



TRAVEL



For your Honeymoon

O, Canada: Vacation north of border

By Jeri Young
THE CHARLOTTE POST

After the wedding ceremony, the next big thing is the honeymoon.

Traditionally, the couple jaunts off for a few days in the Caribbean or perhaps a romp through Mexico.

But times (and costs) are a-changing, says travel agent Linda Taylor. People are looking for trips that are a little off the beaten path or even combing the wedding and honeymoon to make the trip special.

"Now, a lot of people are actually combining them," says Taylor, has also worked as a wedding consultant. "They're going away to the islands and getting married and having their honeymoons while they are there."

Such traditionally "hot" honeymoon destinations as Jamaica, St. Thomas and Montego Bay are still the first to come to mind when honeymoons are mentioned, but other destinations are also being batted about.

"The traditional height of the wedding season, June and August, is also the peak travel season," Taylor said. "People are beginning to find that unless you're booking a year in advance, it's a really hard time to plan for."

It's also the most expensive time of the year to travel. Prices are often double what they may be during the off-peak season.

"I've actually begun to advise people about other times of the year," Taylor said. "More people are marrying in March, April and May, which are times when the best deals are available. Of course, the weather is a little iffy, but there are lots of deals."

Taylor says people are also looking to make the honeymoon memorable by choosing an unusual destination. She says one of the best off the beaten path destinations is Canada.

"Yes, Canada," she said. "When most people think about Canada, they think it's so far away, cold and that there's really not much to do. But Canada is really reasonably priced, has a thriving black population and there's really a lot to do."

The Canadian destination Taylor recommends most is Toronto. Easily accessible by plane, Toronto has a number of selling points, she said.

"Exposure to a different culture is probably the biggest one," she said. "It's really not that far away and people speak English. It's a little like being in Europe, except you didn't go anywhere near as far or spend as much money."

Taylor also recommends Pennsylvania's Pocono mountain

resorts and Martha's Vineyard, a long-time haven of the rich and famous.

Martha's Vineyard has traditionally been a vacation resort for African Americans, says Jack E. Robinson.

"We've always had a black presence here," he said. "Years ago people like Adam Clayton Powell and Joe Louis vacationed here. For 100 years, black people have come here to relax."

Robinson, owner of Martha's Vineyard Resorts and Racquet Club, the resort town's only black-owned inn, says New England is a great getaway.

"There's a misconception that it's cold here," Robinson said. "We're out in the Atlantic Ocean, 6 miles from the coast of Massachusetts. The winds are westerly. We rarely have snow and the temperatures are mild year round."

"We're one of the most upscale resorts in America and people from Hollywood are here all of the time. But the good thing is that we're not a celebrity-driven town. Celebrities are everywhere and they wait in line just like anyone one else. That's really unique."

Also on the rise are honeymoon cruises. Patricia Yarborough, owner of Blue World Travel, organizes a summer cruise for African Americans each summer.

While Yarborough's "Festival at Sea" hasn't really caught on for honeymooners yet, she says there's plenty for newlyweds to do shipside.

"I think a cruise offers a lot," she said. "After you go through all the time and effort of planning a wedding, the last thing you want to do is look for things to do on your honeymoon."

Yarborough says she sees an average of three to five newlyweds on her cruises. One of the things they like most about honeymooning on a cruise is that there's always a photographer handy.

"Most cruises do have a photographer who follows the group around," she said. "When you get off the ship to visit sites, you can have pictures made and really have a good record of what you did and saw to add to your wedding pictures. A lot of people really value that."

Taylor says the first step for planning a great honeymoon is to figure out where you want to go and how much you can spend. But it doesn't hurt to have an open mind.

"There really are a lot of options," she said. "Couples have a lot of freedom and price ranges to choose from."



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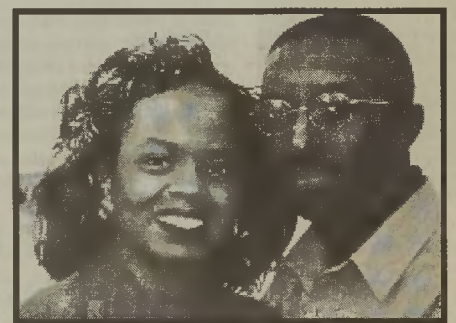
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Cureton - Robinson

Mrs. Beatrice I. Cureton of Charlotte, N.C. is pleased to announce the engagement of her daughter, Lisa Maria, also the daughter of the late John E. Cureton, to James Antonio Robinson of Goldsboro, N.C., son of Mr. and Mrs. Roselle M. Robinson, Sr. of Goldsboro, N.C.

Miss Cureton is a Network Analyst for First Union National Bank. She is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority.

Mr. Robinson is a Business Systems Analyst at First Union National Bank. He is a graduate of Johnson C. Smith University, Charlotte and is a member of Kappa Kappa Psi Fraternity. He is also a singer, songwriter and freelance musician.

The couple was engaged September 13, 1997, while vacationing in Hilton Head, SC. James serenaded Lisa while playing the piano and singing to her in the hotel lobby. He stopped and proposed in front of other hotel guests.

The wedding is planned for April 25, 1998 at University Park Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C., The Rev. Claude R. Alexander, Jr., Pastor.

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