The Hindu wedding ceremony is a holy sacrament enveloped in a symbolic order of events that stem from the oldest of Hindu scriptures, the Vedas. We invite you to witness these very special rituals that will take place under a mandap, a four pillared structure that will not only represent our first home, but also a forum for God to witness and bless our unification. You will also see that fire plays a divine role during the ceremony as it is considered Earth’s life force.

## Baraat - Wedding Procession of the Groom

Traveling by horse, the groom is accompanied by his family and friends to the wedding venue. Music and dancing sets the mood for the celebration of his arrival. He is then welcomed by the bride’s parents and her family, an aarti (blessing) is performed, and the groom and his family enter inside.

## Ganesh Puja - Invocation of Lord Ganesha

This Hindu god of wisdom and salvation is called upon to bless the bride and groom and all those present.

## Madhuparka - Welcoming the Groom

The mother of the bride welcomes the groom to the mandap (wedding altar). The father of the bride then honors the groom with honey water, rice, and flowers. The bride’s family then raises a curtain in preparation of the bride’s arrival.

## Kanya Agaman - Arrival of the Bride

The bride is led to the mandap by her father and is greeted by the mother and father of the groom.

## Antarpat - Exchange of Garlands

The raised curtain is removed and the bride and groom see each other for the first time. Garlands are exchanged between them as a form of respect.

## Kanyadaan - Entrusting of the Bride

The parents of the bride give her away by placing her hand over the groom’s. The couple promises each other endless love and devotion, and a hand-woven cord, a varmala, is placed around the bride and groom to unite and protect them from evil.

## Hasta Melap and Pani Grahan - Holding of Hands and Tying of the Knot

The bride and groom hold hands to symbolize the acceptance of each other. The groom’s sister then ties a knot between the couple to signify eternal togetherness.

## Agni Puja - Invocation of the Sacred Fire

Agni, or fire, symbolizes the illumination of the mind, bringing forth knowledge and happiness.

## Shilarohana - Mounting of the Stone

The bride and groom place their feet on a stone, representing strength in the face of difficulties of life.

## Mangalfera - Sacred Rounds

The couple walks around the holy fire seven times, with groom leading 4 times, and the bride, 3 times. Each round represent Hindu goals in life: Dharma (righteousness), Artha (accomplishment), Kama (energy and passion), and Moksha (liberation).

## Saptapadi - Seven Steps

The couple takes steps to symbolize the seven blessings in their journey through life:

First Step: An invocation to God for the plentitude of food and nourishment
Second Step: A prayer for mental and physical strength
Third Step: A fulfillment of spiritual obligations and duties
Fourth Step: An attainment of happiness in all walks of life
Fifth Step: A blessing for strong and virtuous children
Sixth Step: A prayer for longevity and bountiful seasons together
Seventh Step: A prayer for true companionship in a life filled with understanding, loyalty, and unity

## Mangalsutra Bandhan - Tying of the Auspicious Necklace

The groom adorns the bride with the auspicious necklace, or mangalsutra, a symbol of unity, love, and friendship. This jewelry traditionally took the place of a wedding ring.

## Pathi Purvani - Blessing of the Bride

The groom places sindhoor (red powder) on the forehead of the bride, promising to forever protect her and keep her happy.

## Aashirwad - Final Blessing

The couple seeks blessings for a long and happy marriage from the priest, parents, family, and friends.

## Vidai - Bride’s Fairwell

The bride and groom leave the mandap as a married couple and receive blessing and a shower of flower petals from all of their guests. This portion of the wedding is very emotional because it includes the farewell to the Bride by her parents, siblings, relatives, and friends. She leaves with tears of both joy and sorrow, but carries the very best wishes of all who witness her matrimonial ceremony.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, please join us for a traditional south Indian luncheon.