



WEDDING CEREMONIES

Indian weddings are a colourful and vibrant mélange of a number of customs and events. If you take into consideration the various different cultures and religions in the country, you will find a variety of pre-weddings functions and celebrations that span over days, apart from the more serious ring exchange ceremony and the exchanging of vows.

A couple of the most popular and commonly celebrated functions are the Sangeet and the Mehendi. The Sangeet is one of the more vibrant and fun celebrations in Indian weddings, replete with enthusiastic live music and dance performances and food and drinks galore. Today, the Sangeet is often celebrated on a grand scale with choreographed dances and skits by family and friends on film and wedding songs and sometimes professional performers are hired too.

There are times when the Sangeet is combined with the Mehndi function as a means to save time and to do away with added expenses of individual functions during this hectic time of merry making. The Mehndi function is one that spans over different religions and cultures. The bride's hands and feet are adorned with gorgeous henna patterns and all present participate in choosing their Mehndi designs. This pre wedding ceremony is also filled with food, music and lots of fun.

The Roka ceremony is indigenous to Punjabi weddings, where the bride's and groom's families meet to formalize the wedding. The Roka is a pre-wedding custom that signifies the formal relationship and commitment between the families, celebrated with a gift exchange and music and dance. A similar pre wedding ceremony is the KachiMisri in the Sindhi community. The KachiMisri is a ritual that precedes a formal engagement; an informal engagement takes place with an exchange of gifts, fruits, coconuts and misri (sugar), symbolizing a commitment between the bride and groom. The groom's sister covers the bride's head with a red dupatta and the groom also feeds sheera to his future sister-in-law.

A ceremony common to Hindu and Muslim weddings is the Haldi ceremony. During the Haldi ceremony, the bride is made to sit on a small stool and family members apply a turmeric paste on the bride's face and body. This fun ceremony usually takes place a day before the wedding and most people add their own spin on it. The paste made with turmeric, sandalwood and rose water

is meant to beautify the skin and get the bride ready for her big day. Female family members normally sing traditional Haldi songs.

The Roce ceremony is a pre-wedding ritual that is followed by some Christian communities. Also held on the day before the wedding, the bride or groom to be is given a bath with hot water and coconut milk or juice; oil is also applied on the forehead or in the ears. Nowadays family and friends also have a little fun by putting all kinds of weird things like eggs on them. The Roce is then followed by a dinner for all guests present and marks the start of the celebrations to come and signifies the last bath as an unmarried individual.

These are just a little sampler of the diverse wedding traditions and ceremonies in India. Whatever kind of wedding ceremonies you decide to have, Sam & Shail will help you put it together. We will help you organize all your pre-wedding functions and take care of the smallest details. From the Sangeet to the Griha Shanti to the Baraat, Sam & Shail will provide you with all the expertise related to various customs, rituals and traditions that make up the big fat Indian wedding.

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