

DWHSAs Master Class: Engagement Trips and Destination Elopements

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Why promote engagements and elopements?

- They involve just the couple in most cases – so, **they're easier to plan for (and sell to) clients** who want to focus on the trip plans they want or who want to control their costs.
- Because it's just the couple, **these trips don't involve other decision makers.**
- **You can offer a wide range of destinations and trip types** (cruises, resort stays, etc. since the details are up to the couple.
- **They'll position you as a "one-stop shop" for romance travel**, able to help your clients with any type of romantic getaway. And, **they help you build that lifelong relationship** with your clients!

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What is an engagement trip?



An "engagement trip" is a getaway planned by one member of the couple who's planning to ask the other person to marry him or her on the actual trip

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Why are engagement trips a great idea for couples?

- Proposing on a trip can be truly surprising – and, **it removes a lot of the “everyday life” distractions of proposing at home** (from nosy family members to job pressures).
- **Couples can take 24 hours and relax after the proposal** to enjoy the moment themselves before sharing the news.
- **They set a pattern for future romantic travel** because couples will begin their lives together based on their proposal trips.

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What happens on an engagement trip?

- These trips may be planned as basic romantic getaways in terms of air travel, lodging, daily activities, etc. However, **it makes sense to plan to do the proposal early in the trip** (even on the first or second day) so that the engagement may be enjoyed for the rest of the trip.
- You can help connect the member of the couple who’s planning the proposal with **contacts at the resort or on the ship who’ll help arrange the proposal logistics** (anything from a proposal written in the sand on the beach to chilled Champagne on standby). One critical element is a photographer or videographer who may be able to capture shots of the proposal itself as well as the celebration afterwards.

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More engagement trip tips

- **The member of the couple doing the proposing must be ready to care for the ring while traveling.** Store it in carry-on luggage (the personal item, not a carry-on bag that might suddenly be gate checked). Store it in something that won’t draw the partner’s attention (in a shaving kit, for example). And, if customs tries a search, be ready to ask for a private inspection out of sight of the partner.
- **Set up the photographer/videographer well before the trip** and confirm the arrangements before the proposal day.
- If it’s possible, **invite the closest relatives and friends for the proposal day.**
- **Be ready with a backup plan** if the initial proposal idea falls through.

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Which destinations work best?

- Domestic North American options
- Any ships or resorts within a few hours' flying time, especially nonstop routes
- Nearby islands and resort destinations (e.g., Mexico, the Caribbean)

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Sandals

SUITE SURPRISE

Includes all of your own suite

- In-suite champagne toast
- Room setup and service for your ceremony
- Breakfast and evening snack for your party in the lobby
- Professional photographer
- One (1) DJ/Entertainment

PACKAGE PRICE \$700



TREASURE UNDER THE SEA

Includes everything you need

- In-suite champagne toast
- In-suite setup and service for your ceremony
- One (1) DJ/Entertainment
- Professional photographer
- One (1) DJ/Entertainment

PACKAGE PRICE \$900



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Palace

ETERNAL PACKAGE

Price: \$3,895 USD

- Heart silhouette (2.5 meters) of roses with petal filling in the center
- Bouquet of 12 roses
- Two (2) romantic cupcakes
- An acoustic soloist (Violin, guitar, harp, or saxophone)
- Two (2) Sparklers
- White letters spelling "MARRY ME" and a path of lanterns
- Teepees with fairy lights and chandelier
- 1 hour photo & video session (30 digital photos & a 5-minute highlight video with drone footage)

Available at Moon Palace Cancun, Moon Palace The Grand-Cancun, Beach Palace, Sun Palace, Le Blanc Spa Resort Cancun, Playacar Palace and Cozumel Palace.

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Marketing engagement trips

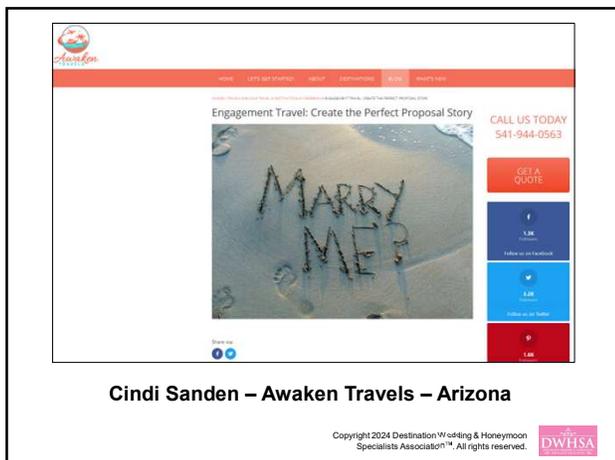
- Add bullet-point lists, blog posts, and other content (including images from suppliers and tourism offices) suggesting and promoting elopements and proposal trips on your web site, your blog, your client and prospect emails, your social media pages, and everywhere else you can think of – **Do this once a quarter!**
- Referrals, testimonials, and repeat business (including testimonials from your first proposal trip and elopement clients!)

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What is an elopement?

Historically, “elope” meant “to run away secretly with the intention of getting married usually without parental consent.”

Now, it means “to plan a small wedding without telling everyone” or “to plan a small wedding with just the couple (and maybe a few others).”

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Why are elopements a great idea for couples?

- They can **avoid the hassles and financial pressures** of planning and executing a traditional hometown wedding or a full-blown DW.
- They'd rather **save the money they'd spend on a traditional wedding to use for other things** (e.g., a house down payment).
- They're **facing family headaches** such as in-laws who don't get along or parents who don't approve of the union.
- They **want to get married quickly due to impending changes in their lives** (e.g., a pregnancy, a military deployment).

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What happens on an elopement?

- **The couple may keep the trip very simple**, with a civil ceremony before they leave home (e.g., saying vows at the local courthouse) and no symbolic ceremony on the trip.
- **They can opt for a symbolic ceremony during the trip** in addition to the civil vows they exchanged before they left.
- **They may schedule a lawfully binding ceremony during the trip** (as long as they satisfy the legal marriage requirements in that destination).
- Ceremonies during the trip may involve **just the couple or the selected family members and friends** they've invited to attend.

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What happens on an elopement?

- If they're planning a legal or symbolic ceremony during the trip, **they should plan ahead for the ceremony basics**: wedding attire (if they wish), rings, photographs, flowers, etc.
- **Many eloping couples will plan a reception when they return home**. This can be simply a reception for relatives and friends to greet the newlywed couple – or, the couple may conduct a symbolic ceremony as part of the reception.

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What's the etiquette for an elopement?

- **It's not traditional for couples who elope to register** for or request wedding gifts.
- However, if they plan a reception after they return home, **it's OK for them to register for gifts at that point**.
- **Sending a wedding announcement after the elopement** (with photos taken during the ceremony and the trip) is very appropriate.
- **Elopements can be the perfect fit for "encore weddings"** (one or both spouses has been married before).

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Which suppliers and packages work best?

- **Traditional hotels, adults-only all-inclusive properties, and other private lodging options** such as small villas
- **Cruises** (the ceremony may be conducted on the ship or in port)
- Few suppliers offer official "elopement" or "engagement trip" packages, but **you can easily customize "off the shelf" DW and honeymoon packages** in many cases. This means you can work with your current preferred suppliers to tailor their existing packages for couples to fit their wishes!
- Beyond the packages, **the key add-on for elopements is the wedding ceremony itself**, which you can arrange with local officiants recommended by suppliers.

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Beaches

TWO LOVEBIRDS WEDDING PACKAGE

If you find yourself daydreaming about uninterrupted time for two, our Two Lovebirds Package is your match made in heaven. Featuring a variety of intimate experiences, there's no better way (or place) to celebrate your love story.



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Jekyll Island Club Resort



Perfect for bride & groom only, or add up to 18 guests.

PACKAGE INCLUDES

SETTINGS

Outdoor location for ceremony at the Jekyll Island Club or the Jekyll Ocean Club. Indoor location provided for inclement weather.

CEREMONY

Wedding Ceremony Director • White wedding chairs • Local minister or judge to perform ceremony

FLOWERS

One bouquet • One boutonniere

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Marketing elopements

- Add bullet-point lists, blog posts, and other content (including images from suppliers and tourism offices) suggesting and promoting elopements and proposal trips on your web site, your blog, your client and prospect emails, your social media pages, and everywhere else you can think of – **Do this once a quarter!**
- Referrals, testimonials, and repeat business (including testimonials from your first proposal trip and elopement clients!)

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Want to Elope?

Cheryl can help you elope anywhere in the world. As a world traveler, Cheryl has extensive first knowledge of all-inclusive resorts, suppliers, hotels and airlines and will bring your dream location to life much better than a faceless website. She will truly make your elopement easy and stress-free and introduce creative ideas that will add so much to your experience. Ready to plan your romantic getaway? Call (614) 479-2388 or email cheryl@fromthisdayforwardtravel.com.

[▶ PLAN YOUR STRESS-FREE ELOPEMENT](#)



Cheryl Stewart – From This Day Forward Travel - Ohio

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Questions?

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DWHSA's Facebook group

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