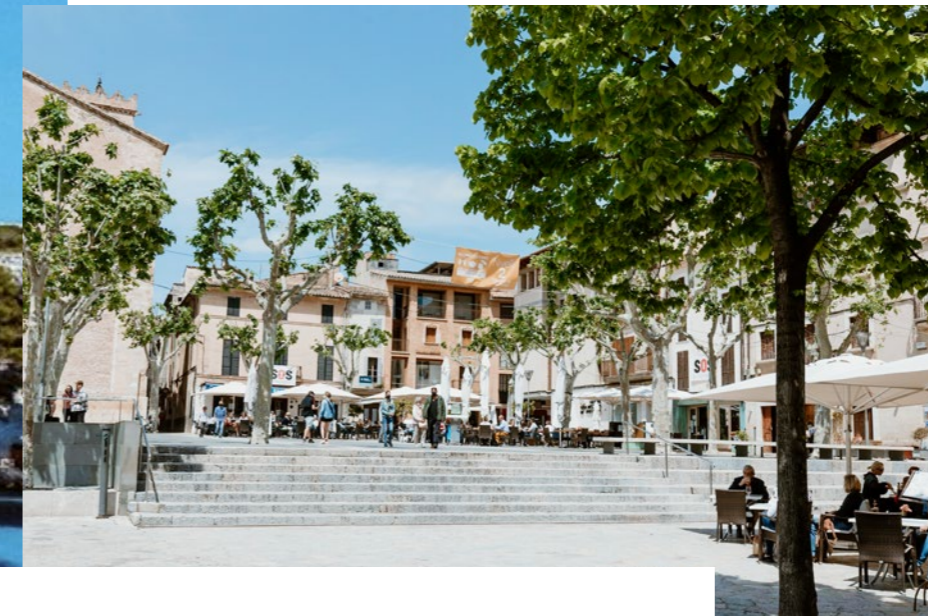




# HONEY, WE'LL TAKE THE KIDS

AFTER A COVID-PROLONGED ENGAGEMENT, HANNAH NATHANSON HEADED TO MALLORCA FOR A HONEYMOON 2.0 WITH HER HUSBAND AND A VERY DEMANDING, BUT EQUALLY CUTE, PLUS ONE

PHOTOGRAPHS: REBEKAH DE VUNSLASH, THE HONEYMOON COAST



LOVE ISLAND CLOCKWISE FROM OPPOSITE: THE TURQUOISE WATERS OF CALÓ DES MORO; THE PLAÇA MAJOR OF POLLENÇA; DAY BEDS AT MURO BEACH HOUSE; THE AUTHOR WITH HER SON

FIRST IT WAS JAPAN, THEN IT WAS THREE WEEKS TRAVELLING around Mexico, trekking through jungles to Mayan ruins and lounging on deserted beaches until our skin felt crispy from the sun and sea. The plan was that we'd save up after our 2020 summer wedding and then use the following Christmas break for an adventure-packed honeymoon to a country neither myself nor my husband-to-be had ever been before. We'd envisaged several weeks spent on the move, exploring new places, punctuated by stays in budget-blowing hotels, where we'd sleep until we woke and soak in the bath for hours, indulgently plotting the next chapter of our lives together.

But the three-week adventure getaway never happened, and for that matter neither did our wedding, or at least not quite as we'd planned it. If there's one thing the pandemic taught me, it was to manage expectations, particularly when it came to organising nuptials. In the end, we postponed our big day not once but twice and, after our 2019 engagement, we finally tied the knot in front of a hundred family and friends in a 14th-century monastery in rural Suffolk last year. Among the guests, and a surprise addition to the seating plan, was our 18-month-old son, who was born during the second lockdown. The wedding was as much a meet-and-greet for him as it was a celebration of our love, which had now multiplied in unimaginable ways.

Despite desperately wanting to be the type of parents who would honeymoon in the Himalayas with their child strapped to their backs, high on life and adrenaline, the past year and a half had quite frankly been enough of an adventure; we were tired and, as it turned out, *not* those kinds of parents. So, when it came to planning our honeymoon in between writing our vows and choosing an outfit for the newly appointed, barely walking ring bearer, our expectations shrunk once more. It needed to be a European break (the shorter the flight, the better) and we would go for five days maximum: the mere thought of packing for any longer while organising finishing touches for the wedding day threatened to bring out the bridezilla in me.

We briefly considered signing up to our first-ever all-inclusive, child-friendly – hello, kids club! – resort. But as one colleague, and well-travelled parent, put it: 'It's fun going on holiday with your own kids, but you don't want to go on holiday with everyone else's kids.' My husband and I have always loved going to

Mediterranean islands, so we quickly settled on a villa holiday (friends insisted that villas and children were a brilliant match) on the Balearic island of Mallorca. I'd been once before on a cycling trip with a group of women I'd never met and loved exploring the island's inroads on two wheels. My husband, more of a beer man than a bike man, had never been, but was excited by the Mallorquin culinary scene of fresh seafood, almond-rich pastries and cava.

One of the things that made us fall in love with Mallorca is that it's a place of perspectives: it boasts both the majestic Serra de Tramuntana mountains as well as an incredible coastline, dotted with secluded coves and calm, clear water. We were heading to Platja de Muro on the northeast of the island, a 45-minute drive from the capital Palma and known as one of Mallorca's best beaches, with golden sands and easy-to-reach bars. Once we'd had the predictable argument about installing the child seat in the hire car, we found ourselves cutting right across the island, lapping up first impressions: views of ancient olive groves and windmills, and the welcoming chimes of grazing sheep's bells.

Our home for the week was Muro Beach House, near the towns of Pollença and Alcúdia. One of a few private properties that sit right on the shoreline, the house's back garden was an exclusive beach with soft, cream sand and super-sized day beds surrounded by white linen curtains – which we quickly identified as the family base. As soon as we walked into the marbled, James Bond-worthy living space and looked out at the view, our son squealed 'sea', which he continued to say every time he saw the incredible aquamarine waters. His constant marvelling – at the water, at the sand, at the huge walk-in shower room – was infectious, and made us see things through his eyes with a heightened >



PARADISE FOUND  
CLOCKWISE  
FROM ABOVE:  
THE ENTRANCE TO  
ALCÚDIA OLD TOWN;  
A CURTAIN STALL AT  
ALCÚDIA MARKET;  
THE STUNNING  
MALLORCAN  
COASTLINE; THE  
CHURCH OF VIRGEN  
DE LOS ÁNGELES  
IN POLLENÇA



appreciation for everything. We might not have been able to lie in or lounge in the midday sun, but we quickly began to realise that honeymooning with a one-year-old was slowing things down in a good way.

As we settled into familymoon life at Muro Beach House, waking up (at 6am) to the sun rising across the bay, we thanked our friends who had advised us on a villa holiday. They were right: we instantly felt like locals and slipped into a gentle routine of deserted dawn swims, making, and then quickly dismantling, sandcastles and heading out for morning trips to explore the nearby towns before the May sun got too hot.

Market days are a big thing in Alcúdia old town and, because we were up early, we could get there before the crowds, taking our time to snake around the vibrant fruit and food stalls before settling down at one of the coveted tables outside Café Elionor in the town's centre. A favourite with the locals, this small, traditional café serves freshly baked Mallorquin pastries, including deliciously soft and airy *ensaimada*, which are coil-shaped and

made with pork lard. Sitting with a pastry and a strong coffee, watching the world go by while our son flirted with cooing marketgoers (much to our delight, the Spanish seemed to welcome toddler chaos wherever we went), I felt lighter than I had in months and thrilled to be surrounded by my family.

Although we were happy to embrace the mayhem and be led by our son's routine, we also planned to have a few hours to ourselves that weren't just nap times. Simpson Travel, which looks after Muro Beach House, recommended we try the trusted babysitting service Jelly and Ice Cream, which operates in various holiday destinations, including the Balearic Islands and several ski resorts in the French Alps. Any feelings of guilt we felt leaving our son with Meg – a wonderful Welsh woman who arrived with a bagful of craft-making materials – for a few hours one morning instantly dissipated as we sped away in the car and headed inland

towards Sineu, a hilltop town located in the very centre of Mallorca, which was once its capital. Its lively and sprawling market has been going for 700 years and uniquely includes live-stock and farm animals from doves to piglets. We skipped the guinea-fowl stall but did barter for some brightly coloured wicker baskets. Childfree, we were able to carefully wind our way through the maze of stalls, not stopping for snack time but nibbling on huge, bright-red cherries and delicious *gató de almendras* that left us with sugary moustaches.

Before getting back to the beach house and, most likely, a gallery's worth of toddler artwork, we stopped at L'Épicerie, a nearby delicatessen in Alcúdia stocking everything from mouth-watering jamón to local cheeses and wines. (It's the kind of place where you go in for olives and come out with over €100 worth of delicacies that will last a lunchtime but make you swear never to buy wafer-thin ham from Sainsbury's again.) We ate lunch together outside in the shade, enjoying the laziness and sipping on refreshing Radler beers.

The last time I'd been to Mallorca – after days of non-stop cycling – I'd had a massage from an incredible therapist called Amanda Noel Woolston, who had a certain touch that made me suspect she might possess a sixth sense. Naturally, I was thrilled when I tracked her down through her company Reflexology Mallorca, and she was happy to come to the beach house to give us both a therapeutic massage. As our son napped, Amanda set herself up near a wide-open balcony door overlooking the sea (having been to various private villas on the island, she said she'd never been to one with such an amazing view) and we both melted away under her magical powers.

From then on, we seemed to float through the rest of our stay,

not aiming to do too much in a day but delighting in late afternoon strolls through the nearby S'Albufera Natural Park and trips to the picturesque towns of Pollença and Santa Margalida, where we sat in sleepy squares drinking freshly squeezed orange juice, watching our son's eyes light up as he inhaled his first ice cream or munched on previously forbidden crisps.

On our penultimate evening, Meg from Jelly and Ice Cream came back to babysit and we treated ourselves to a date night. Before our dinner reservation at neighbourhood restaurant Figueret, we headed to the beach with a chilled bottle of cava and leftover olives from our deli run to watch the sky change colour over the darkening sea. Twilight has always been our favourite holiday hour, and it felt special to be able to wholly enjoy the moment; our makeshift apéritif reminded us of our early days of dating. When we finally made it to the restaurant, we ordered a huge seafood paella, which was served in a traditional cast-iron paellera that was so big it needed its own table and server.

A couple of months after we'd returned from our trip to Mallorca, everyone's favourite boomerang couple J-Lo and Ben Affleck were pictured with their children on a familymoon in Paris. It looked like they were having a great time, embracing the modern way to honeymoon, where everyone's invited. Back in London, we drifted through the entire summer in a post-wedding bubble, realising that managing holiday expectations is no bad thing: we saw and did things we wouldn't have taken the time to appreciate had it just been my husband and I, and we still came back relaxed to our core. One day we might make it to Mexico or Japan, maybe for our 'retirementmoon'. I'd say no kids allowed, but I'm not sure I really mean it. □

## SAY I DO...

THE ALT-HONEYMOONS TURNING TRADITION ON ITS HEAD



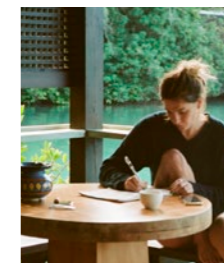
### THE WORKING-MOON

After tying the knot, the designer Jacquemus craved a return to work: 'We have been talking about sugar plums for the last month and a half. Now I would like some professional conversations!'



### THE BUDDYMOON

The fashion PR Rachael Grayer invited no fewer than 28 of her friends to Italy to join her and her husband on their 'buddymoon', hiring an 18th-century Tuscan villa to house everyone.



### THE BACK-TO-ROUTINE HONEYMOON

When ELLE contributing editor Camille Charrière went to Jamaica, her honeymoon offered order: morning pages, daytime journaling, swimming and 'blissful, slow living'.



### THE SOLO HONEYMOON

For Jamie Klingler, the co-founder of Reclaim These Streets, a pre-wedding break-up didn't stop her from booking a solo, month-long trip to the Maldives. Who said one can't be fun?



### THE PARENTMOON

When Brooklyn Beckham and Nicola Peltz got married, it wasn't David and Victoria who showed up on their Italian honeymoon but Peltz's parents and brother. Sounds cosy.

PHOTOGRAPHS: THE HAPPY JETLAGGER, EVAN BOLLAG/UNSPRASH, SHUTTERSTOCK, COURTESY OF CAMILLE CHARRIERE, GETTY IMAGES, INSTAIMAGE.COM