

## TYPES OF WEDDINGS

**South Indian Wedding:** Southern states of India usually a Hindu ceremony

**Punjabi/Sikh Wedding:** Northern states of India such as Punjab, Rajasthan or a Sikh ceremony

**Middle Eastern/Muslim Wedding:** Include countries such as India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, a Muslim ceremony

It is common to have **fusion weddings** that combine two cultures or religions, such as a Hindu/Sikh Wedding. These types of weddings sometimes have two separate ceremonies which may take place on two separate days.

Generally, Indian weddings last around 3-4 days. (Pre-Wedding Festivities/Sangeet, Wedding Ceremony, Reception)

## PRE-WEDDING

**Sangeet:** A pre-wedding ceremony that includes henna artists, dancing, and singing. Most Indian weddings have a sangeet and it ranges from size, but it may be considered a big event that will take place in a banquet hall.

Indian weddings do not usually have a wedding rehearsal before the wedding, but it's nice to do at your final walk through since many of the bridesmaids/groomsman would be attending their first Indian wedding.

## PRE-CEREMONY

**Baraat:** The groom's procession to the ceremony on the day of the wedding. He arrives on a horse or car as music is played and his family dances toward the venue. This event would take place outside (as it is generally a boisterous gathering) and is common in most Indian weddings.

**Milni Ceremony:** The meeting of the bride and groom's family before the ceremony. This takes place after the baraat before heading into the banquet hall/ceremony location.

## CEREMONY

**South Indian Wedding:** South Indian/Hindu weddings can take place anywhere (indoors—banquet hall or outdoors) as long as there is a mandap.

**Mandap:** A four post structure where the bride and groom are wed during South Asian weddings. It is the equivalent of an altar. There will need to be room for a small fire pit in the center for the religious aspect of the ceremony and seating for the bride and groom.

## CEREMONY (cont.)

**Punjabi/Sikh Wedding:** Ceremonies are usually held in a Sikh temple so there would not be a need for a ceremony venue.

**Middle Eastern/Muslim Wedding:** The actual ceremony is called a Nikkah. The bride and groom sit on a stage/thrones in front of friends and family. This event takes place in an indoor location such as a banquet hall.

## COCKTAIL HOUR

Indian weddings do not traditionally have a cocktail hour before the reception, although it is now popular event for the younger generations. The bride and groom typically change into their reception outfits during this time, so they are not in attendance as they would be at an American wedding. It may be out of the question for some Indian weddings if alcohol is prohibited.

## RECEPTION

The reception may take place on the same day or the day after the wedding ceremony. It is a big party that consists of speeches, performances, dinner, cake, and dancing. The bride and groom usually sit on a stage and there may be separate seating for the bridal party. Indian weddings are generally very large gatherings so seating and the size of the dance floor is important to guests. Buffet style cuisine is most common in Indian weddings and some Indian cultures have strictly vegetarian diets. Receptions last until late hours of the night and there may even be an after party if the bride and groom have planned to do so and have made accommodations. This is often the finale of Indian weddings.

## WALIMA

The Walima is a marriage banquet after a Muslim wedding. It may be combined with the reception or the bride and groom may choose to have it a day or two after the reception as a kind of second (more intimate) affair that would take place in a banquet hall.

## VIDAI

A farewell ritual that marks the departure of the bride from her parental home typically taking place after the wedding rituals are completed. The bride is accompanied by her family to a car and the bride's father gives her to the groom. She then throws back three handfuls of rice and coins over her head, into the house. This symbolizes that the bride is repaying her parents for all that they have given her so far. It is a teary farewell and often omitted by modern Indian brides and grooms.

