



THANK YOU FOR JOINING US IN
CELEBRATING THE MARRIAGE OF

*Rina &
Matthew*

MAY 29, 2017
CLIFF AT LYONS | CO. KILDARE, IRELAND

PRESIDING OVER THE HINDU WEDDING CEREMONY IS PARITOSH K. GHATAK,
ASSISTED BY HIS WIFE, ARUNDHATI GHATAK.



A Bengali Hindu wedding ceremony is an elaborate, colorful and meaningful affair, full of rituals rooted in 6,000 year old Vedic tradition. Each phase of the ceremony has a symbolic, philosophical, and spiritual meaning. The ceremony is traditionally performed in Sanskrit. The Sanskrit word for marriage is *vivaha*, which means “what supports or carries.” The *vivaha* ceremony is therefore a sacred ceremony meant to create a union that supports and carries a man and woman throughout their married life in pursuit of righteousness, or *dharma*.

Bor Jatri – THE GROOM’S PROCESSION – Matthew and his friends and family make their way to the ceremony site in a joyous celebration.

Bor Boron – WELCOMING THE GROOM – Rina’s sister, Tina, warmly greets Matthew with a traditional bamboo tray which holds various ceremonial items. A friendly negotiation takes place between both families prior to Matthew being escorted to the wedding altar.



Ganesh Puja – OPENING PRAYER – After all are seated, the ceremony begins with Matthew seeking blessings from Lord Ganesh, the remover of all obstacles and the God of all circumstances. Most Hindu ceremonies begin with invoking His divine blessings.

Saat Paak & Subho Dristi – HERE COMES THE BRIDE – Rina makes her grand entrance escorted by her sister. Rina’s cousin, Amit, then escorts her the rest of the way, and the pair circle Matthew seven times to symbolically intertwine the couple. All along, Rina holds up betel leaves, which prevent her from being able to see her handsome groom too soon. It is only after the seventh circle that Rina lowers the betel leaves and she and Matthew lovingly glance at each other for the “first time!”



Mala Badal – GARLAND EXCHANGE – Rina and Matthew exchange floral garlands, each playfully dodging the other in light-hearted fun. Alas, they will give in to each other and accept the garland to formally accept each other as soon-to-be husband and wife!

Sampradan – GIVING THE BRIDE AWAY – Rina’s father, Sisir, formally gives his beloved daughter away by joining the couple’s hands and asking that Matthew take care of her, always. Vedic hymns are recited as Matthew promises Rina’s father that he will not fail her in his pursuit of *dharma* (righteous life), *artha* (wealth), and *kama* (desires).

Jor Bandha – TYING THE KNOT – The priest's wife, Arundhati, ties a piece of Rina's clothing to Matt's shawl symbolizing that they are tied together in body, mind & soul.



Vivaha Homa – SACRED FIRE – A small fire is lit and prayers are recited to Agni (Lord of Fire) symbolizing light, power, and purity. These prayers have a special importance, for it is Agni that acts as a principal witness to the ceremony and who dispels the darkness and ignorance from our lives and leads us to eternal light and knowledge.

Atha Laj Homa – CIRCLING THE FIRE – Rina and Matthew circle the sacred fire and pray for protection and a long, blissful life with each other. With each circle, they give offerings of puffed rice to the fire. Rina's cousin, Sundip, hands Rina the rice to assist in this ritual. This is symbolic of his constant and unwavering brotherly support.

Saptapadi – SEVEN STEPS – Matthew and Rina take seven sacred steps together to solemnize the wedding. This represents the beginning of their journey through this life and the next together. With each step, they make a vow to each other.

Let us take the first step to provide for our household,
Let us take the second step to strengthen our mental and spiritual powers,
Let us take the third step to prosper by righteous means only,
Let us take the fourth step to gain knowledge and happiness by mutual love, respect and trust,
Let us take the fifth step to be blessed with virtuous and noble children,
Let us take the sixth step to be blessed with happy and healthy lives,
Let us take the seventh step to be inseparable friends forever.

After the final step, Rina sits to his right, closer to his heart.

Pani Grahana – JOINING HANDS – Matthew and Rina join hands, symbolic of their divine union.



Sindoor Daan – MARK OF MARRIAGE – Matthew puts vermilion, a bright red powder, on the parting in Rina's hair, denoting that she is now a married woman. Matthew and Rina are now officially husband and wife!

Ashirbad – CLOSING BLESSINGS – The priest sprinkles holy water over the newlyweds while reciting prayers. Close family and friends are then invited up to the altar to bless the newlyweds!



A Special Note

To our beloved family and friends,

A heartfelt thank you for bearing witness to our Hindu marriage ceremony! Thank you for the support, encouragement, friendship, love and laughter that you contribute to our lives. You are our teachers, guides, very best friends, and our favorite people in the world. We are sincerely grateful for all the memories we have shared with you and look forward to many more in the years to come!

We hope that you relax & enjoy the rest of the evening!

With love & gratitude,

Rina and Matt

