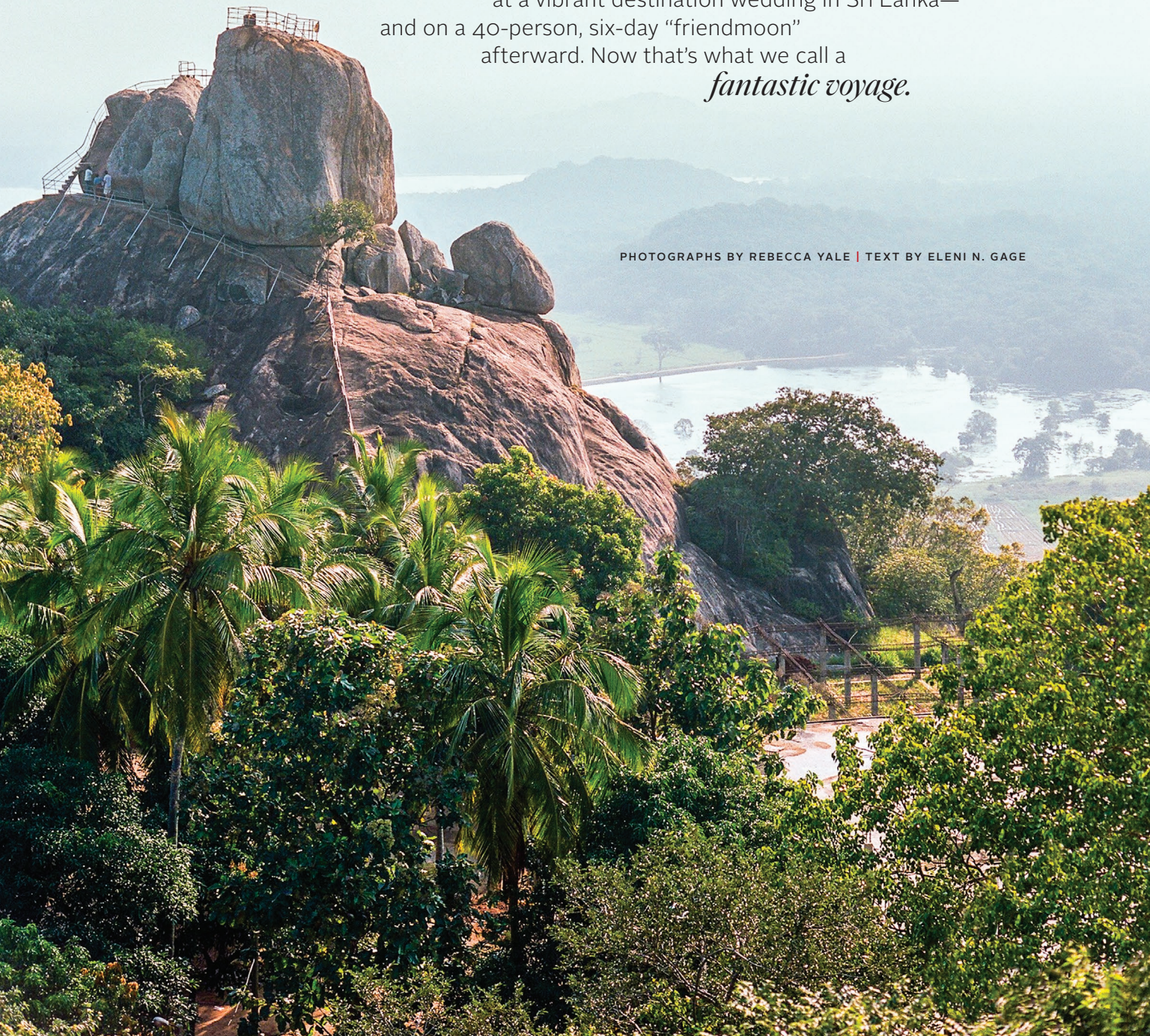


# P♦A♦R♦A♦D♦I♦S♦E

## *found*

After a passion for travel brought them together, this globe-trotting duo shared their wanderlust with 82 loved ones at a vibrant destination wedding in Sri Lanka—and on a 40-person, six-day “friendmoon” afterward. Now that’s what we call a *fantastic voyage*.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY REBECCA YALE | TEXT BY ELENI N. GAGE





## EYES ON YOU

Kelly Kollar wanted a dress she'd never seen on another bride, and found it in this strapless Liancarlo with a tropical-flora pattern. Her husband, Sanjiv Singarayar, wore a blue tux from Joe Black. **Opposite:** One of the most sacred spots in Sri Lanka is Mihintale, where an Indian missionary is said to have converted the king to Buddhism in about 250 B.C.E. A series of cliff-top shrines and caves are connected by 1,840 steps.

**S**ANJIV IS REALLY SMART AND KIND, and well-traveled. And I love traveling,” says wedding photographer Kelly Kollar, putting into words what made her swipe right on Sanjiv Singarayar’s Tinder profile. Her instincts proved spot-on. “He asked me to go to India with him on our third date, a good sign that he was up for adventure.” She accepted the invite, then three and a half years later said yes again—this time to the big question, which Sanjiv popped on a trip to Alaska for Kelly’s 30th birthday. “We took a helicopter ride up to a glacier, which was epic,” she recalls.

Although she’d never been to Sri Lanka, Kelly knew right away that she wanted to get married there. Sanjiv’s parents had emigrated from the island nation to Australia, where he was born, but he’d visited his parents’ homeland many times before moving to New York City to work as a consultant for an Australian bank. “Sri Lanka had family significance for Sanjiv, and a combination of things that were important to me—the tropical climate; the beautiful, vibrant culture,” she says. After coordinating for 16 months with the Sri Lanka-based wedding planners Magical Moments (another great online match), Kelly achieved her dream of “getting away with friends and doing something super-memorable for everybody.”

That something was, for many of their 82 guests, the trip of a lifetime. It started with a welcome barbecue by the pool at the Garton’s Cape Hotel, where many guests had booked rooms, and on the next evening, February 17, 2019, the wedding took place at a private beachfront villa where the couple and some family and friends were staying. Sanjiv’s uncle, a priest, performed the Catholic ceremony, which was followed by sunset cocktails, a seafood feast, passion-fruit cake, and dancing to a live cover band. Then came the fireworks, Kelly’s flat-out favorite memory: “It was the moment I was able to relax and take in how much fun this all was.”

After celebrating into the wee hours, the couple and 40 friends left the next morning for a six-day trip around the country. “We saw wild elephants, visited Buddhist temples, and went to tea estates,” says Kelly, who continued with Sanjiv on to a honeymoon in Bali. And finally the unforgettable trip was over—except for the intrepid newlyweds, whose journey was just beginning.



### COME RAIN OR SHINE

The day before their guests arrived, Kelly and Sanjiv did a casual photo shoot in Galle, a historic Portuguese fort city with a famous lighthouse on Sri Lanka’s southern coast. “It was pouring rain for the first 30 minutes,” Kelly recalls. “We just embraced it and had fun!”



1



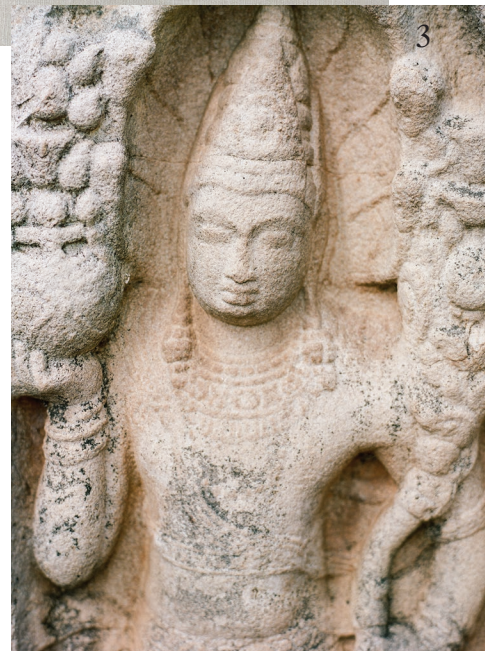
2



5



4



3

## TROPICAL POPS

**1.** Kelly's bridesmaids each dressed in a different jewel tone. **2.** A la Carte Paperie designed the invitation suite, featuring custom watercolor illustrations of the wedding site, Sri Lanka's tea country, and elephants. **3.** One stop on the "friendmoon" was Anuradhapura, a sacred city built in the third century B.C.E. Today, it is full of houses of worship marked by carved guard stones like this one. **4.** Sanjiv gave his six attendants, dad (to his right), and future father-in-law (to his left) Sri Lankan sarongs to wear while getting ready. **5.** Wild elephants were spotted during a safari in Udawalawe.

## VOWS WITH A VIEW

The ceremony took place in the late afternoon on the lawn of the waterfront Villa Indisch, located near the island's southern tip. One side of the pool served as the ceremony site, the other as the reception space and dance floor.





## READY TO GLOW

**1.** A stunning sunset lit up the cocktail hour. **2.** Kelly admired her future mother-in-law's jewelry while getting dressed. **3.** Traditional Sri Lankan *kandyan* folk dancers performed during the poolside welcome party at Garton's Cape Hotel. **4.** Local flowers adorned a ceremony marker. **5.** The groomsmen and bridesmaids joined the couple on the steps of the villa. Tropical flowers in the bouquets, boutonnières, and bridesmaids' hair helped unify the group.





## NIGHT BRIGHTS

- 1.** On the villa's first-floor veranda, guests enjoyed a buffet of grilled lobster, coconut-crusted red snapper, and chili-orange chicken.
- 2.** The colorful escort cards were printed in white and arranged on a dark wooden board for contrast.
- 3.** Crocheted table runners lay beneath clear vessels holding orchids, fuchsia ginger flowers, ferns, and orange bougainvillea and heliconia. Carved elephant favors, covered in sequins and mirror work, sat at each place.
- 4.** Strung lights illuminated the dance floor.
- 5.** Candlelit lanterns floated in the pool; the groom pushed one back into place.

KELLY + SANJIV'S

# EXCELLENT ADVENTURE

## BY THE NUMBERS

11

Countries the couple had visited together before their wedding: Australia, Belize, Canada, China, Guatemala, India, Namibia, South Africa, United Arab Emirates, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

178

Weddings the bride photographed professionally before celebrating her own.

66

The number of guests who flew in from abroad.

1

Inflatable kangaroo that appeared on the dance floor—a tradition at parties among Sanjiv's Australian friends.

35

Revelers who ended up in the pool by the end of the night.

## MOOD MUSIC

Sanjiv and his all-Australian team of groomsmen walked in to "Down Under," by Men at Work, and the bride processed to Van Morrison's "Into the Mystic," sung by a friend who was accompanied on the guitar by a pal of Sanjiv's—the two practiced on Skype calls between New York and Australia. The newlyweds danced to the country tune "Tennessee Whiskey," a nod to a starry night in Belize when they were standing on a dock and the song played on someone's device. "We did an impromptu little dance and thought, *Oh! This should be our first dance!*" Kelly recalls.

“

WHEN KELLY EMERGED FROM THE VILLA, IT WAS AMAZING TO BE STANDING UP FRONT AND SEE ALL OUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS, WHO HAD FLOWN IN FROM AROUND THE WORLD, WATCH HER WALKING DOWN THE AISLE.

”

—SANJIV, ON HIS MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT

## MULTIMOON DISPATCH

The peripatetic pair did a two-night "pre-moon" in Dubai on their way to Sri Lanka. "We stayed at the **Palace Downtown** (*the-palace-downtown.allhotelsdubai.com*), which we chose for its more traditional, Middle Eastern aesthetic, and went on a camel-riding safari, complete with a Bedouin-style dinner and dancing," Kelly says. After their wedding and six-day "friendmoon," the exhausted newlyweds flew to Bali for four days. They chilled at the **Bulgari** in Uluwatu (*bulgarihotels.com*), which "overlooks the ocean from these cliffs," says Kelly. "Every sunset was spectacular. We didn't do much, but we did take a day to go into the cultural hub of Ubud and see the temples and markets."

## HE GAVE HER...

A WOODEN RING BOX WITH TWO ELEPHANTS ENGRAVED ON IT: ONE TO SYMBOLIZE THE COUPLE'S FIRST TRIP TO INDIA, ANOTHER TO REPRESENT THEIR WEDDING LOCALE.

## SHE GAVE HIM...

A vintage compass engraved with the words *My True North* and their wedding date. "No matter what, he's always the way home for me," Kelly says.

## WORDS TO WED BY

"The day is going to be a whirlwind of excitement and activity, and it's important to take a moment with your partner to step away and just absorb it all," says Sanjiv. "After dinner, we went up to the balcony of the villa and spent a couple of minutes taking it all in by ourselves. Then we hit the dance floor!"

## THAT'S A WRAP!

After their bus trip around Sri Lanka, the entire "friendmoon" group of 40 attended one last hurrah, hosted by Sanjiv's parents at the **Grandeeza Hotel** (*grandeeza.com*) in Negombo, complete with a Sri Lankan band and food. The dress code? Saris for all.

## SOURCES

**Photography** Rebecca Yale **Location** Villa Indisch **Catering** Raffles **Event planning** Magical Moments **Flowers** Flowers by Shé **Stationery** A la Carte Paperie **Place cards** Muse by Amarante **Cake** Butter Boutique **Rentals** Mangala Sootra (tables and chairs); Highbury Inc. (flatware) **Bride's gown** Liancarlo **Bride's accessories** Pauletta Brooks **Wearable Art** (earrings); Susie Saltzman (engagement ring); J. Lingnau Jewelry (wedding ring); Lulus (shoes) **Reception dress** BHLDN **Hair and makeup** Dana Mack for Salon Tranquillo **Groom's tuxedo** Joe Black **Groom's accessories** John Henric (bow tie); Satomi Kawakita (ring); Florsheim (shoes) **Lighting** Light Up **Transportation** Red Apple Travel & Holidays