



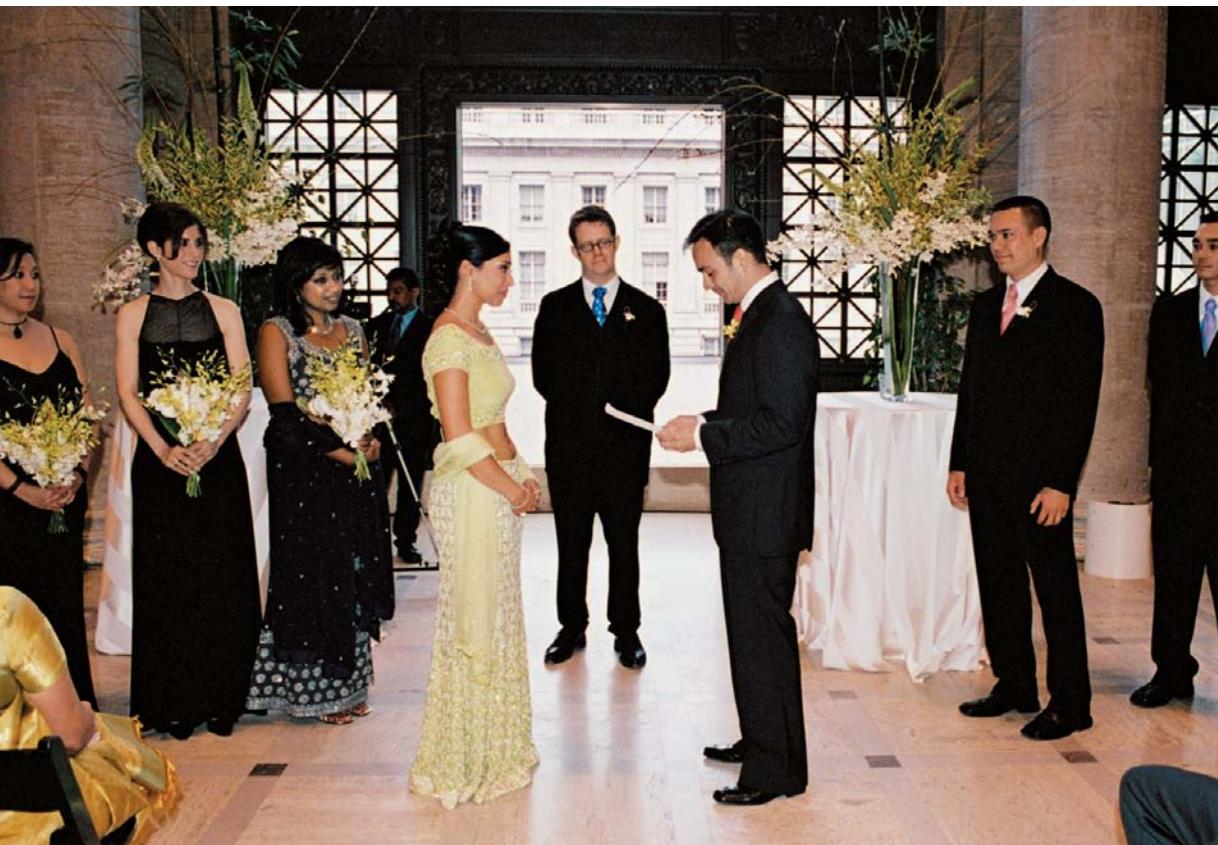
meena & chuck

MAY 7, SAN FRANCISCO

photography by Kimberly White

What sweeter way to meet your love than over a tasty treat? Meena Ravella, a 34-year-old who works in marketing, and Charles Seiber, a 36-year-old product manager, met at a mutual friend's cookie-baking party. Chuck was being set up with another woman, but it was Meena who really caught his eye. The two clicked and soon began dating, and a year and a half later Chuck planned a weekend getaway hiking along the California coast. After a few hours of hiking (and Meena suspecting nothing), Chuck picked a scenic spot to pop the question.

Meena and Chuck—both San Franciscans—wanted a wedding that would reflect both their style and their home city. The pair started planning (“with lots of help from our fabulous caterer,” Meena says) and found that choosing a reception site that could accommodate their 220 guests was the biggest challenge. Their search ended, however, with the neoclassical Asian Art Museum. Meena is Indian and Chuck is half Chinese, half Caucasian, and “the museum seemed a perfect choice for reflecting our families’ cultures,” says Meena. The pair set the tone by sending guests simple square invitations with red ink letterpress (the traditional wedding color in China and India), on white card stock. >>





Flower tip: Focus on one type of bloom to make a dramatic statement. Seen everywhere, white and green orchids suited Meena and Chuck's modern wedding style.



MEENA & CHUCK CONT.

The ceremony took place in the museum's Samsung Hall, a stunning room with high ceilings and an ornate marble floor. "The space is so spectacular that it needs very little decoration," Meena says. She wanted to wear a gown that incorporated her Indian heritage with a modern style—she found a skirt in an Indian boutique in Chicago and designed a matching top herself. As the soft afternoon light streamed through the room's large windows, the couple was married in a personalized ceremony that included a friend officiating, readings from Ayn Rand, a Native American love poem, and vows they'd written themselves.

After the ceremony, guests moved downstairs to the South Court where they enjoyed passed appetizers and a full sushi bar. In the North Court, guests served themselves from Asian fusion, Indian, and Mediterranean food stations ("The Indian station was the biggest hit, even with non-Indian guests!" Meena says). The decor was minimal and modern, with eight-person square tables covered with gray tablecloths and topped with bamboo centerpieces and large orchids. Neutral decorations let the artwork already in place shine. "Besides, no decoration could compete with all the Indian women when they walked in with their beautifully colored saris," Meena says.

An upbeat selection of Bollywood music plus a full coffee bar energized the crowd, who also got down to swing, disco, and '80s tunes. After the bash, Meena and Chuck's guests returned to hotels with views of the Bay Bridge for a true taste of the city the bride and groom love. —M.S. >>





MEENA & CHUCK'S INGREDIENTS

CEREMONY AND RECEPTION SITE Asian Art Museum (415) 581-3500 **PHOTOGRAPHY** Meena and Chuck decided to have their portraits taken before the ceremony so that they could spend more time at their party. Kimberly White Photography, KimberlyWhitePhotography.com, Burlingame **GOWN** The bride's skirt came from Ashina Bridals; she designed her top with help from people at the boutique. (773) 743-2912, Chicago, IL **SHOES** Stuart Weitzman sandals. Macy's (415) 397-3333 **HAIR AND MAKEUP** Diva International Salon (415) 543-8444 **BRIDESMAID DRESSES** Meena's three maids could wear whatever they liked as long as it was floor-length. Meena's sister chose an Indian dress. **FORMALWEAR** Chuck wore a gray Hugo Boss suit with a Ted Baker tie, and his three groomsmen all wore dark suits with matching Ted Baker ties. **FLOWERS** All of the bouquets were orchids in white and green. Bonnie Pearson Design (510) 388-8966, Oakland **CATERING** Jane Hammond Events (510) 528-3530, Berkeley **CAKE** The three-layer carrot and chocolate cake featured a red ribbon accent to coordinate with their Asian theme. Butterfly Cakes (650) 344-6100, Burlingame **TRANSPORTATION** "It was a city wedding—we all took taxis!" Meena says. **ACCOMMODATIONS** Hotel Vitale (415) 278-3700; Hotel Griffon (415) 495-2100 **HONEYMOON** Meena and Chuck went to Belize and Guatemala. "We snorkeled every day, ate, drank, read, and slept to our hearts' content," Meena says. Turneffe Island Lodge (800) 874-0118, Belize

