

Tsunami Stories: The Travelers Who Stayed

By Matthew Power

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Bachelor + Bachelorette Action Plans

BREAK WITH CONVENTION

One last weekend (or longer) of freedom deserves to be remembered. So when planning the bachelor or bachelorette party, it's a good idea to cut the boozing with a healthy dose of adventure.

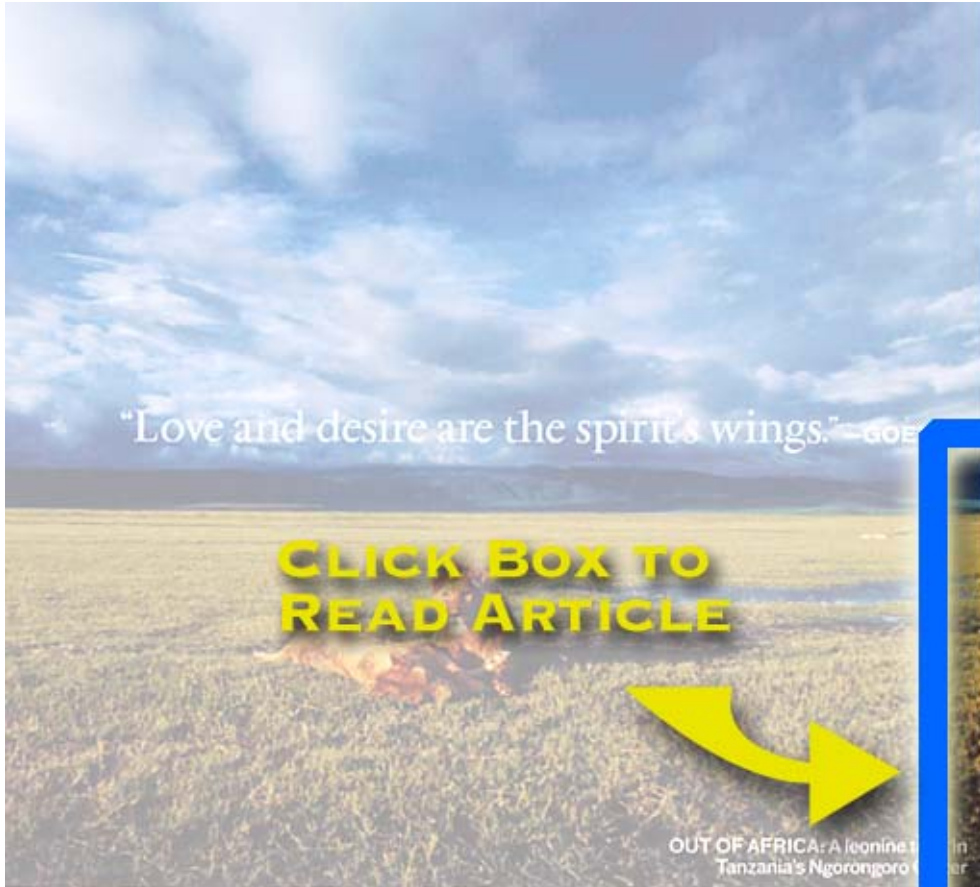
more than just a hangover.

RAFT

Let your best man focus on his speech writing and leave the party planning to Adventure Bachelor Party (\$449 per person; www.adventurebachelorparty.com). Their Grand Daddy Package convenes in Charleston, West Virginia, with a big night out (dinner, VIP nightclub passes, and casino transport included). But don't stay out too late: A daylong float down the Gauley River shoves off at 8 a.m. At night, kick back riverside at a three- to five-bedroom cottage and celebrate fleeting freedom with a bonfire barbecue.

PRE-NUP REPOSE:

Relaxing in view of Idaho's Sawtooth Mountains



"Love and desire are the spirit's wings." —GOETHE

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OUT OF AFRICA: A lionine in Tanzania's Ngorongoro

18-92 YEARS Fly Me to the Moon

If you can arrange it, take a minimum of two, or more like four, months for your honeymoon. Relax on white-sand beaches and climb mountains, sleep in luxurious suites with ocean views (the wedding cake must be squandered, not carefully saved), and huddle next to each other in a double-wide sleeping bag. Chances are you'll only be able to spare a week or two. That's all right. With the right plan, a trip of any length will be an epic celebration. "Adopt a philosophy that anything that happens is an opportunity to learn about how to rely on each other," says Michele Weiner-Davis, a marriage counselor and author of several best-sellers on enriching a marriage. "Starting with the honeymoon, compromise is key. You shouldn't be competing or keeping score."

Just the Two of Us

From waking up each other in the morning to Patagonia's Torres del Paine Massif—the most dramatic mountain range in the world—travel right through your honeymoon. Sure, the towering granite monoliths and reflective lakes will make you feel like you're in a dream, but they'll remind you how important you are to each other. You also have the luxuries of the Hotel Salto Chico 2 for three nights; www.saltochico.com), at your beck and call. Fashioned from native cedar and cypress woods, the lodge sits on the turquoise shores of Lago Pehoe. Spend a day backpacking on Glacier Grey and hike to Refugio Pehoe, from where you'll set off to hike a moraine and watch the astonishing orange streaks of light upon the Torres's red walls.

Wunderbar in Zanzibar

Tanzania's your best choice for an African honeymoon two-for-one combo: a classic safari vacation and a traditional white-sand retreat. First, fly to the city of Arusha and transfer to the five-star Ngorongoro Wildlife Lodge (\$445; www.ngorongoro.co.tz). Perched on the rim of the 2,493-foot-deep crater, the lodge will serve as your jumping off point for forays among the lions, elephants, rhinos, leopards, and buffalo that live below. Once you've had your fill of the Big Five, return to Arusha for a flight to Zanzibar, the legendary spice island 20 miles off Tanzania's east coast. Spend a few days wandering the piquant streets of Old Stone Town, indulging in seafood barbecue stalls and *Konyagi*, the local spirit. Then, finish your trip at the Nungwi Village Beach Resort (\$130; www.nungwivillage.com), set on the secluded beaches of Zanzibar's north coast.

Feelin' Fine in Fiji

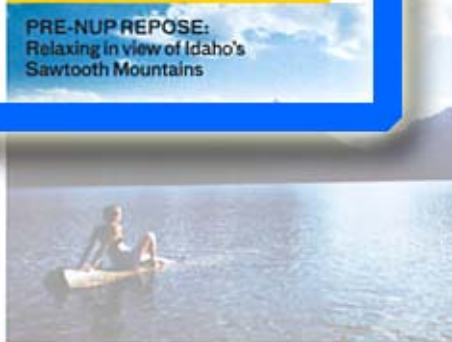
If Jacques Cousteau had had it as good as his son, Jean-Michel, he may never have explored anything other than the electric blue waters right outside his front door. Jean-Michel's Fiji Islands Resort (\$480, includes meals and most activities; www.fijiresort.com) is a retreat befitting of paradise—25 bures (private, thatch-roof bungalows) set on 17 acres of a coconut plantation that borders the calm waters of Savusavu Bay. Spend a day just unwinding on the sand and then enlist the resort's full-time marine biologist to lead you to a slew of secret dive sites, or make like Jane and Tarzan at a nearby rain forest waterfall. In the evening, get a side-by-side massage and indulge in candlelight dining at the end of the resort's private pier. But remember: Even a trip to paradise requires a little planning. Reserve the Honeymoon Point Reef Bure, which has a private hot tub overlooking the sea.

DIVE

Just because the party plan calls for action, doesn't mean it can't revolve around the drink. Spend six days getting scuba certified with Culebra Divers (\$550; www.culebradivers.com) on Culebra island, Puerto Rico, part of a 1,580-acre National Wildlife Refuge. After communing with sharks and stingrays, retire to Mamacitas (\$85; www.mamacitaspr.com), a low-slung, beachside retreat just a short walk from the dive shop.

RELAX

Facing Idaho's jagged Sawtooth Mountains, Meadow Creek Inn & Spa (\$190; www.meadowcreekinn.com) will calm the most severe pre-wedding jitters. Less than an hour's drive from the Sun Valley airport, the spa's treatments include body wraps, reflexology, and aromatherapy. Release any remaining butterflies on a day-long rafting trip with The River Company (\$87; www.therivercompany.com) down the Class III Salmon River. —Jeff Gangemi



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