

Go here, not there: the best affordable honeymoon spots in the U.S.

If you're planning a honeymoon, there's no need to book an expensive postnuptial vacation overseas. You can stay close to home, with several romantic retreats here in the U.S. eager to host your honeymoon, offering experiences surprisingly similar to tropical paradises and European adventures — for a much, much lower price.

Whether your love language is a vineyard with a view, a cozy cabin or a private beach, we're playing matchmaker to set you up with some small to midsize cities throughout the U.S. that will give you the unforgettable, romantic experience you've always dreamed of.

These 10 honeymoon destinations are worth swooning over — no passport required.

Santa Fe, N.M.

Population: 83,008

Why you should honeymoon here: With art galleries galore, adobe architecture, a designated Margarita Trail and stunning views showing off the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, Santa Fe has helped earn New Mexico its "Land of Enchantment" nickname.

Go here instead of: Japan. This southwestern gem certainly preserves and celebrates Hispanic culture. But there's also a can't-miss spa reminiscent of Japanese *onsens*.

Average nightly hotel price: \$119

Where to stay: Book an adobe casita at La Posada de Santa Fe. This resort is set on six beautifully landscaped acres just steps from Santa Fe's beautiful and bustling historic Plaza. Make sure to mention you're there on your honeymoon: Newlyweds are treated to flowers, chocolate-dipped strawberries and champagne.

What to pack: Out-of-town visitors are often surprised that it does indeed snow in Santa Fe. (You can even go skiing!) Be sure to pack plenty of warm-weather accessories if you're traveling in the winter.

Romantic date night spot: Take a class at the Santa Fe School of Cooking, which are taught by some of Santa Fe's special chefs. If you're feeling spicy, opt for a chile workshop.

Can't-miss experience: Set aside an afternoon for Ten Thousand Waves, which is inspired by Japanese mountain hot springs. To really get this right, book a private tub and spa treatments.

Sweet spot: Sip chocolate elixirs and sample chili chocolates at the adorable Kakawa Chocolate House.