The Great Escape - One In Five Weddings Now Take Place Abroad

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The big day is looming for William and Kate, and if it all gets too much with the in-laws, they could well consider the growing trend of escaping further afield, as new research from Mintel reveals one in five weddings (18%) now take place abroad.

Indeed, since 2005, the number of ceremonies abroad has risen an impressive 27% - up from 45,000 and reaching just over 57,000 in 2010.

The idea of getting away from it all to wed abroad has never been more popular and the rise has come as the number of weddings taking place in the UK has continued to fall. An estimated 266,000 UK weddings took place in 2010 marking a 7% drop over the five years since 2005.

In 2010, the average wedding abroad cost Â£6,585, around a third of the cost of a UK wedding. While the average cost of weddings abroad has risen (by 9.8% since 2005), in the UK overall costs appear to have fallen slightly as a result of the recession, to just below Â£20,000.

Tom Rees, Senior Travel and Tourism Analyst at Mintel, said:
â€œThe lower costs of overseas weddings are an important factor for many, with cost concerns influencing the whole market. However the various desires to do something different, seek out better weather than can be expected in the UK and to avoid overblown, too-many-guest affairs are attracting more and more couples to the weddings abroad market.â€•

What is more, Mintelâ€™s research finds the percentage of consumers stating that they prefer UK weddings has fallen significantly in the last two years. Indeed the number of consumers saying that they would rather get married or attend a wedding at home has fallen from approximately three in ten (28%) in 2008 to just two in ten (21%) in 2010.

Meanwhile, opposition to weddings abroad has fallen, today, fewer than one in ten (9%) agree that they would not like to get married abroad or attend a wedding abroad down from 11% two years ago.

And it seems that money is becoming less of an issue here, just 7% agree a wedding abroad or attending such an event is too expensive down from 10% in 2005.

In the last two years, the percentage of consumers agreeing that â€œthe cost and time required in attending a wedding abroad puts relatives and friends in an awkward positionâ€• has fallen from approximately one in five (19%) in 2008 to nearer one in seven (15%) in 2010.

Furthermore, according to Mintelâ€™s research, three in ten (31%) people believe they may marry, remarry or renew their vows in the future. Looking at attitudes amongst these consumers, as many as two in five (37%) say they would like to get married abroad or attend a wedding abroad, significantly outstripping the percentage who would prefer a UK wedding with more friends and family (28%).

Only one in ten (8%) is worried that it would upset too many people if they got married overseas.

And the increase in popularity of getting married abroad has not been at the expense of the honeymoon. Indeed, the desire to honeymoon abroad has risen significantly in the last two years - from 57% in 2008 to 70% in 2010 - while just 3% would like to honeymoon in the UK.

However, one area in which attitudes seem to be shifting is what people are looking to do on their honeymoon â€“ the proportion saying they want to "just relax" has fallen from 34% in 2008 to 28% in 2010, while around one in eight (13%) would like to do â€œsomething out of the ordinary" while on honeymoon.

Source: Mintel Oxygen Reports

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