

WEDDINGS AND AYEYE

DIGEST

NUPTIAL NARRATIVES

WEDDING BUDGET ON FAITH...

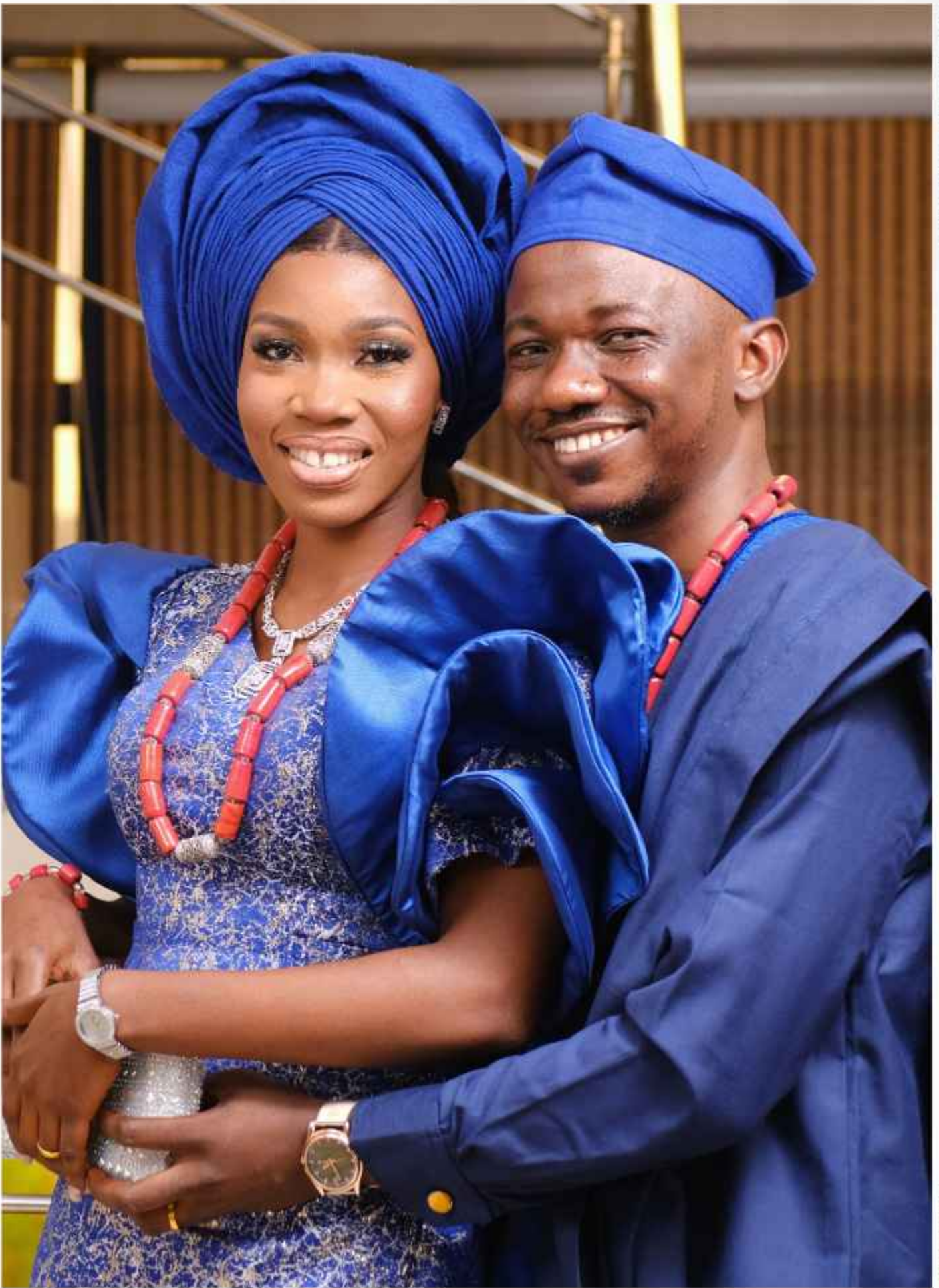
Tips for looking "Peng" before Big Day
Jollof war: who wins?

Aure: Come enjoy the life of
your head



IBIBIO TRAD:

UMBRELLA IS A TRADITION!



Weddings and Ayeye celebrate love, culture and the start of a new life...

From the Editor

A warm welcome to YOU, our dear valued reader! Yes, this is the very first edition of **Weddings and Ayeye Magazine**! And we are very excited to have you embark on this exciting journey with us. This magazine is a heartfelt tribute to the vibrant and diverse world of traditional weddings and celebrations, especially in a generation where tradition meets modernity in the most beautiful ways.

Our mission is simple yet profound: to honor the rich landscape of traditional weddings, explore the unique stories behind them, and provide valuable insights for engaged couples, newlyweds, families, and wedding professionals. With each issue, we aim to celebrate the joy, love, and cultural heritage that make every wedding a memorable and cherished occasion.

In this first issue, we are delighted to bring you a collection of engaging and thought-provoking content. We hope that through our carefully curated content, you find inspiration, guidance, and a deeper connection to the beauty of traditional weddings and celebrations. Our goal is to celebrate these cherished moments with you and to foster a community sense. As you explore this free first edition, remember that your feedback is invaluable to us. We are eager to hear your thoughts and suggestions as we strive to enhance and enrich future issues. Thank you for joining us in this celebration of love, tradition, and community. As it is said that, "One does not feast alone; the celebration is more joyous when shared", it is my pleasure again to share this first edition of Weddings and Ayeye Magazine, as a gift to You!

Cheers to the beginning of a beautiful journey together!

E ku 'kaale.

Olamide Tejuoso

PUBLISHER,
WEDDINGS AND AYEYE DIGEST





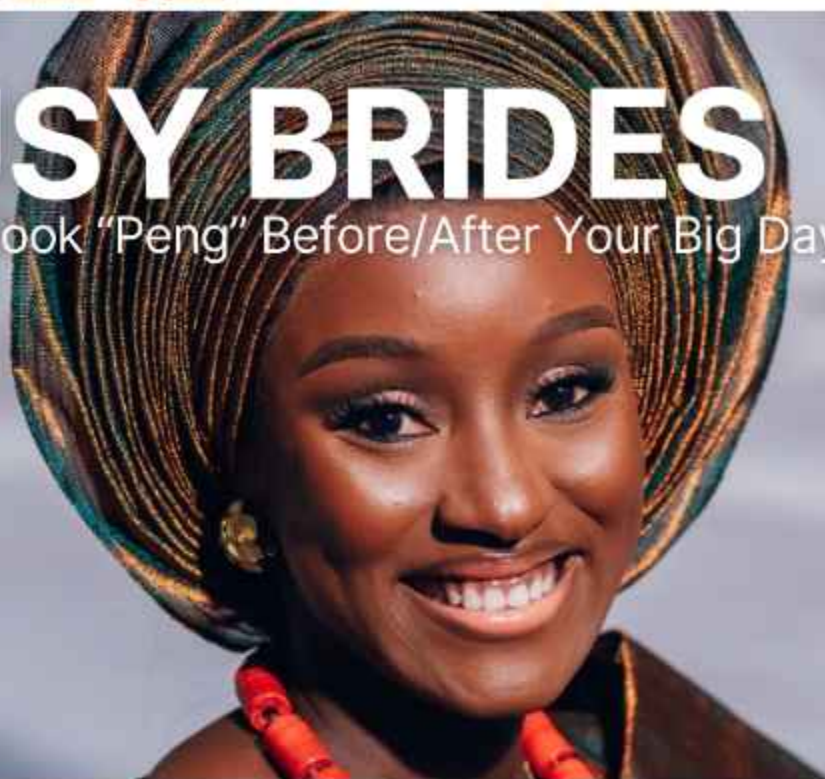
WHAT'S INSIDE

- 05** **BUSY BRIDES**
How to Look "Peng" Before/After Your Big Day
- 06** **WEDDING DEBATE**
TRADITIONAL Wedding after Church or Before Church?
- 09** **"AURE"**
How to Enjoy the Life of Your Head
- 13** **ITEM 7 SPECIALE**
The Jollof War: How to Come Out Victorious
- 20** **LOVE BEYOND BORDERS**
An Ibibio Wedding: Umbrella is a tradition!
- 24** **2024 WEDDING TRENDS YOU COULD HAVE MISSED**
- 29** **WEDDING BUDGET ON FAITH AND PRACTICALITY**
The story of Zacchaeus and Blessing
- 32** **WHAT IT REALLY MEANS TO HAVE A "UI WEDDING"**
Meet the Alaos



BUSY BRIDES

How to Look "Peng" Before/After Your Big Day



The wedding day is one of the most memorable days in a woman's life especially. So, brides are expected to be busy making sure the day goes on without hitches. Therefore, it's possible to become so stressed and fail to look your best when you should look and feel stunning on your big day.

To help prospective brides, here is a quick guide to maintaining their glow and remaining stunning during the usually busy wedding preparations.

1. Maintain your Glow with Nutrition

As your big day approaches, what you eat will go a long way in determining how you look and feel during your wedding ceremony. Therefore, you must invest in proper nutrition. Firstly, stay hydrated - drink at least 8-10 glasses of water daily to reduce dark circles and give you a natural glow. Try to avoid alcohol and too much caffeine; drink water instead of soda.

Additionally, focus on eating skin-loving foods, mainly fruits and vegetables that are rich in antioxidants, such as berries, spinach, and carrots. You can also include omega-3-rich foods like salmon or walnuts to give you healthy-looking skin.

As you approach your big day, avoid salty and processed foods and carbonated drinks. Instead, opt for whole grains, lean proteins, and fibre-rich meals to maintain a balanced digestive system.

2. Get Quality Rest

A good night's sleep is a great beauty hack when preparing for your big day. Sleep helps your body recover from stress and keeps you calm while attending to all the required details in preparation for your big day.

Sleep helps brighten your skin because skin cells regenerate during sleep. To achieve a refreshed look, aim for at least 5 hours of uninterrupted sleep and some quick naps during the day. If your schedule permits, a 20-minute nap in the middle of the day can work wonders on your appearance and having a relaxed mind.

3. Create Relaxation Routine

Wedding planning can be stressful, but intentionally taking time to de-stress is important. So, creating routines that can help you relax will go a long way toward retaining your beauty. These routines include pampering yourself with skincare treats and light exercises.

WEDDING DEBATE 101:

If you've ever followed wedding conversations on social media, you've likely come across spirited debates on whether traditional weddings should come before or after the church wedding. This question isn't just a logistical one; it taps into culture, faith, and personal ideals. And while both sides make compelling arguments, the answer is as unique as the couple making the decision. Ultimately, no approach is "right" or "wrong"—both weddings are valid. What determines which should come first boils down to your preferences, priorities, and the message you want your wedding to convey.

What Are Traditional Weddings?

Traditional weddings are celebrations deeply rooted in the cultural and ancestral heritage of a couple's ethnic background. In most African, Asian, and Indigenous cultures, these ceremonies are colorful, communal, and richly symbolic.

For instance, in Nigeria, the Yoruba and Igbo traditional wedding involves the groom's family formally asking for the bride's hand in marriage. This request is accompanied by lively music, symbolic gifts, and the exchange of a bride price. Across India, traditional Hindu weddings feature rituals like the "Saptapadi"—taking seven sacred steps together to signify a lifetime of unity. Even within Western cultures, elements of Celtic, Jewish, or Italian traditions add unique flavors to traditional ceremonies.

One key aspect of many traditional weddings is the involvement of family and community. These events signify not just a union between two individuals, but a merger of two families or even communities. They often feature traditional foods, attire, and music, emphasizing cultural pride and shared values.

On the flip side, traditional ceremonies sometimes align with cultural norms that modern couples might not fully embrace. For example, the tradition of polygamy, which persists in some African customary laws, contrasts sharply with the monogamy most couples now prioritize. This leads many to complement traditional ceremonies with going to court to legalize their union.



TRADITIONAL WEDDING AFTER CHURCH OR BEFORE CHURCH?



Understanding Church Weddings

Church weddings, by contrast, focus on religious solemnization. Rooted in Christianity, these ceremonies emphasize the spiritual covenant of marriage. Many argue that church weddings, with their exchange of vows and blessings under the guidance of church leadership, lend a sacred weight to the union, which is true. While the bride's white gown, the groom's tuxedo, and the wedding rings may echo Western "white wedding" traditions, church weddings retain a deeply religious significance.

It's worth noting, however, that the concept of the white wedding—and by extension the church wedding—was introduced to many African and Asian countries through colonization and missionary efforts. Some see this as a legacy of cultural imperialism, while others have embraced it as a meaningful extension of their faith to attract divine blessings on their union.

The Arguments for "Traditional First"

Supporters of traditional weddings coming first before church blessings, often cite cultural continuity and family expectations/acceptance. In many African and Asian cultures, the traditional wedding is seen as the "real" marriage—the point where a couple becomes husband and wife in the eyes of their families. By prioritizing this, couples honor their roots and pay homage to their parents and families.

Asides that, there is a highlight of joy and vibrancy of traditional weddings. Why not start your marital journey with the lively celebration of your heritage before moving to the more solemn setting of church wedding?

WEDDING DEBATE 101:

TRADITIONAL WEDDING AFTER CHURCH OR BEFORE CHURCH?

The Case for Doing Both Consecutively

Many couples opt to hold their traditional and church weddings on the same day or within the same weekend, blending the best of both worlds. This approach ensures neither aspect is sidelined and minimizes logistical challenges.

However, this can be overwhelming and expensive. Balancing the demands of two ceremonies in a short timeframe can put restraints of time and resources on both the couple and their families. Yet, for those who pull it off, the payoff is a unified celebration of both culture and faith.

Which Should You Do First?

At the end of the day, the order of your weddings is a personal choice. Consider these factors when deciding:

1. Cultural Expectations: Does your family or community hold strong views about which should come first?
2. Religious Beliefs: Do you prioritize the spiritual significance of the church wedding?
3. Logistics: What's more feasible for your budget and timeline?
4. Personal Values: Which ceremony resonates more with your identity as a couple?

Ultimately, your wedding day is about celebrating your love and the union of two lives. Whether you start with culture or faith, or blend them seamlessly, the focus should remain on building a marriage that reflects your values and dreams, and building a home that lasts beyond the afefe yeye.



VENDOR

Picking Your Vendors: Red Flags and Questions

Weddings are undoubtedly among the most beautiful and glamorous events one can experience. Behind the glamor is a group of people coming together to ensure the event is seamless and enjoyable for all. These people are your wedding vendors, and they include caterers, décor guys, make-up artists, videographers, and wedding planners, among others.

Needless to say, they determine the success or otherwise of the wedding. Hence, couples need to select their vendors with the utmost care. Thankfully, there are certain red flags one must watch out for to determine the right vendor for your event.

1. Lack of Transparency

Transparency is vital in relating with vendors, especially for a wedding ceremony. So, when a vendor is unwilling or shady in providing detailed proposals and pricing breakdowns and comes up with hidden fees that were not initially discussed, there is a tendency such a vendor is hiding something.

2. Unclear Communication

Vague answers, poor responsiveness, or inconsistent communication are red flags you must watch out for when choosing vendors. You don't want a vendor who is slow to respond, not proactive on their job, and meticulous with details.

3. Overpromising and Under-Delivering

Having prospects and being creative isn't out of place, especially for a vendor. However, some promises seem too good to be true and infeasible within the time frame. Looking out for realistic commitments from vendors is a more productive route.

4. Negative Reviews

It's vital to watch out when previous clients have poor experiences with a vendor and the services rendered. This doesn't mean a vendor will always be perfect; sometimes, they might under-deliver based on circumstances beyond their control. But when bad service and customer relations surround a vendor - if that's the prevailing opinion - you might want to take a step back before deciding.

5. Rigid Terms

Vendors who aren't flexible and are unwilling to negotiate contracts or adapt to your needs and demands may be an obstruction in the long run. No matter the expertise or efficiency of the vendor, they should adhere to the picture you have in mind to create. In a situation where that is not possible for whatever reason, it should be communicated politely and then you both can reach a consensus. But when they are rigid and refuse to budge, consider hiring better hands. It is your wedding after all!



HOW TO ENJOY **THE LIFE OF YOUR HEAD** AT AN AURE

Were you invited to a Hausa wedding and wondering whether you'd enjoy it or not? Kimmmmmmmon! Put on your party clothes and come along!

Honestly, you should be excited to explore the Northern region of Nigeria and their traditional wedding rites. The wedding ceremony (Aure) is usually filled with ululations that pumps your mood with joy. First things first, to enjoy an Hausa wedding, go dressed up in any of their traditional attire even if you are not Hausa, in order to blend in with the celebration and identify with them. Also, you can learn the Hausa greetings, like "Ina Kwana" and "Ina Wuni" e.tc.. With this, you can fully enjoy yourself by starting a conversation and mingling with other guests. Plus, you can use this opportunity to build inter-tribal relationships.

The wedding reception, called the Walimah, is where food and drinks are enjoyed even though, how pompous the party is highly dependent on the social status of the families involved. Various foods are usually served at a Hausa wedding. In some cases, Masa is first served as a snack or appetizer. It can be enjoyed with accompaniments like honey, sugar, or pepper soup, which makes it adaptable to sweet and versatile tastes.

Another food that is usually present is Tuwo Shinkafa. This thick pudding is typically served with various soups, such as Miyar Kuka, Miyar Kubewa, and Miyar Tausha. It can also be accompanied with side dishes like Kwadon Zogale because of its unique taste and nutritional value. You won't want to miss this part of the event!

Again, you should expect to be served Shinkafa da Wake, more commonly known as rice and beans. This hearty and balanced dish is often served by the Hausas with spicy pepper sauce, stew or fried plantain, making it a satisfying option for a Hausa wedding.

And yes, Hausa people are not left out when it comes to nutritious beverages! Fura da Nono issss a goal!!! This beverage is usually made from Fura balls combined with tangy Nono. It is refreshing and healthy, and it can be sweetened with sugar or honey and taken alongside meals.

While you savor the delicious food served, you also enjoy the lively Hausa music and dance performances, including the traditional "Shadi" dance where both men and women get to shake their waists, bodies and feet to rhythmic beats!



Maintaining “Steeze” Before Your In-Laws

“First of all, take a deep breath! It doesn’t have to be as nerve-racking as you think, because Africans are generally hospitable people, so you have nothing to worry about in that regard.”

Meeting in-laws can be a nerve-racking experience in all circumstances. However, it is more stressful when it is a multicultural and distant relationship. If you are a foreigner engaged to an African or you are someone from the diaspora community who doesn't know so much about the African culture, we are with you how you're feeling about the thought of meeting your in-laws and gaining acceptance.

First of all, take a deep breath! It doesn't have to be as hard as you think and you don't have to wear Ankara compulsorily (LOL). Seriously, Africans are generally hospitable, so you have nothing to worry about in that regard, just calm down.

Should you be afraid your partner's parents might prefer their son or daughter to marry from their culture? Yes, but should you be confident you might just be the right person they have been waiting for? YES!!! But how do you maintain steeze and composure before your in-laws?

Be Prepared to Give Them Time

Know that; this is also a new experience for your in-laws, except you are not their first rodeo, and they have another foreign in-law. If not, understand that your in-laws also feel strangely about the union but could be fascinated about the change. So, be prepared to give them time to get used to it. If you expect an immediate warm welcome and don't get it, it might affect your confidence. However, understanding this is new territory for all parties involved will put you in a more stable state of mind to handle the uncharted waters.



Research

Before meeting your in-laws, prepare to do a lot of research so you don't go in completely blind about what you may experience. You may want to rely on your partner

to tell you all you need to know; you guys should create time to almost talk everything. Your partner might take many things for granted because it's their home front. If you are marrying a millennial or Gen-Z (apologies), they may be ignorant about the culture themselves. So, it will do you a lot of good to research on your own, ask some elders questions or people who have been married for year's in your circle, and then discuss some of your findings with your partner. If you go in well-versed about their culture, maybe throw in greetings in their language, trust me; there is no better ice-breaker then make them laugh with you on your accent and appreciate you making efforts.

Let Your Partner Prepare the Ground

Your partner also needs to do the groundwork. They know their family best, so they know those who are open-minded and those who will be harder to reach. Encourage your partner to help you water the ground before you get there. For instance, if you share something in common with any of the tough family members, your partner can help you create a bond based on that area. Say you and her brother love music; you can get him something related to music on his birthday that he might enjoy. That would soften his heart towards you even before you meet physically.

Be Open-minded

If you are marrying into another culture, you cannot afford to be close-minded. Particularly, if you are from the Western culture and you cannot help looking down your nose at Africa's culture. Trust me; they (the Elders) will know if you look down on them even if you pretend not to because they are not stupid. So, you must not go there with a preconceived notion; rather, go with an open mind to learn about people different from yours, but people deserving of respect and honor nonetheless.

Be Yourself

I understand the need to want to overcompensate to get them to like you, but you may just end up looking fake. Try to be yourself and not put on an act before them. African elders especially will see through you without you saying a word. Rest assured that if their son/daughter likes you, you would have something in common with them they would like; they may not just see it now. Also, you may not get everybody's approval at the first instance, but by being yourself, respecting them and being open to learning their culture, and identifying with them will soon win most of them over.



"RENT OR BUY?"

A Guide for Budgeting Bridal Attire and Accessories

The debate of what a wedding should be has never gone out of trend. Many opine that a wedding should be an official celebration of the beginning of a marriage; however it holds a great significance across several cultures especially in Africa. Besides that, it is a joyous occasion for the couple, as it marks a significant milestone in their lives; the bride's adornment is one of the many things that make the day memorable and joyous. Everyone literarily looks forward to the "Here comes the bride" moment.

It is believed that many of the brides-to-be dream of their wedding dress long before they meet their groom, so deciding on the bridal look is crucial for ladies. Conventionally, the bride's family purchases the bridal attire and accessories, while the groom's family covers other major expenses. However, in some cases, the groom may be responsible for the bridal dress; it depends on the agreement between the couple-to-be and their families. This traditional approach emphasizes the importance of family involvement and support in the wedding celebration.

Meanwhile, in our modern world and society, getting bridal attire doesn't have to be conventional. There are other alternatives - a bride can buy, rent, or even borrow from a relative, friend or colleague - that is the new normal!! I mean, why should you spend your life savings on just one gown when you can approach a rent store or even a friend who has been married earlier? Or even choose to revamp an inherited bridal dress from your mom or aunt?

Various factors, including cultural values and personal preferences, influence the decision to rent or buy bridal attire. Some brides, especially those who share more Western values, prefer to rent their attire; they consider it unnecessary to buy something they'll only wear once usually because of how glamorous and heavily beaded some of these wedding clothes can be. In fact, renting even allows access trendy designs at a lower cost, so why bother spending that much?

On the other hand, some brides prefer to buy their own attire - this is it, why show up in a wedding gown someone has rocked for her own wedding when you can afford yours? This is usually characteristic of romantic and emotional women, who attach great sentimental value to their wedding dress. They never want to forget the memory of the day they tied the knot with their prince charming in their own customized wedding dress, kimmmmmmmon!, it's not easy mehn!. Of course, some think they would want to avoid unnecessary thoughts of bad omen (especially in an African setting) they think might be associated with wearing another person's wedding dress. Hence, they prefer to buy a wedding gown they can always keep as a memorial.

Also, apart from viewing it as a symbol of their union and an emblem of their love, some brides regard it as a potential heirloom to pass down to their daughters. These brides often prioritize owning their attire over the cost. This approach highlights the emotional and legacy significance of the wedding attire and its role in preserving family traditions.

Ultimately, the decision to rent or buy the bridal attire depends on individual preferences and cultural background. While some brides prioritize ownership and sentimental value, others prefer the convenience and cost-effectiveness of renting. Couples need to discuss and agree on their priorities and budget for the wedding attire. Nowadays, whether you decide to "Rent" or "Buy", what matters most is that you get a bridal attire that makes you feel beautiful and confident on your special day while not running into debt or unnecessary "wahala".

ITEM 7 SPECIALE

The Jollof War: How to Come Out Victorious



Jollof rice is one of the main foods served at a typical Nigerian wedding. For some reason, without it, the menu is not complete. It is the highlight of the wedding because well-cooked, smoky jollof rice has a way of leaving an indelible mark on guests.

Wedding guests often have different reasons for attending the celebration: some attend to celebrate love or as the bride and groom's friends, while others are there to eat and pack jollof rice, home! Yes, pack rice home! In fact, some people come prepared to get their three-course meal and will stop at nothing to achieve this goal. The funny part is that these individuals always have a plan drafted in their heads that will ease the process of smuggling the smoky jollof rice. Smuggling rice where? Under the table of course, then inside a plate or nylon then into the bag (LOL). Yes, it's all part of the party fun and culture especially if the rice is 'sweet'.

Another exciting way through which guests win the jollof war is by sitting on or near the "High-Table". From popular gate-crashing weddings experiences recorded, it has been observed that the people around the high table are served first. Therefore, to save themselves the stress of fighting over who is to be served a plate of jollof rice, they target sitting there are no hassles about getting drinks and small chops and even being served the better part of the meals first.

Now, with all these food enthusiasts at one's wedding, how do you ensure you come out victorious as the host? Considering you will be busy being the couple that day, you need to delegate this duty to the caterer and your event planner/coordinator. However, you must make sure to set things in place for them to also win the battle – it's a win-win game of party after all!



Get the Number of Guests Right

The first thing to take care of is the seating arrangement. The caterer must know the approximate number of guests attending to properly prepare for them. But you must ensure the number doesn't exceed that by making the invitation card the only pass to enter the reception hall. This will save the caterer and every one the drama caused by party crashers over a plate of rice.

However, you should still plan for at least some extra mouths of children or Mo-gbo-mo-branchers (non-invited guests).

Use Smaller Plates

If you are planning your wedding on a budget and want the food to be enough, ensure your caterer serves small dishes and plates with a calculated portion for everyone in attendance. Trust me; this method will prevent arguments or fights about not getting served. The food will go round and around, and you might even have extra.



Employ Adequate and Skilled Vendors

Getting a few servers will not achieve that orderly planned wedding - although it depends on your wedding size. But to be on a safe end, always agree with your caterer to bring enough servers to ensure the serving process is seamless. Also, make sure to do your homework to employ a skilled caterer and servers who are experienced with big events and the usual gimmicks of food mongers and gatecrashers. Also the caterer and servers should be familiar with the seating arrangement and the order in which the food will be served to fight rowdiness. This will allow for an easy flow of service and a well-organized event overall.

With all these in mind, you will have a well-planned and orderly wedding and a wedding purged of 'bad belles' who don't mind ruining one's wedding over a plate of jollof rice. Ire o!





GLOWING

AMIDST WEDDING STRESS

Wedding preparation is not a walk in the park, definitely. The feeling of ensuring everything works perfectly on the D-day can be overwhelming, burdening and conflicting. Like it is said in a popular Yoruba parlance that "Ara o rokun, Ara o r'adire" – meaning as the rope is in distress; the fowl that perched on it is also distressed. Hence, many brides forget to take care of themselves, including neglecting the nutrition required to stay healthy and glowing on their D-day.

But do you know you can prepare your body for the stress of the wedding process, as it relates to nutrition? Here is the way out!

It's quite understandable that many couple especially indulge in anything fast, and convenient during wedding preps just to buy time. This does not have to be your case if you are intentional about breaking the cycle and making the right food choices even amidst your planning schedule.

Here are 4 nutrition tips to help you glow amidst the wedding preps:

A. Ditch Fast and Convenient foods: They are packed with hidden sugars and bad fat; if you must eat them, do so in moderation. "Treats should be treated as treats; not food."

B. Fruits should be part of your plan: Months to your wedding; cut out the "once in a while" attitude and rather prioritize fruiting goals, say, replacing soda with fruits. Indulging in fruits gives your body the vitamins and minerals you need to glow up before the wedding. Eat and snack on them instead of unhealthy snacks.

C. Be a lover of vegetables: You are not dieting; get this right!; you're just making intentional right decisions to stay healthy during your preps. Eating vegetables doesn't have to be elaborate; it can be as simple as adding carrots to your potato porridge or cabbage to your egg sauce. You could also make stir-fried vegetables for your rice and pasta and you would have fulfilled your vegetable needs. It might look difficult, but it's doable! If you do have friends or siblings around; this is a good way to engage them especially when you do not have the time to do it yourself, delegate people willing to help you ease your stress before your big day.

D. Variety is the spice of life: Indulge in colourful foods. Even if you must eat out, reach for healthier alternatives. For instance, you can get a veggie sandwich instead of the regular one. Do long grain or Chinese rice recipe to spice your taste buds and mood with excitement for the journey ahead. You can also order fruit juice without added sugar, fruit-infused water, or smoothies. These are all options you can try out to help in your glow-up journey.

As the bride, you deserve to look good on your wedding day; what you consume affects your appearance.

NOTE: THE NUTRITION ADVICE PROVIDED IS GENERAL AND NOT INTENDED TO REPLACE PERSONALIZED MEDICAL ADVICE. IF YOU HAVE AN UNDERLYING MEDICAL CONDITION, PLEASE CONSULT A REGISTERED DIETITIAN OR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER TO DEVELOP A TAILORED NUTRITION PLAN THAT MEETS YOUR SPECIFIC NEEDS.



*A "Glowing" golden traditional
bridal elegance with Mrs O.*



Meet the beautiful people of
#GreatGlory'24

Mr. Greatness and Mrs. Glory Olaitan!



Important Questions to Ask Your Partner Before Your Wedding

Yes, you got the confirmation that he is God's will for you; your parents liked him when you introduced him and bla---bla....but that's not all to it! The issue is not a lack of conversation but rather missing essential topics of discussion.

Marriage is not a bed of roses. Cliché, yes, but it is also true. However, it is not a battlefield and shouldn't be, provided some crucial checkboxes are addressed before getting married.

One such way is to go through essential questions with one's partner before the wedding. Often, couples enter marriage without truly understanding each other, raising questions essentials during courtship.

Discussing certain topics and aligning perspectives before marriage can help avoid unnecessary misunderstandings and conflict. C'mon, who doesn't crave having a peaceful home?

Here is a curated list of 95 questions or topics for engaged couples to discuss before their wedding to foster a peaceful marriage.

Please note that you don't need to run through these questions as though you are conducting an interview. Let them simply serve as a guide for some of the things you need to talk about during your courtship process. Also, note that you are not only to ask questions; you need to be ready to answer them as well, so your two can cut four (LOL).

Important Questions to Ask Your Partner Before Your Wedding

- What does marriage mean to you?
- Why do you want to get married?
- What does religion/faith mean to you?
- Are your parents still married?
- Are your siblings married?
- What's your opinion about divorce?
- What does love mean to you?
- What are your love languages?
- How do you express love?
- How will you handle it if we drift apart? Say location changes because of job or something?
- When do you feel the most loved by me?
- What's your definition of respect?
- What do you like about me?
- What don't you like about me?
- What do you want out of marriage?
- What would you need from me to make you happy in marriage?
- What are your deal breakers in marriage?
- What does communication mean to you?
- What's your communication style?
- What's your opinion on polygamy?
- What are your career goals?
- What are your dreams and aspirations?
- What are your long-term goals?
- What are your short-term goals?
- Whose career would take precedence if it became necessary?
- If the woman is ever more successful, will it be an issue?
- Where will we live?
- How do you express anger?
- What would you like your spouse to do when you are angry or upset with them?
- How do you resolve conflict?
- How did your family resolve issues?
- How do we resolve conflicts in our home to prevent them from blowing up?
- What are your core values?
- What's more important to you: work or family?
- Who should do household chores?
- What's your opinion on the division of labour in the home?
- What's your ideal domestic situation? Do both work and care for the home, or do one stay home?
- What is your parenting philosophy?
- Do you want children?
- How many children can we manage spiritually, emotionally and financially?
- How will we raise our children?
- What would we do if we struggled to have children?
- What options are open to us and those we won't consider when trying for children?
- Do you support using babysitters, nannies or maids?
- What are your hobbies and interests?
- What are some things you cannot do without?

- What are your financial goals?
- What's your definition of wealth?
- How do you manage finances?
- Do you have debts? If yes, what are the repayment plans?
- What are your financial principles?
- Do you believe in savings and investments?
- Do you have significant savings or investments?
- How will we manage finances as a couple? Do you prefer joint or separate assets?
- How do we share financial responsibility if it's separate?
- Who should manage the assets if they are joint?
- What are your politics?
- Is your spouse agreeing with you politically crucial to you?
- What is your understanding of proper health and nutrition?
- What should be our lifestyle goals health wise?
- Do you have any medical history that I need to know about?
- Does your family have any hereditary medical history?
- How important are regular medical checkups to you?
- What are your health and medical principles? Do you prefer traditional or Western?
- What's your genotype or rhesus factor?
- Who is your best friend or closest friend?
- How did you meet them?
- What does friendship mean to you?
- What boundaries will be set for certain friends?
- Are traditional roles important to you in marriage, or would you prefer a more liberal style?
- To what extent should family be involved in our marriage?
- What are your values around prioritizing your new family?
- What are your values around setting boundaries with family?
- Would we allow family to live with us, or can they visit alone?
- Do you believe in counselling?
- To what extent should third parties be involved in our marriage? Who are these third parties who are allowed? Spiritual leaders, parents, mentors, friends, etc?
- What was your childhood like?
- Is there any experience that you think shaped you today?
- Do you have any childhood traumas?
- How were your past relationships?
- Is there any relationship that profoundly impacted you?
- How can I help you when you are stressed?
- Do you believe in alone time in marriage?
- If yes, how much time would you need?
- Do you believe in setting boundaries in marriage?
- What are the limits to boundaries that can be set in marriage?
- What are your sexual expectations?
- What are your sexual fantasies and secret desires?
- What are your social expectations for us?
- What are your biggest fears?
- How do you handle change and the unexpected?
- What's your take on vacations, and how often would you like to take them?
- Do you have any secrets?
- What's something you know you should tell me but haven't told me?

Please, note that you don't need to run through these questions as though you are conducting an interview. Let them simply serve as a guide as some of the things you need to talk about through your courtship process. Also, note that you are not only to ask; you need to be ready to answer these questions as well.

LOVE BEYOND BORDERS

NUPTIAL
NARRATIVES



It's love story time!....once upon a time; a man met his ray of sunshine, the melody in his life's soundtrack, the only butter in his bread, lol, one of his most prized possessions; and for her; he is everything she has prayed for – It's the 2BecomeOne'24 love story all the way from Ottawa to Uyo!!!

How they met

It was an ordinary day in Ottawa, yet it would become a cornerstone in the lives of Brian and Betty. Fresh from Toronto, Brian was adjusting to his new city when a friend invited him to a Nigeria Independence Day event. Little did he know, his heart was about to find its compass.

"My friend happened to be Betty's roommate," Brian recalls, a smile tugging at his lips. "The first time I saw her, I felt something unique—her charisma and personality were magnetic. She instantly lit up the room. That evening was one of the most memorable of my life because I met the woman I would call my wife."

For Betty, the day held a different rhythm.

"I wasn't even supposed to attend the event," she laughs. "But I kept feeling this tug to go back home. When I walked in and saw Brian, my first thought was, 'Ouuu, who is this fineee person!'" She shares: "But ofcourse, I had to keep my calm. A girl can't show she's too excited, lol". With a sprinkle of charm and some light talk, the two connected and the rest they say, is history!

Why have traditional wedding in Nigeria?

Though based in Canada, the couple chose to tie the knot in Nigeria. Their decision was driven by family ties and a desire for an authentic wedding experience.

"We wanted our wedding to feel like home," Betty explains. "Nigeria offered us the chance to have a dream wedding without restrictions, like those we'd face in here. From vibrant traditions to a family-centered ceremony, it was an experience we couldn't replicate elsewhere." Let's be real—planning a dream wedding in Canada comes with some rules. For instance, You'd need a licensed operator in order to use a smoking machine. Outdoor music? Noise restrictions. But Nigeria? Bring out the DJ, the live band, the smoke, the band and lots more

For Betty, the decision was about honoring her roots. "I couldn't imagine missing out on certain cultural elements - having the traditional ceremony at my father's house, enjoying authentic Nigerian flavors, and wearing outfits designed by Nigerian brilliant designers—it all made the experience irreplaceable."



Wedding Bloopers and Lessons

Betty: Oh, where do I start? For one, my bridesmaids' dresses arrived the night before the wedding. Picture my girls sitting at a tailor's shop, sewing at lightning speed. Vendors, please—realistic timelines are your friends!

Then there was the umbrella wiggle that was supposed to be done as I was dancing in. My maid of honor was holding the umbrella over me (as tradition demands), but apparently, she was supposed to wiggle it up and down rhythmically. Nobody told us this in advance, so we had some aunties yelling instructions mid-procession. Fun times, though! I just wished someone told us earlier.

Brian: My stylist, bless his heart, decided my face needed makeup for his own personal styling branding. Yes, makeup. It wasn't until I started taking pictures that people kept asking, "Why is your face so white?" Let's just say that's one memory I won't forget.

The Nigerian experience: Worth the trip?

Betty: Yes!,yes! Yes! There's just something about celebrating in Nigeria that hits differently. The food? Unmatched. Try replicating authentic Nigerian flavors in Canada—yes, you'd try but it may never really be as it should be. The outfits? Nigerian designers are world-class. Why stress over shipping and fitting when you can have everything tailored right there?

I'll admit, the heat was...intense. I'm talking sweating-through-your-glam intense. But even that added to the beautiful experience. There's something nostalgic about fanning yourself under the sun's heat during a traditional ceremony. And having my traditional wedding in my dad's compound? Priceless. That's how we do it in Akwa Ibom—traditions and all.

Brian: Same here. Experiencing Nigerian traditions was a blast (even if I had to dance moves my dad did). The marching band, the traditional flute—every detail made it feel larger than life. Sure, some elders chuckled at my attempts, but hey, I tried!

Celebrating Memories: The Power of a Wedding Page

In a nod to modern trends, the couple created a dedicated Instagram page for their wedding - 2becomeone24. "We're big on capturing memories, especially Brian," Betty explains. "We wanted our guests, vendors, and friends worldwide to share their perspectives using our wedding hashtag, tagging us after uploading them."

Brian adds, "Having the page allowed us to see our day through the eyes of others. It was also a practical way to coordinate with vendors and keep everything organized."



Top 10 Yoruba Wedding Protocols You Cannot Not Observe

Yoruba weddings are known to be fun-filled and colourful. But that's not all there is to it. It is also an event with certain must-haves. Besides the bright attire and funfairs, these protocols make a Yoruba wedding what it is. Suppose you are getting married to a Yoruba person or are one yourself but not conversant with Yoruba weddings, this piece comes very handy for you as it offers a guide to the cultural must-haves and must-dos for Yoruba traditional weddings.

01. MCs (Alaga Ijoko and Iduro)

The two families are important aspects of a traditional wedding, hence, it should also be officiated by two Alagas: one representing the bride's family and another the groom's. The Alaga Ijoko is for the bride, while the Alaga Iduro is for the groom. P.S; Some families use just one traditional MC and her team for both sides now, for the want of time or resources to hire two professionals.

To understand the role of the Alagas, think Master of Ceremony (MC); as stated earlier, they officiate the ceremony and help both families oversee the matrimony. They are usually women who are well-versed in the culture of each group and help smoothen the wedding process.

They are also usually boisterous, funny, joyful and loud, all of which are necessary for a successful Yoruba traditional wedding procession.

02. Groom and bride's family entry

The first order of events is usually for both families to meet. The bride's family is usually seated within the hall or venue while the groom's family dances in to introduce themselves to their in-laws. In some cases, though, both families dance in. However, the bride's family must be seated first to welcome their guests who have come to ask for their daughter's hand in marriage.

When they come in, they pay an entry fee to the housewives (Iyawo-ile: married women of the house) of the bride's family and state their reason for coming. Once they are accepted, they take a seat opposite their in-laws.

03. Groom and friends prostrating before both families

The groom and his friends are then ushered in with dancing and good music. After that, he and his friends prostrate before his bride's family as well as his family. The two families, in turn, pray for him, and he goes to his seat.

04. Reading of the proposal letter

The Alaga Iduro presents the letter to the Alaga Ijoko on behalf of the groom's family. The latter then calls on a younger female representative of the bride's family to read the proposal letter to the hearing of all, in attendance. The groom's family might be asked to offer her some money so that she could read the letter properly. Once this is done, the bride's family presents that of the groom with an acceptance letter.

05. Bride kneeling before both families

After this, the bride is veiled and dances in with her girls. Then, she kneels before both families and is prayed for. She goes to her family first, who will pray for her and proverbially let her go. Then, she is taken to the groom's family as a new addition where she is unveiled.

06. Bride accepting the proposal through the fila

She is then given the husband's fila (cap) to put on him, which signifies her acceptance of his proposal. In Yorubaland, a single man's fila tilt the right (left-hand side), but that of a married man faces the left (right-hand side) to show he has a woman by his side. The couple's seat is also positioned such that the bride's seat is on his right-hand side. When she wears the fila for him properly, she sits on his right-hand side.



07. Presentation of the engagement items

The list of the engagement items (Eru Iyawo) would have been sent to the groom's family prior to the day to prepare for the occasion. These items are presented to the bride, who is asked to pick one. This is just a formality, as she is expected to pick the Bible (for Christians) or the Quran (for Muslims). The engagement ring is often attached to it, which she hands to the groom. He, in turn, places the ring on her finger. He may also be asked to carry his wife to indicate that he can "carry" her in marriage.

08. The bride price

The bride price is also presented based on what was written on the list of engagement items. However, most times, it is returned to the groom, who is told that their daughter is not for sale and that he should make sure to take care of her.

09. Traditional food

After that is merriment. A traditional Yoruba wedding is not complete without the people's traditional food. Iyan (pound yam) and Egusi or Efo Riro, and Amala are usually served at these trad-centric events ; however, one or two traditional dishes modern dishes are available such as rice.

10. Dance! dance! Dance!

In traditional weddings, the after-party is a must, where the couple and their friends and family simply dance and dance; rejoicing and marrying until they get tired.



2024 Wedding Trends You Could Have Missed

A trend in any given year offers a glimpse into the next trend direction in the year ahead. While there are several trends on the internet and in society generally, we are here to revisit the core of wedding trends you could have missed in 2024, and yes, this could give you heads-up on what to expect in 2025. Get your trendy cap on and let's cruise together!



2024 Wedding Trends You Could Have Missed cont'd



A significant feature of the wedding trend 2024 is the fusion of cultural traditions with global trends, adding glamour to the outlook of wedding celebrations. Wedding events reached a significant milestone that amusingly and innovatively tells the story of the couples and their backgrounds.

Let's start with the pre-wedding photo-shoots! Couples really stepped up their photoshoot game by turning up in trad outfits, especially those from their parents, and in sleek cars usually convertibles of Mercedes Benz brand and Volkswagen beetles (bugs). This has been a beautiful blend of modern elegance and timeless tradition. The video shoot typically features a lot of candid moments; with the couple laughing, walking rhythmically towards each other or looking intently at each other, sitting as if driving while in the car or one of them could be outside while the other is in the car, and in front of ancient buildings. Another beautiful thing about this trendy shoot is their "an-co" (matching clothing) of the couple-to-be.

In 2024, couples increasingly embraced elements of their heritage and culture into modern wedding attire, which was novel and a departure from the usual. For instance, we had brides who paired Western gowns with traditional veils and grooms mixing tuxedos with accessories inspired by African, Asian, or other cultural motifs. Some brides also had prints of their deceased parents especially their mothers, on their veils instead of just having their picture frame at the wedding. This beautiful blend allows the couple to honour their heritage while embracing contemporary styles. It allows couples to create a personalized picture that reflects their background and fashion preferences.

Decor was another descriptive part of wedding celebrations that gave way to the innovative fusion experienced in 2024. Couples created decorations and environments that looked both familiar and foreign or traditional and modern. For instance; combining Japanese minimalism with Moroccan luxury or Scandinavian simplicity with Indian grandeur, kimmooonnnnn, couples are bursting in creativity, mehn. This motif across different cultures and traditions created a visually captivating ambience. Did you miss out on the popular Garden of Eden ambience created for a wedding in Lagos in 2024? Omoh, don't dull it! Get on da move, mehn!

Also, in 2024, the culinary experience was top-notch, featuring dishes from the couple's cultural backgrounds. Imagine the adventure of attending a wedding ceremony where you don't eat the usual – rather, you have access to many firsts. For example, serving French desserts alongside Middle Eastern appetizers or sushi paired with Italian pasta dishes offers guests a delightful gastronomic experience.

Inclusivity also leapt and travelled beyond the corporate world to events and wedding ceremonies to include multilingual signage, speeches and activities. Cultural performances such as traditional dances and art displays show the richness of our cultures and remind us that there is beauty in diversity and more to come in 2025!!!



Hiring a Content Creator for Your Wedding: “A Decision You’ll Regret”

Yes, you read the title right: hiring a content creator for your wedding is a decision you’ll regret!

At least, that’s what some photographers and videographers might tell you. But is it the truth, though? Absolutely not!



Professional photographers and videographers are essential for capturing the formal aspects of your day, so you should definitely consider them still if they fit your budget, of course.

However, a content creator offers a unique perspective that will elevate your wedding experience. If you need a little more convincing, keep reading.

Why Hire a Content Creator?

Real-Time Sharing

A content creator can capture and share pure unaware moments, updates and behind-the-scenes glimpses with friends and family who couldn't attend physically to participate virtually. They can also keep the anticipation high with real-time stories and posts.

Creative Storytelling

A content creator can craft a unique narrative by capturing the essence of your love story. An excellent creator can craft captivating stories through visually stunning content, highlighting the emotions and unique details of your wedding day and creating a truly immersive experience.

Unique Perspective

They can capture spontaneous moments, the energy and excitement of your wedding that traditional photographers might miss, and give a fresh perspective on your beautiful day.

Time-Saving

A content creator can handle all aspects of content creation, from capturing footage to editing and sharing, freeing you up to enjoy your special day.

Don't Miss Out on the Fun!

A content creator can help you preserve your wedding day for generations. Hiring a content creator lets you fully immerse yourself in the festivities without worrying about capturing every moment. Let them handle the technicalities while you create unforgettable memories with your loved ones.

Choosing a Reliable Content Creator

When selecting a content creator, ensure they have experience in wedding photography and videography. Look for someone who can capture your unique style and moments well. Moreover, ensure to find out how well they deliver from past clients.

Don't let your wedding day fade into memory; let it be remembered forever. Hire a content creator and live to tell the tale with the stunning visual representation of your wedding day!



Efik Entenge Hairdo

A Masterpiece of Cultural Craftsmanship

Did you know the length of the hairdo of an Efik bride has to do with her position in the family? Interesting, isn't it?

When it comes to traditional weddings, the Efik people of Nigeria know how to make a statement. One of the most striking aspects of an Efik bride's attire is her beautiful hairdo. The Efik hairdo, particularly the Etenge style, is a true masterpiece (or say "chef d'œuvre") of traditional craftsmanship and cultural significance.

So, what makes the Etenge hairdo so special? Let's dive into the world of Efik culture and tradition to find out.

The Etenge Hairdo: A Symbol of Beauty and Status

When it comes to traditional weddings, the Efik people of Nigeria know how to make a statement. One of the most striking aspects of an Efik bride's attire is her beautiful hairdo. The Efik hairdo, particularly the Etenge style, is a true masterpiece (or say "chef d'œuvre") of traditional craftsmanship and cultural significance.

So, what makes the Etenge hairdo so special? Let's dive into the world of Efik culture and tradition to find out.

In Efik culture, the length and design of the Etenge can indicate the bride's position within the family hierarchy. For instance, the first daughter, known as the Adiaha, is entitled to wear a longer and more elaborate Etenge, while the second daughter can only wear an Etenge as long as her bra length (a bit below her shoulder). If the second daughter wishes to wear a very long and elaborate Etenge, then she must give wine to the first daughter in order to receive permission from her to use it. What a beauty culture of honor and respect! This tradition holds as long as the first daughter is alive; even if she's married, no younger daughter has the right to use a long Etenge without her (the first daughter's) permission. This distinction reflects the importance of family lineage and social status in Efik tradition.



"The process is a labor of love, because it's an arduous one, requiring great skill and attention to detail."

The Making of the Etenge Hairdo:

So, how is this intricate hairstyle created? The process is a labor of love, because it's an arduous one, requiring great skill and attention to detail. According to Edisua Merab Yta in *Changing Meanings in Patterns of Efik Women Hairstyles*: "The bride's hair is often divided into five sections, the front, the sides, the centre and the back. Fibre is attached to natural hair and plaited or braided. The front is made to fall and cover half of two third of the forehead. The sides are made to fall after the ears 2-4 inches each side. The back design has different rows or steps, the back is usually made to be long – 10 inches to 12 inches below the shoulders or sometimes shorter. The centre – the Etinghe with the penile shape is made to be about 4-10 inches high depending on the wealth, social status or whether it is the Adiaha – first daughter or second daughter." Also, the back design features multiple rows or steps, with the center section, the Etenge, rising high on the head.

Adornments and Accessories:

The Etenge hairdo is adorned with brass combs, which are carefully placed to add a touch of elegance and sophistication. Coral beads are also used to complete the look, adding a pop of color and texture to the overall design. The use of brass combs and coral beads is not just for aesthetic purposes; it also holds cultural significance. In Efik tradition, brass combs are a symbol of wealth and status, while coral beads symbolize beauty and femininity.

Preserving Tradition in Modern Times:

While modern trends have influenced the evolvement of Efik hairstyles, the Etenge remains an integral part of traditional weddings. The bridal hair design has retained much of its original form and significance, reflecting the importance of preserving cultural heritage in the face of change.

In fact, the Etenge hairdo is so deeply ingrained in Efik culture that it's not just a hairstyle; it's a rite of passage. For instance, a woman from another culture who marries into this tribe is made to go through the hairdo rites. Meanwhile, for Efik women, wearing the Etenge hairdo on their wedding day is a symbol of their transition from maidenhood to marriage. It's a celebration of their femininity, beauty, and cultural heritage. Overall, the Etenge style, with its intricate design and symbolic significance, is a tribute to the richness and beauty of Efik tradition.



Work Cited:

Edisua Merab Yta, *Changing Meanings in Patterns of Efik Women Hairstyles: A Journal of Theatre and Media Studies*, University of Calabar, 2016.

WEDDING BUDGET ON FAITH AND PRACTICALITY



For Zacchaeus and Blessing, their journey to the altar wasn't just a test of love but of diligent and careful planning. From Nigeria to the UK, and back, this couple proved that weddings can be meaningful without draining your bank account or mind. Their story? Let's dive in.

Love That Took Its Sweet Time



Zacchaeus chuckles shyly when asked about how it all started. "We were more like disinterested friends from church—a mentor-sister dynamic relationship it was from me to her." But things began to shift after a retreat in 2020, where Zacchaeus had a dream which he didn't even take seriously. While he wasn't initially sure what to make of it, he began "intentional follow-ups," which he calls his "gentle persistence." By January 2023, the duo officially became a couple after numerous confirmations and their church's approval.

For Blessing, it wasn't as straightforward. "I had my wishlist of what my husband should look like, despite looking out for God's best: tall, bearded, and a few other things," she says, laughing. But through prayer and conviction, she saw the bigger picture. "Zacchaeus wasn't just a man; he was the man for me." But their love story wasn't without its plot twists. During his NYSC service, Zacchaeus had been briefly engaged to someone else. "Yes, I proposed someone else's in Abuja despite that I had submitted Blessing's name to the church marriage committee," he admits with a sheepish grin. "But it didn't feel right, and God kept pointing me back to Blessing." Fast-forward to the proposal, and Zacchaeus came all the way from Abuja to Ibadan, though he was already preparing to leave for the UK, also delaying his work resumption just to pop the question. "I was so nervous because she looked exceptionally beautiful that day and my speech turned into rambling about a journey I'd like us to walk together," he recalls, laughing.

Once they decided to tie the knot, Zacchaeus and Blessing knew they had to get smart about their budget. "We didn't even plan to marry as early as July 2024—it was supposed to be September," Zacchaeus says. "But her parents, bless them, jumped in to help." *continued on page 31*

Zacchaeus and Blessing

Modesty IS BEAUTIFUL

Fashion and beauty mean different things to different people. For some, fashion may mean showing off some pounds of flesh, after all, it's your body! For these people, covering up might not be perceived as sexy or fashionable. This stance or perception, though, is far removed from fashion from the African cultural sense. The African culture does not glorify immodesty. Instead, it encourages redefining beauty and fashion by adding a touch of sophistication to the African culture. Talk of the Aso oke, the gele, the cap, turban, the beads, lalle, kente among others; are all sources of covering for women.

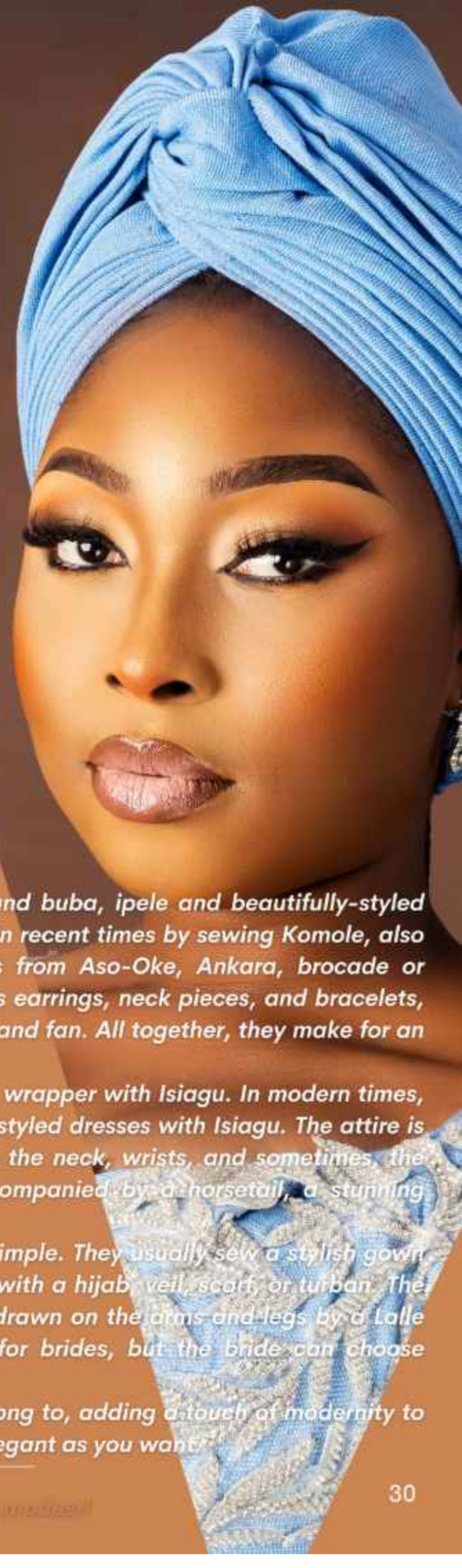
So, if you are a soon-to-be bride bothered about dressing for your traditional wedding, remember that beauty is beyond being display pounds of flesh on the outside. The idea might be to be the talk of the town, or even to be in the face of paparazzi and you wonder how you can achieve this while dressing modestly; you must of thought, who would notice me if I cover body? LOL. Now, let's talk:

For Yoruba brides, you can never go wrong with iro and buba, ipele and beautifully-styled gele. However, you can get creative with it as they do in recent times by sewing Komole, also known as faux iro. Some other brides make dresses from Aso-Oke, Ankara, brocade or Damask, among others. They accessorize with beads as earrings, neck pieces, and bracelets, and they complete the look with a well-crafted bridal hand fan. All together, they make for an elegant and confident bride.

The Igbos also often make a top from lace fabric and a wrapper with Isiagu. In modern times, brides have also gotten creative by making beautifully styled dresses with Isiagu. The attire is accessorized with red coral beads sitting elegantly on the neck, wrists, and sometimes, the hair and/or waist. Like the Yorubas, the look is accompanied by a horsetail, a stunning addition to the royal look.

On the other hand, Hausa brides are known for being simple. They usually sew a stylish gown with the boldly embroidered Zane and cover their hair with a hijab, veil, scarf, or turban. The bride is often decorated with an artistic Lalle (henna) drawn on the arms and legs by a Lalle specialist. Flowery designs are the preferred choice for brides, but the bride can choose something equally stunning.

From the above, it is clear that whichever tribe you belong to, adding a touch of modernity to your traditional attire suffices to make you appear as elegant as you want.



Here's a pro tip from the couple: "We started saving early and then we sorted some things on time". Buy your wedding cows early. Yes, you heard that right. In February, Zacchaeus and Blessing's family purchased cows for the wedding and handed them over to herders. "Cows were cheaper then," Zacchaeus explains. "By the time we needed them for the wedding, they were healthy, well-fed, and ready to serve... on plates."

Given the circumstances, much of the planning was remote. Zacchaeus was in the UK, and Blessing was tied up in Abuja. Her parents became their de facto wedding coordinators, managing venue bookings, clothes, food, logistics among others. Their only regret is not distributing some tasks into smaller units for their friends to assist them with early enough.

Blessing, ever the practical one, was adamant about not going overboard. "At one point, she said, 'No reception. Let's just do something simple,'" Zacchaeus says, still in awe. "I was like, 'Is my wife not Gen Z? Is she not influenced by rends?' Is she not a woman like other women?"

Stress? What Stress?

Their wedding stretched Friday to Saturday: a traditional engagement on Friday and the white wedding on Saturday. By Monday, the couple were already packed up to head back to the UK. How did they manage the whirlwind schedule? "Intentional planning," Blessing says. "We had everything laid out on an Excel sheet—even though we weren't physically present, our parents executed things like pros! As they were doing the needful, we were ticking the boxes".

Zacchaeus adds, "It's important to have a solid support system. Family and friends really carried us."

Distance Didn't Stand a Chance

Planning a wedding while being miles apart wasn't easy, but the couple focused on what truly mattered. "We stuck to our budget and refused to fall into the trap of impressing others," Blessing says. "At one point, we considered renting a tent instead of a hall. It's about staying within your means."

Their advice for couples in similar situations?

- Prioritize a legal wedding if one partner will be traveling abroad, then plan a larger celebration later if needed and just seal it in court first.
- Love over luxury: Focus on the relationship, not the aesthetics.
- Be creative: Think about cost-effective hacks, like their cow-buying strategy!
- Teamwork is everything: Rely on family and friends to help with execution.
- "Weddings don't have to be trendy or Instagram-perfect,



"Zacchaeus concludes. **What matters is starting your home on a solid foundation of love and understanding.**



WHAT IT REALLY MEANS TO HAVE A UI WEDDING

Meet the Alaos; Omolola and Alao, whose journey from campus acquaintances to life partners was nothing short of beautiful! What began in the heart of the University of Ibadan—the Faculty of Education, through chance meetings, cultural night, and shared values—blossomed into a love story that seamlessly intertwined the academic spirit with vibrant celebration. Let's hear from them!

How did you meet, and what role did UI play in your story?

Alao: It all started back in October 2017 at the department's cultural night. I noticed her from a distance; she had this impeccable dress sense that caught my eye. I had been admiring her for a while, but that evening, I knew I had to make a move. So, I walked up to her, asked for a picture, and that was the start of everything.

Omolola: (laughs) Yes, he asked for the picture, and I didn't mind at all because I was looking pretty fine that day! I'd been getting compliments from people before he even came to ask for a picture. But what I didn't know was that the picture was his way of getting my contact, so he could slide into my DMs on Facebook Messenger.

At what point did you have that conviction that you would marry your spouse?

Alao: Exactly! It was all about making that initial contact. After that, we started chatting more often, and before I knew it, we were talking every day.

Omolola: (smiling) We didn't really expect it to go anywhere at first. But by the time I got to know him more, I just got used to having a conversation with him. I could feel the warmth and companionship. Alao can sustain a conversation, easy and fun to be with. It made me realize just how serious Alao was about this relationship.

Alao: (grinning) Yeah, it wasn't just me who was all in. My mum knew it was Lola from the start because I'd never really brought anyone else home. When Lola also had her mum on a phone call one day, she spoke to me, and was very receptive. Lola is just a queen, she would even sponsor some bills when we go out and I could not afford it then as a student. Lola had brothers and siblings that were taking "sponsoring" her as it were. There were times we trekked together from hexagon back to UI, when my card failed and she never complained. And from then on, things just felt natural.

What would you say made your wedding a "UI Wedding?"

Omolola: The whole UI experience has been such an integral part of our story. Even our first date at Ventura had that campus vibe—just classic UI style. We always joked that our wedding would definitely be a "UI wedding" because that's where it all began for us.

...the story continues on page 35&36



YORUBA WEDDING CULTURE THAT CAN NEVER BE MONOPOLIZED

From the phase where the groom contacts an Alaarina (intermediary) to the mo-mi-kin-mo-é (meet and greet/introduction) stage to the Idana phase (traditional wedding): the Yoruba I-gbe-yawo (carrying-of-wife) is a very significant step in the procession of a traditional African wedding. Meanwhile, some of the Yoruba wedding (Idana) procession share some similarities with other African traditional weddings.

Let's start with the Burkinabé's traditional wedding:

For the Yoruba igbeyawo, when a man wants to marry a woman, he doesn't go over to her directly. This is because the man and the woman are not allowed to meet before all the wedding arrangements take place, so he has to resort to telling an alaarina. An alaarina is someone who is close to both the girl and her family. This person goes on to tell the girl; if she's interested, the alaarina then informs her parents.

The bride's parents ask her if she has feelings for the man. If she gives a positive response, they then go on to research about him and his family.

If they find him desirable for their daughter, they inform the alaarina of their intentions to meet the groom and his family.

This meeting is called mo-mi-kin-mo-e (meet and greet). Nothing usually happens at this stage except that the two families get to know each other.

In Burkina Faso, a similar thing happens whereby a selected member of the groom's family visits the bride's family to make their intentions known. Like the Yorubas, the bride's family also researches the groom's family before making their intentions known. If the bride's family is content with what they know about the groom's family, they meet again to celebrate.

After the mo-mi-kin-mo-e, the Yoruba bride and her family write down a list of engagement gift items the groom's family is expected to provide. The groom's family brings all the items, including the bride price, on the engagement day.

The similar practice also happens in Burkina Faso, where gifts and bride price are exchanged.

Respect and submission of a wife to her husband is a prevalent theme in African culture, so it's expected to be symbolized in most of the wedding practices. For the Yorubas', it is symbolized when the bride takes a cap and wears it on her husband's head while kneeling down.

A similar thing also happens in Burkina Faso during the traditional wedding. The bride is given a drink by her cousins; she drinks it first and then goes on to give it to her husband to drink. This she does, while kneeling.

The Burkinabés are not the only culture similar to the Yorubas when it comes to weddings; **the South Africans** also share some similarities with igbeyawo. For example, the bride price, called Lobola, plays a significant role in traditional South African weddings.

Additionally, just like the Yorubas break kola nuts during the igbeyawo, the South Africans do the same.

The Yorubas believe the kola nut will help the couple live long and be together till they are old. The South Africans, however, believe that breaking the kolanut represents the bride and groom's commitment to sharing and supporting each other throughout their marriage.

Another similar culture is that of Cameroon. Cameroonians also pay the bride price, and negotiations are made between the couple's parents.

Just like with the Yoruba igbeyawo, the groom and his family visit the bride's family to inform them of their intention to marry one of their daughters. The Cameroonians call this practice "the knock door".

From the above, it is clear that the Yoruba igbeyawo practice does not have monopoly over some of its practices done during the Igbeyawo ceremony. This is because most African traditional weddings share a similar rich culture. Moreover, most African weddings are seen not just as a union of the bride and the groom but as a union between two families.





What would you say made your wedding a “UI Wedding?”

Alao: (nodding) Absolutely. It was almost inevitable. With the kind of popularity I had around UI, there was no way I wasn’t going to bring that vibe into our wedding. I knew I was going to have a big entourage, and it turned into over 70 Agbada men ready to party with us. These are my friends from UI days, NIJ, from the media space, among others.

How did you handle the bridal party?

Omolola: (laughing) Yes, and we had about 20 Aso Ebi ladies! That’s for my end. It was a carnival from start to finish. Even our wedding chairman, Prof. Keye Abiona, the Dean of Student Affairs, was part of the mix. He’s like my school daddy, so it was a no-brainer having him as our chairman.

Alao: Talking about attendance, from former excos and leaders, lecturers, and so on, all turned out for the wedding. We had former student union leaders, student union members with their buses, lecturers—UI definitely showed up for our wedding.

Can you describe some fun UI-tradition moments you had at your wedding?

Omolola: (laughing) The whole vibe was about solidarity. We sang the UI anthem during the reception—nothing like the aluta spirit of Uites! You could feel the energy throughout the entire wedding, from the photo sessions to the dancing at the reception. Everyone was just vibing to that UI energy.

Alao: The UI influence started showing even with our traditional attire. We went to the market together to pick our colors, and it was quite a revelation. Initially, we thought purple would be great, but when we saw it in person, we realized it didn’t quite work for us. So, we ended up with purple for the bridal party, and green and wine for the guests. And of course, the Gyration! The night before the wedding, it was full of fun. Our friends were dancing and having a blast. It was all about letting loose, celebrating the love, and making the most of that day. We even sang the UI anthem, and the MC himself was overwhelmed. We had over 1,000 guests by the time the day arrived.

About your wedding day and union, did you encounter any challenge especially with your parents?

Omolola & Alao: One of the best things about our wedding was the smooth sailing when it came to picking the date. We knew our parents, and they knew us, so there were no major disagreements. We both come from Osun and Oyo states, so the families had already met during our convocations. It was really a matter of us picking a date and checking with everyone's calendar.

Was there anything you reflect on and wished you had not missed?

Alao: (chuckling) On wedding bloopers, we forgot to check the weather too! We didn't want a rainy day, so we kept our fingers crossed. Luckily, the rain held off. The only thing I'd say we didn't plan for was the number of guests! It was so packed, people were still dancing at 8 p.m.!

Omolola: And the biggest lesson learned? I think it's to set realistic expectations. We were planning for what we had, not trying to impress anyone. We weren't trying to throw the wedding everyone would talk about for years; we were focused on what mattered to us—our love and our journey together.

Any final thoughts on what makes a "Ul Wedding" special?

Alao: And if I had to give advice to others planning a wedding, it would be to keep the focus on the important things. Don't get caught up in the pressure to make your wedding grander than it needs to be. Be smart with your planning, lean on family, celebrate with your friends, colleagues and former school mates. Together, enjoy every moment!

Omolola: (smiling) Yes! It's all about the love you're celebrating. The rest? It's just details.





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01 Jan 2025 | \$0.00