tent even came fully decked out with its own ensuite.

THE FOOD We are so lucky in Australia, especially on the coast, to have easy access to an amazing array of seafood. The food was especially delicious at the three restaurants we visited in Byron Bay: Rae's on Wategos, Paper Daisy at Halcyon House and The Three Blue Ducks.

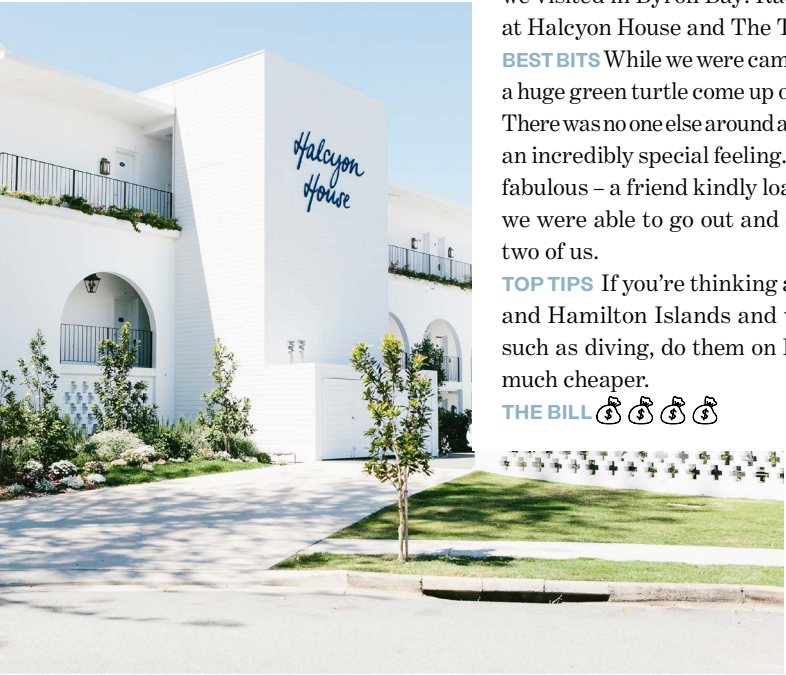
BEST BITS While we were camping on Fraser Island, we saw a huge green turtle come up onto the beach to lay her eggs. There was no one else around and being so close to nature was an incredibly special feeling. The Whitsundays were also fabulous – a friend kindly loaned us a boat for the day, so we were able to go out and explore the islands, just the two of us.

TOP TIPS If you're thinking about going to both Hayman and Hamilton Islands and want to do lots of activities such as diving, do them on Hamilton Island as they are much cheaper.

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Above Holly and Leigh on their wedding day. The couple roadtripped the east coast of Australia for three weeks. Below The luxurious boutique Cabarita Beach hotel, Halcyon House.



♥
“Right by the ocean, their rooms were luxurious and the food at their restaurant, Paper Daisy, was divine.”



Top right The 18th-century bridge, iconic to Hoi An. Above Christine and Craig on their special day, later jetting to Vietnam for their honeymoon. Right The colourful street markets in Hoi An. Below Thu Bon River in Hoi An.

CHRISTINE AND CRAIG

WHERE Vietnam. Two nights in Ho Chi Minh City, five nights in Da Nang and five nights in Hoi An. We flew out of New Zealand a couple of days after our wedding.

WHY Vietnam ticked all the boxes for us – we knew we could relax when we wanted to, but also have some adventure. What really made the decision for us though was that the InterContinental Hotel in Da Nang had won the best resort in the world for the last two years and was exactly what we were after for a bit of luxe.

HOW We initially went to book our flights through Flight Centre, but it actually worked out cheaper for us to book through Webjet. We'd highly recommend shopping around if you have the time to save on flight costs.

WHERE TO STAY The InterContinental Hotel Da Nang. If you can splash out on a couple night's stay at this resort you will not regret it; it has its own private beach, award-winning spa and the team are caring and knowledgeable. You feel like you're in your own world.

THE FOOD We loved the food! A few favourites would be the fresh rice paper rolls, the Vietnamese pancakes (banh xeo) and the Hoi An chicken rice from a place called Morning Glory. Food is incredibly affordable in Vietnam, we only paid about \$100 for three meals a day, including a beer or two.

BEST BITS Besides looking for cool eateries in the cities we visited, another highlight was experiencing the buzz of Ben Thanh Market in Ho Chi Minh City. This place is crazy busy and sells everything from scarves to running shoes, fish to spices. With such a mix of smells and everyone trying to get your attention, I was so out of my normal environment, but it was such a cool experience. I'll also never forget having to cross the busy street for the first time, that's an experience in itself.

TOP TIPS We got given a piece of advice from some of our friends before we left and that was to 'get a visa'. When they visited they didn't know you had to apply for one. Pack a rain jacket or poncho, comfortable shoes and mosquito spray.

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