

JAMAICAN! SEAFOOD! BARBECUE! ALL VEGAN!

# VegNews

plant-based food + lifestyle

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PLANT-BASED  
EATS & RECIPES

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A vertical photograph of a tropical landscape. The top half shows a clear blue sky with a few wispy clouds. The bottom half features a bright blue lagoon with a sandy beach in the foreground. Lush green trees, including palm trees, line the shore. The overall scene is bright and sunny.

# Adventure Is Calling

Eschewing tradition, these three couples made their unique weddings entirely their own with epic international locales, multiple ceremonies spanning continents, and incredible vegan food. From the lush jungles of Vietnam to pastoral scenes in Bigfork, Montana to the frozen tundras of Antarctica, these incredible nuptials showcase the power of love ... and veganism.

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*by*  
**ARUKA SANCHIR**

# A GLOBAL LOVE

SARA BLAIR &  
NICHOLAS COMPTON



The wanderlust-stricken couple celebrated their commitment by saying 'I do' not once, not twice, but four times.

## Their LOVE STORY

When Sara Blair left behind the Yukon in 2015 for life on the isolated Marshall Islands off the northeastern coast of Papua New Guinea, she expected to focus on teaching, healing after a breakup, and taking advantage of the fresh start to focus on herself. What she wasn't expecting was to find the love of

her life.

"I met him within a week," she says of the whirlwind romance with fellow educator Nicholas Compton. "We quickly became close friends and moved in together within six months."

The romance continued to grow, culminating in a proposal from Compton. However, with high highs,

came low lows. In 2020, Blair was diagnosed with cancer, putting plans for their dream wedding on hold. But after a year of chemotherapy and a stem cell transplant, Blair's cancer went into remission, and, with a new lease on life, the globetrotters decided to make the most of it with four epic, personal weddings around the world.

## The PROPOSAL

While Compton always wanted to get married, Blair had been against the idea since she was a teenager. However, after reading a feminist essay by Laurie Penny, she changed her mind, realizing how special marriages can be in these modern times, because for many of women around the world, it is a choice, rather than a necessity.

## The WEDDING

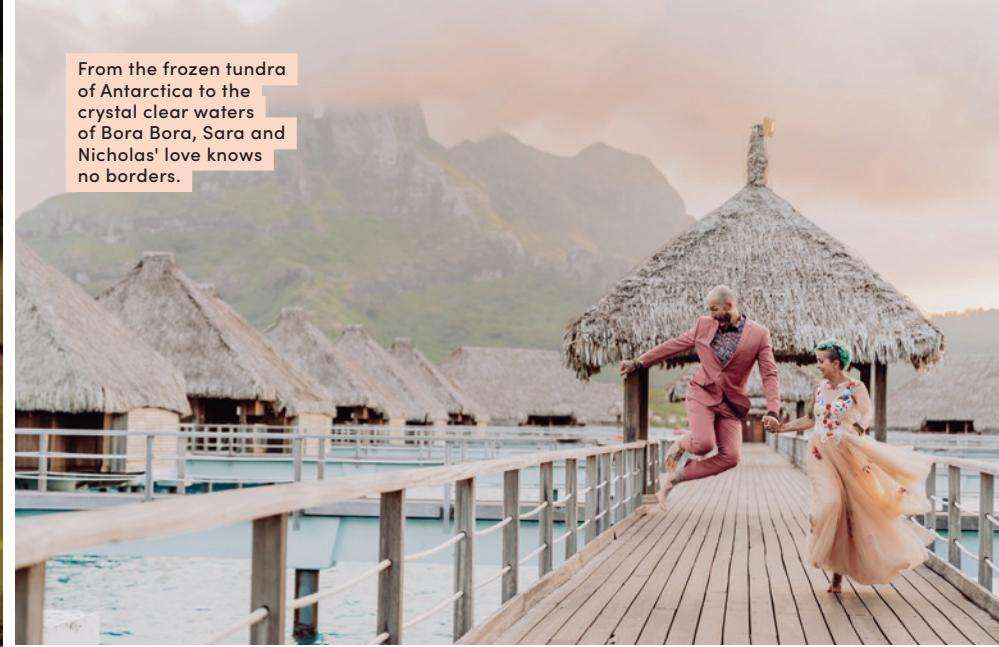
Traveling has always been a passion for both the bride and groom, so the pair wanted a wedding that was a true reflection of their personalities and commitment to each other. "Living abroad and traveling has been our life together," Blair says. "We aren't very traditional, so we didn't want our wedding to be either." In a celebration that spanned over a year, the bride packed a vibrant dress that matched her equally colorful hair for each trip, saying "I do" in four stunning locales. In the spring of 2022, the pair first eloped on a boat in the picturesque Galapagos Islands with 18 strangers they met on a cruise. Then, three months later, the groom stepped off a rowboat onto a Bora Bora beach to be wed in a Polynesian ceremony overlooking the sparkling turquoise waters. In December, the grand adventurers were joined by two friends and a local penguin to be wed by the cruise's captain in the snow on continental Antarctica. For the grand finale two months later, the couple drew inspiration from one of their favorite shows, Netflix's *Vikings*, with a historic chapel ceremony on Viking land in Iceland.

## The LOOK

The groom's peach-colored suit perfectly complemented the bride's unique dress embellished with a sea of rainbow-colored flowers. "When I bought my dress, I was like 'Wait, how do people only wear this once? That's not sustainable, that's stupid. So I said, 'Let's just do a year of weddings,' and every time we booked a trip, I looked into whether we could get married there," Blair explained.

## The MENUS

In the Galapagos Islands, the couple feasted on fresh dragon fruit, passion fruit, and guava. In Bora Bora, a dinner at the St. Regis resort featured vegan



sushi, French toast and pancakes, and *méli mélo*—cooked and mashed vegetables with potatoes and floral oil. In Antarctica, Indian-inspired fare included Blair's favorite korma curry with a medley of vegetables topped with a crunchy *padum*. And in Iceland, the snow hindered the newlywed's dinner plans, so a handful of

snacks from a grocery store held over the happy couple.

### The CAKE

The chef on the Ecoventura cruise surprised the couple with a sumptuous coconut-banana cake, while the St. Regis impressed with a rich chocolate cake accompanied by coconut ice cream.

# A LOVE OASIS

SAVANNAH CARNES  
& ZACH JACOBS



Surrounded by lush greenery and sweeping mountainous landscapes, this dynamic duo wed in an intimate, once-in-a-lifetime ceremony in Vietnam.

## Their LOVE STORY

When Zach Jacobs and Savannah Carnes locked eyes across the room at a UC Berkeley law school party, it was like instant tunnel vision. "We knew from the first meeting that it wouldn't be our last," Jacobs says. "We were one of those really disgusting law school couples after we met," Carnes says. "We took every class together, sat next to each other, took notes together." Veganism played a role early on in their relationship, too. So much so that the now lawyers are both doing pro-bono work for The Humane

Society. As a vegan of eight years, Carnes schooled then-vegetarian Jacobs on how to cook soyrizo during one of their first dates. And the rest is history.

## The PROPOSAL

Jacobs proposed on the beach during a trip to Hawai'i with both families, and the newly engaged couple spent the day snorkeling, exploring the island, and enjoying the sunshine. They ended the idyllic day watching the sunset with their families, accompanied by the sound of the ceremonial blowing of a conch shell.



## The WEDDING

For their international elopement, the couple flew more than 24 hours to Vietnam, where they vacationed for three weeks before embarking on their new careers. "We always knew we wanted to do something a little special and romantic—an adventure. Because what is marriage if not an adventure?" Carnes says. Working with local wedding planners, the private ceremony took place at a lush nature sanctuary in Ninh Binh in Northern Vietnam (the same location that a King Kong movie was filmed), accessible only by a rowboat. Under a colorful arch decorated with pink and orange roses, blue hydrangeas, and emerald eucalyptus—just steps away from a river filled with moss and lily pads—the couple exchanged vows and sealed it with a kiss. Afterwards, they enjoyed an intimate vegan dinner decorated with the same multicolored flowers from the ceremony. Back in the US, the newlyweds opted for a vow renewal and a fun reception in the historic library and ballroom of the German Society of Pennsylvania, dancing the night away with friends and family.

## The LOOK

The bride chose a strapless, lace Stella York wedding dress from Fairytale Brides in Washington, DC, a secondhand wedding salon that donates proceeds to charities, while the groom opted for a green Sew More Couture vegan suit.

## The MENU

Awaiting their return to the resort was a candle-lit dinner of fried yuba spring rolls, vermicelli noodles, and sticky mango rice with coconut milk. For their Philadelphia nuptials, local vegan caterer Chef Lenka Zivkovic pulled out all the stops with charcuterie boards featuring gigantic blocks of plant-based cheese, chicken salad phyllo cups, buffalo cauliflower wings, African peanut stew, mushroom risotto, and smoked beets with yogurt sauce.

## The CAKE

Guests at the Philadelphia reception enjoyed an assortment of vegan doughnuts from Dottie's Donuts in flavors like Boston Cream, Blue Raspberry Warhead, Matcha, Pumpkin Spice, and Sweet Potato Pecan.



The serene backdrop of Vietnam's Ninh Binh sanctuary was well worth the more than 24-hour flight for Savannah and Zach.



# HOWDY, PARTNER

RENATA HENRY  
& ELI DUBER



A playdate between two pups brought this happy couple together, so naturally, both River and Leo were front and center during the wedding.

## Their LOVE STORY

Like a meet-cute scene from a movie, Renata Henry and Eli Duber's dogs, River and Leo, introduced the two outside of their Denver apartment complex one frosty winter morning. "They ran into each other and just couldn't stop playing," Henry recalled. After setting up multiple puppy playdates, the friends took their relationship to the next level on a

first date at a concert at Red Rocks Amphitheater, an iconic open-air music venue built in a rock structure. "We moved in together after a month, and luckily, it ended up working out," Henry laughed.

## The PROPOSAL

After seven years together, the timing finally seemed right once Duber finished grad school. Henry

bought a ring and got down on one knee, much to her boyfriend's surprise. The newly engaged sweethearts celebrated with a champagne picnic at Denver's popular City Park.

## The WEDDING

After months of wedding planning, the couple married at Duber's parents' picturesque property

in Bigfork, MT, with an eclectic theme combining old-school Western and Bohemian styles. Between the scenic lake backdrop, antique furniture atop Middle Eastern-style rugs, and rainbow-colored Chinese paper lanterns, the pair created a charming, warm, and relaxed atmosphere for their 90 guests. Duber's groomsmen dressed to fit the theme with thrifted, cowboy-inspired outfits, while Henry's bridesmaids wore lace maxi dresses all representing different colors of the rainbow. The bride and groom incorporated their beloved canine companions in the ceremony with River as the flower girl and Leo as the ring bearer. "They were part of the whole day—they're the reason we met, after all!" Henry says. After the ceremony, the newlyweds took their dinner on a private boat ride around the lake to soak it all in. "It was really special to take that time together alone." During their first dance to a mash-up of Bob Marley's "Is This Love" and Slightly Stoopid's "Don't Stop," Leo and River ran out to shimmy with the newlyweds under the twinkling stars.

## The LOOK

The groom's all-black cowboy outfit came together from various Western-inspired stores, while the bride stunned in a low-back, lace Christos dress from Brides for a Cause, a non-profit dress reseller that raises funds for women-focused charities. Henry changed into a groovy '70's-inspired lace jumpsuit for the reception.

## The MENU

The entirely customizable, organic menu from Farm to Fork Catering blew away the wedding's mostly non-vegan guests. The cocktail hour included Vietnamese spring rolls with ginger peanut sauce and crispy sesame wontons with curried mango-cilantro yogurt dip. For dinner, a buffet-style taco bar featured two types of fillings: lentil chorizo and sweet-and-spicy cauliflower. A dessert table showcased local Montana fruit ranging from bite-sized huckleberry oat bars to flathead cherry-chocolate cupcakes to blueberry-lemon tartlets.

## The CAKE

Montana cottage bakery The Cake Girl created a classic vanilla cake with buttercream frosting, topped with cherries, raspberries, and figs. The dogs also bit into their own vegan peanut butter-banana wedding cake. 

