



# Hawaiian Celebration

Chinese and Japanese cultures meet on  
an exotic island in the Pacific



ABOVE  
Bliss Creations creative director  
Sonya Yeung suggests Maui for  
couples who want a summery wedding

**AS A SPECIALIST IN  
OVERSEAS WEDDINGS IN  
ASIAN COUNTRIES,**

Sonya Yeung, the creative director of Bliss Creations, has seen so many fairy tales come true. But while the idea of getting married in bare feet on a beach is exotic and glamorous, she advises couples to register in their hometowns, because the wedding market is sealed with layers of red tape in a number of Asian countries. The matrimonial laws in China vary between provinces, while the Philippines requires religious components and Cambodia cannot wed two foreigners.

Out of all the far-flung locales in which Yeung has worked, Hawaii (and specifically Maui) is one of her all-time favourites. “I really like Maui. It’s small enough

to explore and has great activities for guests, like surfing, historical parks, hiking and water sports. It’s very holiday friendly,” she says. “When choosing a destination wedding spot, it’s great that the place is meaningful to you – but also make sure it’s entertaining for your guests, because most of them are incorporating a vacation with your wedding.”

It was also where her clients, Rebecca Ma and Toyohiro Bando, tied the knot. Taking place at the Olowalu Plantation House, the intimate outdoor party of 20 was a celebration of nature, culture and a sweet reminder of the state where Bando had proposed. A direction pole of spots the newlyweds have visited welcomed guests at the front. Beside it was a 60-foot-tall pine tree adorned

with the couple’s photographs, replacing the customary slideshow.

To honour the location, local flowers were the main floral palette of the wedding: orchids and roses hung from above, mums were tied onto chairs and colourful hydrangeas acted as centrepieces alongside white candles. The long dinner table under the canopies added a touch of intimacy to a laid-back banquet.

The true melting pot of culture, however, was in the couple’s favours: a can of Chinese tea stamped with their initials; a *furoshiki* (a traditional Japanese wrap made from a single piece of fabric) bag containing a small Japanese figure; a box of Hawaiian biscuits; and thoughtfully, paper parasols in case the weather took a turn for the worse. ❧