We are thrilled to introduce our Holidays for Couples Romance List - 2012, as judged by the editors of Holidays for Couples magazine. We’ve invested huge hours, weighed up the pros and cons of a dizzying number of new hotels and resorts, kept our ears close to the travel grapevine, checked into some incredible hotels and resorts and — for those we could not personally visit — relied on our little black book of trusted travel professionals for ‘the word’ on whether a hotel or resort is actually living up to the PR hype.

All with an eye for ROMANCE, of course! There were many hotels and resorts that were marvellous in their own right, but if they didn’t have that special something that turns a luxury escape into a romantic luxury escape, then we had to let them go.

Narrowing it down to merely 25 was demanding but we hope that the following pages inspire you to write your own romantic-travel-list for 2012 and that you get a chance to experience a few of these amazing destinations that go one step further in providing the perfect sanctuary for couples of all ages.
KIRIDARA - LUANG PRABANG, LAOS

Luang Prabang has a set place as a UNESCO world heritage site. Here, Buddhist temples and monasteries, French colonial buildings, traditional local tea houses, cobbled lanes, and those much-photographed down processions of monks create a unique filter to what is a burgeoning cityscape.

Suitably, even the accommodation is on the down low too - boutique hotels are all the go and there's no big chain hotels to speak of. Kiridara opened in the middle of 2011 and is a delightful 24-room retreat situated in the hills and surrounded by natural tea forests with panoramic views of the sacred Mount Phousi. And boy does Kiridara take full advantage of this prime position! You can enjoy the mountain panoramas from the comfort of your elegantly appointed guest room or for something a bit more fancy from your own mountain view courtyard and terrace in the premium rooms.

Heading into town is easy - the hotel offers a complimentary shuttle service travelling by tuk-tuk or you can stroll or take one of the hotel's bicycles for a spin and savour the sites. And when you've done the temples and the streets, the shopping and the incredible heritage gems you can retreat back to your hotel in the hills to kick up your feet and let the afternoon hours roll by the pool with a lychee martini in hand. Or head to the spa at the top of Kiridara for a blissful experience in the most time honoured cleansing traditions.

Why we love it:

- Kiridara is a little treasure, boasting this incredible town and country - enjoying stunning jungle vistas just moments from the sights and sounds of the old town.

ANGSANA BALACLAVA, MAURITIUS

Angsana Hotels and Resorts do contemporary chic so well. The sister-brand of Banyan Tree Hotels & Resorts is a little surprise to see that their latest offering is taking tropical luxury to new levels of sophistication! Angsana Balclava is set in the North West coast of Mauritius, in the secluded area of Turtle Bay which is well known for verdant hills, soft sand beaches and a peaceful, alluring bay. Designed as a hideaway with couples firmly in mind, the architecture of Angsana Balclava is distinctly Mauritian, with a fusion of African, oriental and Occidental influences like thatched roofs, native teak forests, with panoramic views of the sea and the mountains. With its own secluded beach, an Angsana spa, pools, watersports and a yoga pavilion, this is a place for those who enjoy the peace and quiet or for those who wish to get active.

Why we love it:

- Intimate dining experiences include the fabulous Italian styled Indochine - with the chef from Tuscany - it's exactly what the designers of Hotel Muse - part of Accor's characteristic MGallery brand - did with the glamorous west meets east design of Bangkok's Hotel Muse!

- Couples will love the sensual, romantic overtones that permeate throughout, from the dramatic ironwork and over-the-top decorating (even the light fitting is too beautiful for words!) to the large rooms and suites beautifully outfitted in white, pale mustard and soft grey with black stitching and black timber floors. And the bathrooms are so elegant, - sleek, tastefully done, rolltop bathtubs and black and white tiles (that you'll just want to take them home!)

- A unique hideaway where you can get away from it all.

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- A unique hideaway where you can get away from it all.

- The resort has introduced specifically-designed Angsana Spa Journeys for guests which include an accommodation and a range of activities according to the choice of journey. Guests of the 21 Spa Suites get to enjoy a daily 90-minute spa session.

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ALILA SOTHEA, SIEM REAP

When a hotel has been built in honour of a man’s love for his wife, you can be assured that every room and space has been imbued with a respect for romance. Built in the heart of Siem Reap by a prominent local businessman as a tribute to his belovéd wife Sothea, the Alila Sothea resort exudes the elegance of a grand Khmer villa, fusing nature’s beauty with contemporary touches and charming details of Cambodian heritage. And now, when under the wing of one of the world’s most iconic hotel chains, Sothea benefits from the Alila brand’s signature boutique lifestyle concept – that of high style and contemporary-chic served up with a respectfu l nod to culture. With its emphasis on intimate spaces, exquisite design and experiences around the World Heritage temples of Angkor Wat, Alila Sothea makes a perfect addition to the Alila portfolio.

Hotels like Alila Sothea offer more than just luxury accommodation; they provide a stylish living space to make your horse away from home, with exquisitely furnished suites, intimate spaces and the most refined of creature comforts. The lush landscaped gardens and flowing water features soothe the mind, while natural spa Therapies and exquisite culinary delights inspire and stimulate the senses. Alila Sothea provides a refuge of tranquillity in the heart of Siem Reap where couples can savour the incredible sights and experiences of the city and surroundings, indulge in romantic moments and fall in love all over again in the most ambient of settings. Natalie Bannister

Why we love it: The VIP treatment on offer like the Personalised full-day itineraries that allows guests to luxuriou sly explore the stunning local town of Siem Reap - from cultural insight to adventure, searching for hidden local markets or the best of the regional cuisine - and you even have your own mobile phone to keep your private driver at your beck and call. Now that’s service! alilahotels.com/southeastasia

THE DARLING, SYDNEY

Boutique digs with glittering Sydney views, world-class dining and the fun of a casino next door! Well-played darling. Upping the ante in Australia’s most glamorous city, the Darling is part of the Star Casino’s swish $860 million refurbishment and packs a style punch with careful attention to detail. It’s the ideal landing pad for couples who love big city lights and surprising experiences among the World Heritage temples of Angkor Wat. The VIP treatment on offer, like the 18-hole golf course overlooking either Saadiyat’s pristine beach or the golf club that has been designed by golfing legend Gary Player And it’s golf that plays the largest dresscode to this resort - with an impressive 18-hole course from golf course to challenge the novice and thrill the enthusiastic, there’s a distinct air of the golf here.

That’s not to say there’s not ample opportunity to completely unwind. St. Regis Saadiyat Island boasts the superb Iridium Spa for all your indulgent whims, and the beach here is so pristine that it attracts Hawaikul tufted terns that come here to nest. Botanical underpins a common sight playing offshore. Natalie Bannister

Why we love it: With downtown Abu Dhabi a mere seven minutes away you can have the best of both worlds here - world class nightlife and dining and incredible shopping accessible just across the water. Not to mention adventure activities that would make the most intrepid thrill seeker squeal!, and an intimate and refined lifestyle to immerse yourself in back in the confines of the sprawling resort.Stregissaadiyatisland.com

ST. REGIS SAADIYAT ISLAND, ABU DHABI

Saadiyat Island lies just 500 metres off the coast of Abu Dhabi and in typical UAE style, it’s an incredible example of the modern Arabian, multi-faceted experience for the discriminating traveller. It’s here you will find the latest addition to the iconic St.Regis brand - St.Regis Saadiyat Island. Building on the signature St.Regis brand of American ingenuity and European hospitality, St.Regis Saadiyat Island is lavish in architecture and design yet intimate in the many spaces offered to couples seeking out privacy and an exclusive holiday experience. You can choose from the superior rooms and St.Regis suites or go all out and spleurge on the incredible Royal Suite overlooking either Saadiyat’s pristine beach or the golf club that has been designed by golfing legend Gary Player And it’s golf that makes the largest dress code to this resort - with an impressive 18-hole course from golf course to challenge the novice and thrill the enthusiastic, there’s a distinct air of the golf here.

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Raffles Praslin, Seychelles

Loading celebrity couples have helped put the remote pristine islands of the Seychelles just off the coast of Africa firmly on the travel map. The exclusively pristine and natural beauty laced royal neo-classic William and Kate honeymoon from the hotel’s thematic design and contemporary chic served up with a respectful nod to the Alila brand’s signature boutique lifestyle concept – that of high style and contemporary-chic served up with a respectfu l nod to culture. With its emphasis on intimate spaces, exquisite design and experiences around the World Heritage temples of Angkor Wat, Alila Sothea makes a perfect addition to the Alila portfolio.

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ANANTARA MIU NI RESORT & SPA, VIETNAM

Anantara’s unique brand of laid-back luxury, intuitive service and cultural immersion has produced a large following of devotees who will be happy to hear that a new Asian experience awaits on the stunning southeast coast of Phu Quoc where the sea meets the golden sands of Mu Ne. A beach resort area known as the country’s suniest place! Groves of swaying palm trees,immerse Saharan-sand dunes, winding rivers and tall mountains with pristine waterfalls are just a few of the natural attributes here. Designed with the usual attention to detail and inspired by the rich tapestry of Vietnamese life, 89 rooms, suites and villas offer an exotic island honeymoon that’s luxurious in space and furnishings. The ultimate rooms for romance! We would love to say the pool villas where couples get to indulge with their own lounge area, open-air bathroom and private swimming pool. Wake up early and spend the morning lazing across a fresh water lake before enjoying your specially prepared picnic lunch. Or take a speedboat ride to a small nearby island to climb the 184 steps of historic Ke Ga Lighthouse catch your skin windulging or sailing or simply unwind by your private pool or on a sandy beach.

Chic villas offer more than just luxury accommodation; they provide a stylish living space to make your horse away from home, with exquisitely furnished suites, intimate spaces and the most refined of creature comforts. The lush landscaped gardens and flowing water features soothe the mind, while natural spa Therapies and exquisite culinary delights inspire and stimulate the senses. Anantara provides a refuge of tranquillity in the heart of Mu Ne where couples can savour the incredible sights and experiences of the city and surroundings, indulge in romantic moments and fall in love all over again in the most ambient of settings. Anantara

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SHANGRI-LA HOTEL PARIS

I could sum this hotel up in three words - Paris Shang-La elegance. No less, this is a hotel which offers the epitome of Parisian chic, both through its decor and furnishings and the famous Shangri-La elegance. Flavors and suites are all drenched in a classical French style and all offer wonderful views across the city or the Seine - the Eiffel Tower is unmissable. Each of the suites and rooms have been designed with the utmost of attention to detail with unobstructed views and the softest of linens.

AMAN SVETI STEFAN, MONTENEGRO

Aman Resorts is famous for delivering authentic travel experiences in romantic and inspired locations, with a level of intimate luxury that few can match. So it was not surprising to read that it took them four years to painstakingly restore what was an historic, 15th-century fishing village on the coast of Montenegro. Located on its own rocky outcrop, the island is a UNESCO site, ensuring that all of the historic charm, such as the tiny cobble-streets, remain, but the humble cottages have been imaginatively converted to rooms and suites which are elegant and refined, with an unobtrusive modernity.

SONG SAA, CAMBODIA

Floating in the Gulf of Thailand’s crystalline waters, the resort’s commitment to protecting the surrounding marine life and extensive use of sustainable materials has also earned it a green cred. Choose your own adventure in one of 27 overwater bungalows or beach bungalows, all of which are decedantly spacious and beautifully appointed. In fact, everything here feels wonderfully expansive, open and organically realising, ensuring your stay will put you in touch with nature and set you free to relax and dream. While away your days in the world-class restaurant and lounge and infinity pool edge (which spans both sides) or serenity at the yoga centre and spa.

WE SEMINYAK, BALI

AN LAM NHIN VAN BAY VILLAS, VIETNAM

What makes a perfect honeymoon hideaway? We all have different ideas but to me this property has it all - exquisite accommodation, private beaches, spa pampering, confident staff offering exceptional service who plan daily surprises for guests and epicurean delights every single day of your stay.

Am Lam Ninh Van Bay is an hour by car from Nha Trang in Vietnam and then a 15 minute speed boat ride across the bay to arrive at a remote, pristine location of tropical forest where the 35 villas are spread out by the lagoon and up into the hills beyond. It may be a long way from civilization but guests are not deprived of any of life’s comforts. The cuisine is diverse, with an emphasis on discovering the best of Vietnamese dishes and the wine cellar with its great range of wines from the old and new worlds, would satisfy the most discerning wine connoisseur. Couples love special romantic moments and here, private dining is a specialty. Dinner by a waterfall, on a hidden pool deck or perhaps on a private beach - or choose a different spot every night!

If you're celebrating something special in Paris, you're in luck! This hotel is justifiably considered to be the top area of Paris. The premier room has unparalleled views of the Eiffel Tower and is sited in what is considered to be the top area of Paris. The terrace has breathtaking views, and is sited in what is considered to be the top area of Paris. The terrace has breathtaking views, and is sited in what is considered to be the top area of Paris.

Why we love it: The exotic allure of Morocco beckons at four beaches, and this is a wonderful setting for an intimate dining room, rooftop terrace with panoramic views to the Koutoubia Mosque and Atlas Mountains, and butlers and guides on standby to help make your Moroccan escape unforgettable. Expect tailor-made experiences like a private candlelit dinner beneath the stars of Marrakech with the evening call to prayer and the sounds of Djemaa El Fna Square in your soundtrack. Or an authentic Moroccan bath and scrub in your private hamman. Or a day of following the scent of mint and spice around the vibrant souks, antiquities districts and Atlas Mountains, and butlers and guides on standby to help make your Moroccan escape unforgettable.

RIAD JOYA MOROCCO

Located in the ancient heart of Marrakech Medina, Riad Joya has channeled Moroccan traditions and borrowed a dash of contemporary style from its Italian owners to create Marrakech’s most romantic new address. Boutique in the true sense of the word with just seven magical suites overlooking a central courtyard, Riad Joya also features an intimate dining room, rooftop terrace with panoramic views to the Koutoubia Mosque and Atlas Mountains, and butlers and guides on standby to help make your Moroccan escape unforgettable. Expect tailor-made experiences like a private candlelit dinner beneath the stars of Marrakech with the evening call to prayer and the sounds of Djemaa El Fna Square in your soundtrack.

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MANDARIN ORIENTAL, PARIS
So Franchy, so utterly chic! And we didn’t expect anything less when one of the world’s most ultra-stylish brands set its sights on the city of love. Things were bound to go gorgeous! Located in the Sainthilaire Rue St. Honore in the heart of Paris, just a short way from the Louvre and a bevy of haute couture houses, the Mandarin Oriental Paris offers an enchanting urban escape. Think elegant, contemporary rooms and suites (many with city views), an enchanting spa, a magical garden courtyard, five-star dining – and to top it off, an onsite garden! It’s just a short stroll to the Opera, Champs-Élysées and Tuileries Gardens and the switched-on concierge will also help you find the coolest spots to shop, dine and party in Paris. Nicole Double

Why we love it: It’s not cheap but simply the city’s shamelessly romantic vibe, but we fell in love over the location, swooned over the suites and comfortably fancy but stylish rooms, so different to anything we’ve seen! Rhodes Bannister

Why we love it: It’s not cheap but simply everything about this resort screams first-class luxury which is important to know if you have travelled half way around the world to experience a cultural/adventure holiday in style. rhodesbannister.com

HILTON SURFERS PARADISE
Surfers Paradise has a brand new look with the opening of Australia’s newest Hilton. Big city style with service to match. If you’re after some serious downtime with quality at every turn then this is for you. The fantastic white sand beaches of the Gold Coast are at your doorstep but if that’s just too much effort, take the lift down to the pool level, order lunch from The Deck and while away the afternoon on your private decked with cocktail in hand. With the option of the luxurious Hilton Relaxarium – complete with lounge, dining and fully equipped kitchen or a stylish hotel room, there’s something for every kind of escape. Towering over Surfers Paradise, the views from every room are breathtaking. 24 hour room service means midnight Champagne is only ever a phone call away while the Fix Bar under the stewardship of renowned mixologist Grant Collins offers up a world of cocktails served in vintage glassware accompanied by upbeat, attentive staff. Melissa Reynolds

Why we love it: An oasis in the heart of Surfers Paradise, the new Hilton offers a new level of sophistication for the good old GC. From the sleek white rooms to the huge pool area complete with cocktail bar you can tell they have thought long and hard about what an adult getaway means. Tip: Book a treatment at the spa on your first day and you’ll be miles ahead in the relaxation stakes. hiltonsurfersparadise.com.au

TADRAI ISLAND RESORT, FIJI
A peaceful island paradise designed especially for two! Our own thatched suite with private plunge pool and a deck flooded with panoramic vistas. Exclusive access to four beaches and azure waters perfect for swimming and snorkeling. What more could you ask for an ultra-relaxed, über luxurious honeymoon escape!

The welcoming smiles and swaying palms of Fiji have always held our hearts. Why not also enjoy the awesome high speed jet ski rides and the lush Spa treatments? The rooms are gorgeous! Located in the fashionable Rue St Honore, the Mandarin Oriental Paris offers the perfect romantic getaway! mandarinoriental.com/paris/

BALLYFIN HOUSE, IRELAND
If you're thinking of something more traditional then the luxurious Ballyfin House. If I were heading to Ireland for a holiday, I would most certainly stay at Ballyfin on the top of my list. Situated just 30 minutes drive from Dublin, Ballyfin House was built in 1820 and after serving as a boarding school for nuns, has undergone an eight year restoration to open as a five-star luxury country hotel in May 2011. It’s a building full of romance everywhere – in the sensual touch of the luscious silk upholstery used on the antique armchairs and armchairs in the very grand Gold Drawing Room, to the white marble and elaborate wrought-iron decorative mouldings/decoration. Its 13 bedrooms are all individually unique and the suite of the hotel’s owners is a true delight. Nicole Double

Why we love it: First of all you have to love Vegas which we do, then everything else falls into place. Why stay in an old hotel when you can experience the glitzy new kid on the block? cosmopolitanlasvegas.com

THE COSMOPOLITAN, LAS VEGAS
Las Vegas is a brush, vibrant adult Disneyland – the sort of place you can do what you want, when you want to do it... which is what makes it such a fabulous couples’ destination!

It’s not short on hotels - they’re as omnipresent as the bright flashing neon signs that line the Strip, but still they keep opening new ones such as the glitzy 2,995-room Cosmopolitan, 52 stories high with almost every room enjoying a bird’s eye view of the streets of Las Vegas below.

The most interesting thing about this new hotel besides the monumental and LED Spielgel’s shimmering showings showing videos in the lobby, the curtain of two million crystal in The Chandelier Bar and the adults only poolside Marquee Dayclub is the collection of restaurants – 13 total – more than enough to keep anyone from wanting to leave the hotel.

Atmosphere is the key to Cosmopolitan – the art books scattered across the coffee table. The rooms in the West Tower possibly have the best views as they look over the dancing fountains of Bellagio - the perfect accompaniment to sunset drinks on the terrace.

Rhonda Bannister

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TOP 25 HOTELS & RESORTS FOR COUPLES

ENTRE CIELOS, ARGENTINA
A new chic boutique motel located at the foot of Argentina’s Andes, in an area known for its vineyards and wine. Entre Cielos offers a surprisingly different honeymoon or romantic escape. Located in Mendoza, just 25 Kilometres from Mendoza, it’s Plummers International airport. The resort offers everything either on site or drive by - tours, wine, white water rafting, horse riding, mountain trekking, skiing and so much more. But if it’s my year, you like your holiday, pleasure a little more refined, there’s a wonderful spa with traditional Turkish hamman and fine dining at two exquisite restaurants. And you’re in one of the premier wine areas of a country that is known as the fifth largest wine producer in the world – so naturally there are excellent local wines to wine... there’s also a vineyard attached to the resort.

The design of the hotel is starkly minimalist with floor to ceiling glass providing enchanting views of the snow capped Andes and the surrounding countryside. The rooms and suites are spacious and comfortably furnished but if you’re looking for something special, book the master suite which has a vineyard loft standing above the vineyard on stilts it boasts a bathtub on the terrace and window in the ceiling. The bedrooms and bathrooms are simply magnificent with the light bathed in soft natural light. Melissa Reynolds

Why we love it: A brand new design offering soothing views of the snow capped Andes and the surrounding countryside. The rooms and suites are spacious and comfortably furnished but if you’re looking for something special, book the master suite which has a vineyard loft standing above the vineyard on stilts it boasts a bathtub on the terrace and window in the ceiling. The bedrooms and bathrooms are simply magnificent with the light bathed in soft natural light. melissareynolds.com

RAILO (part of the Tadrai Island Resort) have taken all-inclusive luxury to a new level in the region. Located on the north side of Mana Island in the pristine Mamanucas Group, belt five deluxe villas feature five-star facilities plus special touches like in-room Pubs, stone outdoor showers, soaking tubs with water views and your own private butler. They share access to the main freshwater pool and restaurant, serving delicious Pacific Rim cuisine – which is all part of your stay along with alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages. Indulge with a reef massage at mid tide or steal away for a private Champagne picnic on the neighbouring nuku-mana sand quay where you can whisper sweet nothings under a sweeping South Pacific sky. Nicole Double

Why we love it: All-inclusive luxury in a magical location coupled with the warm hospitality of the Fijian people equals paradise found. tadrai.com
THE NAKA ISLAND - A LUXURY COLLECTION RESORT & SPA, PHUKET

Forget loud bars and crowded beaches. At this resort, you’ll have to settle for being guests in one of only 67 magnificently appointed villas where you can indulge in your own private pool, spacious outdoor area, sala and open-air bathroom, all while enjoying stunning views over Phang Nga Bay. Located just off the coast of Phuket, on Naka Yai Island, yet only 25 minutes from Phuket International Airport, you won’t find much beyond the white sandy beaches, shady coconut groves, natural mangroves and landscaped gardens – this is a secluded, luxurious haven designed to reintroduce you to nature, re-energise you, allow you to get in touch with yourselves and with each other again. You won’t find noisy bars and market stalls, although there is a small fishing village on the island.

This resort won’t suit couples looking for more than a tranquil oasis where spending precious time with each other is the name of the game, nor will it suit couples who have an abhorrence of all things that live in nature - it is after all a resort on an island, a place that appeals to those seeking romance and seclusion in pristine natural surroundings, with more than a dash of luxury thrown in! There is a great range of water sports to enjoy, Epicurean delights to keep even the fussiest eater happy and indulgent spa treatments to relax those muscles and get your skin glowing again. Rhonda Bannister

Why we love it: Cocooned on an island that is rich in cultural history and natural beauty, and easily accessible from Phuket, this is understated luxury at its best - we particularly think the sea-front villas, with their amazing views, would be a great honeymoon base. nakaislandphuket.com

THE ONE & ONLY PALM DUBAI

Located within one of the world’s most spectacular man-made landscapes, and boasting incredible views of the Dubai skyline, this Moorish - Arabesque styled, boutique resort stands out like an exquisite gem on a beautiful Woman. With its amazing swimming pool and gracious palm gardens rimmed with lemon and tangerine trees, The One & Only The Palm sits on the furthest point of the Palm’s throne, ensuring a touch of seclusion and romance along with the excitement of being in one of the world’s most dynamic cities. For the ultimate in glamorous entrances, arrive to the resort’s private marina by boat.

We love the glamorous, contemporary public spaces that gleam with the purity of white light, the open kitchen and interactive dining concept in the resort’s main restaurant - ZEST and the monochromatic palette of black and silver furnishings and the black vaulted ceilings festooned with opulent crystal chandeliers that scream divine decadence in the specialty restaurant, STAY. The designer should be given a gold star!

Couples will also love the over-sized and sumptuously decorated rooms and suites - our favourites have a private plunge pool for extra privacy - and will adore spending an evening perched above the marina at 101 Dining Lounge and Bar; gazing at the striking high-rise skyline of the city while enjoying a cocktail and listening to the resident DJ spin the latest tunes in the sultry evening air. And the ultimate couples treat has to be a spa treatment in the dedicated Couple Spa Suite at the ESPA Spa ...

Why we love it: The fastidious service, gastronomic excellence, glamorous surroundings and secluded location make this a true luxury resort where every visit is a celebration to be savoured, oneandonlyresorts.com

THERE IS A GREAT RANGE OF WATER SPORTS TO ENJOY, EPICUREAN DELIGHTS TO KEEP EVEN THE FUSSIEST EATER HAPPY AND INDULGENT SPA TREATMENTS TO RELAX THOSE MUSCLES AND GET YOUR SKIN GLOWING AGAIN. RHONDA BANNISTER

Why we love it: The fastidious service, gastronomic excellence, glamorous surroundings and secluded location make this a true luxury resort where every visit is a celebration to be savoured, oneandonlyresorts.com

AMANRUYA, BODRUM PENINSULA TURKEY

Steeped in history surrounded by ancient pine forests and overlooking the insanely deep blue waters of Turkey’s stunning southwestern Aegean coast, Amanruya is sheer honeymoon heaven. Located on a fabled coastline littered with Greek and Roman temple ruins, the resort embodies Aman Resorts’ signature refinement and sensitivity to the surrounding landscape in an elegant take on rustic luxe. The 36 spacious Pool Cottages honour their surrounds through Mediterranean and Ottoman architectural elements and local materials including white Turkish marble and handmade rugs, with each with their own private garden, marble swimming pool and plush day beds.

If you can coax your partner from the charming pebble beach or expansive marble swimming pool, day trips to local sites like the ancient city of Ephesus will sate history-hungry couples. Or you can explore the vibrant marina city of Bodrum (formerly called Halicarnassus) including the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, an early monument to the Ancient World. Our tip? Enjoy a romantic on-water adventure sailing the nearby Bodrum Peninsula on a local gulet (wooden sailboat). Unforgettable! Nicole Deuble

Why we love it: Even with the Mediterranean beckoning and thousands of years worth of history on your doorstep, it’s hard to leave the romantic confines of Amanruya. It really is that lovely. amanresorts.com/amanruya.