

# LOVE COMES LATER

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Bangalore, India  
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Arranged marriages were common in many cultures until the last century, and they are still practiced in some regions, such as India. Nowadays, the bride and groom can usually meet and get to know each other in person before the wedding and then decide whether they want to accept the proposal from their respective families. Refusal is acceptable, but should not be done too often. In contrast, there are forced marriages in which the dowry is the main focus, which often leads to existential financial burdens for the bride's parents and represents a lucrative enrichment for the groom's family. In addition, love marriages without family consent are on the rise, especially in the urban middle class.

Wedding celebrations in India are known for their opulent staging: a colorful spectacle with well-prepared choreography, elaborate decorations and many invited guests. Celebrations with up to 500 guests are considered small; large wedding celebrations have 1,000 to 10,000 guests. For those who are among the wealthy, the illusionary world of the wedding industry knows no bounds. Overall, there is a growing trend to stage wedding celebrations as lavishly designed events; the venues, large halls or tents, are transformed into Indian dream worlds with the help of set designers - sometimes as replicas of famous temples or palaces.

Numerous industries benefit from this celebration culture. The annual turnover of wedding service providers is estimated at 50 billion Indian rupees, and the development of this market is progressing continuously.

All of this turns an Indian wedding into a true spectacle in a set world in which the bride and groom and the guests act on the various stages and celebrate the marriage bond.

The photographs in the Love Comes Later series show the venues before or after the festivities. In addition, there are portraits of married Indian women taken months or years after their own wedding. Wearing their former wedding saris and wedding jewellery, they represent different religious and social backgrounds. All of them live in a marriage where sometimes love has become part of life, sometimes not.