

# THE ECONOMIC TIMES

## Beach Weddings Best

►► From Page 1

Neeta Raheja, a Delhi-based wedding planner who recently did a recce in Bintan islands near Singapore, says, "The feeling of having an island completely to you is very romantic. Beach weddings are the best in terms of ambience too."

At least two Delhi-based business families are currently planning to book an island in Fiji for their weddings, one coming up towards the end of November and the other in February.

Clearly, the pomp and show associated with glamorous Indian weddings is playing a part in driving up the demand.

"An island wedding should ideally at least be a week-long affair," says Bidani of Space Hospitality.

With 18 villas, the Yasawa island resort can house roughly 80-100 people, with accommodation costs starting at ₹45,000 a night.

A Fijian style wedding can be organised in the morning when the couple exchanges vows, garlands and fruit hampers. There is a range of water sports that guests can take to. In the evening, they can have a barge party on a huge suspended floating platform.

Many people are also opting for islands in the Maldives, Greece and Lakshadweep where a 3-4 day celebration is planned, with stay costs starting at ₹50,000-75,000 per day.

"Island weddings are attracting the elite due to the fantasy world that they offer. Of course, these islands will have the choicest of amenities and one would usually get there on a seaplane or a boat," says Candice Pereira, creative head and co-founder of Marry Me Wedding Planners, a Mumbai-based company.

The company also gets requests for beach weddings in Lakshadweep where islands such as Bangaram, Kalpeni and Agatti are popular among clients.

Interestingly, many newly wed couples want to be photographed in wedding dress underwater!

The way to this heavenly marriage, however, is not that easy. Often, there are problems with connectivity, infrastructure and logistics, which put off some potential clients, say wedding planners.

Assomull of Marigold Group had contemplated Maldives for her son's wedding earlier this year, but decided against it because the venue would not have been able to accommodate all the guests.