Desert Island DIVA

TIPS AND TRICKS FOR HOT WEATHER HONEYMOON GLAMOUR

By Carolyn Gerin

Your wedding: You were cosseted, corseted, exfoliated, rejuvenated, subtly highlighted, glycolically peeled and were rendered ultimately, stunning. Your groom was on time, the tux fit, he wasn't hung over, he did and said everything on cue and you can't remember being happier. Even the best man (the outlaw from college) behaved himself and gave a toast, not a roast. Bravo! You lived through that glorious blur called "the big day."

You're exhausted. You got a Jack-in-the-Box cheeseburger at a drive-thru on the way to the honeymoon suite, and passed out from sheer fatigue, practically in your gown. Now all you have to do is pour yourself into aisle C and wing your way to a sandy, warm, tropical island for 2 weeks. You want to look fabulous on your honeymoon, but you can't summon the energy to even swivel up your lipstick, and believe me, we understand.

To that point, I have developed a few strategies to make your travels a bit breezier. You want to feel and look good, but without the brutality. Everything I mention, I've done, used and bought. When it comes to products, I sleep around. I like products from the drug store and from YSL. I'm agnostic: I don't care if a multi-national makes it or a female tribe in the rainforest — if the miracle product in question covers up a particularly nasty zit, sign me up.

Hugs not Drugs

You're in paradise, but you have a Herculean hangover, or a sinister rash from a bug bite. Think you can just hail a cab and run to Walgreen's? Think again! Pack a desert island pharmacy to address the myriad health situations you encounter stateside. Lesser mortals have been felled by diarrhea.

Excedrin: Cures hangovers, and is loaded with caffeine to get you back in the game.

Imodium: One false bite, and you could be on the toilet for 6 hours without this stuff.

Tums with Calcium: You don't need Imodium, but your stomach hurts – a little. Intestinal gas goes with indigenous food, culture, climate, and heat. Tums neutralizes this.

Airborne: I would not enter the Avian Flu-era world of coach class without it. Loaded with Echinacea, zinc, vitamin C, and B-12, you actually have a fighting chance of fighting off whatever that mutant in seat C-12 just coughed at you (without covering his mouth). Dissolve in water and bottoms up. Repeat mid-flight.

Emergen-C: To aid and abet Airborne, this daily pick-me-up protects the immune system and joints in a fizzy, Tang-like elixir. Loaded with vitamin C and glucosomine, it keeps you supple and strong for all sorts of contortionist activities.

Protective Services

Remember the bad old days of baby oil, iodine, and Hawaiian Tropic SPF-Zero? Those days are over, darling. A little common sense will go a long way to protecting the youthful looks. We need to use sunscreen, but we don't need to look like a zinc oxide-iced Danish. Also, what is it about your skin when you hit your 30s? Aren't we supposed to be out of acne-land? What the hell is Rosacea anyway? Why am I peeling like a banana? Why does this sunscreen burn and cause a rash when it's supposed to protect me from that very condition? If any of the above issues vex you, here are a few products that take care of your skin like a band of Visigoths, and help you look lovely in the process.

Biafine Creme: Used on chemo patients and burn victims, Biafine is the most powerful sunburn antidote in existence. Après application, the next day, the burn practically vanishes. From France, (like my husband Laurent), Biafine is sublime, delivers, and is under the radar.

You want to look fetching, fabulous and yummy on your honeymoon, but you can't summon the energy to even swivel up your lipstick...

Skin-So-Soft: is Avon's 5-star general of lotions that kept the sand flies off our troops in Desert Storm. Maybe it's because it smells like one part Pine Sol, and one part Car Tree Freshener, all I know is that it works. Not sold as a bug repellent, it has become one, albeit an underground beauty secret. And if it's good enough for the Marines, it's good enough for me. The best part? You don't have to walk around like a sticky citronella candle and get greasy bug spray all over your cute sundress.

Cetaphyl: Those cosmetic counter divas can talk until their lipstick bleeds, but they'll never sell me a cleanser that's better for your skin, gentler, grease free moisturizing without grease, and non-comedogenic than Cetaphyl.

Ultra-C Cream: Developed by Dr. Farnad Fakoor of Rejuvenation Studio in SF, this Nobel Prize- worthy miracle cream offers protection against pollution, skin cancer, free radicals, sun damage (past and present), and is an anti bacterial that actually heals blemishes tout suite. Derived from cabbage, this special C-extract formula doesn't sting or burn like some C-creams do, offers cytotoxin activity on cancer cellsfirms and lifts, and is so lightweight, you can use it under makeup or sunscreen. www.rejuvenationstudio.com.

Anthehelios XL Fluide Extreme: Powerful SPF 60 facial sun block is lightweight, non-comedioagenic, and dermatologist recommended. It's a sunscreen and moisturizer perfect for sensitive skin, acne and eczema prone gals.

Aquaphor: Protects the skin with a thin layer of pure waterproof moisture. I slather on a thick layer before I put on the SPF 45 Sunscreen below. I use this for a morning or afternoon surfing session. The Aquaphor seals the skin off from the sunscreen (which can be sometimes irritating to sensitive skin).

Skinceuticals Sport SPF 45: For the active lifestyle, this cream is waterproof, sweat proof and non-comedioagenic. I use it on every inch of exposed skin when I'm in the water. It doesn't cause breakouts, or make your eyes water and burn.

Hazelettes: Cooling pre-moistened witch-hazel and aloe complexion pads wipe off sludgy sunscreen at the end of the day, or cool you down on a broiling hike. One container is enough for a trip and wonderful against the skin.

YSL Instant Pur Gommage: I could write a screenplay about this product, but I'll keep it brief: this is one the 10 best products of all time. I am so paranoid that they'll discontinue it, that I check with the YSL people periodically. It removes dead cells, stops peeling, moisturizes, and leaves you with a buffed glow (without granules), which can irritate skin.

Smashion Maven

You don't need as much clothing as you think you do. But you do need some innovation, a little bling and a lot of swing. So what's your tropical trousseau going to include? There's nothing worse than channeling the whole St. Barts-Izod-Chanel-Audrey look and when everyone else looks like they've been living in a tree hut with dreadlocks and surfboards. Easy and breezy is where I like to take the look for evening: black silky drawstring All That pants from Athleta.com, and a colored vintage slip, (cut off at the hip and hemmed), becomes a hip DIY camisole. Pile on sparkly Czech glass bead necklaces in a variety of colors designed by Donna Davis at Forbeadin.com. Throw on some $5 flip-flops and you're ready for dinner. Or, you can wear a vintage slip with a little cardigan or cotton lawn button down, (unbuttoned of course) from J.Crew. For a bit more Gallic glamour with a beachy edge, team an airy white cotton lace Anne Fontaine shirt with a pareo. While the shirts are a little pricier than J.Crew, the feeling is fresh and European, the weave is open and breezy (for a beach cover-up or a dinner by the sea) and the look is Brigitte Bardot in Capri, not Sally sorority on spring break. C'est magnifique!

Leave your sparkly wedding ring at home in a safety deposit box. Buy a cubic zirconium look-alike for travel.

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You can't always depend on island accommodations to have in-room safes. Bring no jewelry you can afford to lose on your trip, instead go for disposable glamour: colored glass beads, puka shells, and bangles. Besides, the Ivana Trump look is not apropos for Bali — save the drippy diamonds for the Four Seasons or opera night.

Bathing Suit trauma? What vexes you? With Britney Spears and Jessica Simpson looking like stuffed hens, realize once and for all that no one has a perfect body. And you do not have to wear a bathing suit. Luckily in the X-games world, circa 1990, there became this lovely fusion between sports and swimwear. "Technical sportswear," they call it. Leverage this advantage whether you're on the move, or on your ass, and remember, you don't have to show your caboose if you deem it necessary. Nike.com, Puma.com, Patagonia.com, and Athleta.com have cornered the market on stretchy, quick drying technical tops (complete with shelf bra), in a rainbow of colors that do double duty as bathing suit top, hiking shirt, and sexy halter (add a sarong to the halter and you have a hot evening look). Teamed up with a pair of abbreviated board shorts from Roxy, or old-school boys board shorts from Quiksilver, and you are an athlete, not a sun worshipper. You won't look like you are trying to hide figure flaws, because you're too busy: hiking, surfing, sailing, and swimming to worry about some flimsy bathing suit.

For a romantic, sunset dinner you might want to upgrade from flip-flops, but kitten heels are trying too hard. Espadrillesetc.com is a Spanish family-run business that makes the cutest, most durable espadrilles in the universe. Marc Jacobs looks like an extortionist in comparison (he has the audacity to charge $280 for a pair of espadrilles that aren't half as cool as the ones that cost $50 here).

Chicken or Beef?

I almost fell out of my aisle seat last week when on a 4.5 hour United flight to Chicago they tried to pawn off a bag of nuts as "lunch" and sell me a $10 "gourmet" bagged meal that makes 7-11 microwave treats look like haute cuisine. Pre-flight, run do not walk to your nearest supermarket for bottled water, take-out sushi, low fat burritos, bite sized veggies, and fresh fruit.

User Friendly:

Drugstore.com is wonderfulrocks my world. They offer free shipping, and are in partnership with Beauty.com, so you can order most any product you would buy at the cosmetic counter for less (it's best to know your shade in advance of your order). They also offer free goodies you never knew you needed: I got a full size package of toilet bowl cleaner and Caldrea Grapefruit dishwashing liquid just for ordering online! Throw that into the mix of Kevin Aucoin concealer, Excedrin, and sheer blush from Tarte, and you've got a loyal customer. You don't have to go to Walgreen's to stock up on meds that you know they'll be out of during flu season (Airborne, for instance, is never in stock). Also, if a shade doesn't work for you, they'll refund your money, no questions asked.

Dearly Beloved:

It ain't easy looking beautiful and making it all look effortless. To quote Delta Burke in the Broadway production of Steel Magnolias, "There's no such thing as a natural beauty, honey." All the products and ideas I talk about are things I really use and do. I have spent small fortunes trying to find the best stuff out there: ideas, time and money savers, and innovations. The Anti-Bride philosophy doesn't worship at the altar of what celebrities are wearing, or doing. They aren't us. They have stylists, mountains of free product, and armies of people dedicated to making them look fabulous every day they draw breath. We, however, find our own path, with a little spit, glue, and sparkle and somehow whip up something that works wonderfully. It's my wish that you are a vision of gorgeousness and natural beauty on your nuptial adventure. As well, that your honeymoon is a romantic and relaxing time for the both of you, because you deserve it! Bon Voyage! **I Do**

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