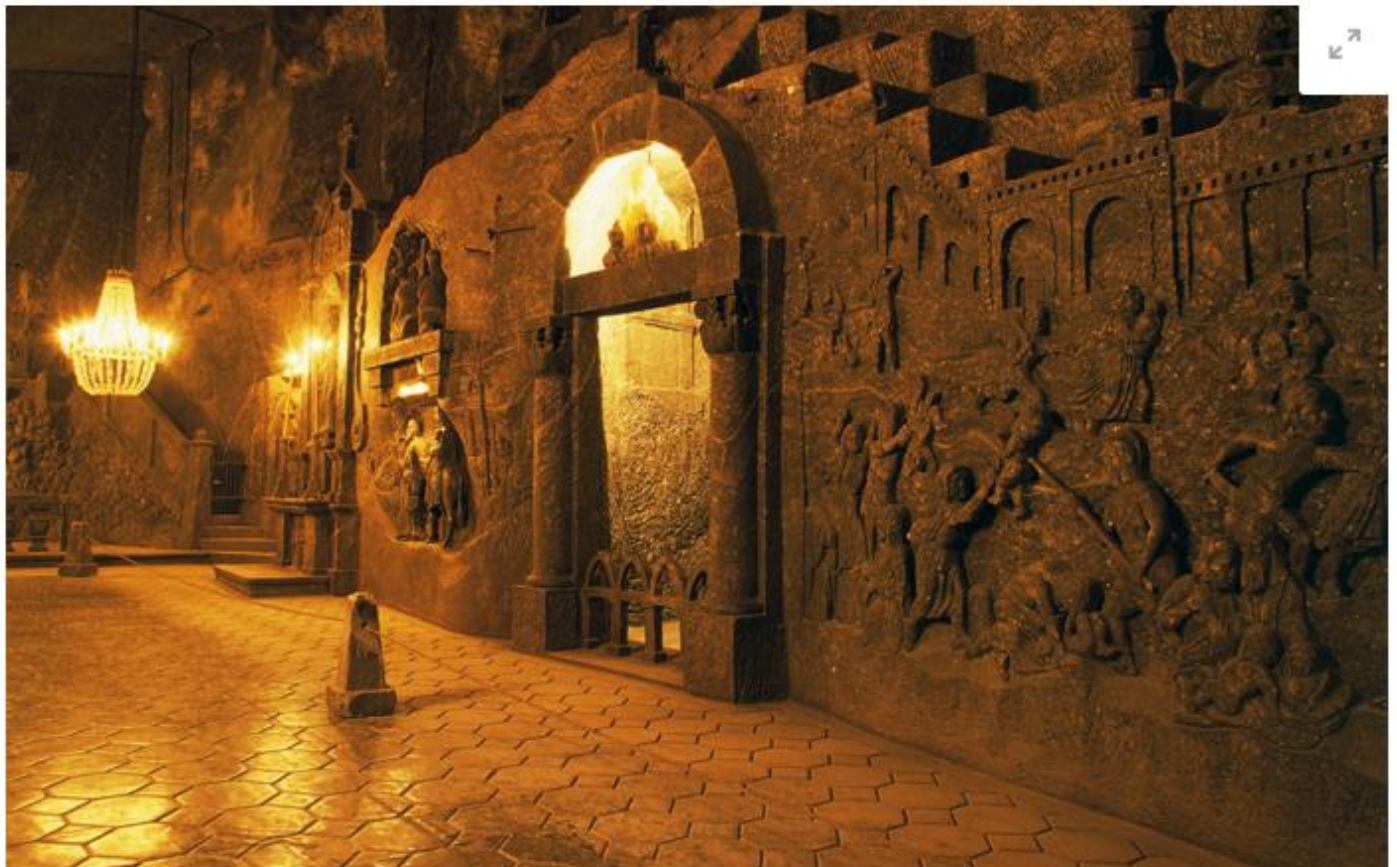




TRIP IDEAS | ROMANTIC GETAWAYS

# Nine Far-Flung, Completely Outrageous Destination Wedding Ideas

by Melissa Locker · November 10, 2015

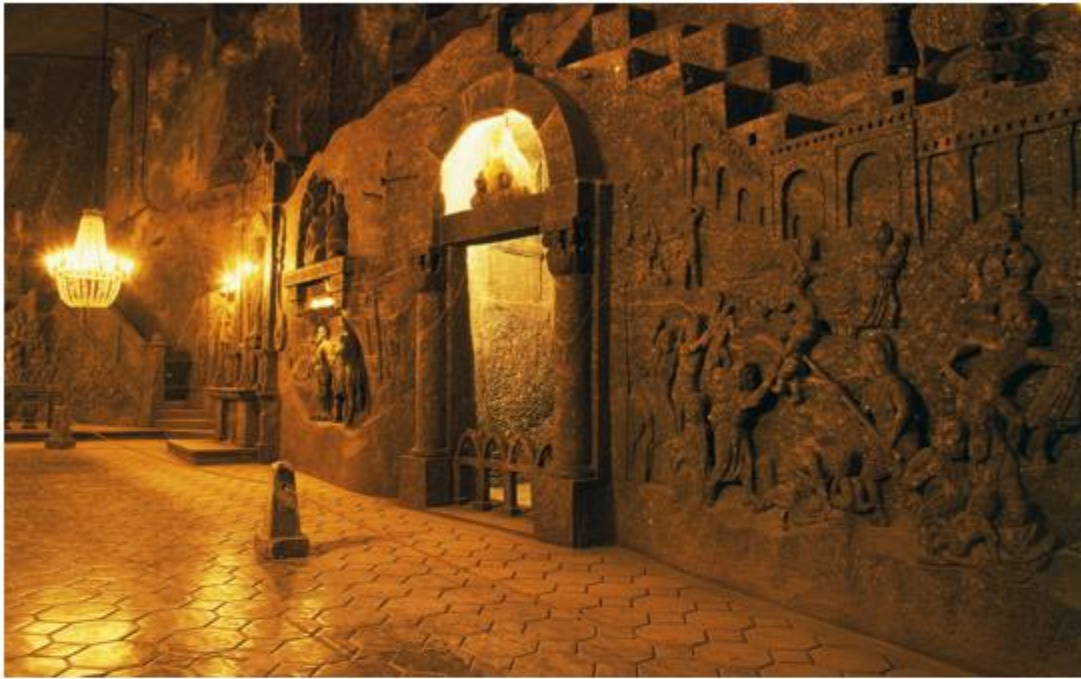


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Bored with beach weddings? Consider getting hitched in an underwater chapel.

Destination weddings have become so common that couples now have to think way outside the proverbial beach-wedding box to ensure that their big day is downright unforgettable.

Here are nine locations—from the beautiful to the slightly bewildering—for wedding ceremonies that will truly make an impression. Next step: planning the honeymoon.



*Getty Images*

## **Wieliczka Salt Mine in Wieliczka, Poland**

Add a little spice to your wedding by saying “I do” in a salt mine. From ceremony to reception, the entire celebration can be held in the underground chambers of the Wieliczka Salt Mine. Located on the outskirts of Krakow, the mine can fit wedding parties of almost any scale, hosting ceremonies in the monumental Chapel of St. Kinga or in the cozier Chapel of St. John. Guests can stay either at the Grand Sal Hotel or in the rooms 400 feet underground, visit the spa for restorative salt treatments, or just dance the night away in one of the UNESCO’s World Heritage sites in the area.



*Getty Images*

## Bran Castle in Romania

Many brides dream of getting married in a fairytale setting and Romania's Bran Castle certainly fits the bill with its illustrious heritage, picturesque ramparts, and beautiful surroundings. While Bran Castle, which was built in the 1300s, was a favorite dwelling of Queen Marie of Romania, horror fans may recognize it as the home of another royal entirely—Count Dracula. It's believed that *Dracula* author Bram Stoker based the Count's Transylvania home on Bran Castle, although the castle's website hopes visitors can "make the distinction between the historic reality of Bran and the character of the Count in Bram Stoker's novel." Still, when couples tie the knot in the majestic setting, the words "til death do us part" may have a more ominous ring to them.

Want something creepier? Have a midnight ceremony at the medieval ruins of Tutbury Castle in Burton-on-Trent. It's thought to be one of the most haunted castles in the U.K.



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## Hobbiton in Matamata, New Zealand

Slip a ring on the finger of your precious in Hobbiton, the tiny farm enclave that stood in for the Shire in Peter Jackson's *Lord of the Rings* films. Couples can wed in the green gardens of Hobbiton, with well-maintained Hobbit holes providing plenty of Middle Earth atmosphere. Serve canapés and champagne in the garden or host a reception in a replica of the Green Dragon Inn, where a menu of Hobbit-friendly food is served, including items like rosemary-encrusted New Zealand lamb, clove glazed ham, and desserts that would make an Orc smile. While generally the couples who choose to wed at Hobbiton are devoted *Lord of the Rings* fans, the setting is truly stunning and no one will check a bride-to-be's fan cred at the gate if they choose to ignore the Hobbits and wed in the lush New Zealand landscape.



*Getty Images*

## **The Cyclone at Coney Island, New York City**

Beach weddings are always a popular choice, but brides-to-be can add an element of adventure to their big day by getting hitched at the Cyclone at New York's Coney Island. Weddings on the wooden roller coaster are a DIY affair, usually taking place on the boarding platform before setting off for the bumpy ride, (not to be taken as a metaphor for marriage). At just \$9 per guest, it's a great option for budget-minded brides who prefer to save their money for a honeymoon. Plus, at 88 years old, the Cyclone is a testament to longevity—a good lesson for a new marriage. After the "I dos," pick up a souvenir snapshot and hit the boardwalk, where guests can chow down on Nathan's hot dogs and funnel cake before hitting more amusement park rides or strolling along the water.



## Tree House, Loch Goil, Scotland

Whether or not you identify as a tree-hugger, getting married in a tree house is a romantic proposition. On the grounds of the Lodge overlooking Scotland's beautiful Loch Goil sits a tree house large enough for an intimate gathering of 24 guests. Located an hour's drive from Glasgow, the house dates back to 1864.

To help make sure the guests are swinging from the branches, the Lodge has its own wedding planner on site.

For an option in the U.S., head to Treehouse Point, in Fall City, Washington, just 30 minutes east of Seattle. A collection of tree houses fill the evergreen forest with overnight accommodations for up to 16 people, but the outdoor location itself can hold 80 guests.



Zero Gravity Corporation

## 32,000 Feet in the Air

Space is truly the final frontier for weddings. To make sure your big day is out of this world, head to the inner reaches of outer space for a so-called weightless wedding. The wedding party and their guests—up to 36 people—will take off in a specially modified Boeing 727 and head to about 32,000 feet, which is when the pilot will start pulling off some acrobatic maneuvers called parabolas. (This is a good point to mention that everyone on board the so-called 'vomit comet' should have very strong stomachs.) As the plane loops over and over again, passengers hover in the air achieving perfect weightlessness for a few seconds at a time. It is just enough time to exchange vows and snap some mind-blowing wedding photos. The entire excursion lasts about five hours, giving plenty of time for a down-to-earth reception and, perhaps, a viewing of *Gravity*.



wedotahiti.com

## The Underwater Chapel, Bora Bora, French Polynesia

If your idea of romance involves a diving helmet, then head to the South Pacific for a wedding in an underwater chapel. Couples can wear white wetsuits as they swim through the blue lagoon to be greeted by a diving Polynesian priest who will perform the ceremony. While 13 feet underwater, couples can say their vows, exchange rings, sign the marriage certificate, and capture it all thanks to an underwater videographer. You can even bring up to four friends along to witness the magic as it bubbles slowly to the surface.

For an under-the-sea option that doesn't require a passport, head to the Long Island Aquarium where couples can wed surrounded by sharks (real ones, not your future in-laws).



## Subterranean Cave, Cornwall, England

Deep underneath the Cornwall countryside lurks a subterranean lake that can be lit by candles for a memorable, romantic marriage ceremony in a cave. No spelunking is necessary to enjoy the wonders of this underground site, though. Instead, couples can arrive at their nuptials aboard a rowboat. Thanks to the British Navy, there's no need to head aboveground for the reception, simply go to the nearby Rum Store cave, which is where the Navy stored their all-important rum cache during World War II.



Hotel de Glace

## Hôtel de Glace, Quebec, Canada

For brides with *Frozen* fantasies, there's no better place to wed than Quebec's Hôtel de Glace. The only thing warming the ice chapel will be your love as you toast to your new partnership with cider. Spend the night in front of the fireplace in one of the hotel's ice rooms and keep each other warm through the night.

For something farther flung, head to Sweden's church at the Ice Hotel. (Just remember to apply for a marriage certificate at the local tax office first.)

If that doesn't sound cold enough, adventurous couples can wed on a glacier in Alaska. Hop a helicopter or a float plane to a glacier outside Juneau, strap on your crampons, and get hitched in a frozen landscape that even Olaf the snowman couldn't dream up. Whichever winter wonderland you choose, remember, with the right wedding dress, no one will be able to tell if you're wearing thermal underwear.