

▣ Babymoos on the rise

Sunday, 18 | 04 | 2010 ; Source: The Sunday Times

By Kezia Toh

Before the sleepless nights and dirty diapers hit, mum-to-be Ng Kai Hoon, 24, and her husband, civil servant Tan Wei Jie, 27, whisked themselves off on a break that is becoming a trend here – a “babymoon”.

The couple went on a five-day trip to Bali in Indonesia earlier this month. Ms Ng is four months pregnant with her first child.



Parents Alice Wong and Jonathan Loh holidayed in Perth just before their baby was born.
PHOTO: COURTESY OF ALICE WONG

The housewife explained: “We might as well travel now and have time to relax because it will be very hard to travel in the next one or two years, and it would not be nice to leave the baby with my parents or in-laws.”

The desire to enjoy a last romantic getaway before the realities of parenthood make the period of peaceful expectation a distant memory, appears a growing attraction for expectant couples.

The honeymoon may long be over, but with a cutely named babymoon, it is also a chance to celebrate the coming of the first child.

Couples do not need to take a break overseas to enjoy it. Three hotels here are picking up on the trend, offering babymoon room packages.

They are rolling out promotions for babymoon weekend stays, for couples who want a getaway without the hassle of travelling.

At The Regent Singapore, mummies- and daddies-to-be will soon be able to get two nights' stay and learn to whip up nutritious baby food at a cooking class at Italian restaurant Basilico. To be launched next month, the weekend staycation package is going for \$1,050++.

Earlier this year, the Singapore Marriott launched a Babymoon Room Package (from \$298++), while M Hotel is prepping a Made For Babe @M package (from \$175++) for babymoon couples next month.

Some couples, however, prefer to make one last dash overseas before being grounded by junior.

Civil servant Alice Wong, 29, and her husband, manager Jonathan Loh, 33, cut it close with their babymoon plans. Their baby boy was delivered 10 days after their return from a holiday in Perth, Australia, last year.

"My parents made a lot of noise because they were worried about possible complications. But we thought of it as one last holiday before everything changes completely," said Ms Wong.

She wore a maternity belt attached to her seatbelt, which cushioned the stomach and made the five-hour flight more comfortable.

Her doctor also recommended static exercises she could do from her seat, to stretch her legs and boost circulation.

Then 35 weeks along, she got the thumbs-up with a letter from the doctor stating that she was fit to travel. But the hiking and cave visiting that she engaged in were probably not what the good doctor had in mind.

"The activities were quite strenuous that even those who were not pregnant were complaining of body aches," she says. "But of course, I did not tell my parents. They'd have flipped."

However, the idea of travelling while pregnant is not for everyone.

For senior executive Angela Yeo, 29, the possibility of complications occurring far from home is a worry. She is seven months along with her first child.

"If there is an emergency, it might be difficult to get medical attention, whereas if you were at home, you can just go to your doctor," she says.

For her, a staycation babymoon at a local hotel sounds just the ticket. She says: "It is like having time away but with peace of mind."

Tips for mums-to-be

- Avoid travelling on long flights that last more than five hours if you are over 32 weeks pregnant, and try to avoid flying after 36 weeks, says Dr Julinda Lee, 38, obstetrician and gynaecologist at Pacific Healthcare Specialist Centre.
- Expectant mothers travelling on planes could wear pressure stockings, move their legs regularly to boost circulation and avoid alcohol, advises Dr Christopher Chong, 40s, obstetrician, gynaecologist and urogynaecologist at Gleneagles Medical Centre.
- If you are thinking of a spa massage, beware that massaging the tummy can cause contractions and is best avoided, says Dr Wee Horng Yen, 40, consultant obstetrician and gynaecologist at [KK Women's and Children's Hospital](#).