



Beautiful gowns are worn at traditional Japanese weddings.
傳統日式婚禮的禮服華麗典雅。

The perfect day

Steeped in centuries of tradition, weddings in Japan are elaborate affairs that draw on aspects of the old and the new

The ceremony of marriage is one of the most important events in almost all cultures across the world.

No matter what race, religion or country, the ceremony is steeped in centuries of tradition, and draws on age-old rituals that through the years have formed the foundations of providing the perfect bond between bride and groom.

In Japan especially, the ceremony is deeply interwoven with the culture of the country. As with many things in the Japan, it follows strict traditions that have been honoured for thousands of years.

Traditionally, a wedding ceremony is an elaborate ritual, celebrated in a Shinto shrine. It tends to be a small and private affair between the bride and groom, and witnessed by their families.

But before the ceremony can commence, traditions need to be respected. As with many cultures, the colour white plays an important part in a Japanese wedding. The colour represents purity, elegance and a fresh beginning, and as such, the bride to be is often completely painted from head to toe in white, in order to visibly declare her maiden status to the gods.





She will then don a white shiromuku, or silk kimono. Shiro means "white", and muku means "pure". The kimono will not be new – often the gown has been passed down through the generations, having been worn by mothers and great grandmothers before them. Very traditional brides will choose to wear a headdress, which includes Kanzashi ornaments intended to bring good luck to the newlyweds. On top of this is placed the Tsuno Kakushi, a white headdress.

Traditionally, the bride will change her outfit at least twice as the ceremony progresses. The first change is into the irochikake, a stunning kimono, often red with flashes of gold, silver and white. The design on this kimono will usually feature a crane to symbolise a long and healthy life. Then, another kimono will be worn. More recently brides have chosen to change into a western-style wedding gown for their final outfit.

The groom has a simpler task, and will either wear a men's kimono known as a haori-hakama, or more recently, a tuxedo.

At the heart of the Japanese wedding is the Sake drinking ceremony, which is perhaps the oldest of the wedding customs. The bride and groom sit facing each other, and whilst looking directly into each other's eyes, they take three sips each from three Sake cups. After the first sip they are considered to be married.

Although life in Japan is steeped in tradition, recent years have seen this tradition start to be interwoven with aspects of western culture. This blending of east and west has become more and more popular in Japanese wedding ceremonies, with brides and grooms choosing to include aspects of both cultures for their perfect day. As such, many couples look for unique locations, and also will often enlist the help of professional wedding organisers and venues.

They may also choose to wear western-style attire for the whole day, and have a tiered wedding cake for the guests at the reception. Western vows have also been added to many ceremonies, as have banquets and gifts.

Arranging such an elaborate affair that can capture both cultures and interweave them seamlessly is no easy task, and for that reason, it makes sense to engage an expert. Professional wedding planners can make the fairytale come true, ensuring the celebration is seamless, memorable and enjoyable for all concerned.

Perhaps it involves exchanging vows in an exotic location; being pampered throughout the day by highly skilled service staff who treat each bride like a princess; or a wedding feast so lavish and abundant it will be talked about by appreciative guests long after the event.

All of these elements, and more, come together in a very special package at the new Shangri-La Tokyo. It is appropriately called Heavenly Weddings at Shangri-La, and for soon-to-be wed couples, it offers the perfect start to their married life.

The hotel sits atop the Marunouchi Trust Tower Main Building, adjacent to Tokyo Station, providing unparalleled convenience for business, leisure travellers or wedding guests visiting from other parts of Japan or overseas.

Heavenly Weddings at Shangri-La is an exclusive, made-to-order wedding service. It was established to provide the ultimate heavenly experience in every aspect of the services celebrating one of life's major events. Shangri-La's warm hospitality, fine cuisine and quality facilities, along with partnerships with world-renowned professionals, will ensure the happiest and most memorable wedding for couples, their families and guests.

The hotel's experienced wedding concierge works closely



with couples to create a unique wedding programme individually suited to them. There are no multiple wedding ceremonies as the hotel will only take two couples a day; one in the morning and the other in the afternoon. When a wedding ceremony is taking place the hotel will not host any other banquets, giving the couple exclusive use of the entire floor.

Lavish ballrooms and exquisite flowers form the centrepiece of Heavenly Weddings. Top beauty stylists are there to ensure the bride-to-be is looking perfect for her big day.

With typical Shangri-La service and expertise, brides, grooms, their families and guests can expect to be treated to a wedding day that none of them will forget; a day which celebrates culture and modernity, tradition and respect. And most importantly of course, love.

浪漫婚禮 永誌難忘

世界各地的芸芸傳統禮儀之中，婚禮總佔著重要位置。不管任何種族、宗教或國家，一對新人永結同心的儀式，均集多個世紀以來傳統習俗之大成。

日本人相當著重傳統禮儀，婚禮儀式有過千年歷史，與日本傳統文化有著千絲萬縷的關係。傳統的日式婚禮通常選擇在神社舉行，新人在雙方親友的見證下，在神社前殿舉行婚禮，儀式較為繁複。

傳統日本新娘要穿名為「白無垢」的純白和式大禮服，日本人認為白色是神的顏色，既象徵著純潔無瑕，也意味著新生活的開始。新娘子全身用脂粉畫得雪白，在眾神祇面前證明其處子之身。新娘穿上由母親以至祖母相傳下來的「白無垢」，頭髮亦要挽起來，戴上冠簪用以固定頭髮及束緊頂戴的髮飾。傳統日本新娘亦要戴一頂稱為「角隱」的帽子蓋住髮髻，取其「蓋住稜角」之意。

正式傳統日本婚禮的花嫁衣著有「白無垢」、「色打掛」和「本振袖」三套，而新娘須先後更換兩次，首先穿上代表純潔的白無垢舉行婚儀，典禮完畢後再換上代表少女青春亮麗的色打掛參加婚宴，最後再穿上代表人婦、色彩比較沉穩的本振袖。時代轉變，近來亦有新娘選擇穿上婚紗作為婚禮的最後一套衣裝。

新郎的衣著則較為簡單，可穿黑色絲綢和服，或西式的燕尾禮服。

傳統日本婚禮的儀式中，喝清酒是歷史悠久的習俗。新娘新郎對坐望著對方，新娘手持酒杯先喝一小口，再換新郎喝，新娘再喝下最後一口，直至新人以此交互連喝三杯為止，象徵這段姻緣合天、地、人之好，有著白頭偕老、長長久之意。

近年日本婚禮亦開始與西方儀式夾雜，而且越來越普遍，有些新人甚至會選擇有特色的婚禮地點，或聘請專業的婚禮專家來

統籌人生大事。新人可選擇整天穿著西式禮服，於婚宴上為賓客奉上多層結婚蛋糕，在儀式上亦加上西式的誓盟、婚宴或禮品。

籌備婚禮，要顧及傳統禮儀之餘，每項細節都要極盡完美。因此，一個專業的婚禮策劃員便不可少。要製造一個童話故事般的婚禮，即使細節也要小心兼顧，務求令每一個參與婚禮的人都有難忘的一天。婚禮策劃的工作，包括選擇令人意想不到的婚禮場地，安排受過專業訓練的服務員及技師，為新娘子提供呵護備至的服務，以至籌備盛大的婚宴，讓賓客良久不能忘懷。

東京香格里拉大酒店提供的專貴婚禮服務Heavenly Weddings，正好體現上述的各項要求。Heavenly Weddings為每一對新人度身訂造永誌難忘的婚禮，由最體貼的服務、高水準的菜式、頂級的設施，以至邀請享譽國際的專家提供優越的服務，一應俱全，讓每對準新人，以至參與婚禮的親友，都能體驗最完美

的婚禮。而每對新人擁有的美好回憶，則喻意在往後婚姻生活有個好開始。

東京香格里拉大酒店位於丸之內大樓本館，毗鄰東京站，讓商務及度假旅客無論到日本以至國外其他地方都非常方便。

酒店的禮賓部為每一對新人籌劃最體貼的婚禮，酒店每天只會舉行兩場婚禮，早上及下午各一。當有婚禮舉行，酒店亦不會舉行其他宴會，讓婚禮可以使用整個樓層。專注的服務正是東京香格里拉對每一對新人的承諾。

美輪美奐的宴會廳及精緻獨特的鮮花佈置成為Heavenly Weddings的焦點，加上首屈一指的美容及形象設計師，讓新娘子以最完美的一面示人。

香格里拉出色的服務及經驗，保證新娘、新郎及賓客們，都可盡享難以忘懷，傳統與現代結合的婚禮，讓愛永留。