

Thai Wedding Ceremony

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In Thailand, one of the most important occasions of a person's life is the wedding ceremony. The Thai wedding ceremony places value on that particular moment when a man and a woman have decided to be united in marriage. Therefore, the complicated steps of the ceremony are accomplished in one day in a sacred and beautiful manner ('Thai Wedding Ceremony').

The most interesting parts of the wedding ceremony are the offering of items, an engagement ceremony, and the chanting of the monks. The wedding proper begins in the morning with the bridegroom's family offering items, or "Khan Mark". It is an advance of how the groom asks for a woman's hand. This embarks on the groom's family and close friends dancing their way to the house of the bride with their hands full of offerings. For the Khan Mark parade, both the groom and the bride are dressed in traditional costumes with close-fitting and brightly coloured Thai silk outfit. The Khan Mark parade is followed by the engagement ceremony. The groom brings the engagement gifts or "Sin Sod", such as money, gold, a ring, and some other jewellery, to the bride's parents. The amount of Sin Sod is usually demanded by the bride's parents. In retrospect, people believe that the amount of Sin Sod depends on several factors such as the social status, the parents' wealth, and the bride's education, age, and beauty. "Sin" refers to richness, and valuables, and "Sod" is the act of storing away or holding the "Sin". Then, they will have a Monk Blessing as a Buddhist custom at the house of the bride or the bridegroom. The monks chant prayers for health, happiness, and prosperity for the wedding couple's marriage. In return, the couple present the monks with alms and food.

In the afternoon, both the bride's and the groom's families and close friends will be invited to the "Rod Nam Sang" event. "Rod" stands for soak, "Nam" for water, and "Sang" for a conch shell. The couple will sit close to each other on the floor with their hands held in Wai Style just as we pay respect to the Lord Buddha. Their hands are connected with a flower chain while they are performing Wai. The most senior will start to soak the couple's hands in water and wish them luck, and the parents and the other people will follow. This is the main event where both the bride's and the groom's families get together before the wedding party night.



Source: "The Wedding Ceremony"

In the evening, the guests are invited to the dinner party at a hotel since the facilities are easier to set up. It could be arranged in different ways such as cocktail style, buffet Thai food, or Chinese food. Before the dinner starts, the couple with their parents will stand in front of the function room, welcoming and greeting the guests. Upon arrival, the guests will register their names and present the gifts at the reception area, and express sincere wishes to the new couple. During the dinner time, the master of ceremonies starts the formal ceremony by giving a two or three minute speech about marriage tips. For example, a spouse is like the tongue to the teeth. They are needed by each other. After the speech, the guests will be asked to stand up in order to toast the bride and the bridegroom by saying “Chai-Yo” or “Cheers” three times. Finally, the bride and the groom will cut the wedding cake and serve the parents, guests, and relatives.

In conclusion, the Thai wedding ceremony is complex with numerous steps. However, this inevitable event is traditional and unique. Thai people believe that after receiving all the friends’ and relatives’ best wishes, the bride and the groom will lead a sweet and happy life together forever. Therefore, Thais value their wedding ceremonies very much.

Work Cited

“Thai Wedding Ceremony.” 12 Feb. 2005
<<http://www.thailandlife.com/wedding/thaiwedding.htm>>