

# Destination wedding



Formal banquets in a hotel ballroom might be losing their appeal for would-be brides and grooms who have friends and families scattered around the world, *Ruth Williams* reports

All photographs courtesy Evason Phuket Resort & Six Senses Spa

**D**estination weddings are *the* big trend in the wedding business according to wedding planner Sonya Yeung.

An experienced organizer of luxury corporate events and charity fundraiser in Hong Kong, Yeung is the Director of Bliss Creations an events management company.

Two years ago she also set up Matrimonial Bliss, a luxury wedding planning company to tap into this growing demand for a wedding that is “unique and romantic”.

Yeung explained that there are many attractive aspects for a destination wedding. “What is cost-effective about a destination wedding is that couples can provide a holiday for their guests within their special occasion,” said Yeung. “It makes it a more personal experience.”

The event organizer says that many people do not want a “generic ballroom” wedding banquet that hotels have traditionally offered. She describes some of the elements that distinguish a destination wedding:

“It’s al fresco; on a white sandy beach; a lush tropical garden; somewhere open-air,” she said. Yeung added that there is also a trend for wedding venues to have a strong architectural edge, or more contemporary design. “The personalities of the couple involved will dictate the type of venue they choose.”

Canadian-born Yeung told *ACHT* that there are great opportunities for hotels in Asia to host destination weddings, and play host to the whole wedding party for a number of nights rather than the few hours of a wedding banquet.

And for couples with friends and family spread around the world travelling long-haul, Matrimonial Bliss says many destinations within the Asian region have the edge as they can often provide more affordable accommodation with a level of luxury not found elsewhere.

### Phuket for a honeymoon

Joe Cauchi, Managing Director of Delivering Asia agrees that more people are looking to

combine a wedding with a get together of family and friends

The travel and hospitality industry veteran told *ACHT* “There’s something very romantic about getting on a plane and flying off to a wedding.”

Asked to recommend a venue for a ‘destination wedding’ Cauchi nominates the Evason Phuket Resort and Six Senses Spa. He points out that it has the unique attraction of owning Bon Island located off the south eastern part of the main Phuket Island and accessible only by a 15-minute boat ride.

Bon Island’s pristine white sands and crystal clear water with stunning views over the Andaman Sea and surrounding islands seem to fit Bliss Creations’ Yeung’s description of a perfect outdoor beach wedding.

Cauchi says that Bon Island, with its 10 *salas* (pavilions) for day use, can be the location for the wedding party, then at sunset all the guests can return to the main resort on the hotel’s long tail boat, while the happy couple are left alone in the honeymoon suite.

As well as the opportunity to enjoy all the pampering that a Six Senses Spa can offer to the couple and guests before and after “the big day” the Evason Phuket Resort has a range of suites and accommodation (including its Just Kids’ Club) to suit different generations and guests. The pragmatic Cauchi also points out that choosing a destination like Phuket means that there is also alternative, inexpensive accommodation available to suit most guests’ budgets within a reasonable distance of the wedding venue. **ACHT**



## AGON HOTELS AND RESORTS LTD.

Consulting Management Recruitment Training GSA