



Rekindling Love on the Road: Travel Tips for Couples

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There's the romantic ideal of travel: enjoying an exotic cocktail sitting with your lover on a white sand beach watching a perfect sunset. And then there's the reality of life on the road—the beach is mosquito-infested, the ice in the drink gets you sick, and it's pouring rain. There always seems to be something keeping you from reaching that romantic ideal—you have work to do, the hotel is overbooked, the kids are screaming, and next thing you know you're back at home and you really need a vacation.

With all the mishaps of travel, what can a person do to ensure a romantic holiday? Yahoo Travel talked to the experts and explored some destinations, and it turns out there are just three easy steps to rekindle your romance on the road. Give them a try, you'll thank us later.

1. Find a Romantic Setting

For some, it could be that white sand beach in the tropics. For others, it could be dining in a fancy restaurant in a five star hotel, or toasting a marshmallow sitting on a log by a campfire in the woods. But what matters, says Sarah Escobedo, the “Director of Romance” at the [Royal Palms Resort](#) in Phoenix, Arizona, is not that the setting is “over the top,” but rather that the place has a “romantic story” to it that a couple can both buy into.

“We have guests who just love the fact that our hotel began as a gift of love, a romantic getaway built by a husband for his wife in 1929,” said Escobedo. But for those who don’t find history sexy, the resort also focuses on designing a romantic present: nightly private dinners for two in Via Capello “lovers’ corners” hidden in outdoor spots on the resort grounds, complete with rose petal and candle-lit paths to the table, a harpist for entertainment, and cuisine tailored for your tastes.

But what happens when a couples’ tastes differ? It’s all about compromise. “We had one husband arrange a hike with a picnic dinner on Camelback Mountain for his wife. Turns out she liked the views, but hated the hiking. So we arranged for a helicopter to come pick them up on the summit.” But again, it doesn’t have to be over the top: “Something as simple as emailing wedding photos to display in your room, and requesting your first dance to be playing on the stereo,” as the Palms has arranged for its guests can transform a regular hotel room into a romantic destination.

2. Share a Unique Experience

Even the most romantic setting can become a drag if all you do is watch the evening news and check emails when you get there. This is why many resorts, like the [Ritz Carlton Half Moon Bay](#) in California, design programs of shared experiences (or “[Romantic Interludes](#),” in the resort’s parlance) to help couples make the most of their time away and create new memories together. It could be as simple (and cheap) as a seaside walk along the hotel’s oceanfront paths, or a multi-course meal at their restaurant with a wine tasting. What’s important is that the couple share an experience and “create new memories together,” Escobedo said.

Like choosing a destination, selecting a shared experience that is romantic for two can be a path of compromise. For example, some combine the Ritz’s Couples Spa Service with a round of golf for two. Or combine a hike in the hills or bike ride to town with a splurge in the Club Level lounge for drinks and desserts. Or the odd couple of shared experiences: toasting sloppy s’mores by the Ritz outdoor fire pits followed with a formal afternoon tea the next day.

3. Explore Together

Travel doesn't have to be perfect to be romantic. Director of Romance Escobedo emphasized that the process of exploration itself is inherently romantic—even if the canoe tips over, a rainstorm douses your picnic, or you get hopelessly lost looking for the ultimate winery, as long as you make it home and you do it together, you're returning with something more important than a mileage credit to your account—you're bringing back shared learnings, shared memories, shared stories.

A stay at Casa Madrona wouldn't be complete without a visit to a local vineyard. (Photo: Getty Images)

One example of romance through exploration can be had at the [Casa Madrona](#) in Sausalito, Calif., where the rooms are nice and the setting is serene, but where the hotel really shines is as a base for exploring the San Francisco Bay Area—from the boats in the harbor in front of the hotel, to [Napa wine](#) tours, or just walking the streets and popping into shops, or wandering the piers into curious local [houseboat communities](#), or even in the hotel itself (check out the Pink Floyd room if it's unoccupied.) In fact the Madrona's Cottages seem almost a home away from home, some with kitchen set-ups, the romance begins when you walk out the door. Perhaps a surprise jazz show while dining in a small nearby restaurant, or some curious cocktails in an old [1970s hipster haven](#). You'll return home with stories to share, filling in the lines for each other as you tell the tale of your romantic destination, the shared experiences, and your new discoveries.