



*honeymoon*  
**ROAD TRIP**

**FROM THEME PARKS**

**TO THE FLORIDA KEYS**

**START THE CAR, HAVE A BLAST, REPEAT.**

More than 40,000 miles of highways and scenic byways line the Florida map, making the state ideal for an epic honeymoon. Start with Orlando's hidden gems and theme-park fun; then follow I-95 down to Miami hot spots and Keys kitsch. Or head west for three legs of California's Pacific Coast Highway.

**BY VALERIE CONNERS, HOLLY V. KAPHERR & BROOKE SHOWELL**

PHOTO BY ASHLEY MCCORMICK PHOTOGRAPHY

# Orlando

DAY 1-2

## CITY BEAUTIFUL

Fly into Orlando International Airport (MCO), and you'll immediately feel the excitement while passing the Universal Studios and Disney storefronts — but hold your Patronus just a second: Downtown Orlando is magical too.

Pick up your rental car and settle into the **Grand Bohemian Hotel Orlando**, the swankiest digs on Orange Avenue. Filled with plush banquettes and more than 150 pieces of art, the hotel hosts happy hour at its Bosendorfer Lounge, where there's nightly live jazz with a distinctly French-boho feel.

Spend the following day in the neighboring hamlet of **Winter Park**, and wander hand in hand down **Park Avenue**, where people-watching and celeb-spotting is practically a sport (Sir Paul McCartney and Carrot Top are regular sights). Sit on **Prato's** patio for a bottle of rosé and a wood-fired pizza

topped with a luscious, drippy egg that creates a perfect pool for crust-dipping. Or grab lunch at **East End Market**, then walk through **Leu Gardens**, where 8,000-plus species of blooms line paths.

Return to the city's center for a stroll around **Lake Eola**, being sure to rent an iconic swan-shaped paddleboat to take in 360-degree views of the city. Stop for upscale Southern cuisine at **Soco** in the Thornton Park district, where whiskey flights pair well with nearly every dish on the menu.

Cap off the night with a self-paced tour of the city's speak-easies. Call ahead for the passwords to Prohibition-era **Hanson's Shoe Repair** and 1960s-themed **Herman's Loan Office**, both tucked into nondescript alleyways, and sip bourbon cocktails at the unmarked bar called **The Woods**. —HVK



*Day 1 itinerary: Hold hands, eat pizza, canoodle alfresco, feed swans.*



Orlando's cityscape. CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Share cold local brews at East End Market. Signature swans at Lake Eola. It takes 20 minutes for the Orlando Eye to revolve once. Park Avenue is the area's most adorable thoroughfare. Prato pizza is sized for sharing. A rooftop pool, window shopping and a plush bar aren't all the Grand Bohemian Hotel has to offer (3). PREVIOUS SPREAD: Close quarters and a closer smooch.

*Be prepared for big surprises. Orlando's charms extend far beyond Mickey and Minnie.*

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: COURTESY EAST END MARKET; COURTESY PRATO; THE KESSLER COLLECTION; KT CRABB PHOTOGRAPHY (KTCRABPHOTOGRAPHY.COM); THE KESSLER COLLECTION

KT CRABB PHOTOGRAPHY (KTCRABPHOTOGRAPHY.COM); CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: HOTEL DEL CORONADO; SHUTTERSTOCK; PA SEA HOTEL; RICHARD ELLIS/ALAMY; SHUTTERSTOCK (2)

1

## California, HERE WE COME!

ON THREE LEGS OF THE PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY, DRAMATIC SURF, JAW-DROPPING CLIFFS AND STUNNING SUNSETS ARE GUARANTEED.

### LEG 1 SAN DIEGO TO SANTA BARBARA

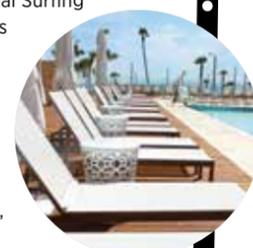
➔ Marilyn Monroe filmed *Some Like It Hot* at San Diego's iconic **Hotel del Coronado** (below, right and left), making it a sizzling spot to kick off your road trip. Built in 1888, the 28-acre Victorian-era resort presides over a private beach on Coronado Island. Get your blood pumping with a morning beachfront spin class, make sandcastles in the afternoon, and wind down with an evening s'mores bonfire. Off island, grab a fresh-caught fish sandwich at Saturday's open-air Tuna Harbor Docks



Market, then sample the best local IPAs with the help of a self-guided tour map of 70-plus breweries (follow @SDBeerNews on Twitter for recs). Romantic clichés are totally allowed on a honeymoon, so it's worth a short detour from



the coast to take a morning hot-air-balloon ride over Temecula Valley's wine country. Heading north, mellow Huntington Beach is a classic O.C. beach town (visit its International Surfing Museum). This is the place to try the Ocean Strand walkway.



The sleek **Paséa Hotel & Spa** (right), opened in June 2016, means "stroll" in Spanish. The hotel's surf butlers can arrange lessons to help you hang ten. —BS

2

# California, HERE WE COME!

## LEG 2 SANTA BARBARA TO BAY AREA

In between tasting pinots along Santa Barbara's urban wine trail, hole up at the **Canary** (below, right and left), with a sunny Spanish-colonial boutique vibe. The swanky rooftop pool lends beach-to-mountain views, and salmon with pork-belly and potato hash is a stand-out item at the hotel's Finch & Fork restaurant. From there, legendary Big Sur twists along a 90-mile stretch of Highway 1. Fill up on gas before hitting the road, and stop for a perfect photo op overlooking the 80-foot waterfall that drops into the ocean at Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park. In charming Monterey, refuel with a soothing Bliss on the Bay lavender and chamomile treatment at the **Monterey Plaza Hotel & Spa**.



At dusk, dress up for a seafood dinner in the glass-domed conservatory of The Sardine Factory before cozying up next to the crashing surf at the hotel's fire pit. Hit the shops at nearby Cannery Row, then ask the hotel to arrange rental bikes or kayaks to spot sea lions along the coastal trail. Back on the road, stop at The Picnic Basket in Santa Cruz to grab lunch and snacks for the drive north. The Bay Area awaits — to ease into city life, spend a night at **The Ritz-Carlton, Half Moon Bay** (right), just south of San Francisco, where the bluffs overlooking the Pacific are a majestic backdrop for golf or horseback riding. — BS



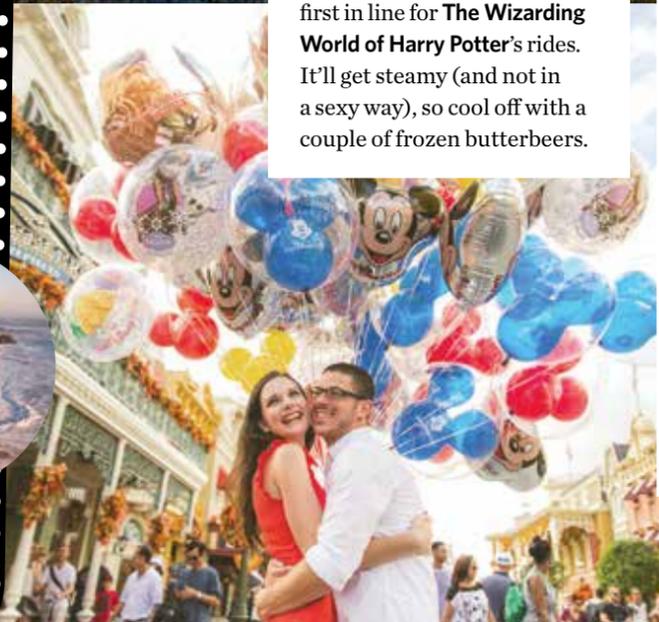
## DAY 3

### UNIVERSAL ORLANDO RESORT

Just 10 miles from downtown, canals and pastel-colored buildings recall Venice at the **Loews Portofino Bay Resort**. Snuggle up on a gondola ride timed perfectly with the opera concert from onsite Italian eatery Bice.

Or venture to **International Drive**, where attractions line both sides of the street. You'll be drawn to the 400-foot **Orlando Eye**, which made its debut in April 2015. Take the 20-minute once-around ride and see all the way out to the Atlantic coast, 60 miles away.

Turn in early and head to the parks when they open to be first in line for **The Wizarding World of Harry Potter's** rides. It'll get steamy (and not in a sexy way), so cool off with a couple of frozen butterbeers.



Scream your way around the lagoon on the spanking-new **Skull Island: Reign of Kong** ride, then take a breather; the **Cat in the Hat** elevated train is a perfect way to slow down and admire aerial views of the **Islands of Adventure** park.

## DAY 4

### WALT DISNEY WORLD RESORT

The next best thing to a Tahitian honeymoon: **Disney's Polynesian Village Resort**. Stay in one of the newly renoed rooms (revamped fall 2015), or really shell out some money for a Bora Bora bungalow, perched over a lagoon, to get a front-row view of the nightly Magic Kingdom fireworks. **Trader Sam's Grog Grotto** is an adults-only tiki bar where you can sample Hawaiian poke and sip a rum-laden Shrunken Zombie head served in, well, exactly that.

Play all day at any of the

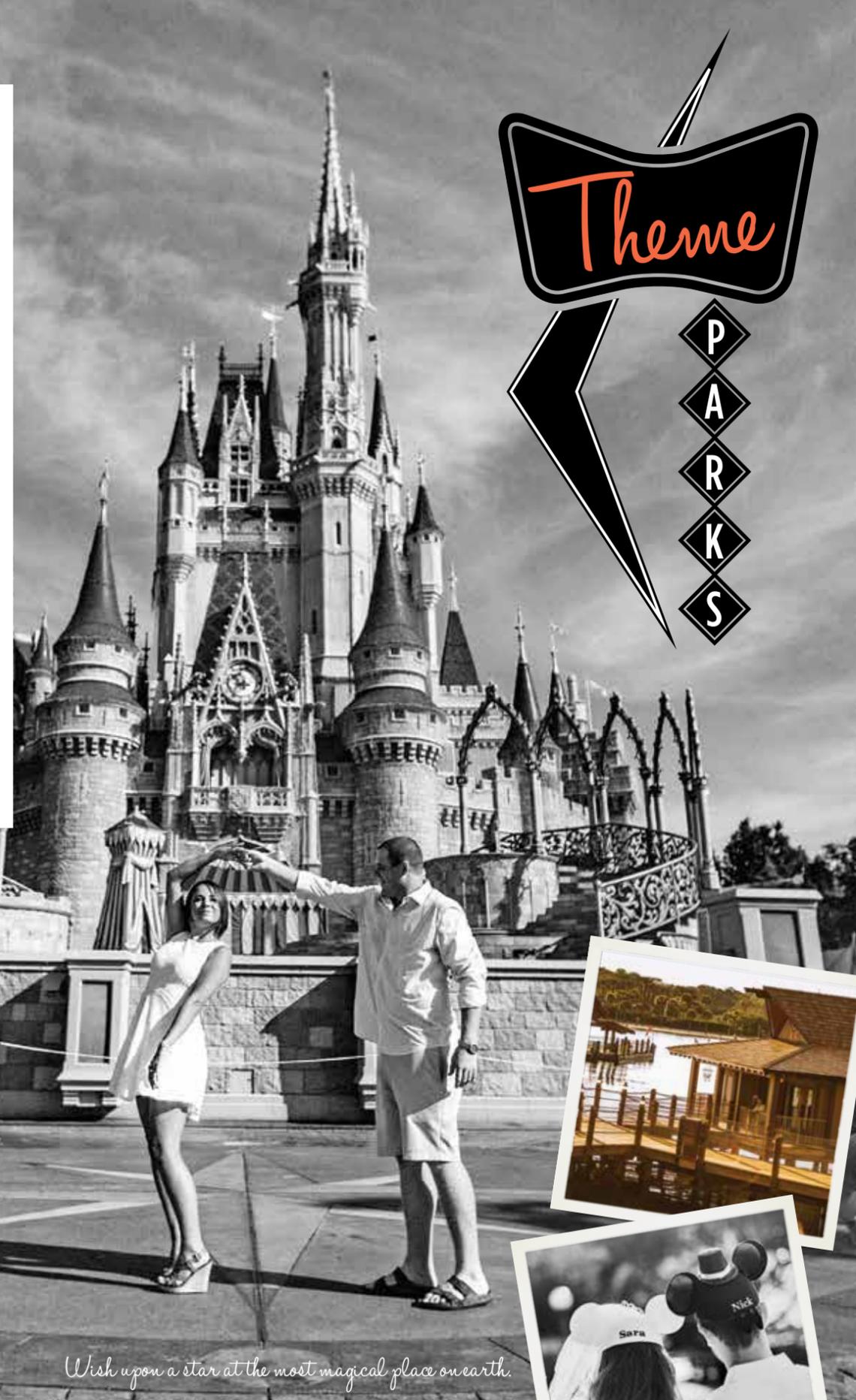
Disney parks — new attractions open all the time — but don't miss the relaunched **Test Track** at **Epcot**, where newlyweds with a need for speed can "build" their own vehicle and then let it rip on the simulator. Duck into the cool, dark wine room at the Italy pavilion for a couple of cannolis and a flight of proprietary prosecco. For *Beauty and the Beast* fans, **Be Our Guest** restaurant in Fantasyland's grand dining room recalls the tale as old as time with French fare in a setting fit for a royal couple. Try the "gray stuff" — it's delicious.

Downtown Disney was rebranded **Disney Springs** in early 2016 and has become the resort area's hottest spot for shopping and dining. The sexy second-floor **Forbidden Lounge** at **Morimoto Asia** is the spot to share some sake and feed each other some of the area's best sushi, looking over the dining room shimmering under chandeliers. — HVK

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: CONCEPT PHOTOGRAPHY (CPTPHOTOGRAPHY.COM); MATE STROSLINE/UNIVERSAL ORLANDO RESORT; JESSICA REBEZ PHOTOGRAPHY; UNIVERSAL ORLANDO RESORT; CONCEPT PHOTOGRAPHY (CPTPHOTOGRAPHY.COM); THE RITZ-CARLTON, HALF MOON BAY; THE CANARY, SANTA BARBARA, CA

CONCEPT PHOTOGRAPHY (CPTPHOTOGRAPHY.COM); FROM TOP: EVAN WENDLER, CONCEPT PHOTOGRAPHY (CPTPHOTOGRAPHY.COM)

The obligatory shot in front of Cinderella Castle. CLOCKWISE FROM OPPOSITE TOP LEFT: The Dumbo ride is classic Disney, while the Rip Ride Rockit at Universal Studios is a scream machine (2). Transform from to-be-weds to newlyweds. Overwater Bora Bora bungalows at Disney's Polynesian Village Resort. Bride and groom mouse ears are a must. Balloons and baes on Main Street U.S.A.



*Wish upon a star at the most magical place on earth.*

3

# California, HERE WE COME!

## LEG 3 BAY AREA TO VANCOUVER

Once you arrive in San Fran, stop for some provisions at Nosh at The Market, a new gourmet food mecca in Market Square. Ditch the car and grab new wheels from Bay Area Bike Share; kiosks are peppered throughout the city. After pedaling across the Golden Gate Bridge, head inside to the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, which reopened in May after a three-year renovation.

The urban-chic **Hotel Vitale** (right), on the Embarcadero waterfront across from the historic Ferry Building, is the spot to sleep.

From the City by the Bay, it's into the wild: Highway 1 along the North Coast expands into rocky cliffs, rugged forest and quiet stretches of sand. Stop in the romantic coastal hamlet of Mendocino, where

2,000-acre **The Inn at Newport Ranch** (left and below) opened a trio of luxury suites in February 2016 (fittingly, 24 redwood trees hold up the structure). The year

2016 marks the centennial of the National Parks — and perhaps the best place to celebrate is Redwoods National and State Parks, where the massive trees (not to mention elk, sea lions and whales) dot the coastline heading toward Oregon. Bring your Wellies and a cute umbrella, and don't rely on Google Maps; cell service is known to be spotty, so use the spectacular sunset as your guiding light. — BS



## DAY 4-5

# MIAMI BEACH

Hop on A1A around Fort Lauderdale, where you'll be steps from the beach the whole ride south. Soon Miami Beach — with its barely there bikinis, pink and turquoise neon, and wide swaths of silky sand — will fill the horizon.

Check into the art deco-style **Delano South Beach**, a beachfront icon often attributed to recasting SoBe as an international hot spot. Breeze past the lobby's billowing white curtains and make yourself at home in a sleek, all-white guest room with whimsical touches, like a minibar tucked into a leather luggage trunk.

Cuddle in one of the hotel's private poolside cabanas or beach loungers — but not for too long. When hunger strikes,

head to Ocean Drive for lunch at **News Cafe**, perfect for people-watching, mango margarita in hand. Then take to the streets on a guided walking tour led by the **Miami Design Preservation League**.

Grab the car and scoot over Biscayne Bay (you'll pass the street where Jay and Bey live) into Miami's vibrant **Wynwood** neighborhood. Pose for selfies in front of colorful graffiti inked by acclaimed street artists, sip flights of craft beer at **J. Wakefield Brewing**, and shop for handmade jewelry and art in galleries that line the stenciled sidewalks.

You're right there, so it's worth slurping down oysters and a happy-hour martini at **Michael's Genuine** before dinner. Slip into something slinky and head to **Juvia**, an Asian-fusion rooftop restaurant boasting the city's

most enviable skyline views.

If your first day in the Magic City leaves you tuckered out, rejuvenate with a Couple's Love Ceremony treatment at the sensual spa at the **Setai** by Thémaé. The Balinese massage, followed by a private dip in a tub filled with rose petals and accompanied by champagne and chocolate-covered strawberries, will ready you for the miles to come. After you've regained your senses, dine at **Byblos**, which prepares Eastern Mediterranean masterpieces — some with a decidedly romantic bent, like "Persian wedding rice" and a rose-infused vodka cocktail. — VC

The vibrant and surreal Wynwood Walls have transformed the neighborhood and are Instagram gold. Say #nofilter!



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Posing with a giant mural in Wynwood. CLOCKWISE FROM OPPOSITE TOP LEFT: The dining room at Byblos. A lighthouse-style lifeguard hut on SoBe doubles as photo backdrop. Dessert topped with gold leaf and rooftop views at Juvia (2). Reserve a cabana at the Delano pool. Each mural inspires a different emotion. News Cafe has been a Miami staple since 1988.

# the KEYS

DAY 6

## UPPER KEYS

Rise early and make your way 90 miles down Route 1 into the Florida Keys, through crowded Key Largo into sprawling Islamorada. Plan a pit stop at **Rain Barrel Artisan Village** to shop for souvenirs, then visit **Robbie's Marina** to hand-feed giant tarpon.

Chow down on conch fritters and a Reuben filled with spiny lobster at **Keys Fisheries Market and Marina** in Marathon. Take a final side trip to **Bahia Honda State Park**, where crescents of natural beach, a former railroad bridge, groves of sea grapes and piercing blue water make for post-worthy pics.

Now it's time to settle into complete luxury. Drive to Little Torch Key, and be whisked by private boat to **Little Palm Island Resort & Spa**. With only 30 suites, this hideaway is primed for pampering.

Swig directly from your welcome bottle of champagne from the privacy of your thatch-roof bungalow's waterfront deck, and savor the silence: TVs and radios are a no-no. Whatever you do, don't miss the opportunity to book a private sunset dinner on the beach flanked by tiki torches. You'll never forget it.

*Head south early — cup of Cuban coffee in hand — for a slice of Florida as authentic as Key lime pie.*

DAY 7-8

## KEY WEST

Thirty miles south, the quirks of Key West await. Continue past the scene on Duval Street to **Ocean Key Resort & Spa**, whose honeymoon suites overlook the nightly sunset spectacle at **Mallory Square**.

The hotel's central waterfront location also means you can hang up your car keys for



the rest of the trip and rent bikes from **WeCycle**, which delivers wheels to your hotel doorstep. Pedaling around the 6-square-mile island is the easiest way to explore sights like the **Ernest Hemingway Home and Museum**, where more than 50 famous cats roam, many of which have six toes. Pack a picnic lunch from **Old Town Bakery** to eat at **Fort Zachary Taylor State Park and Beach**. Then climb the **Key West Lighthouse** for island panoramas (and a sweet spot to steal some kisses).

Taste eight wines as you watch the sun slide behind the horizon aboard **Danger Charters' Wind & Wine Sunset Cruise**, then share tapas at **Santiago's Bodega**. It's worth grabbing an over-the-top chocolate dessert or a glass of wine rimmed with oozy caramel at **Better Than Sex**, though we can't guarantee the moniker's accuracy (honeymoon sex is pretty great, after all). Mood properly set, slip into your in-room jetted tub for two. — VC

Taking a load off at Mac's Sea Garden in Key West. CLOCKWISE FROM BELOW: Little Palm Island is a honeymoon oasis. Feathered friends at Robbie's Marina in Key Largo. The bridge to Bahia Honda State Park. A canopy bed draped in white gauze at Little Palm Island. A fishing pier in Islamorada. Cuban Coffee Queen is a Key West institution. Tangled toes on a secluded SoFla beach.

EVAN RICH PHOTOGRAPHY (BOTTOM LEFT); FILDA KONEC PHOTOGRAPHY (LITTLE PALM ISLAND); SHUTTERSTOCK (FINDING LIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY); LITTLE PALM ISLAND; SHUTTERSTOCK

FILDA KONEC PHOTOGRAPHY (FROM LEFT); SHUTTERSTOCK (SAMMY TODD DYESS)

