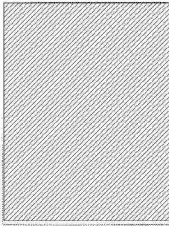


# CASTLES, CRUISES & COASTLINES

Beyond our obvious amorous affair of alliteration, there's plenty of appeal when it comes to castles, cruises and coastlines (see what we did there?). There's truly something for everyone amongst these honeymoon and destination wedding locations. Whether you're considering a castle in Ireland, the Italian coastline or a cruise through Greece, prepare yourself for lovely options galore.

CASTLES, CRUISES & COASTLINES

Photo courtesy of Courtney Cox





# Sail Away to the Greek Islands

WORDS BY MELISSA KLURMAN

Secluded islands filled with hidden coves and private beaches, seaside cafés facing aqua Mediterranean panoramas, gorgeous coastlines and fabulous ports – it’s hard to imagine a more picturesque honeymoon destination than the Greek islands.

For adventurous couples who love the water, few travel options can match the romance of setting sail on a tall-masted sailboat cruise with [Star Clippers](#) around the Aegean Sea.

The closest alternative to a private yacht experience, sailing on Star Clippers’ small ship (170 people max) allowed us to visit sexy ports like Patmos and hidden gem Amorgos – spots that big cruises can’t reach. We hopped off the ship to visit the sun-kissed ports, then came back on board in time to watch the sails unfurl. At night, the wind and water rocked us to sleep in our cozy cabin.

## Island Highlights

We set sail around the Northern Cyclades, an itinerary made for romance. Here are a few port highlights:

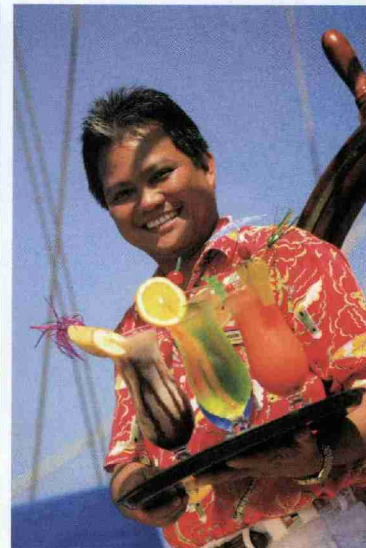
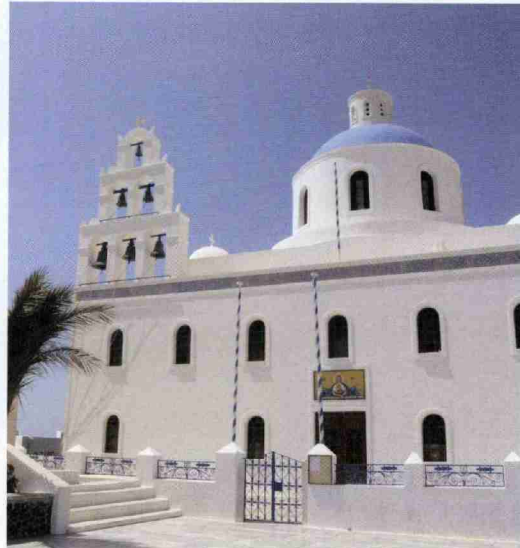
### PATMOS

The chicest Greek island you’ve never heard of and a well-kept secret of the rich and famous (George Clooney, Naomi

CASTLES, CRUISES & COASTLINES

Photo courtesy of Star Clippers





Campbell and Julia Roberts all have homes here). Follow the locals' lead and stroll the flower lined, white washed passage-ways, then explore the chic shops down by the port before ducking into beachside tavernas and cafés. After lunch, plunge into the crystal sea or rev-up the adrenaline by renting an ATV to explore the upper reaches of the island, including a gilded mountaintop monastery.

AMORGOS

This tiny port feels like a hidden treasure not yet discovered by Grecian island explorers; it's all small beaches and lovely spots to eat fresh fish pulled directly from the sea. Walk along the seaside or hop on a moped to leave the last bits of civilization behind and find the perfect secluded spot for a romantic selfie.

This postcard perfect town is known throughout the world as the trendy heart of the Greek islands, but there is also plenty of romance found in twisting alleys and tiny shops for the two of you to get lost in. Rent a car to head out to the beach party scene on the southern side of the island. The ship won't set sail until 11 p.m. at this popular port, so you have plenty of time to kick back.

Star Clippers

The barefoot luxury of a small ship with thousands of people less than a big cruise ship also means you can eat without crowds and tender to shore without waiting for hours. When

the ship is docked, it's easy to get off at the gorgeous ports and sample the local cuisine. Don't miss the fresh fish, creamy feta, ripe tomatoes and frothy iced coffee frappes. The "sail away ceremony" when the ship hoists its sails, the wind fills the canvas, music soars and the ship sets off quietly under the night sky is a romantic chance to clink Champagne flutes.

Staterooms on long, narrow clipper ships are cozy by necessity, although you'll still have twice daily housekeeping and a comfortable, roomy bed. For the most spacious options, book category one or two staterooms; the two aft suites that open onto the back deck are perfectly located for private stargazing. Adventurous couples shouldn't miss climbing the rigging up to the crow's nest and lying out over the sea together on the bowsprit netting.

Getting There

To sail the Greek islands with Star Clippers, fly into Athens; cruises depart from Piraeus, about a 30-minute ride from the airport. Direct flights from New York take approximately 10 hours (United, Alitalia, Emirates/JetBlue and Delta/AirFrance all offer nonstop options). From California, you'll need to connect, a few easy options include Lufthansa with a stop in Munich, Alitalia with a layover in Rome and Swiss Air with a change in Zurich.

For insight on Santorini, Italy, in the Southern Cyclades, check out *The Honeymoonist* article on pg. 76.

Photos courtesy of: Star Clippers

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