

VOGUE

INDIA

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BOOK**
2017

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Wedding album

From Big Fat to Boho, Royal to Spiritual, Destination to Intimate—if you're looking for inspiration for your Big Day, look no further than most exciting weddings of the year

By SHEREE GOMES GUPTA

THE MULTICULTURAL WEDDING

Carmeni & Ulrich



The bride: Carmeni Naidoo, audit partner, Deloitte
The groom: Ulrich Bester, mining engineer, DRA
The destination: Johannesburg

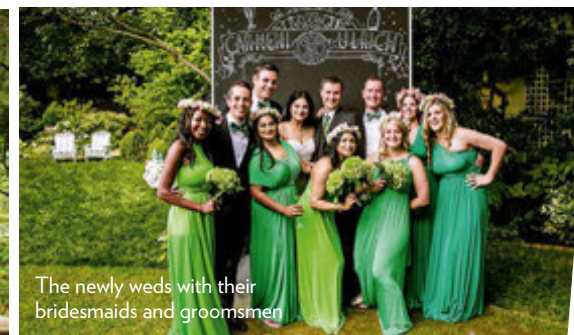
THE THOUGHT

"We wanted to celebrate the best of both our cultures," says Carmeni Naidoo of her wedding festivities that took place over three days. Naidoo, whose ancestors are from Andhra

Pradesh, married her South African beau last December, a year after they met at a food market. "Ulrich asked my parents for my hand in marriage after just five months of our dating," she says.



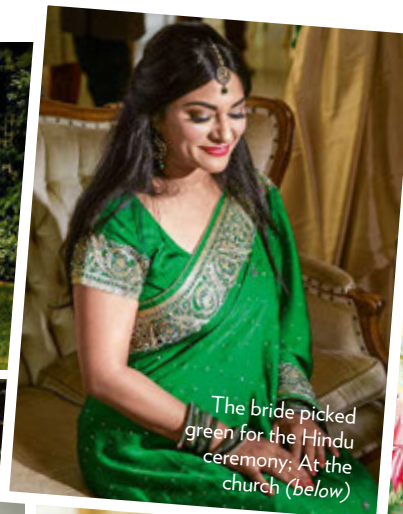
The white wedding gown and cathedral veil were designed by Pronovias



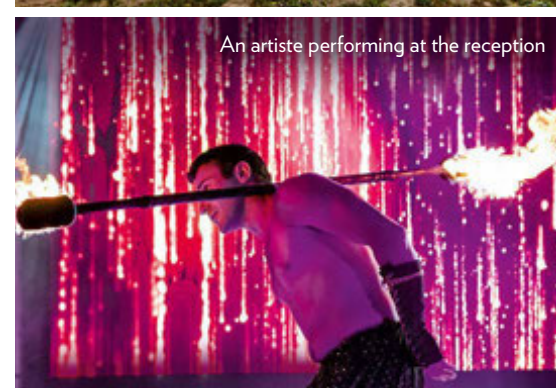
The newlyweds with their bridesmaids and groomsmen



Flower girls at the reception



The bride picked green for the Hindu ceremony. At the church (below)



An artiste performing at the reception



The dining area all dressed up



At the wedding

THE WHITE WEDDING

This traditional affair took place under a white Bedouin structure within a private botanical sanctuary of a home in Hyde Park, Johannesburg. "With its own rainforest, a water garden comprising six ponds and a bog, a colonnade, a formal rose garden, a lotus garden and a sunken vegetable garden, Beechwood provided the perfect setting for a summer outdoor garden wedding, with delectable canapes, lights snacks, champagne and other beverages going around," informs David Bloch, the couple's wedding producer. Entertainment included performances by a classical string trio and an electro-swing band. The reception took place in the evening, a five-minute drive from Beechwood Gardens. "This party went on till late—one of South Africa's best cover bands, DEN-IM, and DJ Luis Almeida performed," adds Bloch.

THE NALANGU

This pre-wedding cleansing ritual was staged at a multi-level venue, providing just the right setting for the couple's Aladdin's 'Cave of Wonders' theme with lounge pods, low cocktail tables and café-style tables as well as formal seating for guests. The bridal party performed, with a special act by Naidoo's father. "A highlight was the performance by a Bollywood troupe who provided our guests with a taste of the rich, colourful and diverse musical and dance genres celebrated in India," says Naidoo. Since the wedding was held in December, the cuisine had a hint of Christmas spirit, complete with lamb roasts and flambéed pancakes.

THE INDIAN CEREMONY

Guests got to experience a traditional Hindu service. "Shades of gold, accented with pops of oranges and blues, created a beautiful visual with long dining room tables giving the Polo Room at the Inanda Club a distinct feeling of grandeur," says Bloch. Traditional Indian musicians and Bharatanatyam dancers performed as Indian specialties like tikkas, biryanis, curries, chaats and kulfis were served. "For me, the highlight was my first dance with Ulrich to the popular Bollywood song 'Kuch Kuch Hota Hai'," says Naidoo.

THE WEDDING ENSEMBLES

Pronovias was the bridal house of choice for the traditional white wedding gown and cathedral veil. Bester wore a bespoke suit. On day two, Naidoo wore a sari, followed by a lehenga from Paaneri, which is based in Mumbai. For the Hindu ceremony, she wore a traditional Sabyasachi lehenga with Bester in a matching suit. ■

Blackbook

WEDDING PRODUCER: David Bloch (Davidblochint.com)

HAIRSTYLIST: Saadique Ryklief (Saadique.co.za)

MAKE-UP ARTIST: Gina Myers (Gimyersmakeup@icloud.com)