

# WEDDING & BRIDAL

## *Supplement*

JUNE 25, 2016



# The Quest for a Destination Wedding Venue

## WHAT'S INSIDE

■ A Perfect Affair	S2
■ The Quest for A Destination Wedding Venue	S3
■ Chut Cuerva & Kim Kokseng: From Central Park to Napa	S4
■ Pinoy Priest's Cookbook Reveals Recipes for Spicing Up Married Life	S5
■ Floral Centerpieces Add Natural Beauty to Wedding Reception Tables	S6
■ Reflections of 50 Golden Years	S8
■ Wedding Videography Capture Couples' Love Story	S9
■ A Filipino Wedding in Molokai's Filipino Camp in the '60's	S10

Your wedding is the most special day of your life. It's a celebration of your love, commitment and the wonderful journey you're about to begin. As you read through our special wedding supplement, take to heart the personal reflections and helpful advice from couples on choosing the perfect venue, florist, videographer and much more. From the Chronicle to you—much love and happiness on your special day!

► COVER STORY, S3

# A Perfect Affair

By Renelaine B. Pfister

This month, I will be celebrating my 10th wedding anniversary, which means I still have much to learn about marriage. It makes me reminisce about my wedding day, though, a happy event that I can't believe happened almost a decade ago now. We had a small wedding, 26 people including me and my husband. My husband, his brother and friends from Germany took the bus and met me and my party at the City Hall in Teaneck, New Jersey. I wore a simple, lilac-colored lace dress that my mother bought for me in the Philippines. It was remarkable because my mother and I had very different tastes in clothing, but that was one of the few times she got my style. The ceremony was over in minutes, and the German guests probably thought, "*we flew thousands of miles for that?*" We had a quiet reception in a hotel function room. It was all low-key, and perfect for us. We had planned to have a bigger church wedding in the Philippines, but this never came to fruition. We decided one wedding was enough.



My brother's wedding was bigger, and I was very happy to go home to Cebu a few weeks ago to attend it. It was a perfect affair.

The woman he married was a born again Christian, and they were wed in that faith. Pastor Joe officiated at the wedding, and he gave a long sermon about marriage. He spoke for 20 minutes or so about marriage these days being a failure, citing high divorce and separation rates. At first I squirmed in my seat, uncomfortable at his stern, lecturing tone. Well this is reassuring, I thought. But I realized everything he was saying was true. For example, he said married people slowly lose honor for their partners.

They go to bed without showering, are late for appointments with their spouses, talk badly about them, and put their spouses last. In fact, the opposite should be done: we should hold our spouses in the highest regard. We should put our spouses first. He said his 89 year-old uncle still pulled out a chair for his wife at the table. This is what we should strive for.

After the ceremony, we went outdoors to have our portraits on the dock, with the background of a pinkish sky and clear blue waters in Macatan Island, Cebu. But after standing in the sweltering heat in high heels (at least for the women), the whole wedding party was happy to return to the glass-walled pavilion for cocktails, snacks, and air conditioning. Then came dinner, speeches, a slide show of the newlyweds' pre-nuptial photos and singing. When the newlyweds made their thank you speech, they gave away gifts to their respective families, which was rare since it is normally the couple who receive gifts on their wedding day. Being one of the recipients of their thoughtfulness though, I found it heartwarming.

That's how we Filipinos usually celebrate weddings. But it's interesting to see how other cultures do it. A few years ago I witnessed a German wedding when my husband's best friend invited us to his.

The town mayor officiated



the outdoor wedding. He and the couple were seated at the center of the lawn, with the couple facing him. I suspected it was a beautiful exchange, if only I understood what they were saying. After the ceremony, the guests walked to the nearby restaurant for champagne and nibbles. Pretty soon, though, weird things started happening (at least, to this Filipino's eyes.) For example, someone set a miniature house on fire. Real firemen arrived shortly, with sirens blaring and lights flashing. It was all prearranged and part of the festivities.

"Isn't this a waste of the firemen's time?" I asked my husband.

Apparently no. It was tradition. One man suited the bride up in a firefighter's jacket and she helped put out the fire while the groom handled the water pump at the truck.

Then the couple sawed a large piece of wood together.

Then a large truck came and dumped chunks of firewood on the lawn, and the couple was supposed to clean it up. My husband said it could also be sawdust or anything else. All of these activities were meant to join the new couple together and promote unity. I simply thought it was too much physical labor for a wedding.

There was, however, a game where everyone could participate in. There was a block of wood (they sure had lots of trees in Germany) with nails sticking out. You're supposed to hammer down the nails with the thin, narrow end of the hammer, not the larger hammerhead. This could go on the whole night, my husband said, and it did. This was just a game, a pastime, and an excuse to drink. Everyone standing around the block of wood got a turn, and those who failed to drive the nails down had to take a drink. The funny thing is, the more drunk you are, the harder it is to drive the nails in.

Aside from the abundance of wood products, German weddings are also abundant with cake. In one tent, there was a long table covered with cakes of all sizes and colors. They were brought in by the guests and all looked mouthwatering. Picking just one or two slices (which is all one can really eat) was an agonizing decision to make.

The party lasted till the wee hours of the morning, but I had gone home with my in-laws long before that.

Whatever the setting, and whatever the culture, weddings to me are always happy and uplifting. A grand party that ushers in a new beginning. ☺



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## COVER STORY

## WEDDING &amp; BRIDAL SUPPLEMENT 2016

# THE QUEST FOR A DESTINATION WEDDING VENUE

**By Seneca Moraleda-Puguan**

**T**he feel of sand while walking down the aisle, the sound of waves lapping the shore as vows are exchanged and a majestic sunset view as the first kiss is shared. These are images that come to mind for many couples who dream of having a beach wedding.

My dream of a beach wedding came true more than two years ago along the white sand beach of Laiya, Batangas. It was beautiful and serene. It was perfect. It was everything I wanted.

But choosing and deciding on the venue was one of the most challenging parts of wedding planning. It took several calls and hours online searching for the perfect location. It was stressful and time-consuming.

Although many couples still prefer church weddings, the number of soon-to-be newlyweds who choose to hold their weddings outside of the four walls of the church building has risen in recent years. Destination weddings have become popular, not just among celebrities, but also among ordinary couples who want their weddings to be extraordinary. They desire to have the view of the sea and the sky as their altar, and the gardens as their backdrop.

The Philippines, with its 7,107 islands, gives couples many beautiful options of romantic wedding venues to choose from—mountains, gardens, lakes, beaches, old houses, churches. Anything you could ask for, the Philippines has it. Ironically, having so many options makes it tougher for couples to decide.

So what should couples consider when choosing a wedding venue?

Several former brides and brides-to-be were asked their advice on choosing the location where they will give their precious “I do” to the man they love. And these are the things they shared.

**Setting.** Beach, garden, mountain, lake or cliff? You, as

a couple, must decide the setting of your wedding. Are you both beach lovers? Or do you like gardens better? This is something you may not agree on but simple decisions such as this will make you know each other better and strengthen your relationship. And somewhere along the decision-making process, you have to compromise.

“We had to consider what we both wanted as the setting of our wedding. I wanted sand, Art wanted a view. He wanted convenience for his family. I wanted that too. So we decided on Club Balai Isabel in Talisay, Batangas,” says Joyce Torres, who married Art in December 2012.

**Sentimental Value.** Some newlyweds-to-be prefer to hold their wedding ceremony in a certain location because it has a significant meaning and importance in their lives.

“For the wedding, we chose Boracay for sentimental reasons. My husband, BJ, proposed to me there,” says Lai Lingan, who got married along the shores of Boracay in June 2015.

Shemah Asis and her husband John Paul chose to be wedded in Cagsawa Ruins, Albay. According to her, “Bicol is the place where we both grew up.”

A wedding is a once-in-a-lifetime experience for a couple where beautiful memories are created and cherished. When choosing a venue, think of the place that is dear to both of your hearts.

**Picturesque Venue.** Couples invest in expensive photography and videography to capture the most important day of their lives and the beginning of their forever. One thing to

consider when choosing a location is its picture-perfect beauty.

Joei Revilleza and Grace Deloria both agreed that the venue has to be beautiful.

“The venue has to be picture worthy. This is why we chose La Huerta Estate in Antipolo,” says Revilleza.

Deloria agrees: “The beauty of the venue was our first consideration. The view has to be perfect. Who wouldn’t agree that Baguio City is one of the most beautiful places in the Philippines? It’s one of the best places to start forever with the one you love.”

Indeed, nothing beats saying ‘I do’ and having your first kiss as husband and wife with picturesque scenery as your background. Someday, you will look at your pictures and share with your children how beautiful your wedding was.

**Accessibility.** While others choose on holding their weddings somewhere isolated, many still prefer locations that are accessible to their loved ones, friends and also suppliers.

“Since I live in Iligan, we chose to have our wedding in Cagayan De Oro so the family of my husband, Rodel, who is from Baler, Quezon, could visit my hometown,” says Estela Soniel who had her wedding at the Marco Hotel.

Bride-to-be Chezka Vidal explains, “While I’m set on looking at beach venues, other considerations include out-of-town charge, corkage fee, weighing between sticking with the caterer I like or looking for a local caterer in Batangas.”

**Budget.** Deciding on the budget for the wedding venue



Anthon and Lenee Te tying the knot in Mahogany Place, Tagaytay.



Edson and Ina Tan becoming one in Hacienda Isabella, Cavite.



With majestic Mayon Volcano in the background, JP and Shemah Asis say “I do”.

is a very important consideration. You don’t want to be broke and find yourselves in debt as you start your marriage, do you?

On the other hand, do not allow your resources to limit you in choosing your wedding venue. You can trust that God will provide and He will use people around you to bless you.

So be wise in your spending but at the same time, do so in faith.

**Others.** The Philippines being a tropical country, it is helpful to choose a location that is appropriate to the changing weather.

Ina Tan, who tied the knot with her husband, Edson, in

(continued on S4)

## COVER STORY

## WEDDING &amp; BRIDAL SUPPLEMENT 2016

THE QUEST... (from page S3)



Newlyweds BJ and Lai stroll along the white sand beaches of Boracay.



Kim and Grace Deloria begin forever in the beautiful mountains of Baguio City.



A breathtaking ceremony of Art and Joyce Torres in Club Balai Isabel in Talisay, Batangas.

Hacienda Isabella, Cavite three years ago shares, "The time we were planning, we knew we wanted somewhere without "four walls". A garden was an option, but since our wedding was in October, we knew we needed a covered venue nearby in case it rained, which actually happened in our case. And since I knew how difficult it was to walk on grass wearing heels, I knew we needed a place with a concrete or cemented walkway."

Destination weddings also help to limit the number of guests if you are on a tight budget. Guests usually pay for their own flight tickets so only those who are willing to spend for and really love the couple will attend.

"We chose a destination away from the capital because our theory was only those who really loved us would spend the money to come. This eliminated the arrival of guests who were given courtesy invites. There were so many family members who were

given invitations but who we were not close to, so we hoped the flight would be a deterrent," says Lai Lingan.

Some couples also choose a place where their families can attend not only the wedding ceremony but also enjoy nearby tourist spots.

These are just some of the things to consider. There are countless reasons to prefer one venue from another. What's important is that the bride and the groom ultimately agree on the venue.

My husband and I chose to have our wedding in Laiya, Batangas because even before getting married, both of us wanted to have a beach wedding. Laiya, which is about three hours from Manila, is the nearest white sand beach where our relatives and friends could easily travel to. We were able to find a resort that fit our budget, had excellent customer service and served good food. Laiya Coco Grove was a beautiful and affordable wedding venue.

Whether enjoying the majestic view of the mountains of Baguio or Mayon Volcano of Bicol, having a classy and elegant wedding at the gardens of Tagaytay and Antipolo, or basking in the wind and gazing at the beautiful sunset on the picturesque beaches in Batangas, Boracay and Palawan, at the end of the day, what makes a wedding glorious and memorable is not location but love.

It is love that has brought you together in the first place. So whatever venue you choose, I am sure it will be beautiful. Besides, your fam-

ily, friends and guests will have their eyes on you more than anything else. You are going to be the center of attraction and attention.

More than the wedding itself, what really matters is marriage. Marriage is a covenant created by God to reflect His love for His bride, the Church. Weddings last only for a day, but marriages are meant to last forever. Having your wedding in the most beautiful and most expensive location will be for naught if the marriage eventually crumbles. Just as what the couples before us advised, invest more

on your marriage and not on your wedding.

Lenee Te, who married Anthon in Mahogany Place, Tagaytay, summed up her considerations when choosing a beautiful wedding venue.

"The place should speak volumes about you as a couple. The place should be something you asked God for, a place you have been believing and dreaming of. The place should be a venue where people can comfortably come together and enjoy."

Happy hunting for your dream destination wedding venue! ☺

## FEATURE

CHUT CUERVA & KIM KOKSENG:  
FROM CENTRAL PARK TO NAPA  
VALLEY

HEART TO HEART By Rica Lopez-De Jesus

**J** made sure it was a pang Romansa Espesyal," says Chut Cuerva when he told us the good news about his engagement to Kim Kokseng. It was summertime in New York when Chut proposed to her in Central Park.

It was a whirlwind romance and we were surprised how fast it happened. We met Kim in February, and we realized immediately why Chut fell in love so easily with Kim because she is just so easy to get along with and we loved her right away! Kim is Cebuana, which can only mean that she is very malambing — loving, sweet, generous and warm.

It was because of Chut's good friend, Cecile Ang, and a common friend and best man, Marty Qua, that the couple



Rev. Dalton tells the newlyweds Chut and Kim Cuerva: "Each time you look down at your rings, as a married couple, down through the years, you will remember the line: 'Love is patient and love is kind.'"

met. "It started when my friend Kim recently moved to Manila. Little did she know

what was in store for her. Who knew that a simple click by @chutster to follow @kimm\_stagram would change his life completely. I have never seen Chut so fulfilled and content," said Marty.

Says Kim's best friend Mia Zamora: "She has a heart as big and as warm as her laugh. Thank you, Chut, for making our Kimmy very happy. Because ever since the two of you started dating, she's been different; there's a sparkle in her eye, and a glow to her smile and she shines like the gem that we always knew she was. You brought out the best in her as she has with you."

Chut is a man of fine taste and he pays great attention to detail. We receive the most personalized gifts from him

(continued on S12)

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## FEATURE

## WEDDING &amp; BRIDAL SUPPLEMENT 2016

# PINOY PRIEST'S COOKBOOK REVEALS RECIPES FOR SPICING UP MARRIED LIFE

By Edna Bautista, Ed.D., C.W.S.

**J**t has been said: "a couple that prays together stays together." One Filipino-American priest also believes that a couple that cooks together can spice up their marriage and satisfy their hunger for true love.

Fr. Leo Patalinghug, known internationally as "the Cooking Priest," wrote a unique cookbook, "Spicing Up Married Life." Published in 2012 by Leo McWatkins Films, Inc., it is a follow-up to "Grace Before Meals: Recipes and Inspiration for Family Meals and Family Life" (Random House, Inc., 2010). He is also the author of "Epic Food Fight: A Bite-Sized History of Salvation" (Servant Books, 2014).

Fr. Patalinghug revealed that the inspiration for writing his second book "came from prayer with God speaking to my heart," he said. "[I]f I really want to help families, I need to focus on where families begin—the marriage between husband and wife."

He hopes his book gives couples the chance to renew and strengthen their love for each other and God. In each of the 12 chapters, which corresponds to celebrating monthly anniversaries throughout the year, Fr. Patalinghug presents lessons to learn and grow together, discussion questions to encourage couple communication, prayers, recipes for romantic meals and colorful food photos. Marriage topics include loving for a lifetime, finances, in-laws and extended family, parenting, health issues, forgiveness and faith.

He even peppered some Pinoy references throughout the book. He shared his mother's version of pork

adobo infused with curry and coconut cream along with a few other Asian recipes. And he explained the symbolism of the endearing Filipino wedding tradition of the "arrhae" (exchange of 13 coins) in one of the chapters.

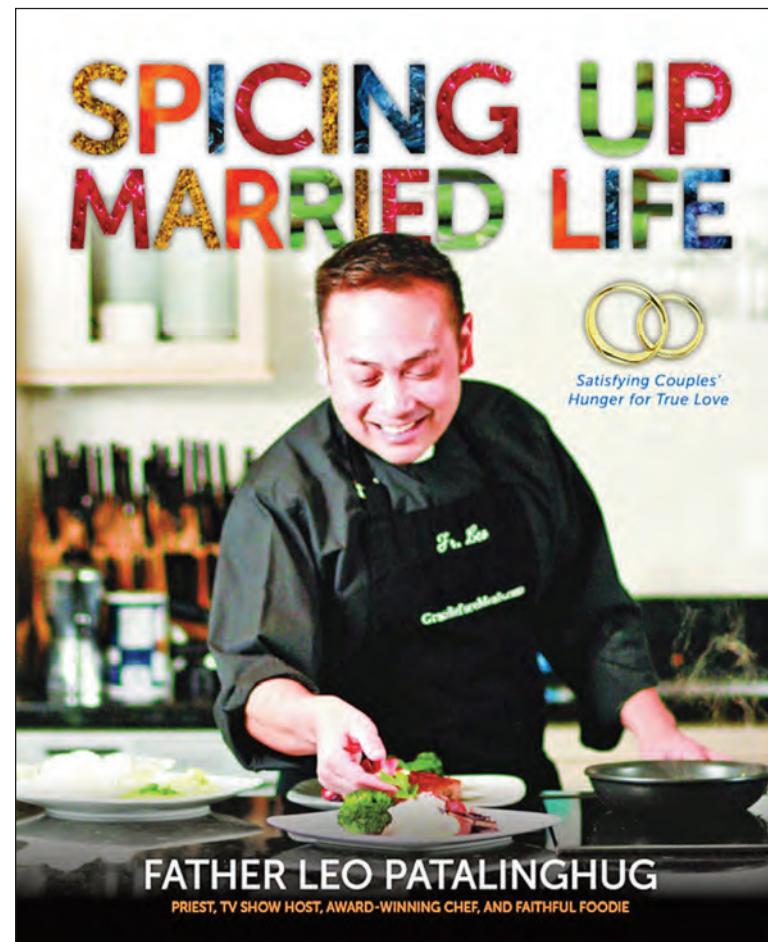
The author was born in Cataingan, Masbate, Philippines, in 1970, to Dr. Carlos and Fe Patalinghug (he dedicated the book to his parents on the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary in 2012, the year it was published).

"[I] came to America when I was 2, and ever since, Baltimore has been home. I am the youngest of five siblings, with one in heaven," he said.

Fr. Patalinghug is an ordained priest in the archdiocese of his hometown in Maryland serving part-time as a sacramental and pastoral minister. His full-time ministry is with Grace Before Meals, which focuses on the trinity of faith, family and food.

"Grace Before Meals is a movement and apostolate to bring families back to the dinner table because that is where families can be fed and nourished, not only with food, but with life lessons and the loving relationships we desire to have with family members," he said. "The Table Foundation is my new non-profit organization [501(c)3] that carries the mission by seeking to elevate the culture and family life one meal at a time. So know that regardless of who you are or your situation, there is room for you at this table to eat some delicious food and experience true nourishment!"

To help promote the movement further, Fr. Patalinghug also hosts the TV



Shown above is the book cover of Spicing Up Marriage Book written by Fr. Patalinghug

cooking show "Savoring our Faith" on EWTN (Global Catholic Network), now in its fourth season. An episode guide and more multicultural recipes, including Filipino favorites (arroz caldo, cassava cake, Lapu-lapu fish, lumpia, pancit, sini-gang and so much more), may be found at [www.ewtn.com/savoringourfaith](http://www.ewtn.com/savoringourfaith).

It was in seminary in Rome that he developed his passion for cooking. He learned a lot of trade secrets from Italian restaurant owners and chefs and shared with them his own culinary experiences. He also took cooking classes at Le Cordon Bleu in Perugia while in Italy to build upon his skills.

Fr. Patalinghug even defeated a world-famous chef with his steak fajita recipe during a cooking show competition on the Food Network "Throw Down! with Bobby Flay" in 2009.

This peppy Pinoy priest has a zest for life, which is reflected in his ministry. Moved by the Holy Spirit, Fr. Patal-

"The Catholic Church has so many beautiful teachings about marriage, which is being obscured due to political debates. While I don't want to tell people who they can or can't love, as a priest, I am required to tell people that marriage invites God's love into their lives. And they should love one another as Jesus loves us. This is understood in marriage," he said. "This book simply invites people to learn how to love as God loves."

"Spicing Up Married Life" is a thoughtful and practical present for weddings and anniversaries. It and his other publications are available through bookstores and online sellers, including the Grace Before Meals website. At [www.gracebeforemeals.com](http://www.gracebeforemeals.com), there are more recipes, multimedia links and information about Fr. Patalinghug and his ministry outreach worldwide. ☺

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*Brides and Blooms*

# FLORAL CENTERPIECES ADD NATURAL BEAUTY TO WEDDING RECEPTION TABLES

**By Edna Bautista, Ed.D., C.W.S.**

**F**lowers are romantic representations of a couple's blossoming and growing love. So it's only natural that buds, blooms and greenery are the most popular picks for wedding decorations.

At the reception, especially if the party takes place indoors, floral décor enhances the setting. Guests spend the majority of time at the tables during the wedding celebration. So decorate their dining area with stylish centerpieces.

Here are some points to consider when using flower arrangements to transform the tablescape into a gorgeous gathering space.

#### Budgets for Blooms

The Knot and Brides magazines report that couples typically spend 8-10 percent of their wedding budget on flowers, which may include bouquets, boutonnieres, leis and corsages as well as ceremony and reception décor. Some companies offer wedding package deals on a combination of these floral items to fit a range of budgets. Check their websites as some offer coupons and specials.

For fresh floral centerpieces, Bernard Somera of BGS Floral Design (<http://bgs-floraldesign.weebly.com>) estimates that prices for each arrangement can start as low as \$25 and go as high as hundreds of dollars.

Prices are determined by a number of factors, such as the type and amount of flowers/plants chosen and whether they are in or out of season (based on availability), the kind of container (vase, cube, pot, etc.) used, the time/intensity of the labor and design work, set-up fees and delivery charges.

When couples initially meet with a florist to discuss their wedding flowers, it helps to have a budget in mind, along with a color scheme and the

number of centerpieces needed for the reception tables.

"For centerpieces, I always say search for something you want [for your wedding] and bring pictures," advised Somera. If the desired centerpiece design is not within the couple's budget, most florists are very understanding and can discuss alternative ideas for the couple to save money and still have beautiful arrangements for their wedding. "I am always willing to help find ways to cut down a little on the cost, too," he said.

"A lot of the flowers can be used for both the church and reception to keep the cost low," added Somera. For instance, aisle and altar arrangements can do double duty as decorations at the reception and bridesmaids' bouquets can be repurposed by putting them in vases to grace the guestbook and/or head tables.

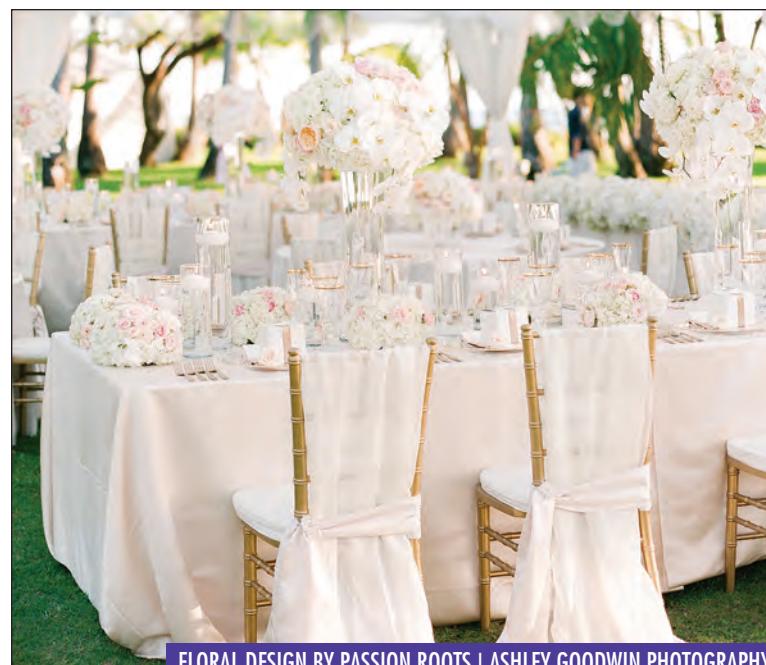
He said to keep in mind that florists' busy season is from February to May (Valentine's Day, Easter/spring celebrations, proms, Mother's Day, Memorial Day, graduations, etc.). So plan early when hiring a florist, especially during this time, to ensure that services are available for the wedding date and during the popular summer months and throughout the year.

Many DIY (do-it-yourself) brides also think that they could save money by simply sticking flowers in a vase. But someone still has to prepare, set up and deliver everything and the floral design might not be as picture-perfect for the wedding.

Somera said, "Brides should leave florals to the pros to be stress-free and enjoy their special day."

#### Tropicals, Traditions and Trends

Hawaii is often called a tropical "paradise". In this Garden of Eden there is an abun-



FLORAL DESIGN BY PASSION ROOTS | ASHLEY GOODWIN PHOTOGRAPHY



FLORAL DESIGN BY PASSION ROOTS | ABSOLUTELY LOVED PHOTOGRAPHY

dance of flowers and plants that already provide a natural beauty to the wedding environment. Many brides and grooms are taking advantage of what is available locally and mixing tropicals with other favorite flowers for their wedding centerpieces.

In particular, "orchids are very popular," said Edith Doc-tolero of Sunrise Leis and Flowers ([www.sunriseleisflowershawaii.com](http://www.sunriseleisflowershawaii.com)). "A lot of our customers want orchid branches flowing out of tall vases. Others want the orchids dropped in clear containers and floating in water with marbles or rocks and lights or candles."

These tropical centerpiece designs are simple yet stunning. And orchids may be mixed with other flowers for a

fuller effect.

Roses, carnations and stephanotis (pua male – literally translated as Hawaii's "wedding flower") are also popular choices. Plumeria and pikake ("sampaguita" – the national flower of the Philippines) are better suited for leis and floral accents as the blooms do not last very long in centerpieces.

Doc-tolero also said she has noticed that the tradition of using all white flowers for a wedding has moved toward the colorful trend.

"Everything is very colorful now. We are mixing a lot of colorful flowers into wedding centerpieces and bouquets," she said. "However, if our customers still want traditional white flowers, we recommend

adding a touch of color with accent flowers and ribbons that match the wedding colors because they photograph much nicer than just all white flowers."

Color creates a visual interest and couples could consider incorporating bright blooms in their centerpieces to symbolize a bright and joyful future ahead in their married lives.

#### Centerpiece Size and Style Selections

Size matters when selecting the style of the centerpieces. Couples need to communicate with their florist about the table type (such as long luau style or round tables) before choosing the design.

"Always make sure your florist knows your table dimensions as it makes a huge difference on how your florals are designed," advised Shilhi Boloico Seibel of Passion Roots ([www.passionroots.com](http://www.passionroots.com)). "Tables can fill up quickly with plates, glassware and utensils or even family-style plating. We have been to many a wedding where changes were made to the overall tablescape and we were not notified and have had to completely redesign the flowers to make it work with the new table settings."

For round vs. long rectangular tables, Seibel said, "Round tables are often more cost-effective as a single statement piece can be used to fill up the table. Long rectangular tables often require two or three arrangements per table. Otherwise, with a single piece, the table can look underwhelmed."

Regarding the height of the arrangements, she said, "Going with low centerpieces is more cost effective than tall. If there is room in your budget, you may consider asking your florist to create two different height arrangements, allowing for a mix of low and

(continued on page S12)

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## MARRIAGE HIGHLIGHTS

## WEDDING &amp; BRIDAL SUPPLEMENT 2016

# Reflections of 50 Golden Years

By Trifona Andres

**W**hat does one say on one's Golden Wedding Anniversary? It is exactly 50 years ago on January 29, 1966 when it happened. Osler and I got married in Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Mangnago, Laoag. It was an exclusive evening ceremony. We walked into the church ready for an elegant church wedding. It was under this beautiful setting that Osler and I exchanged our wedding vows. The extra festive church atmosphere was because another couple was also getting married the following morning, I would be the organist for that wedding.

Fifty years! What happened all those times? The years were filled with many surprises, challenges and successes. On this day, I want to reflect on the most memorable ones—the ones that I will always cherish in my heart.

How can I forget the



Osler and Trifona Andres (center) with their children at St. Ann's Church in Kaneohe for the renewal of their wedding vows. Their children are (from left) Myra, Amabelle, Mary Rose, Gregorio, Marilou and Ursula (missing: Andrea).

flowers, grapes and ice cream cake air-freighted via PAL from Manila to Laoag? How can I forget the 298 mile drive from Manila to Laoag just to visit? How can I forget the beep of Osler's 1957 Chevy to announce that he was in town? The car is still there for sentimental reasons.

Then, the reality of marriage sank in when the children kept coming. Osler delivered the first five—all girls—at the Ilocos Norte

Provincial Hospital in Laoag. Of course, the first one was awaited with much anticipation and excitement. There was much guessing as to whether the baby was going to be a girl or a boy.

Same thing for the coming of the next four who were all girls. After having five girls in a row, Osler and I were hopeful the next one would be a boy. He was going to be born in Chicago and we had already decided on the name Andre. The baby turned out to be Andrea.

When we came to Hawaii, I was pregnant with the seventh. We guessed we were destined to having girls, especially when my doctor said as I was being wheeled into the delivery room at Kapiolani Women's and Children's Hospital: "This is the room where girls are born."

As I was being wheeled, I was still hoping for a boy. In between contractions, I kept repeating to myself, "The doctor must be kidding." True enough, the doctor was kidding. There was our much awaited baby boy!

The children grew up fast. Osler and I wanted the best for them—good educational opportunities, that is,

gree or two—B.S. Nursing, B.A Biochemistry, Doctor of Philosophy (Bio Physics), B.S. Civil Engineering, B.S. Liberal Arts, Master of Social Work, B.S Psychology, B.S. Biology, and Doctor of Pharmacy. Our dreams for them were finally realized. It was worth all the sacrifice. Their education, we told them, is our best legacy.

What is the greatest thing that happened within the 50 years? The greatest, no doubt, is having been blessed with seven wonderful children. We thank the Lord for them. They are very loving, caring and generous. They are our precious jewels. We couldn't ask for more.

Then, equally wonderful are the guys who came into lives of the girls. The Andres household has been enriched with the arrival of seven terrific grand kids. Then, the stork brought us a baby girl to greet us on our Special Day. These grandchildren have brought so much joy to the family. Now, we are looking forward to welcoming a daughter-in law, I mean, a daughter-in-love.

More than 50 years ago, while Osler was in medical school at Far Eastern University, he met my sister who mentioned that I would be coming home from my East-West Center scholarship in Hawaii. Right then and there, he promised himself that he would marry me. I'm glad he kept that promise.

Once in Hawaii, came the challenges—where to stay, where to work, how to get around since we had no car. Luckily, we had good relatives and friends who helped us to resolve these issues. Osler and I finally found jobs that we liked. There were many inconveniences but we dealt with them until we were at last reunited with the children.

The children studied hard and all of them graduated from college with a de-

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Looking back—it has been a long, interesting and exciting 50-year journey filled with many challenges. I want to remember the first cry of our babies, the honors and awards they achieved in school, the diplomas and degrees they earned, the weddings that were performed, the giggles and laughter of the grandchildren. Our life is a life fulfilled. We thank the Lord for getting us to this point in our lives. ☺

## FEATURE

## WEDDING &amp; BRIDAL SUPPLEMENT 2016

# Wedding Videography Captures Couples' Love Story

By Edna Bautista, Ed.D., C.W.S.

**L**ights...camera...action!

The bride and groom are definitely the stars of their wedding with the entourage as their supporting cast. Wedding videography can capture the couple's love story—and that movie becomes a cherished memento of the beginning of their married life together.

Although the "paparazzi" (comprising of photographers and guests with digital recording devices) are ever-present during the big event, it is the film crew of videographers that can document the details of the wedding day with motion pictures and sound that a still photograph cannot capture.

"Sure, a picture is worth a thousand words, but videography can capture the 'feel' of the day in a way that photography can't," said Ian M. Fernandez, president of IMF Visions.

Sherwin Acidera of Visionize Media agreed with his fellow videographer's views: "Yes, pictures are also moments that can be cherished, but videography is moving pictures that I feel personally can portray more emotion than a picture can."

Pictures have been the traditional way of preserving wedding memories since the late 19th century. Now, especially in this age of technology and social media, wedding videos have become another keepsake option, though some couples think a photo album is enough.

"One of the most common wedding regrets I hear from brides is not having their wedding day filmed," said Fernandez, "On the other hand, I often hear couples who DID have videography complain that they spent too much on it and don't pull it out often to enjoy it. But it's better to have it and hardly watch it than not

to have it at all."

Glamour magazine has reported that 98 percent of all newlyweds recommend having a movie made of the wedding day in addition to hiring a photographer. But the biggest reason they don't choose professional videography services is because of the cost. [SIDEBAR]. Couples then seek out a friend or family member to film the festivities for free or at a deep discount.

But Fernandez cautioned that "having friends and family film it for you is never a good idea" and listed the disadvantages:

- The quality (of the video) certainly won't be as high as what you will get from professionals.
- Your friend/family member might miss important wedding shots because he/she is too busy socializing with friends and family.
- Your friend/family member will run a higher risk of having technical errors (dead battery, full memory card, etc.) that could mean missing important parts of the day.
- Your friend/family member will not enjoy your wedding because he will be obligated to work.
- It will be difficult to critique your friend's/family member's work.
- It will take a toll on your (relationship) if you don't like your friend's/family member's work.

Fernandez said the advantages of hiring a professional videographer include:

- You get what you want. A professional will customize your video just the way you like it.
- The quality will be much higher. You're hiring for experience and a creative eye.
- The professional videog-

raphers are there to work your event and to capture your special day. They will not miss anything because they are there to work and not to socialize with friends and family.

- You can critique and make changes to your video as you see fit with no hard feelings, since they're professionals and not family.
- You'll enjoy the final product for years to come.

"I would highly recommend making professional wedding videography a priority. I have talked to many relatives who have put videography very low on their list and regret not investing more into their videographer. If you have a limited budget, I recommend really looking into other portions of the wedding where you can cut down so that you can invest more into having a great videographer," said Acidera. "A wedding can only be lived once, so why not go all out?"

Many reputable videography companies offer value packages (some even bundled with photography services) and/or a la carte options to accommodate a range of budgets so couples can choose how much to invest in their wedding video.

"Try to find a company that can work with your budget. Most companies will understand and will work with you on getting your dream wedding immortalized on video," advised Fernandez.

Pricing depends on the hours of coverage (preparation, ceremony and reception), number of videographers on site, video editing with titles and transitions (such as same-day edits, online teasers, highlight reel, full feature film, etc.) and DVD/Blu-Ray/USB drive copies.

Some additional costs might include music slideshow presentations, guest interviews, extra event videos



## HAWAII WEDDING VIDEOGRAPHY COMPANIES SAMPLE RATES (2016)

Below are publicized sample rates for basic wedding videography services in Hawaii for ceremony and reception coverage (some bride and groom preparation shoots may cost extra). Check the websites for details on more video packages and customizable upgrades offered by each company. There are several other local videographers who will respond to inquiries if contacted about specific pricing.

**Cinema Verité Wedding Movies** (<http://alohawedding-movie.com>) - \$999 for up to four hours (3 Blu-Ray discs or USB drive \$60 extra charge)

**IMF Visions** ([www.imfvisions.com](http://www.imfvisions.com)) - ceremony package starts at \$999 plus tax

**Kai Media Hawaii** ([www.kaimediahawaii.com](http://www.kaimediahawaii.com)) – commissions start at \$3,000

**L'Amour Photography & Video** (<http://lmprophoto.com>) - \$1,765 for 4-hour package

**Ohana Films [Maui]** (<http://ohanafilmsweddings.com>) - packages begin at \$3,900

**Pure Media** ([www.puremedia-hawaii.com](http://www.puremedia-hawaii.com)) - \$1,899 for up to 4 hours of coverage

**Visionize Media** ([www.visionizemedia.com](http://www.visionizemedia.com)) – commissions start at \$3,000

**Zest Kauai** – \$1,250 for up to 1.5 hours of filming

(proposal/engagement, rehearsal, love story documentary, save-the date, etc.), internet live streaming services, raw footage file, videographer destination travel fees, digital guestbook, photo/video booth rental, movie poster artwork and expedited editing.

Once the wedding day is over, videographers continue to work on the project by editing the video. While a short version may be viewed on the company's website or channel within a week or so, the final full film will not be ready until a few months later because it takes time to create a quality product.

"There is a special craft, especially in the editing stages to wedding videography that takes hundreds of hours to complete," said Acidera. "We pay very close attention to the little details that you may not see as a wedding couple that

we can capture on video. With videography, you get multiple points of views rather than just one, to help create a piece that takes countless hours of crafting."

When the newlyweds finally receive the video, they come to realize that they have no regrets on their decisions to invest in a movie filled with memories of their wedding day that flew by so fast. The value of the video increases as time goes by when the couple watches it on their anniversaries and can share their love story with their children.

"Video is special because these moments can be relived in a heartfelt final product that can be cherished and passed down to future generations," said Acidera.

A picture is worth a thousand words but those who have a wedding video say it is worth so much more! ☺

# A Filipino Wedding in Molokai's Filipino Camp in the '60's

By Christine Sabado

The evening after I'd met Mama in the dimly lit hallway, Philip was asked to go to his parent's room to "talk story." It seemed he had been with them for hours. I was anxious, but grew weary and succumbed to the long day of emotions and traveling and drifted off to sleep. I awoke when a lone beam of light from the hallway filled the room like an arrow seeking its mark. He opened the door slowly to say good night. He would sleep in the parlor, as was proper.

I sat up immediately and pulled myself together. When he did not speak, I grew impatient and blurted, "Did they like me? Am I okay?" As a side comment, I added, "Your Mom is sort of spooky but your Dad is really sweet.... Hum, I don't think your sisters like me." When he still did not answer, I demanded, "Tell me now!"

He smiled in his innocent way, laughing at me, as always. "Too late to back out now. They are going to start fattening the pigs!" It was truly the most local answer he could have given. At that moment I understood immediately. I had won them over and with that, he would be my prize for life.

I asked again about his sisters. "They smiled at me, but I am not sure about them." As a woman, I could see that behind the smiles, there were wary, passing glances that I was sensitive to. I knew I had a long way to go with these women who were devoted to their sibling for life.

"Never mind them," was his answer. "Mama is the only one who will make the decisions and she is the boss and I am spoiled by her. Besides, I am the 'Budidik,' the youngest." He knew his rank and place in the family and was almost cocky about his position with his Mom.

The question of how many



Newlyweds Philip and Christine Sabado and their wedding entourage.

pigs, cows and chickens would be required for cooking at the party was a critical point. Most of the talk at the table from there on revolved around this main topic. Many nights were spent in serious discussion about whose pigs and cows to buy. How much garlic and bay leaf would be needed? Not to mention the selection of dishes. I was amazed and stood back to observe the intense planning and discussions that revolved around the party. In the end we had three pigs (over 900 pounds of pork), 95 chickens and two cows, for a guest list that would top off at over 1,500 people...I truly stood at a distance in a state of awe.

June 14 was chosen after a great deal of discussion. Choosing the correct date for the wedding was quite an ordeal as well. Many superstitions played into this decision. Naturally, it was understood, Mama would have the final word. A mix of the Chinese calendar as well as calculating 'pay day' was critical. It was understood that all the townspeople would be in a more comfortable position to "kokua" if they were not between paychecks.

My family in California would order formal wedding invitations on a beautiful white linen paper from the finest printer in Los Angeles. These were sent to mainland

guests, friends of my parents and people I had known since I was a girl. I received a box of the invitations with the double envelopes as well. They were all so white and beautiful. I laid them out proudly for my husband to see. For a moment he looked perplexed and then asked innocently, "Why send (invitations) when everybody going come?" And they did, all 1,500 guests. Only my parents, my sister, and Nanny (my paternal grandmother) came from my side. Perhaps a wedding in paradise in a far distant place called Molokai was "too exotic" for our side of the family in the late 60s.

Months before the wedding, Mama and Papa moved from Molokai to Aiea on Oahu to be near us. When she arrived, Mama tactfully took me into her room and closed the door. She sat on her bed and began to speak in a very direct manner. "They" (Philip's brothers and sisters) don't like you.... But I like you, and I am the only one that matters." In her way, she was still modest, she must have caught wind of all the conversations after my departure to sabotage this pending marriage. I swallowed hard, anticipating her next words. "Your Papa and I, we move here, so no more 'pilikia' (trouble) for you!"

As the wedding drew

near, my mother and I were given a shopping list a mile long. On this ever-growing list were enough garlic, bay leaves and onions to sink a ship. An especially important item on the list was whiskey for the cooks—it had to be Seagram's seven. The preferred drink that was called a 'seven, seven' a mix of Seagram's and Seven-up (I am sure the mix was more whiskey than soda).

The preparations for the wedding seemed endless. I was not ready for the amount of ritual and superstition that preceded the sacred event. Mama had set forth the first directive. In the next seven days before the wedding Philip and I had to be separated, unable to see each other until we met at the church steps. All of these superstitions and precautions were to ensure we would have prosperity, health, many children and long happy years together.

To guarantee our paths would not cross, Philip was taken to a hidden location at the opposite end of the island, while I remained in Maunaloa. He was not allowed to drive a car (considered to be bad luck). I am not sure he really minded this custom because most of his time was spent with the other men drinking, joking and gathering flowers and the special foliage that would be needed to deco-

rate the wedding hall. Somehow they were very careful about timing and managed to keep us on opposite ends of the island. This was amazing since there were only 5,000 people living on this island then, but we never did collide.

## Wedding Day

Tradition would herald every detail and protocol that was to follow in the days to come. Philip's sheer richly embroidered wedding shirt was called a 'Barong Tagalog.' It was made of a traditional fabric known as 'piña,' a smooth almost stiff fabric made from the pounded fibers of the pineapple plant. Rows and rows of white floral embroidery decorated the front panels of the ecru button-down shirt. All the male attendants wore the traditional embroidered shirts as well. These are the norm in the Philippines, mostly because of climate. They are cool and the breeze just flows through. Pure white and truly elegant, it was the perfect wedding garment.

My wedding gown was a delicate white silk with small floral designs woven into the texture of the fabric. The style was the traditional Filipino dress with peaked, rounded sleeves that were called 'Terno.' The style was probably from the 1800s with a strong colonial Spanish influence. Stiff buckram was used in the sleeve to make it stand on its own.

The women of the camp had sewn my dress and the attendant's dresses and men's shirts by hand. They had sent for the 'pina' fabric or had it on hand for such an occasion. They all sat in a circle and sewed happily for months. There was no money involved; this was done for the sake of the celebration and out of respect for Philip and the family.

The other tradition was having godparents known as 'ninongs and ninangs' in lieu

(continued on page S11)

## NON-FICTION

## WEDDING &amp; BRIDAL SUPPLEMENT 2016

FILIPINO WEDDING... (from page S10)

of bridesmaids and attendants as in Western custom. The "Ninongs and Ninangs" are the sponsors for the bride and groom; it was an honor to be asked to be a godparent. The bond and commitment to each other is life long.

My family experienced cultural shock. My mother, who held her doctorate in education, and speech and drama, suggested that I write the story of my wedding for National Geographic Magazine. The going rate was then ten cents a word. As she spoke, she was wide-eyed, looking in every direction at the chickens and goats skittering about the dirt lanes of the village. I dismissed the idea immediately, having adjusted my life and finding acceptance and comfort in this island village. The differences in culture were as wide as the sea separating this Molokai plantation camp and the California suburb my family had always known. Surprisingly there were no objections to the match. How could their have been? Philip was clearly a treasure, a rare human being that was the kindest person, they had ever met. Perhaps they could see how truly happy I was with Philip. My parents did their best to fit in. They too saw this as a great adventure and were seduced by the magic of Molokai and being married in the midst of ripening pineapples.

On our wedding day Philip, I walked down the same red dirt road that Philip had trodden as a boy. I wobbled on my heels and perfect white satin shoes as my silk train trailed in the red Molokai dirt road. On my head was a white Spanish comb, fixed into my chignon, the mass of pearls and small diamonds in the comb sparkling in the sun. For the veil, which swept to the ground, I chose the sheerest lace with a small scalloped design on the border. In my hands were 20 strands of pikake known as "sampagita" blossoms mixed with white "honohono" orchids, the

most fragrant flowers in the world. The flowers were strung in leis that were as long as my dress.

Fifty or sixty guests attended the ceremony at St. Vincent's Church; everyone else was at the hall. As I entered the church, I saw that white 'meatpacking' paper had been laid down the aisle from the door to the altar. As I walked up the aisle the red dirt made tracks and the tips of my heels made small holes in the paper. The wind swept through the small wooden building in a funnel and picked up the edge of the paper. Suddenly the white paper was whipped into the air, making a crackling noise as it flew over our heads. I turned to see what was making the commotion, yet no one else seemed to notice. Apparently, these things were normal in the camp and everyone smiled when they saw my face as I watched the paper crackle and buckle, scraping the ceiling of the small, wooden church.

The priest before us on this wedding day was a kind, middle aged man, we had only just met at the rehearsal. He had the annoying habit of forgetting my name during the ceremony. He recited the vows, "Do you...ugh...what is your name again? Take this man," etc. After the third time he forgot my name, I was annoyed. The organist at the opposite end of the church, only knew the first bars of 'Here comes the Bride' and played it 20 times in a row.

Once our vows had been exchanged, Philip and I shared a kiss, and then turned to face the open doors that revealed the miles of rolling sage ash green pineapple fields with Molokai's grandeur before us. Someone had been kind enough to catch the naughty white paper that had run amok and held it in place for us as we walked down the aisle. Outside the church my mother was wiping her tears of happiness.

Just as I began to wonder where everyone was, I saw a sea of people before me. They



**Philip and his new bride Christine show off their beautiful wedding cake.**

all stood at the ready to greet the bride and groom as we passed. It was like a parade, where all the people line the road as we walked from the church on the hill. Fifteen hundred people stood on the road waiting for us to arrive so the party could begin. The women cried, waving and wiping their tears and the children beamed, jumping with joy. I recognized some of the women who had sewn my dress. They proudly tugged at my sleeve as I passed them. One last adjustment! I had never seen so many people in my life—neither, I am sure, had my family. Among the crowd were Philip's school chums and his aunts, uncles and cousins having many different nationalities, they all smiled, jumped and clapped as we passed.

Dusk had descended on this mountain village and streams of warm gold light embraced us as we walked to the reception hall. The large banyan tree in the center of town had sat in this place for well over a hundred years. It now shaded the hall and the post office; this tree was a gathering place where everyone 'talked story' when they collected their mail. We all had to bend at the waist to pass under the tree to enter the hall. This banyan tree was so sweeping and beautiful no one wanted to trim the branches. Everyone was in the habit of stooping low to pass under this great old banyan. It would have been unthinkable to cut such a grand tree!

side port in France, he befriended a baker and his family who taught him the secrets of making the French bread, which became the famous 'Molokai bread.'

Before the wedding, there was so much fussing and whispering about the cake and my curiosity was aroused. His sisters and brother would huddle with a concerned look. Everyone was concerned about the condition of the cake when it reached the camp. The biggest worry was that it might not survive the distance from the island town to the mountain village intact. Since the roads were bumpy, this could be a valid concern as more often than not; a cake would arrive in Maunaloa broken, or worse, with flies stuck in the frosting. Fortunately, our cake did arrive in one piece and happily without flies.

I bought the cake top decoration in Honolulu at a Portuguese bakery. I had considered many styles of cake decorations, but I finally chose a couple, arm in arm, under a heart-shaped arch. The problem was they were both blonde with the pinkest plastic skin. I took felt tip pens and colored the groom's hair black and tinted his pink face to bronze. (I guess I was a pioneer in interracial wedding cake tops.) It suited me, and everyone wondered if I had it special ordered. My answer was a smug smile.

In one corner of the reception hall, a 'shot table' was set up. Money was placed in a freshly oiled koa bowl in exchange for a 'shot' of whiskey. This was a busy table, with a long line! An ensemble of old men with their instruments provided the orchestra music. Even their name was romantic and melodic, they were known to all as a 'Rondala band.' The origins of this instrument stem from the minstrel days of renaissance Spain; this was more commonly known as a 'mandolin.'

The 'Tinikling' bamboo dance was always a crowd pleaser. For this dance, two performers holding hands with great precision lightly jump

(continued on page S12)

## NON-FICTION

## WEDDING &amp; BRIDAL SUPPLEMENT 2016

FILIPINO WEDDING... (from page S11)

over and between two long bamboo poles that are held at their ends by two other members of the dance troupe who click the poles together, then separate them and bang them on the floor in an upbeat, engaging rhythm. The only sounds are the clicking and loud banging of the bamboo poles and the shouts encouragement from the performers and the watching crowd. This is a playful dance where the beat starts slowly and increases to frenzy. Only the most skilled dancer will attempt this, never fearing having their ankles crushed between the pounding bamboo poles.

The ‘money dance’ was eagerly awaited because it gave the guests a chance to ‘bless’ the new couple and wish them good fortune. During the dance, giggling women and men placed coins as well as paper money in my mouth, everyone already a little tipsy. Children eagerly waited to be a part of the ritual as well. They would beg the parents for coins so that they could partake in the gaiety. Philip’s task was to take the money from me with a ‘kiss.’ His hands had to remain behind him the entire time, as were mine behind me. There were hoots and hollers at each feigned kiss.

As we turned, came together, and drew apart in the dance, Philip snatched the coins and bills from my mouth with his teeth and then let them drop to the wooden floor. The light caught on the coins and sparkles of silver and gold



**Philip and Christine Sabado leave the church for the camp hall for their wedding reception.**

flew in the room, making a ringing, jangling noise. The dance came from the days of the Spaniards, so gold coins were a part of the custom. As the spirit of this dance caught on, everyone jumped up enthusiastically with money in hand to give the new couple. Lines formed as people waited for us to dance into the corners of the hall.

Before the Money Dance, my sister-in-law had instructed me about the proper protocol required for this time. With wide eyes and serious consternation she cautioned: “Do not look at the money; when Philip takes it from you, he will let it drop to the floor, do not ever look at the money, even when it is on the floor. People will think you are greedy if you watch the money. They will think you are counting already.” My behavior on this day was critical to the success of the marriage as well. The message was

clear; since all the people at the party had known Philip from childhood, all eyes would be on me.

Everyone came bearing gifts wrapped in silver, white or gold paper. Yards of ribbon cascaded down the sides of boxes carefully wrapped by hand. After the wedding the gifts were placed in Manang Rosita’s house; they were stacked so high they filled the hallway and nearly reached the ceiling. A small path had to be made between the boxes to access the kitchen and the banyo. The people from the camp gave from their hearts to the new couple and I treasured all their varied gifts. We received carved wooden trays and dishes of monkey pod that had come from the Philippines. There were even carved carabaos, a water buffalo, and the Philippines national symbol of strength, patience and endurance—sort of a Filipino icon.

FLORAL CENTERPIECES... (from page S6)

(medium) tall florals to create visual texture among the tables.”

However, some couples are concerned that the height of the centerpieces might interfere with their guests’ views and conversations. Seibel suggested that the floral design be no more than 16 inches high (including vase height and flowers), or it can cause a lower wall effect, which can be distracting.

“If going with tall centerpieces, they need to be 24 inches or taller to avoid block-

ing your guests’ view across the table,” she said. “Expect to pay more for tall centerpieces as they are more labor intensive to create, and require greater skill and technique to design.”

Seibel added, “While tall centerpieces appear luxurious and over-the-top, there are many factors to consider: If your location is outdoors, the wind factor will play a significant role in balance—you do not want your tall, top-heavy centerpieces being knocked over.”

Whether tall or short, cen-

terpieces are traditionally placed on the tables. But couples can consider other trendy floral arrangements above them.

“Many of our clients are requesting a large statement piece, like a seven-foot wide hanging chandelier filled with cascading foliage and flowers, often hung over the dance floor,” said Seibel.

Carefully planned and well thought-out centerpieces and statement pieces can create a floral fantasy, upping the “wow” factor at wedding receptions. ☺

Meanwhile, presents had been arriving for months before the wedding from my family’s friends from California and the East Coast. It was quite exciting when the letter carrier came with a large box. Everyone would crowd around like bees around a blossom. They would all insist that I immediately open the box and the present inside.

My mother did manage to thwart one tradition. Once we’d left the party, Philip and I were supposed to stay in a small house for seven days after the wedding. All of our meals would have been left at the door for we were not supposed to leave the wedding house. An ancient tradition to yet again ensure the success of the new couple. However, my mother had bought a honeymoon for

us in Kona, on the Big Island of Hawaii. She slipped us away with some story to the airport after we left the party. The celebration continued anyway. I am not sure we were even missed. We heard that the feast that followed the wedding went on for three days. In the midst of all the preparations I don’t think I stopped to think where all the food had come from.

With the proceeds from the money dance, the gift envelopes and the shot table bowl we had about a thousand dollars tucked into brown paper lunch sack. We arrived in Kona on a Sunday when all the banks were closed, so we hid the money under our bed in the sack, now very creased from my clutching. We were officially married now and beginning our lives together. ☺

CHUT CUERVA... (from page S4)

and everything he does is carried out with much thought and elegant execution. Says his best friend, Marco Antonio: “Chut is a self-professed flâneur — a man of leisure, a connoisseur of the street. His broad interests run deep, from hunting down highly sought-after Old World vintage wines in Bordeaux to New World Napa wines, to constantly expanding his knowledge of design and architecture, be it Bauhaus or mid-century Modern; or driving a Vespa in not-so-motorcycle-chic Manila. As a flâneur, Chut dedicates his life to pleasure and beauty. He is also an obsessive perfectionist: it is precisely because of Chut’s thirst for aesthetic perfection that we — the lucky

162 family and friends of Chut and Kim’s — get to celebrate in this picture-perfect, supersosy, Michelin-starred, Robert Parker-approved wine-filled wedding extravaganza.”

It was no surprise to all of us that the wedding was conducted in such good taste. The reception was at the Meadowood Napa Valley Resort in St. Helena, California — a luxury resort and private club with a golf course, tennis courts, swimming pool, croquet, fitness and spa for members. It houses one of the two three-Michelin-starred restau-

rants in Napa, the Restaurant at Meadowood. It’s a perfect venue for a destination wedding.

In attendance were family and friends coming from five groups — D’Berks, Team Calypso, La Fam, The Baby Wine Club and Nisekrew. Gathering 162 guests is quite a feat for a destination wedding, but as Rev. Dalton said, he could feel the “presence” and love in the room. And that’s the most magical thing about this wedding: we all laughed and cried, listening to all the roasts and toasts of close friends Marty Qua, Marco Antonio, Ed Ngo, Mia Zamora, Menchit Mabanta and Johann Espiritu. We cherished every single moment of the three-day event.

Rev. Dalton quoted Meister Eckhart: “If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is ‘Thank you,’ it will be enough.” This sums up the magical event of Kim and Chut. Always be grateful to God for all our blessings. And those blessings include a most beautiful wedding for a sweet couple who are lucky to have each other, delicious food to eat, great company with a close-knit family and friends of the couple and a safe journey for everyone who attended the celebration. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com)) ☺