

# I do, again

## Renewing wedding vows in paradise

**CHRIS AND DARA ROBINSON**  
Special to the Toronto Sun

We recently renewed our wedding vows in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. This is our take on the experience and the destination from a his and hers viewpoint:

**HERS:** I am searching for the right word to sum up St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

"Simple" implies a lack of complexity — which understates the diversity you find in the 32 islands that make up this nation. "Unspoiled" is overused, and does not describe the extent to which it is untouched by tourism. "Pure" gets closer to describing the sheer beauty of the place and the authentic Caribbean experience that awaits the traveller.

And it sums up nicely the experience of our vow renewal, which was light on stress and strong on what really mattered — no small thanks to both the breathtaking venue but also the caring, lovely people who facilitated the ceremony and became our family for the day.

**HIS:** There is an inverse relationship in travel between the ease of travelling to a place and the unspoiled nature of that place. And by "unspoiled," I mean the degree to which the destination remains true to its own culture and not homogenized into "Anywhere Ville."

And so St. Vincent and the Grenadines remains

true to its Caribbean roots, the vibrant fusion of native, African and European peoples that epitomises what is so wonderful about this part of the world, and where we chose to confirm our commitment to each other after 30 years of marriage.

**HERS:** De-stressing is an important part of the experience. One St. Vincent hotel cheerfully told us that our toilet wouldn't flush as they were currently filling the swimming pool. Another apologized for the flooded pathway because whilst filling the swimming pool they had "forgotten to turn off the tap." In both cases the important thing was that the pool should be full — time would take care of the rest.

There is no doubt that once you can shrug off life's inevitable hiccups you are a better person for it. And it was in a very relaxed frame of mind that we arrived at the private island resort of Petit St. Vincent for our vow renewal.

Our first wedding had taken place in Girton College Chapel in Cambridge University in the U.K. While a wonderful experience, I also remember stressing over the wedding present registry, guest list, bridesmaids dresses and the like.



Dara and Chris Robinson renew their wedding vows on the beach in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

It's not that I took my marriage for granted after 30 years, but somehow you do take short cuts and rely on "of course you know." So making the effort to go to this beautiful, remote, romantic place and say out loud, in public, that you love each other is very special. And very pure.

**HIS:** There are trips and then there are journeys. Our journey had taken us by big plane to Barbados, by small plane to St. Vincent, by tiny plane to Union Island, and then by speedboat to Petit St. Vincent and the sand cay called Mopion.

Our other journey had taken much longer over time and space as our lives became ever more entwined and inseparable. Here on tiny Mopion, our two journeys came together in perfect unison.

For travel information, see [disoversvg.com](http://disoversvg.com) and [psvresort.com](http://psvresort.com).

**HIS:** This time around there was no doubt what I would wear. I am "Mr Tilley" when it comes to clothes. I live in this informal travel gear and my blue shirt and khakis were topped off with the crowning glory of a famous Tilley hat.

Dara also chose Tilley — a simple white top and skirt fell un-creased from the suitcase after a week, and she looked gorgeous.

As for footwear — it turned out that, despite Dara's womanly obsession with shoes, barefoot was the only way to go.

I'm a guy, and half British too, so a stiff upper lip normally sees me through occasions such as this. But here I am on a tiny sand cay called Mopion, in the middle of the Caribbean, hand-in-hand

with a lady who has no business looking as beautiful as she does after 30 years of being married to me, and my Travel Show radio voice cracks as I renew my commitment to her in front of Father Andrew, our two witnesses and the gentle swash of turquoise waters on the pure white sands.

**HERS:** Stripped down to the bare essentials of a minister and two witnesses, the ceremony was quite lovely and very moving. The manager from Petit St. Vincent came along as a witness as did Janice, who did my makeup and also provided motherly hugs. There wasn't a dry eye on the island.

In which State will you find the following:

The birthplace of Elvis?

60 miles of white sand beach with a Space Center close by?

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ANSWER:

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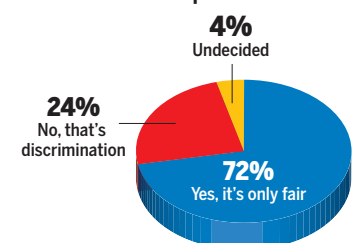
### This week's question

Have you ever been to a destination wedding?

- Yes, I've had one
- Yes, I've attended one
- No, I was invited but unable to attend
- No, my friends and family have married locally

### Last week's results

Should overweight travellers pay for two seats on a plane?



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