

# Equal Right To Love

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## Top Gay HoneyMoon

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### Uruguay

Uruguay approved same-sex marriage in 2010 and remains a welcoming and rarified place for gay travelers. Both the nightlife hotspot of Punta del Este and the boho-chic enclave of JosÃ© Ignacio are less than a hundred miles up the stunning coastline from the capital of Montevideo, whose bustling historic downtown full of faded Beaux Arts buildings is not to be missed. The boutique, gay-owned Casa Sarandi Guesthouse is a great starting point for exploring the city; from there, rent a car and head for the pristine beaches of Carrasco, visit the 17th-century Portuguese stronghold of Colonia del Sacramento, or find a place to go whale-watching along the coast. For something more secluded and luxurious, tuck away inside one of the modern architectural compounds of Playa Vik, or try one of the surprisingly affordable rooms of Casapueblo, the whitewashed cement citadel created by the late artist Carlos PÃ©rez VilarÃ³.

### Kauai

When the Hawaii Marriage Equality Act was passed in 2013, it further solidified Hawaii's reputation as a quintessential honeymoon destination for gay couples looking for someplace simultaneously exotic and familiar. Couples with secluded relaxation in mind might pass up Honolulu's extensive gay-friendly nightlife options for Maui, or better yet, Kauai, which has the more dramatic scenery: the peaks of the Na Pali Coast, primeval rainforest, red-rock cliffs of Waimea Canyon, and Wailua Falls. Book a room at the St. Regis Princeville Resort for unobstructed views of Hanalei Bay, or head to the smaller Koa Kea Resort in Poipu Beach for peak tranquility.

### Iceland

Having given us the world's first openly gay head of state, Iceland's embodiment of the liberal Nordic outlook makes it perfect for LGBT honeymooners whose taste in landscapes skew toward the results of violent geological upheaval. Gay life there centers around the Icelandic capital of Reykjavik, which boasts a handful of gay owned and operated bed and breakfasts, and a number of bold and contemporary spaces, like the 101 Hotel, which boasts nice views of the harbor and old town. A stay in the Blue Lagoon Clinic offers the Iceland-only perk of a spa treatment in a geothermally heated lagoon. With the new wave of budget airlines offering transatlantic routes, fares from Boston to Reykjavik have been known to go as low as \$99.

### Coastal Maine

Though Provincetown, Cape Cod remains New England's traditional gay enclave, Maine, which voted to recognize sam-sex marriage in 2012, boasts the kind of romantic coastline inns that great honeymoons are made of. The White Barn Inn in the seaside village of Kennebunkport offers dinner for two in French-influenced, five-star dining room that also happens to be a timber-framed barn, while the kitchen of the Norumbega Inn, which is situated in a turreted stone castle in Camden, is run by a former Culinary Institute of America professor. Head back out on Maine's coastal Route 1 to find in search of a classic lobster shack, explore the galleries of Portland or Deer Isle, or shove off for an afternoon with any number of sailing companies.

### Vieques

Thousands in Puerto Rico celebrated last Friday's Supreme Court ruling, which also meant marriage equality for the U.S. territory. The island of Vieques, 8 miles off the Puerto Rican coast, lost its "undiscovered" mystique some time ago, but still promises the same languid pace, beaches, and beautiful coves. (Also, nighttime kayaking to the bioluminescent Mosquito Bay.) Splurge on lodgings at the W Retreat and Spa, or splurge even further and rent an entire Prouve-style villa, in the form of the Casa de Crystal. Head back to the Puerto Rican mainland for a day exploring Old San Juan, which is nicely capped off by an evening bouncing around the city's many gay bars and clubs.

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## Amsterdam

Amsterdam offers the only Pride Parade in a canal, with events like the Drag Queen Olympics running from late July to early August. Those same waterways are also great places for a canal cruise at dusk. Excursions to the Van Gogh Museum, or the shopping options along P.C. Hoofstraat, or people-watching in the city's trendy Jordaan District aren't far from any number of design hotels carved into heritage spaces; the Hoxton, in five former canal houses, or the Andaz Amsterdam Prinsengracht, in what was once a library, and is now a wonderland designed by the inimitable Netherlands-born designer Marcel Wanders. Head to Bolenus, in the city's World Trade Center, for "New Amsterdam" farm-to-table cuisine, or hit up Hofje van Wijs for traditional Dutch fare.

## Moorea

Bora-Bora's less popular sister island Moorea has some of the bluest lagoons on earth, and unparalleled vistas from which to view them, making it a honeymoon standby for those who like the idea of renting a full bungalow to serve as a basecamp for exploratory outings. The Sofitel Moorea la Ora Beach Resort and the Legends Moorea both offer such accommodations for wannabe castaways, and the latter has the added bonus of private Jacuzzi terraces. Like Tahiti and Bora-Bora, which are just a short ferry or plane ride away, Moorea has granted LGBT travelers full protection status since France passed marriage equality in 2013.

## Spain

From the Hotel Neri, honeymooning couples are based right in Barcelona's medieval quarter, making a stroll in pretty much any direction a de facto historic architecture tour. From there, hit up Gaudí's park Güell and the Sagrada Família, head to Quimet Y Quimet for world-famous tapas, have a drink in the dimly lit Barcelona Pipa Club, and plan an excursion to the seaside town of Sitges, whose bars, restaurants, and beaches make it one of the most popular gay-friendly destinations in Spain, where same-sex marriage was legally recognized in 2005.

## Greece

Though LGBT activists in Greece are still fighting for marriage equality, the country remains a gay travel hotspot, probably due in no small part to the depictions of homosexuality in the art and literature of Ancient Greece. Young couples might enjoy the abundant gay nightlife offerings of Mykonos; older couples might head to Santorini, where you can rent a traditional cave home on Airbnb, or hole up in the clifftop Katikies Hotel, and from there, visit a few local vineyards, or go snorkeling in the waters off Red Beach.

## Curaçao

While much of the Caribbean is still rife with homophobia, the Dutch island of Curaçao broadcasts a "live and let live" philosophy in its aggressive courting of gay travelers. As with Aruba and Sint Maarten, gay marriage is still not recognized there, but the island is generally known to be the most tolerant of the three, with growing annual Pride activities. It's also the least heavily developed of Dutch Caribbean islands, which makes for a pleasant lack of time-shares and mega resorts. Many Americans and Europeans will relegate Curaçao to one stop on a cruise, but they're missing some truly lovely beaches and vistas. The palm-studded Lions Dive & Beach Resort has oceanfront rooms on one of Curaçao's best beaches, while the Hotel Kura Hulanda and the Avila have more of a grand dame vibe, in keeping with the country's colorful colonial architecture. Don't leave without a visit to Christoffel National Park, and a broad sampling of the eclectic local fare, which French, Dutch, Brazilian, Indonesian, and Japanese offerings.

## Wales

Marriage equality came to most of the U.K. (with Northern Ireland being the prominent exception) in 2013, and there's hardly a better place than Wales for a quintessential country inn experience. Try the Bell at Skenfrith for a four-poster bed in the quaintest refurbished 17th-century coaching house imaginable, or the gay-owned and operated Felin Glais, a

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circa-1650 "Barn and Beast House" in Aberyscir, right outside Brecon Beacons National Park.

## **Paris**

The seductive charms of Paris are legendary enough that it would be pretty hard to go wrong there. Book a high-ceilinged room full of endless toile and Louis XV-style details at the Hôtel Lancaster, or a more modern (but still boldly patterned) one in the Relais Christine, and enjoy a few neo-bistro classics at Septime to fortify yourselves for a night out at some of the best gay clubs in existence.