



Vivaah Sanskar

Wedding Guide

Karimah- Clinton Wedding Films

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WEDDING FILMS

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Introduction

When we started capturing hindu weddings, I had probably been to 2-3 hindu weddings in my entire lifetime as a guest before and all were from the outskirts, a visitors perspective, it was either too long or too many people to stick around till the end. We were hired for both photography and videography and I had never seen the rituals in detail before which seemed repetitive but long and complicated when I did.

Despite the confusion we were still able to capture some great video shots as the couple were really romantic with each other and smiled a lot. As we did another and another, they were all not so easy as some of the couples were tense and showed their confusion on their faces. I started digging to get some more information on the rituals as I began to see the same basic steps with minor variations. My questions to couples or parents often went unanswered, which made me realize that most of the primary people taking part in the ceremony didn't really understand the reasons behind their actions but was advised by an elder, naaw (pundit assistant) or pundit.

As I undertook, intense research into the symbolism of each ritual in the ceremony my whole outlook changed, it really struck me on how absolutely romantic and intense each step making up an entire storyline was and there we were trying to capture a "love story" yet all everyone saw was the nervous feelings on the faces of the bride and groom having 150 plus people gaping with judging eyes.

Me, being married myself and with a multi religious background, I really appreciated this new found knowledge on the ceremony. I started really appreciating the moments of the wedding despite its length and getting caught myself in the emotions that I assumed the couple were having too. There were moments of my clients weddings I became really emotional about and even cried while holding a camera as they saw each other for the first time that day and the emotions after all the preparations they had made proceeding this day, with popular Bollywood film songs playing in the background about love which made it so more movie-like.

The Hindu ceremony is very detailed and handles all aspects of male and female energies. It is a transformational and emotional undertaking but yet the couple, the videographer/photographer nor family understood. This lack of knowledge on all parties made our jobs really hard and it made the whole process more stressful for the couple and their families.

Finding Information on the 'true' meaning of the rituals behind Hindu weddings aren't easy, especially if you're asking friends and family or using google to find local terms you've heard. We have not just witnessed over 140 plus Hindu multi day weddings alone but we've spent over 5000 hrs reviewing and editing Hindu wedding footage and we've done external research comparing traditions over various countries and Hindu communities. In this book we've stripped away all the differences and expounded on the core values and spiritual side of the ceremony in which we know you will appreciate.

The great Hindu scripture, the Upanishads, describes the male passive force of the universe, the Purusha and the female active force of the universe, the Prakriti to be constantly drawn to embrace and fuse with each other.

The joining of these is described to be the root and seed of all creation including the supreme being Brahman. This “urge to merge” of these inseparable forces with one another is not to be confused with primal sexual attraction but rather a much more deep-seated mental and spiritual connotation to complete one another or make a whole. This process of two becoming one in the Hindu tradition is revered as a means of awakening and enlightenment so much so that it is surrounded by religious rituals and responsibilities.

Did you know 5000 years ago, your forefathers undertook the same ritual to be married to their spouses?

At the heart of all the pomp and glamour, which is a modern Hindu wedding the core steps performed around the world by pundits to join husband and wife together are centuries old.

In Hinduism when two people find each other for marriage, it is because of their karmic actions. Both their individual destinies now become intertwined together and they must seek to find mutual liberation (moksha) together as one unit.

It represents the joining of two souls into one destiny, the creation of a new family outside of one's parental home. Every Hindu wedding is considered a symbolic representation of the marriage between Vishnu and Lakshmi. The traditions and rituals are all meant to be carried out to join the

couple so securely that their souls and destinies become intertwined forever. A true step of commitment for two people that already profess to love each other.

The contents of this book were originally drawn from first-hand discussions with pundits, gurus, naaws (pundit assistants), the parents, grandparents and elders of the couples that hired us to photograph and capture video clips of their wedding. The great majority of them were eager to divulge meaning, anecdotes to their best memory and understanding. Over time, our knowledge of the symbolism and processes started to greatly exceed that of our couples. Interestingly, we found that the more we shared our knowledge with them before the wedding, the better their photos and videos came out to be.

We've seen our fair share of confusion and negative emotions in Hindu wedding ceremonies and because of this, we've nailed a successful day/days of wedding to depend on two factors:

Knowledge and appreciation of the actual steps of the Hindu wedding.
The expectations the couple has on their wedding day.

We believe that when these two aspects coincide with each other. It's absolutely magical!

In this book, we will share all that we've learned from capturing traditions with added research and quick tips on how you can make the most out of your wedding day.



The Beauty of Vivaah Sanskar

We have always been grateful for the opportunity to capture weddings and in particular Hindu weddings, because from a creative perspective it's an insane opportunity for a kind of dramatic imagery that any artist would appreciate and love, with the presence of jewelry, flames, bold colors and over the top outfits and decor.

However over the years the Vivaah Sanskar has become way more for us, as our short video wedding trailers developed into short movies portraying not just the couple's love for each other but family support, respect for the deceased, long-lived traditions and intense stories of love between father and daughter or mother and son. What's mind-boggling is that the rituals portrayed in our videos resonated with viewers worldwide via social media, a bigger Hindu Community old and young in different countries but were familiar with the same traditions, and most of them had little to no idea of the meaning behind the rituals.

The complete set of wedding rituals takes the audience through a narrative. It follows the couple seeing each other for the first time on the wedding day after a dramatic bridal processional entry, the parents of the bride making the symbolic gesture of 'Kanyadaan' to pass her hand in marriage to the groom, the couple making their sacred vows to each other in front of the sacred fire, the bride's transition to her in-law's home and having their first meal together.

Hindu Marriage ceremonies are among the most sanctimonious of all religious ceremonies. According to Vedic texts marriage is considered a Divine Union upon which God, through the Holy Fire bears witness to the vows of loyalty, commitment and friendship that the couple makes to each other.

This unbreakable bond made to each other is meant to withstand the test of time, through many hardships or misfortune. Vedic texts narrate that once married, their bond is said to last seven lifetimes, even through the process of Samsara (death and rebirth), the couple's souls find each other and remarry.

Hindu marriage is considered a union that two souls share to jointly pursue the correct moral responsibilities (dharma), success and prosperity (aartha) whilst enjoying worldly happiness and pleasure (kama).

Hindus do not believe in the concept of divorce. After marriage, the two souls (atman) are dutifully bound in their duty as Hindus. According to Hindu scriptures, three-quarters of all life depends on the success of the marriage.

These facts alone are enough to set the tone for a wildly emotional journey for both families over the wedding days and usually do as our brides and grooms understand the intensity and symbolism.

Vivaah Sanskar is the most personal and most extensive ritual an adult Hindu can undertake in their life. It is considered the most important of the 16 Sanskars each Hindu must do in their lifetime.

A Hindu enters the Grihast Ashram (household stage) through marriage. Grihast Ashram is considered the most important of the 4 stages of a Hindu's life. This stage of life has the greatest impact and responsibility toward society.



Vivaah literally translates to responsibilities, the responsibilities of a lifelong duty as a wife and a husband. The Hindu Ceremony is one of the longest amongst all religious ceremonies and is definitely a direct reflection of the importance hinduism as placed on the “Married Couple” and “ Family Life”, a strong proclivity for the social enforcement of long term committed monogamy.

Whilst Kama, the pursuit of sensual pleasure is one of the 4 aims (purusharthas) of life. It is by no means a casual or transitory moment in Hindu culture. This is evident in the sheer number of rituals involving the bride and groom's parents, uncles & aunts; the Hindu vows, prayers and mantras involving assurances of loyalty, kindness and commitment through good and bad times.

Vivaah Sanskar represents the transition from the first stage of life, devoted to education (Brahmacharya Ashram) to the second stage of life, devoted to building a household and raising children (Grahasthashram). The importance of both partners' contribution to the success of the marriage is evident in the Hindu marital vows. In a broader sense, this concept is very beneficial to society as a whole.

Hindu scriptures place a great emphasis on raising children and associating marriage to moral responsibility. Even contemporary Hinduism views marriage as an obligatory duty of every person to pay homage to the struggles of their forefathers by passing on their family name and traditions.

It describes a man without children as a barren tree in the land useless to others in society. Hindu scripture states that a married person is better able to distinguish between truth and falsity.

Vivaah Sanskar is another step in the transformative journey from materialism to spirituality on the journey toward Moksha {liberation from the cycle of death and rebirth (samsara)}. These ceremonies are timeless and remain the same despite language barriers.

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Vivaah is performed in the language of the Hindu Vedic texts, Sanskrit, which means that most people who speak Hindi and English won't even be able to understand the meanings, unless well researched before but nevertheless our ancestors were still able to maintain traditions over years and over seas of travel for some, through the understanding of physical gestures through rituals rather than by language and understanding.

This fact really explains our varying experiences in weddings where some pundits read hindi and do not explain the wedding proceedings to the couple or their families, but yet rather is tied in the actual physical gestures of the rituals, which we must respect as well because in the past this was the only factor ensuring the continuation of these ancient traditions.

However, in recent times with the rise of technology, more and more young couples seek out information yearning to transcend their boundaries, for this we provide this handbook to help in the understanding of this special moment.





Section 1: Wedding Traditions

Pre-Wedding Day Traditions

The Engagement

Tilak Ceremony/ Sagai Ceremony / Ring ceremony / Shagun

Above are some common terms elders, pundits may use to describe the engagement day. However, it is simply an announcement of the wedding.

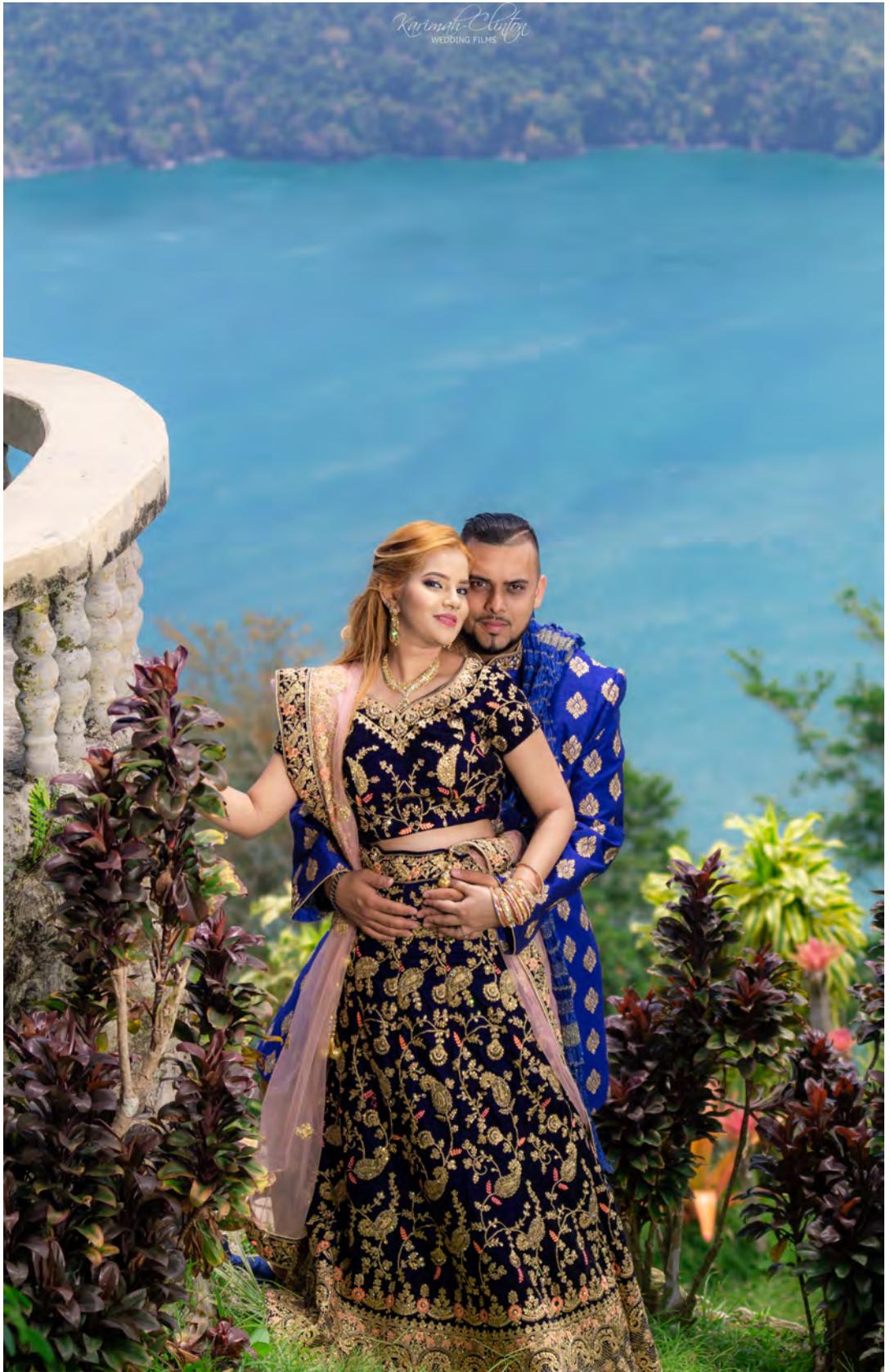
The sagai (engagement) is traditionally held at the groom's residence with the bride's father presenting a token gift and traditional Indian sweets to the groom's family. The groom's mother presents gifts of clothes, jewelry, makeup and baby clothes to the bride.

A pundit performs puja to all the household deities as well as Ganesh Prayers (remover of obstacles) and Navgrah Prayers (9 planets). Lunch or dinner is served toward the ending of the ceremony.

Apart from these activities the bride and groom's parents also publicly announce for the first time their commitment to their children's marriage and positive hope for their future lives together.

From the beginning the parents are heavily involved and their positive support is urged, this is something that has broken down severely in societies worldwide where after the age of 18 many "children" are to be on their own, however Hindu households worldwide have managed to maintain a more nurturing view of the family and so parents are considered as gods to their children and so adopt a mature, dependable and respectable role and so the children always work to satisfy and fulfill their parents wishes.

At this engagement ritual, both fathers bring a few cups of unhusked rice paddy (a symbol of prosperity) and mix together before dividing again. This is the rice paddy that is used for parching at the individual houses in later ceremonies.



Setting an Auspicious Date

Vivaah Muhurta/ Mugurtham

In this tradition, auspicious dates and dates that are perfect for the couple to be married are decided upon. The perfect date is considered the time where all the constellations, stars and planets are aligned to favor the couples holy union.

The date is calculated using the Panchang, the Hindu lunisolar calendar and the Janam Kundali, the astrological chart made for bride and groom based on each of their exact birth date, time and place of birth. The calculation of the time and date that is best suited for the marriage of the couple is also said to avoid the presence of the evil eye at the wedding.

Note: Wedding Invitations

Hindu wedding traditions have always been family-based. The Hindu Marriage ceremony has special parts for immediate family as well as extended family (the bride and grooms paternal aunt, brides sister, brides brother, brides mother, fathers of both bride and groom, seven married ladies)

Allocating duties to special people gives those family members a sense of responsibility in your marriage's success creating a supportive and positive environment for the couple to thrive in and hence gives them a better chance at creating a successful family.

Since 60 years ago, It has been tradition to hand deliver invitations to each person and in a way as to not offend any of the guests. In recent times, the print quality, colours and format of the invitation presents itself as a regal document that gives the receiver much pride and prestige. Sticking to traditions some may also include Hardi, Rice, clove, all symbols of auspiciousness, signalling the start of an event.



Remembering Our Deceased Forefathers

Pitri Puja/ Shraadhah/ Nandi Tradition

Reverence and puja toward deceased family members. Traditionally this is performed 10 days prior to the wedding ceremony. It is often regarded as more important than other pre-wedding ceremonies.

The Nandi Tradition ceremony marks the beginning of all the wedding-related activities. This tradition is regarded by many as a kick start to all wedding-related activities

In Hinduism and all pre-Abramic cultures, great emphasis is placed on ancestor worship which stems from the belief that nothing we have today is because of solely ourselves, but because of the hard work, labour and decisions of our ancestors. We exist because they existed. In these cultures it is encouraged to live a life as if your ancestors were present and just as much a part of the present as they stood on earth years ago. Constant appreciation, acknowledgement and worship should be given to them.

Worshipping our ancestors, honoring them was always considered a sacred duty that any god believing, spiritual person was expected to do. Families may set up a permanent shrine at home or a small space where ancestors items, or pictures are placed and by no means should this aspect be left out of the wedding setting but can be part of the decor planning.

In a Hindu Wedding or any wedding in fact, the photographer's or videographer's main aim is to get moments with the couple alone, posed portrait photos and video shots where they look at each other and smile etc. because usually these are the photos the wedding couple will appreciate. Family group shots most of the time are given ample time for and usually happen, however after the day the couple regrets not posing for a photo by themselves.

So for this you hire an experienced photographer that will make the shots happen and use the environment to their best.

However, we've seen that in Hindu Weddings it is a bit different. Yes the portrait shots are important, but because the whole family have been on this journey with the couple in preparation and some given responsibilities for after the wedding for couple support, the wedding day becomes not just about the couple but their ancestors, sacrifices, celebrations of all they have and all they will be. The wedding photos and videos now become a source to represent that all encompassing feeling after the wedding.

Transform your wedding memories captured by the photographers and videographers into a family memory heirloom- Be it in the form of a printed album, or a wedding video trailer with flashing scenes of your deceased loved one's shrine which will surely be appreciated by everyone in your family.

Decorating Bride with Body Art

Mehndi Night/ Maruthani

Traditionally, the bride's close female friends and family would decorate her hands and her feet with beautiful mehndi designs. In more recent years, most brides opt for professional mehndi artists to design intricate and elaborate designs that only a trained professional can manage. As a modern ritual, the bride has the artist cleverly disguise the groom's initials or first name in the design. At some point, after the official ceremony the brides ask the groom to find his name in the design, while she cleverly teases him about the futility of his efforts.

The Mehndi Night may sometimes be coupled with music and a fun last minute celebration of the Bride's family, where sweets are prepared for all to partake.

Even in traditional weddings mehndi isn't limited to just the bride and her entourage but also applied to the groom but he of course can get something to suit his style with simple masculine designs on inner hands and back hands this really connects the couple and makes the imagery novel worthy.

But in the past mehndi wasn't just applied for beauty but it was said the Henna Paste made from the Henna Tree had medicinal effects for infections, cuts and bruises, which also it soothed the wearer and so was put on the bride and groom's hands to prepare them for this rigorous period of worship.

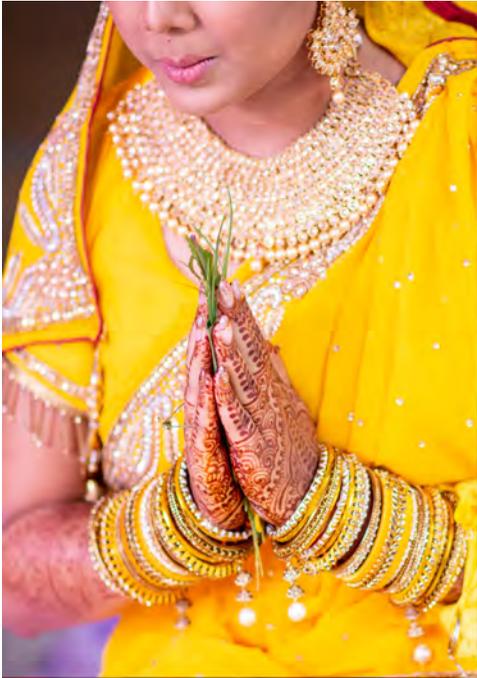
It was also said that the darker the mehndi stains the more affection would the bride's mother in law have for her.

There are many sentiments shared about the mehndi application, some which may not be applicable for today's couples but overall it can be noted that the mehndi traditions reflect the rich Indian culture, which results in joyful celebrations in preparation for the auspicious wedding days.

One of the favourite things about a Hindu wedding that photographers and videographers love are mehndi designs. You may opt for no photography on that day because it will just be you and the mehndi artist or you may want photography and videography for that day.

Here are some important points to note if you are:

1. Choose an Outfit- If you're hiring a photographer/videographer to capture the mehndi process and you're not confident in the way you are dressed, you won't be happy with the photographs after. This limits the focus to a zoom shot of the mehndi being applied alone. Photographers/ videographers always do their best work when they are excited about building their portfolio with beautiful work.
2. Long Hours- The Mehndi process is longer than you think especially if you are doing full arms and legs, If you're inviting people over, make sure it's a celebration and not a burden, ensure your immediate family are onboard, at the end of the day its those beautiful, happy expressions before the wedding that you'll be looking for in your photos and videos.
3. Backgrounds- Choose an area in the house that's most picturesque for your memories to sit with the Mehndi Artist, you won't be able to move for a while.
4. Professional Makeup: We encourage doing professional makeup on any day you are having a professional photographer or videographer come over.
5. Designs (Optional): Modern Trends are to incorporate an applicable story in your design, this helps in the story telling of your overall wedding memories (photo & video).
6. Hours of Coverage: If you have to pick your hours with the photographer/ videographer let them come when the mehndi has started already, don't micromanage, choose people who you are confident in their creativity.



Paying respect to Mother Earth

Matkor/ Maaticor/ Mridaharana

The maticoor ritual takes place at both the bride and groom's home. The sanctified dirt that is dug by the mother of respective bride or groom is symbolically placed on the bedi (area for the wedding prayers) of both homes. Symbolic of the blessing from mother earth (Bhumu Devi) that is bestowed on the couple. The maticoor ceremony centers around the female members of the respective families paying respect to mother earth whilst asking for a successful marriage ceremony.

From our research, this tradition is one of the oldest, dating back to the 300BC, an earlier representation of the deity Bhumu Devi (Mother Earth). In these earlier times, the ill fortune associated with children could only be fixed by the reverence of mother earth - An easy symbolism to understand in the context of an upcoming wedding.

It is believed that this night of reverence and worship to mother earth influences the couples ability to heal from disease, acquire an abundance of food, be healthy, to have food, clothing and shelter.

In Hinduism these ills are non discriminatory and believed to be because of Karma (one's past actions, in this existence or another), this is a chance for the mothers along with female relatives to reduce the future hardships and adversities that the couple may experience in times to come by the reverence of mother earth.

The night starts off with the symbolic blessing and reverence to the music drums and garden hoe to be used for the ritual.

Then, the ladies make their way to the maticoor grounds to the now rhythmic lively pulsating music of the drummers.

Upon reaching the intended area, the drumming ceases and the traditional ritual offerings begin. The mothers of the couple then proceed to clear grass and remove a small amount of dirt from an area with a garden hoe. A mound of dirt is removed with the hoe and placed in a cloth to be returned to the house. This dirt is then placed on the baydee upon which the wedding ceremony takes place.

On the cleared dirt, five leaves are placed and an offering of rice, coins, turmeric, sindoor, and nutmeg is placed on each. Tilak is then placed on the forehead of all the married women as a sign of reverence by the grooms mother and the tassa drumming resumes, this time with a lively display of feminine energy and fun.

These are moments where ritual proceeds photographer, this is not a moment where the photographer usually has much control, and so some photographers may not be willing to do it because it entails being mobile and walking down to another location, with expensive gear despite rain or shine, ensure the photographer you choose can cope with this environment- as these ceremonies are done with bare streetlight, make sure your photographer have done these shots before- candid moments that you cannot control, but to capture it you must understand and appreciate the meaning behind it.



Tying the Protection Bands

Kangan Bandhan Tradition/ Pratisara Bandhan Tradition

Eight items that have to be used in wedding ceremony are tied with a yellow strip of cloth. The items are tied whilst sanskrit mantras are chanted for protection and blessings of the the wedding ceremonies to be undertaken in the upcoming days.

A turmeric colour cotton thread is then tied on the wrists of the grooms right hand and brides left hand. This is not removed until after the wedding.



Beautifying with Haldi

Nalangu Ritual/ Haldi Chardar/ Hardi Lepana

This tradition is performed at both the bride and groom's house. Turmeric mixed with water and fragrant oils is rubbed on their faces by young unmarried girls.

The turmeric is believed to contribute to better looking skin for the wedding ceremony- As we've seen an influx of cosmetics with the active ingredients being from this auspicious plant. They may also sprinkle coconut oil on the bride's hair and with flowers tucked around some areas of the hair.

Besides for the ravishingly smooth skin tone you desire for your wedding festivities, tumeric has also been used by our ancestors to ward off evil energies. It is said that tumeric has powerful properties that deter omens and evil energies. You may hear elders saying that after the 'saffroning' is done that the bride or groom must go inside and stay in their homes and do not allow anyone to touch them or hug them.

We have seen some most joyous moments in the whole pre-wedding celebrations in the Haldi Night. Ensure your photographer/ videographer has enough space to maneuver around the stage/ mandap area and emphasis is placed on capturing those moments.











The Farewell Night

Laawa Night/ Bhatwan Night/ Dhanbatti

This night's activities are traditionally held the day before the wedding ceremony at both the bride and groom's houses. The respective father's youngest sister, the poowa, leads the night's cooking activities, patching the laawa (puffed rice) in a large cast iron pot by a fireside. The family members rejoice and everyone dances around her and gives her money for her efforts. Cooking preparations for the meals to be prepared for the wedding are started at this time.

This is yet another example of the involvement of family members in a Hindu Wedding, giving them special duties bringing them closer together and showing the bride/ groom support from different directions of the extended family.

In some regions, It is also believed that the behaviour of the women that night are influential in the sexual matters between the couple. So on both bride and groom sides they engage in humor, loose dance and role play with sexual gestures all in the favour of the couples success.

With the increasing demands of today's world, some families may opt to join both the Haldi Night and Cooking night celebrations together so that guests are only invited for one night and all preparations can be made for the comfort of their guest. Celebrations last a bit longer in the night and as the bride goes inside after the puja, the parching of the lawa begins, Pundits are usually not needed for these traditions as they are more cultural and vary over region.

Photography & Videography for this time consist of candid dancing, live music entertainment and ladies jesting around the large iron pot.



SECTION 2: The Wedding Day Ceremony

Early Morning Traditions

The Auspicious Bath

Mangala Snaanam/ Pokra

This ritual traditionally occurs before dawn on the morning of the wedding ceremony on both bride and groom's home.

It is symbolic of a purifying holy bath to cleanse the bride and groom of any negativity or evil eye before the ceremony begins.

This tradition has died down a bit especially on the bride's side as it is now replaced with getting ready with Professional Makeup Artist, Hair Stylist and Lehenga Fitting.

However, If you are still doing it, it can be an awesome photo opportunity if well dressed and decorated.

Morning Rice Patching

Lawa Bhoonjana

Early on the morning of the wedding but after the bride and groom had their respective auspicious baths, the female friends and families of both bride and groom make a ceremonial walk to a neighbours house to conduct a quick tradition. Here they patch a few cups of unhusked rice (akshat) which is done in a makeshift fire pit.

The Grooms Ceremonial Dressing

Naiw Chawar and Groom's Imlia Ghotai

In this tradition the groom's mother and sisters go through the motions of beautifying him for the marriage ceremony. Each of the groom's nails are ceremoniously trimmed and painted with red nail polish by his sister. His sister then applies eye liner which in ancient times gave a cooling effect to the eyes to prepare him for the day's events, also it is said to ward away negative energies. Traditionally this is done with the boy's mother sitting in a chair behind him while he sits lower than her on a pidha (short bench) in front of the bedi.

When his sister is done, his uncle approaches them holding five mango leaves. He individually holds each leaf with his right hand making a wide circle around the mother and the groom, then finally giving the leaf to the groom to bite the tip of the middle fiber. The groom keeps all the pieces in his mouth then finally spits it back in the mother's hand. The mother then swallows the leaf pieces with the help of some water the uncle offers.

The grooms in law then puts on his shoes and lifts and takes him to the car, when possible.

Five ladies then 'parichay' (pass a lighted deya and sprinkle of water) the groom to bid him safe journey.







The Grooms Side Arrival

Bharaat Milaap/ Vara Satkaarah

The arrival of the groom and his family is supposed to proceed by much fanfare and excitement if all prior preparations are made on by the bride and her family.

The groom's father will lead a small welcoming party of males relatives and friends of the family to meet and embrace and meet a similar entourage led by the bride's father.

Upon greeting they will place garlands (mala) around each other, exchange cordialities and then wait for the groom near the area for his upcoming Dwaar puja.

This tradition should capture some really heartwarming pictures of warmth, love, appreciation and excitement for the upcoming wedding day between two families about to be joined by law. It should not be viewed as a solemn ritualistic procedure between fathers ordered by pundit.

Photos and Videos from these segments are usually appreciated by the couple, as these are the parts they are not a direct part of and to look back at smiles on in laws faces as they start their children's marriage with a support and respect of the ceremony.

All these provide for picturesque moments which are a chance to highlight the groom's masculinity, family support and culturally, families also take this as a representation on how strong the foundation of the groom's family are in society and the impression they make to the Bride's side.





Introduction and Familiarization with groom

Parichay

The bride's mother and her contingent of close married female family members go to the groom's car to greet and welcome him. They bring akshat (unhusked unbroken rice as reaped from the plant) in a hibiscus or other large flower. Akshat is symbolic of abundance and prosperity, the flower is symbolic of happiness and holiness. The bride's mother and the other ladies each give the groom a tikka as well as aarti. They each throw bits of dough in the 4 directions. The bride's mother now leads the groom inside the hall but still close to the entrance where Dwaar Puja will be performed.

Sarbala is meant to be the nephew or cousin of the groom who accompanies him as his protector.

In ancient times, where the Groom rode on a horse to the bride's village, the 'bharaat' or grooms entourage could sometimes be intercepted by robbers, the Sarbala acted as the groom's decoy in his identical clothes. In today's setting the Sarbala concept is rigged with tradition and signifies prosperity and protection. A younger boy is used as he is best suited to wear grooms identical clothing or matching.

What better way to introduce the Groom to the masses than accompanied by a younger, adorable boy dressed up so well, no one in the crowd can deny the gentleness but potential of a child.







Prayer for Removal of Obstacles

Dwaar Puja

Prayers are offered to Lord Ganesh, Lord of success and remover of obstacles, near the entrance of the wedding venue for a successful day ahead. At this time the brides, father makes a symbolic gesture of reverence and appreciation for the man about to take his daughter's hand in marriage, by washing his feet with a sprinkle of water from a mango leaf.

The Grooms Rest before Ceremony

Janwaas

The groom sits after his Dwaar Puja and has a sweet drink and some traditional indian sweets which he awaits his orders to make his way to the mandap. The brides at this time are performing her personal prayers sometimes done in yellow sari. The groom summoned a little while after the bride returned to her chambers.

All these set up for some great establishing moments for the bride's father and the groom, or the groom's energy pre-bridal entrance. The way we view each step, as a narrative of a bigger story, really helps in bringing out the best of each moment in a hindu wedding. It's one of the secrets to our emotional wedding trailers and so every moment helps.



Mango Fiber Tradition

Bride Imli Ghotai

While the groom is sitting Jaanwas. The bride's mother and her mother's brother or other male relative perform a short ceremony with her.

The tips of five mango leaves are given to the bride by her uncle for her to nibble, she then spits it back into her mother's hands, the naaw pours some water into her hands and she gulps it all down. This tradition along with gauri puja for the bride is done in the brides yellow wear.

The whole mango leaf biting tradition is meant to be a communication between the bride, her mother and the mother's brother who acts as support for the mom. The daughter passing the biting mango stems to the mum is an age old tradition used for the bride to tell her mum that no one is forcing her and the marriage is about to take place is what she desires. It is still a major part of modern hindu weddings, some mothers may not actually swallow but the tradition demonstrates the importance and honor of women in hinduism, maintaining their rights and voice.

Most brides aren't aware of this part before the wedding so it's confusing and maybe a bit gross on first impression but is always included and nevertheless has a timeless significance as female rights and empowerment is still a modern concern.

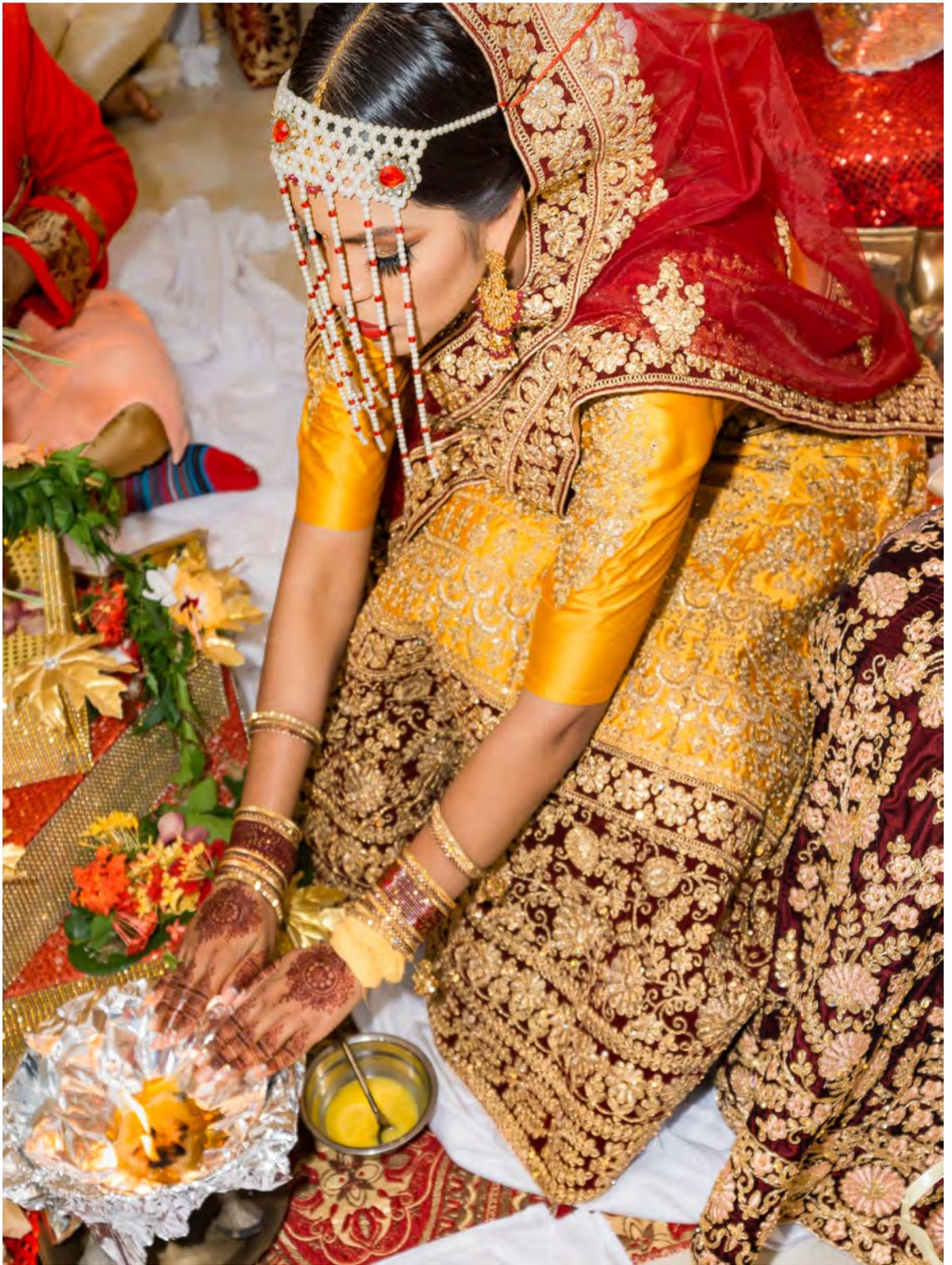


A Future Brides Prayer

Gauri Puja

The bride offers her prayers to the goddess Gauri. Gauri is considered symbolic of the perfect wife. She is the perfect representation of purity and austerity. The bride prays to goddess gauri asking her to guide her into becoming the perfect wife and for a long and happy married life. After this puja the bride makes her way back into her bridal chambers to change into her main outfit.

Check out our Indian Wear Section for more on what color suits you, traditionally yellow is worn, but with modernization, brides have more styles, more colors and more fabrics to choose from that are all widely acceptable. Overall for Photography & Videography these are our establishing moments for the bride and represent her personality, traditionally her female energy, femininity, style, her daintiness and her mystery is portrayed in this part. We urge brides to be creative with their story and determine what female characteristics are important to them.



Consecrating the Wedding Seat

Peerha Sankalpa

The groom and the bride's father bless the peerha, a short bench used as a wedding seat with the pundits guidance. The pundit and naaw place 5 leaves on the wedding seat with five heaps of rice, flowers and coins. The pundit then instructs the groom and father of the bride to lift the peerha touching it to the bedi then their forehead 5 times. The heaps of rice is then gently shaken off unto the bedi. The bride's father then offers to sit on it. This is the seat he shall be wed to his daughter.

The bride's father, then washes the feet of the groom, gives him a chandan on his forehead(white marking on forehead) and finally places a flower on his forehead. In this ritual the bride's father is telling him, from today he worships him as Lord Vishnu, and wishes that he treats his daughter the way God treats his devotees.

The groom is encouraged to proceed to this section with confidence and respect for the bride's family and their wishes.



A Sweet sip of Honey Drink for Groom

Madhu Parka

A honey mixture of honey, dahee, ghee, water and sugar is given to the groom to taste by the bride's father.

"The honey is the sweetest and the best. May I have food as sweet and health-giving as this honey and may I be able to relish it!"



The Refreshing Sip

Achaman

The bride's father gives the groom a small sip of water. This symbolizes purification and conduciveness to a peaceful attitude and mind.

Blessing the Limbs

Anga Sparsha

Touching the grooms limbs with water held with the thumb and two middle fingers. This symbolizes a prayer for physical strength and alertness of the grooms limbs.

These are other sections of confusion, having to taste an unknown liquid, do physical movement in a weird way, but it usually lightens the mood of the main characters and prepares the groom's mood for the bridal entry. From a serious entrance displaying strength and vigour to a sequence of steps with smiles and light jesting from the pundit, it lines up a narrative of acceptance from the bride's family and presentation of his beloved bride.



The Brides Entry

Kanya Aagaman

The bride makes her grand entry to the mandap and sits opposite to the groom. She does not sit on the marriage seat with the groom as yet.

Hindu Weddings are grand from days before preparation to the end, but the highlight moment has always been this first look, this reveal of the two to each other. After all, this is what all the days of preparation has been made for the joining of two people, to make the best versions of themselves together.

For this part we welcome big ideas, the close female sisters and cousins ushering in the bride, or the brides brothers and male cousins escorting her, or young girls from both bride and groom side with hand pieces. Whatever is right for your family, is welcomed for this part, consider logistics and space but keep emotions real and don't hold back.

Emotions In a Hindu Wedding

Just the fact that the Wedding Ceremony, Marriage and Family are such important aspects of a hindu's life are enough to set the tone for an emotional ceremony. A lot of couples may say that they don't expect any tears on their day or more emphasis is put on the planning of the after party or reception, in our experience this is usually associated with a lack of knowledge of the meaning of the ceremony. The remedy for this is to prepare yourselves with the right information and even share it with your family that's helping you and taking part in this auspicious occasion.

Life is about emotion and in Hinduism emotion is often depicted with aesthetics the Hindu Heritage speaks so loudly with bright bold colors, Gold and Ivory all depicted emotions behind stories of great Kings and Queens. As we know it we are an emotional culture and it's in our heritage to be part of life stories of love, desire, attraction, respect and family honor.





Bride Donation (passing the hand in marriage)

Kanya Daan

The ritual represents the father of the bride passing his daughter's hand to the groom in marriage. In doing so he is passing the protection, care and guidance on to the groom. Kanyadaan literally translates to girl donation. Hindu scripture teaches that the giving of a girl child away in marriage is the greatest gift one can make.

The bride's mother pours water from a lotha (a bronze cup) on the bride's father's palms, which flows to the groom's hands and then lastly dripping into the bride's hands. This act symbolizes the continuity of life, repaying the debt to their forefathers for their sacrifice or work to bring them into the world and further ensuring that the families heritage are at least passed off for one more generation.





Gift Donation

Gau Daan

The exchange of gifts is usually clothes or ornamental.

Lighting the Holy Fire

Vivah Homan

A sacred fire, Agni Deva regarded as the witness (saakshi) is lit and the pundit recites mantras in Sanskrit. The couple make offerings of ghee and fragrant herbs to the fire and pray for children' prosperity and long life.

Taking the Brides Hand *Pani Grahana*

Taking the bride and the groom says to her. I seize your hand for the sake of happiness. I hope that you live to an old age with me, your husband. He now moves the bride over to sit on his right hand side. Traditionally, this was the first time that the groom held the hand of the bride.



Tying the Sacred Knot

Granti Bandhanam

In this part of the hindu ceremony the bride and groom literally ties the knot. The groom's father ties a cloth in a knot to the groom's scarf and the bride's dress. This symbolizes the union of two souls .

Some hindu weddings also use a gold threaded string called ad Vamala that is placed around their shoulders and necks.





Prayers, Gifts and Blessings

Paaw Puja

The bride's mother and her married female relatives washes, the couple's feet position chandan on their foreheads offering flowers and aarti. They also give a traditional gift of a Lotha and thalee. The couple's great grandparents would have also received a gift, centuries earlier as well as some other token or monetary gift. The thalee and lotha is a reminder to the couple of their responsibilities as hindus to perform puja.



Offering rice to the Holy Fire

Laawa Homan

The offering of puffed rice or barley to the sacred fire by the couple assisted by the bride's brother during Sat Pher or circling of the fire.





Circumambulating the Fire

Sat Phere / Agni Pradakshina/ Mangal Phera

There are two variants of this ceremony, 4 circumambulations around the fire and 7 circumambulations. In both variants the bride and groom take turns with the bride leading first then the groom leading. For example the bride leads the first 4 circumambulations' then the groom leading the last 3 circumambulations. With each circumambulation count the brides brothers assists the couple with Laawa Homan to the equal number, for example on the 3rd circumambulation, 3 offerings of rice are made to the fire.

The seven circumambulations represents:

1. A prayer to Lord Ganesh to remove all obstacles and impediments from their pathway in their new journey of life together.
2. A prayer to Lord Hanooman for the protection of the household.
3. A prayer to Goddess Lakshmi for wealth and prosperity in their home and for their family to meet their needs.
4. A prayer to Goddess Durga for blessings for the children that they may bring into the world.
5. A prayer that they may be able to make the journey of life together as partners always together leading a life of joint and equal responsibility.
6. A prayer for longevity so that they may experience the joys of raising children together.
7. A prayer for favourable conditions from all directions.

The four circumambulations represents vow to live of life of obedience to the 4 hindu Purushartas (aim of human life)

1. Dharma, which means Religion and Ethics
2. Aartha which means wealth and prosperity
3. Karma which means love facility and family.
4. Moksha, which means spiritual Liberation and freedom.







A Symbol of Steadfastness

Shilah Rohan/ Asmarahana

The symbolic climbing or stepping on a stone by the bride to show her willingness and strength to overcome difficulties.

Let us live together lovingly & bring up our progeny. Let us lead a joyful life of a hundred years. Please ascend this stone and be as firm throughout our married life

The Seven Steps

Saapta Paadi

The vows in Saapta paadi are considered sacred and unbreakable. The couple take the steps together side by side.

First step,

The groom vows to take responsibility for providing good nourishment and food for them both as well as any children they may have. The bride in turns vows that she will support him this endeavour by taking care of the family and household and also sharing this responsibility just as much as him.

Second step,

The groom vows to develop and look after each other's health: physically, mentally and spiritually.

The bride vows that she will help him in any possible way she can, both willingly and courageously.

Third step,

The groom vows that he will strive his best, working diligently to bring wealth and prosperity into their home so that they can educate themselves and their progeny.

The bride vows to be responsible in managing the resources of the home. The bride vows to remain loyal to the relationship and to never bring a third person into the marriage.

Fourth step,

The groom first thanks his bride for making his life beautiful by agreeing to marry him. He vows to respect both sets of her family just as much as his own from today.

The bride vows to stand by his side for any commitments he may have be it family, religious or otherwise

Fifth step,

The couple vow to raise noble and virtuous children. The couple also vow to be empathetic and understanding toward each other sharing in both the happiness and sorrows that life may bring.

The couple prays that should God bless them with children, they will strive their utmost to raise them with sound moral values and a nourishing life.

Sixth step

The couple vows to lean on each other should any fall ill or when support otherwise is needed.

Seventh step, we will always remain friends and cherish each other.

We ask brides to gently raise up your lehenga so to expose your foot, it really makes for better and clearer photography & videography, listen to the steps, don't be afraid to look at each other, laugh, smile and be expressive, embrace the moments.





The 12 Marriage Promises

Pratijna / Vachan

Hindu marriage traditions demonstrate great concern for the success of householder life. After the wedding day the bride and groom are expected to live with mutual understanding and trust. Hindu scripture states that when the husband is satisfied with the wife, and wife with the husband, happiness is assured forever. Mutual commitment and love happens until death. This according to Hindu Scripture is considered the highest law for husband and wife.

The pundit recites a total of 12 promises husband and wife should make to each other. The promises are divided between bride promises and groom promises, 7 from the bride and 5 from the groom, that is meant a guide for happy marriage life, albeit from many centuries ago. Both bride and groom must agree upon, these again in the presence of Agni, the Divine Fire as witness.

1. A promise that if you were to ever undertake a personal endeavour religious or otherwise, I wish to accompany you on that process when possible.
 2. A promise that I should join you in any prayers or celebrations for our family and prayers for the deceased family .
 3. A promise that you respect my relationship with my family and let me always stand and support them with you by my side in the event that they may need our support.
 4. A promise that we should join together our efforts to serve our community in any efforts to purify our wealth.
 5. A promise that you may consult with me for any extended trips away from our home, whether work or pleasure
 6. A promise that you consult with me anytime you need to lend, borrow or gift to or from our home.
 7. A promise that you never speak harsh or angrily to me whether in private or public
-
1. A promise that you conduct yourself in society in a manner that no one will be able to speak negatively about your honour and the family's honour.
 2. A promise that if you are to entertain any visitors to our home you shall be kind to them beyond reproach.
 3. A promise that we work out any minor differences in opinion with each other alone and not with any third parties or families.
 4. A promise for assistance with the domestic duties of the home.
 5. A promise that you stay with me and render assistance where possible should my health not permit me to work.

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Moving close to the Grooms Heart

Lotpaata

The bride now accepts the groom's promises and moves over to the left of the groom, the traditional side of the wife.

Touching the Brides Heart

Hirdaya Sparsh

The groom places his left hand on the bride's shoulder and his right hand on her heart. The pundit has him repeat a mantra asking Brahma to keep them loyal and faithful to each other forever.



The Mark of a Married Woman

Sindoor Danaam

This ceremony takes place after the circumambulation of the fire and the seven steps.

A red Vermillion powder, sindoor Is applied by the groom to the parting of his wife's hair, near the center of the forehead

Some cultures also represent This ceremony with the policing of your Red Dot on the forehead.

Other more modern societies have opted for a small diamond Bindi just under the pattern.

Throughout the centuries Various meanings behind the symbolic gesture of Sindoor Daanam have been put forward, evidence of sindoor placement of new brides can be observed via archaeological evidence as way back as 3300bc. Some Hindus regard the placement position of the sindoor as the 6th chakra or third eye.

We've had grooms, cry just after this application. As we are not always lucky to get an emotional groom like that it just depicts the honor that the groom and his family can associate with the honor of finally putting the sindoor for his bride as he marks her taken as his significant other.



Exchanging of Rings

Mudrika Pratidaanam

The rings are blessed by the pundit and the bride and groom place them on each other's respective fingers.





The Older Brothers Promise

Taag paat or Raksha Sutra

The groom's elder brother gives the bride Gifts of clothing in a small suitcase, then adorn her with his special yarn necklace. Symbolically he is saying that he is willing to take responsibility as an elder brother in the event of any unfavourable conditions.



The Bridal Necklace

Mangal Sutra Ritual

The groom places the Mangal Sutra or (suspicious threads) a unique item of jewelry on the bride's neck. It is believed the Mangal Sutra has divine powers of protection to the bride. Many put immense emphasis on this aspect and in Hindu weddings it triumphs the exchanging of rings in importance. It goes deep and signifies that the couple are mates until separated by death. It represents, love and commitment.

"I pray to the Almighty that I be blessed with a long life. I tie this knot around your neck. Oh Soubhagyawati, may providence bestow on you a fulfilling life of a Sumangali for a hundred years to come!"





Exchanging of Garlands

Jai Mala Ritual

The couple exchanging garlands. The choir or DJ serenade the couple with songs reminiscent of when Lord Rama and Seeta Maata placed garlands on each other as depicted in the Ramayah showing respect, love and honor to each other and the vows taken toward their marriage.



Auspicious Gazing

Surya Darshan/ Dhruva Darshan

The couple looks at the Sun or the North Star as a reverence to fidelity in their relationship and each other.



Peace Mantras

Shantipaath

The pundit sings peaceful mantras towards the couple while wishing them long life and prosperity.

The Final Blessing (Benediction)

Ashirvada

The couple is blessed by elders and the priests by chanting of vedic mantras and throwing of rice for a long and prosperous life.



Family Blessing

Chumawan

Five married women take doob grass and rice to pass over the feet, shoulders, hand and head of the couple. Praying for their marriage to be blessed. After this ritual, the couple walk off together, till tied together from the Granthi Bandhan, to the bridal chambers led by the brides mother.



Back to the Bridal Chambers

Kohbar Ghar

Upon reaching the bridal chambers the bride's mother performs Aarti on him, gives him a tilak and a cash token for his paghree/ headpiece. This ritual is showing support and appreciation for her new son in law. The bride's mother together with the Naaw now help in untying the cloth from joining the couple. The mother then leads the groom out to a seat in the flood of the mandap for his next ritual. The bride at this time uses the opportunity to freshen up her makeup and have some light refreshments.



A Sweet Rice Meal for Grooms Contingent

Khichari

Seven of the groom's closest male relatives or friends have a seat next to him at the mandap. The mother of the bride then gives a ceremonial food of khichari (rice with sugar and milk). They do not eat the food offering yet. First they await a long queue of the bride's family, friends and well wishers that have gathered to make a financial donation to them. The queue then approaches the bharat and individually makes a donation to the groom and each of his entourage, starting with the groom and giving a larger donation to the groom.

These latter parts after the final benediction are the aspects that take up a lot of unplanned time, the pundit has left the premises and now the parents and couple rely solely on the naaw, this coupled with large groups of friends and family wanting to meet and greet the gorgeous couple of the moment and the hosting family. Couples most times underestimated their hours of coverage with the photographer/ videographer because most of the time these parts are not included in the average "2-3 hours" from the pundit. These rituals are external to that and should be considered in the wedding planning before so to make time for photos and moments with the bride and groom alone and with immediate families and friends waiting to see them, at this time the scenic areas of the wedding location (if in a temple) should be used or typically the mandap as the background.

An Emotional Goodbye

Vidai Ritual

This moment of the bride leaving her parents care and home is oftentimes the most emotional moment of the day.

There are moments of rice throwing in this ritual. There are various symbolic meanings attached to Vidai ritual.

The bride is considered to be in the position of Goddess Lakshmi during her Vivaah Sankar.

If the wedding venue is the actual home of the bride then she throws rice backward behind her in a symbolic gesture of blessing them with prosperity and wealth as the Goddess Lakshmi is known to bring. This ritual gesture is also a blessing of gratitude for all the love and care they put toward her upbringing into the woman she is today. Her parents offer words of encouragement.

The parents usher her forward with her groom and also offer a silent prayer that she may leave behind all negative energies and spiritual debts and be successful in her marriage.

The parents throw rice toward the bride and grooms vehicle when departing for the groom's home as a symbolic gesture of farewell and good wishes.







A Cheerful Welcome

Dwar Roka Tradition

The Dwar Roka ceremony is performed at the groom's home upon the couples arrival back at the groom's home. The grooms sisters and female relatives express delight in the couples arrival however the groom's sister blocks their entry in a playful manner meant to elicit her brother to pay her to enter the gate. It is meant to be symbolic of a fun new relationship between sister in laws.



Bringing Prosperity Through the Door

Griha Pravesam Tradition

The bride's first entry into her new home as a wife. The bride gently pushes a pot, glass or lota filled with rice so that the rice is spilled inside the new home. Rice has traditionally been used as a symbol of prosperity in Indian this ritual symbolizes the bride, being Lakshmi entering the new home bringing with her good fortune and prosperity.

I enter this house with a happy heart. May I give birth to children, who observe the path of righteousness (dharma)! May this house that I enter today be prosperous forever and never be deficient in food. May this house be populated by people of virtue and pious thoughts.

Goddess Lakshmi's Form

Ghar Ni Lakshmi

On the entrance to many Hindu homes are framed keepsake of a red footprint against a white background. This is held reverently at the main entrance as a reminder of when the Goddess Lakshmi as the bride on her wedding day entered the home.

On the wedding day, the bride places her foot in a thalee of wet kumkum (red vermilion powder) and then steps on either a white paper, cloth or canvas to be framed after.



Bonding Games

BERA FIGHT TRADITION

Games such as these have traditionally been used to increase the playfulness and bonding of the couple and not as a ritual or prayer. A female relative drops a gold beera into a thalee (thariya) and the couple rushes to see who can grab the beera first, the most out of the 5 or drops.

AEKI BEKI TRADITION

The same rules as bera fight but instead of thalee a tall pot half filled with coloured water is used. Traditions such as Aeki Beki were traditionally thought to relieve some nervous energy from the bride, who typically enters into the groom's familial home.



The Couples First Meal Together

Kansar Bhakshan

This ritual is meant to show equality and fair treatment toward his wife in her new home. The couple take turns feeding each other equal amounts of food.

From the photographers/videographers point of view a lot of couples forget to be happy at this point. They are overwhelmed by friends and family and the expectations of them performing the traditional ritual correctly, their nervous energy shines through them whereas it was meant by ritual to be affectionate and happy show of equality by the couple.

The Sweet Reunion

Pag Phera Tradition

In this tradition, the bride returns to visit her parental home to much fanfare and celebrations. Traditionally, the brother of the bride who goes to her husband's home and escorts her back to the parents home. There she spends a few days with them. Ensuring their continued prosperity as a married daughter in Hinduism is symbolic of the Goddess Lakshmi bringing prosperity and good luck.

Section 3: Wedding Wear

For all types of people worldwide, one of the most notable and extravagant parts of a Hindu Wedding are the outfits worn by the Bride and Groom. In this Chapter we will outline the history behind the bridal clothing (what is acceptable and what is not), help you in choosing what colours/ styles are right for you and share some trends that we've seen in modern day Hindu Weddings. While we are tempted to get started on some exciting new ideas we've seen on Pinterest a part of us are still worried if its acceptable, not wanting to offend or upset anyone, after all hinduism and hindu weddings by extension encourages family acceptance, and respecting and honoring ancestors. In this Chapter we'll guide you on current trends that are applicable.

History

For centuries, a thick embroidered piece of cloth 3 to 9 yards long, was gifted to through generations, a family heirloom, a cultural tradition that made it the usual for an Indian bride to wear her mother's wedding outfit as her own. The traditional sari style cloth wrap represented all that is an Indian bridal dress. Hindu scripture also makes mention of Solah Shringars or traditional adornments on the hindu bride, namely: bindi on the forehead, kajal on the eyes, maang tika (a large forehead jewellery), nose ring necklace, ear rings, mehndi, bangles, armllet, hathphool (ring with chain attached to bracelet), hair accessories, waist accessory, toe ring and anklet, perfume, sindoor (applied during ceremony).

Exponential growth

Whilst, nothing can top the simplicity and nostalgia of seeing a traditionally wrapped red sari on a hindu bride, in recent years there's been a tremendous growth in the popularity of new styles for hindu weddings namely the lehenga and anarkali styles. Exponential growth in textile manufacturing and fashion industry marketing have presented plethora of options for the perfect choice bridal wear that best accentuates the beauty and femininity of every bride.

The industry has also evolved with modern colour shades, hues and tones that weren't possible using only non synthetic options in the dying of fabric.

A modern indian wear features more fabric choices in the multi layered dress that allow more comfort and utility whilst radiating grace and poise.

COLORS

At the beginning of time colors originated from natural things like spices and minerals that were used over that specific geographical area, for example, Turmeric is widely used over India for cooking and in religious prayers and marriage ceremonies.

Yellow is an auspicious color and represents sanctity, the Bride usually dressing in a yellow sari or lehenga for the pre-wedding activities or Matkor Night and also Gauri Puja before she makes her grand entrance to the main ceremony and meets with the Groom. Yellow for those occasions are symbolic for keeping evil spirits or bad omens away in preparation for marriage as so many other aspects like the tying with yellow cloth on all things to be used for the wedding ceremony.

Red is also an auspicious color, red in hinduism represents both sensuality and purity. Red also is the favourite colour of Devi Shakti known for her female power. Red has deep meanings in the Hindu psyche and is said to contribute to making a stronger and more potent bond between the couple.

We know you've probably imagined yourself in a specific colour already and maybe is a traditional red and yellow. But if you are still tinkering with the idea and haven't locked onto a color, this chapter will help.

We've mapped out recommendations for the perfect color for brides to be based on energies/ personality types.

<i>COLOR/ SHADE</i>	<i>SIGNIFIES</i>
BLOOD RED, CRIMSON, MAROON, BURGUNDY	Auspicious color representing transformation, major life change, prosperity, fertility, strength, vigour, love, energetic, headstrong and fierce.
GOLD, REGAL PURPLE, BURNT ORANGE	Warmth, creativity, confident, perfectionism, passionate
PURPLE, PLUM, DARK BLUE	Uplifting, growth, ambitious, practical
PASTEL SHADES- BABY BLUE, PINK, PISTACHIO, LAVENDER & PEACH	Balance, harmony & connection, down-to-earth, humble, graceful, curious, enthusiastic
GREEN	Nature, life and happiness, stabilizes the mind, peace, fun, adventurous
SILVER	Unconventional and independent
GREY	Compassionate, romantic and friendly

What we've seen

While all of our brides have opted for the traditional red/ burgundy lehenga some of them have definitely used these colours to enhance their pre-wedding ceremonies and post wedding ceremonies.

Color Combinations

“If I tell my mom I want to wear the colour blue for my wedding, I definitely know how that will go, I can't Imagine getting her approval. After all, blue is not exactly a bridal color. Or is it?

Red is a must wear and why won't you want to wear it? Red was worn long ago as the standard colour because it was said that the brightest and boldest colour brings out the complexion of the wearer and they look and feel their best! But there's no harm in mixing in your favourite colours in accents and jewelry.

Pre-Wedding

Yellow with green, pink and gold embroidery



Yellow & Orange



Yellow & Silver



Wedding Day
Color mixes - Burgundy with Light Pink Dupatta



Wedding Day
Coordinated Couple Outfits- Wedding Day Match Ups

Matching Red Velvet Outfits



Wedding Day
Coordinated Couple Outfits- Wedding Day Match Ups

Main Color for bride is used as accent color for groom



Traditional Red



Instead of changing into a white dress, all these couples opted to stay with traditional Indian wear.







Double Dupatta

The big question is should you wear double dupattas or a single dupatta for your bridal lehenga?

It's a choice that every bride is faced with and definitely should be touched on. While the outfit you've chosen is already remarkable, double dupattas tweaks the look to a more traditional charm for a brides look- break colour monotony with this tip, be sure to use the lighter material on your head and the heavier draped around you.



Mother of the bride wear

Mothers of the bride play an extremely important and main role in Hindu Weddings and should be dressed to impress. With some even rivalling their daughters, but nevertheless it's a big moment with Mum being one of the first faces the groom sees so be sure she is ready and makes an impression- be it humble, warm and welcoming or regal and proud.

Here are some mums and daughters we had:









Indian Wedding bouquets and bridesmaids

Colour coordinated outfits for the brides closest friends/ bridesmaids or sister entourage ushering her in in the bridal entrance. It adds to the picture perfect moment, it helps in simplicity & symmetry of the scene.



SECTION 4: Wedding Decor

THE HINDU MANDAP

Various religions use an additional structure within the wedding hall to represent a special area under which vows and prayers are conducted. Traditionally, consisted of a wooden four pillar structure with a yellow or red canopy, the four pillars said to represent the parents of the bride and groom who supported the couple from their birth. It is an acknowledgement of the parents contribution to elevating the children from birth up to the marriage. The canopy around the four pillars signifies the universe under which the couple is making their transition to householder life.

The pillars of the traditional mandap are traditionally made of wood and decorated with sugarcane, bamboo and other stalks. However modern mandaps could be made with anything from iron to fiberglass and may exclude organic components, except for what is needed for puja, in favour of fabric and faux flowers.

Modern Mandap designs may accessorize and stylize using a lot more objects such as: chandeliers, crystals, candles, fairy lights, coloured uplighting and much more. Traditionally the colours of the mandap are vermilion red and golden yellow but many couples now opt for non traditional colour that complement their decor or wedding hall.



Extra!

It's going to be hard, but focus on the meaning, smile, enjoy the moment and make the time for those keepsake Photos, you won't regret it.

Your Guest

Keep them happy with good food and keep them connected to the couple with accent personalized decor pieces like prited pictures and signature books by the entrance. Let them know more about the couple, let them feel like they are apart of things- by making them sign and leave comments. Give them a chance to impart their knowledge on you.

Multi days or one ?

It's up to you, budget, family preferences, but most brides don't like the haste of the day or mixing the white dress with sindoor and their same red sari makeup, if this is the case for you, you should definitely opt for multi days, if it's traditionally one day in your family, don't break tradition but when changing outfits for a reception consider a coloured Indian wear instead of the white dress idea - This is you chance to get really creative!

Conclusion

Now we know what a Hindu wedding looks like, and what it's all about, we hope these guidelines help in executing or attending your next Hindu wedding. Our hopes in educating our clients in our one on one meetings before the wedding day have always been so that after they are able to enjoy and appreciate the day as it goes so that we as the photographer and Videographer can get the moments that they and their families deserve to look back on after all their hard work and preparations.

We hope that this book reflects all that we would have gone through with our clients and more before the wedding day.

From the beginning, we knew that our couples deserved more than just a wedding job, more than just the typical shoe shot, ring shot, couple portrait shot, beneath all the pomp and glamour the true meaning was always there.

It's about a love story between newly weds, it's about their loved ones, it's about all the support they've gotten from parents or grandparents who've sacrificed so much to get them where they are at. And if there's tension in the family, then the aim becomes creating a memory that brings everyone together. If they are deceased, then it becomes a tribute to the love of the ancestors.

In Hinduism there is no divorce only two souls that spend their destinies together. Across religious boundaries, geographical or other, Hinduism believes in the undeniable connection and desire between female and male energies. And so do we.

"From the union of these two
the universe has come to be:
Two lamps, one light
Two eyes, one sight
Two lips, one word
Two hearts, one love
In this way these two create one universe"

