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Charanjeet Kaur Bhogal

weds

Amulkumar Patel

March 16, 2013

Gurdwara Sahib  
San Jose, CA

## CLOTHING

At Sikh weddings, everyone wears clothing in vibrant and bright colors. Although it is better to avoid pure white and black (as they are worn at funerals) at the wedding there is nothing sacrosanct, but you may feel a little out of place. Dark colored suits for men are OK. Modest dress is best. Bare shoulders, plunging necklines and short skirts will be out of place at a religious venue but will be fine for the reception at the restaurant. In the Gurdwara, you will need to sit cross-legged or otherwise on the carpeted floor for at least 1 hour.

## UPON ARRIVAL

Proceed to the front drive way located between the Water Fall and Main Entry Foyer.

All men, women, and children must cover their heads when in the Gurdwara. Please do not cover your head with a hat. You may use a long scarf or handkerchief. The Wedding Party will provide clean scarves for anyone who needs one.

The meeting of the two families and Ardas (prayer) will happen at the Gurdwara Main Entry. Which will be followed by breakfast in South Langar Hall (Dining Hall) to the Left of the Main Entry Foyer. You may leave your shoes on while eating.

Once breakfast is complete you can head to the Small Prayer Room, which will be to the Left of the Middle Entry Foyer. Everyone is required to remove his or her shoes in the Middle Entry Foyer before entering the Small Prayer Room. Please remove your shoes and place them on the racks provided. If you have touched your shoes or feet, please wash your hands at the sinks. Men's washrooms are on the left and women's are on the right.

Once you have removed your shoes and covered your head, you will enter the Small Prayer Room for the wedding ceremony. Women will seat themselves to the right and men to the left. If you would like to make a money offering to the Temple, you may walk down the center of the room to the altar, place down the money and step to either the left or right side to be seated. This is not necessary. If you arrive late, please do not do this because the bride and groom will be seated at the front.

## **WEDDING DAY ACTIVITIES AT THE GURDWARA SAHIB**

**Arrival at Gurdwara & Reception of Baraat:** The Groom's party is "received" by the Bride's party at the Gurdwara.

**8:30am - Milni:** (means "Introductions"): This will take place in the front area of the Gurdwara. Ardas (a prayer) will be performed by the priest (Giani-jji). After, formal introductions of the bride and groom's families start. One by one, members of both families will exchange well wishes and garlands.

**9am - Tea:** Tea, snacks, and sweets will be served in the South Langar Hall (Dining Hall) to the Left of the Main Entry Foyer at the Gurdwara. After tea, everyone will go into the Small Prayer Room (to the left of the Main Entry Foyer) where the wedding ceremony will take place.

### **10am - Main Wedding Ceremony "Anand Karaj" – Blissful Union**

This is not merely a physical and legal contract but a sacrament – a holy union between two souls. Two individuals are joined in equal partnership.

After all guests have been seated, the groom sits in front of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib (Holy Book). The bride then enters with her parents, brothers, and sisters and sits next to the groom. The following takes place:

- Kirtan - The singing of the Holy Hymns, "Gurbani".
- Ardas (Prayer) – The Bride, Groom, and their parents will stand with folded hands and join in this prayer. This prayer indicates the public consent of the parties involved to this marriage taking place. From this point on, every time the bride and groom arise or sit down during the ceremony they will bow down to Sri Guru Granth Sahib (Holy Book) out of respect by touching their foreheads to the ground.
- Palla – The Groom will be wearing a sash over his shoulder. The bride's father will place the end of the sash into the hands of the bride. The bride will hold onto this sash during the ceremony. This signifies the giving away of the bride
- Laava Phere – The Laava Hymn of Guru Ram Das is the main part of the wedding ceremony. The four stanzas of the hymn describe the progression of love between a husband and wife, which is analogous to that between the soul (bride) and God (the husband). After the conclusion of the recitation of each stanza the groom, followed by the bride holding the end of the sash, will go around Sri Guru Granth Sahib in a clockwise direction while the stanzas are read and sung out. After each round the couple will sit until the next

stanza begins. During their walk around Sri Guru Granth Sahib often there will be members of the girl's family who help her complete her rounds with her husband. This is to signify their support for her as she leaves one family for another. According to the hymn, the following takes place during each round:

- In the 1<sup>st</sup> round, the marriage is initiated;
  - In the 2<sup>nd</sup> round, the partners (bride and groom) are united and there is unsung rejoicing within;
  - In the 3<sup>rd</sup> round, the mind is filled with divine love; and
  - In the final, 4<sup>th</sup> round, the mind becomes peaceful having found God.
- Lectures – After the Laava are completed the couple is lectured on marriage.
  - Ardas – Everyone will stand and join in the Ardas (prayer) for the marriage as the religious ceremony is formally concluded.
  - Hukamnama - The Sri Guru Granth Sahib (Holy Book) is opened to any page at random and the hymn is read out.
  - Parshad – Upon completion of the ceremony, you will receive a sweet offering (blessing) to eat. The sweet blessing called parshad is generally made with flour, butter and sugar. Since the blessing is sacred, please do not throw it away. It is best to ask for a small portion if you are not likely to eat much.
  - Sagaan – This is a ceremony where the parents of the Bride and Groom, followed by key people and the congregation will bless the newly wedded and give gifts or money and have photos taken. It is then customary for the guests to form a line behind the bride and groom to offer a monetary blessing. This is optional. If you do make an offering, it is considered good luck to include a \$1.00 with the amount you wish to offer (i.e. \$10+\$1).

## **Reception**

If you will not be participating in the monetary blessing ceremony, please proceed immediately to Mayuri Indian Restaurant for the luncheon reception.

“They are not said to be husband and wife, who merely sit together.  
Rather they alone are called husband and wife, who have one soul  
in two bodies.”

*Sri Guru Granth Sahib, Page 788*