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REAL WEDDINGS • TRUE LOVE STORIES

CLASSIC ELEGANT ROMANTIC
One reward for marrying your soul mate? Beginning that living-happily-ever-after part in a dreamy beach setting. Nothing is as romantic as watching the sunrise and set with the rhythmic sound of the ocean surrounding you. Spend the first days of married life with sand between your toes and an ocean yawning before you, and see how lovely life as two can be. — June Naylor

THE CARIBBEAN

The tiniest among the United States Virgin Islands, St. John remains a favorite. The most perfect patch of landscape in the Caribbean Sea is mostly undeveloped, as three-quarters of the island is national park. Your honeymoon destination is the exquisite jewel box of a resort called Caneel Bay, unfurling along seven pristine beaches on the southwestern corner of the island. Founded 60 years ago by the Rockefeller family as a tropical getaway, it has an enduring elegance that never goes out of style, starting with an absence of TVs and telephones in the infinitely comfortable suites and including the most gracious service any resort can offer. There are nearly as many staff members as guests, making sure your every need — from towels and cocktails on the beach to flowers in your room and breakfast picnic baskets left silently at your doorstep — is met. The two of you can explore a wealth of hiking trails on the hilly island, enjoy kayaking and paddleboarding, go swimming in the aquamarine-blue water with turtles, take yoga classes or go on a scuba dive. But doing little has its own rewards. Maybe you’ll simply enjoy a sumptuous massage in a cabana overlooking lovely Hawksnest Bay, an evening sunset cocktail cruise and an extraordinary dinner at ZoZo’s, a sublime restaurant housed inside a historic sugar mill ruin. Be sure to arrange a private dinner on the beach, complete with champagne, torchlight and music. Caneel Bay Resort, Caneel Bay, St. John, United States Virgin Islands; 340-776-6111 or caneelbay.com.
The timeless appeal of Nantucket, the tiny island off the Cape Cod coast, just radiates romantic notions. Every iconic image of Nantucket — its cedar-shingle-clad buildings and cobblestone streets, dunes and beaches, lighthouses and wharves — is riddled with storybook charm. Among the lovely, intimate places to stay is The Wauwinet, a luxurious 1875 landmark with views of the open Atlantic Ocean to the east and Nantucket Sound to the west. Tucked into one of the cottage suites at The Wauwinet, you can gaze at the sand and sea from the comfort of your living room, big cushy bed or porch while deciding what to do. While the day away sipping champagne from a lawn chaise, take a ride on the hotel's boat to see shellfish plucked from the ocean (you can learn to shuck oysters, while you're at it), enjoy a lobster-and-wine feast on the terrace, indulge in a couple's massage at Spa by the Sea or bicycle to one of two nearby wildlife refuges. A new BMW 330e courtesy car takes you on a tour of the 80 miles of Nantucket's swimmable beaches; you'll also see the nation's oldest working windmill. Splurge and book the new White Elephant Hinckley, a 36-foot-yacht, for a tour of Nantucket Harbor or a side trip to Martha's Vineyard. The Wauwinet, 120 Wauwinet Road, Nantucket, Massachusetts; 508-228-0145 or wauwinet.com.