

real
wedding

NANCY JE & ED RIOJAS

DECEMBER 13, 2009 • NEWPORT BEACH, CALIFORNIA

Jewel-Toned Jubilee

Nancy Je and Ed Riojas lived two doors down from each other as students at the University of Southern California. Despite practically being neighbors, it took a chance meeting several hundred miles to the north for the two to meet.

One weekend, Nancy decided to join friends traveling to Northern California to attend a USC Trojan football game. Meanwhile, Ed was temporarily residing up there during an internship and accepted an invitation to join the group. Friendship was only the beginning for the two; Nancy and Ed eventually became engaged in March 2009.

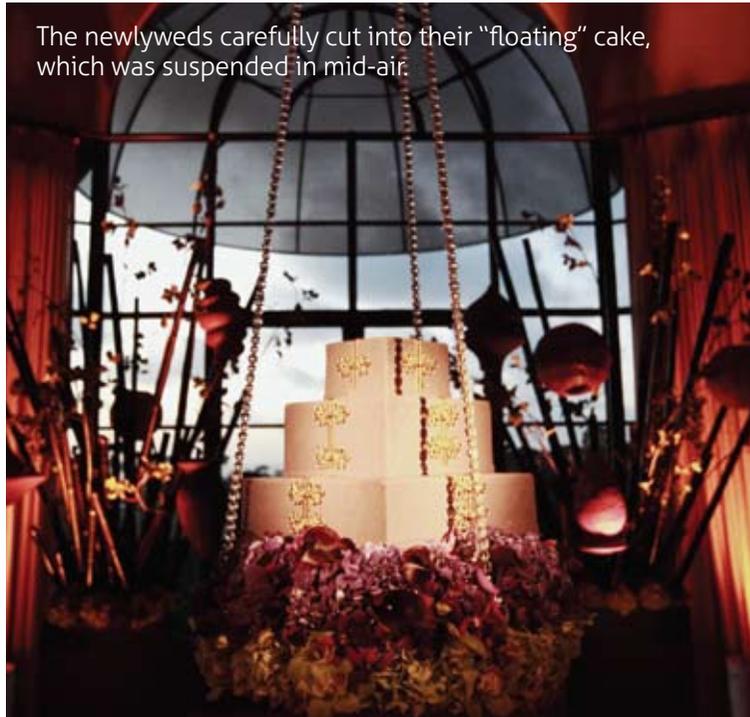
"Ed and I had dated for a very long time, so it was going to be nearly impossible to surprise me," says Nancy. Another complication was the language barrier: Ed first wanted to obtain Nancy's parents' blessing but did not speak Korean. He enlisted the help of her close cousins to take her out, and he then asked the bride's brother to translate for him during the formal meeting. "When I came back home later in the day, I wondered why my parents were in such a good mood," she jokes. With the bride's family in the know, Ed had to act fast before word got out. The proposal came two weeks later on White Day, a Korean holiday similar to Valentine's Day, when he popped the question early in the morning at their favorite Malibu beach. "I was so impressed that they all managed to keep the secret from me!" says Nancy, who was equally surprised by Ed's second surprise of that weekend—an engagement celebration that included out-of-town relatives.

Nancy and Ed wanted to honor the importance of family in their wedding. The groom's mother chose December 13 for the big day by following a Chinese tradition that uses the couple's birthdays to select a lucky date. The fusion of cultures—Korean on the bride's side and Taiwanese and Mexican on the groom's side—was a prominent feature throughout, beginning with the marriage ceremony that took place on the outdoor lawn of The Resort at Pelican Hill. They integrated both a Korean bowing ceremony and the Hispanic tradition of the lasso, in which a large wedding rosary is tied around the couple to symbolize their union. During the cocktail hour, they served signature drinks made from Korean alcohol and offered Rioja wine (a reference to the groom's family name). It was during this time that the couple respectfully changed into *hanbok*, traditional Korean attire sent especially for the occasion from the bride's relatives in South Korea.

The beautifully-draped reception room made a bold statement with the jewel-toned purple and green color scheme chosen by Nancy and Ed. From the amethyst and lilac Chinese lanterns that dangled above the dance floor to the emerald-hued tablecloths and seat covers, the color combination created a vibrant and rich ambience.

Nancy and Ed had fun planning the wedding together and wanted this to be their guiding mantra for the celebration. One way they inspired guests to have fun was through the photo station that included fun props to liven up their pictures. Not forgetting their guests who might want to indulge their sweet tooth, the couple provided mini Chinese take-out boxes for stashing treats from the candy station.

Another surprise for the guests: a special performance put on by the couple and their bridal party. Decked out in matching black-and-white Adidas track suits, the group gave a rousing performance that ended in an emotional group hug. "Everyone was energized and excited after finishing the routine that we had practiced so hard for. This energy carried over to our guests [who] poured onto the dance floor and surrounded us. We all went crazy on the dance floor," Nancy reminisces. For a pair that puts family first, this highlight was exactly what they envisioned for their big day.



The newlyweds carefully cut into their "floating" cake, which was suspended in mid-air.

Photography RAY SOEMARSONO AND ERWIN DARMALI OF APERTURA

The bride and groom smiling in their *hanbok*, traditional Korean garments.





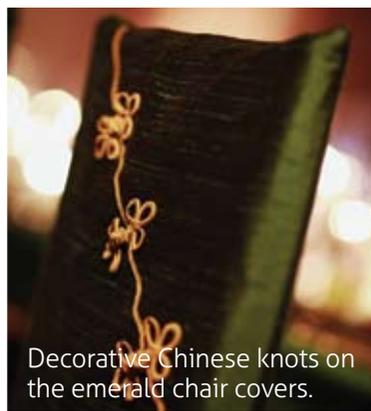


The wedding party strikes a pose after their energetic dance performance.



WHAT IS YOUR ADVICE TO FUTURE BRIDES?

"Enjoy and cherish the time you spend together! Once you begin to plan for the wedding, the best advice I can offer is to take as much stress off you and your fiancé as possible by delegating. The easiest way to ensure this is to hire a wedding planner. For an event of a lifetime, you are going to need professional help!"



Decorative Chinese knots on the emerald chair covers.



Style FILE

wedding
COLOR PALETTE



WEDDING COORDINATOR

THE SPECIAL DAY, CAROLYN CHEN

BRIDAL SALON

HAUTE BRIDE

BRIDAL GOWN

MARTINA LIANA

BRIDESMAID DRESSES

PRISCILLA OF BOSTON

BRIDESMAID SHOES & ACCESSORIES

KATE SPADE NEW YORK

FROM NEIMAN MARCUS

SHOE BROOCH FROM HAUTE BRIDE

GROOM'S FORMALWEAR & SHOES

HUGO BOSS

GROOM'S ACCESSORIES

CUFF LINKS FROM BLOOMINGDALE'S

WATCH FROM CH PREMIER JEWELERS

ENGAGEMENT & WEDDING RINGS

CH PREMIER JEWELERS

WEDDING JEWELRY

EARRINGS BY SWAROVSKI

NECKLACE FROM HAUTE BRIDE

MAKEUP ARTIST

JOYCE LUCK STYLE, JESSICA AHN

HAIR STYLIST

JOYCE LUCK STYLE, BETH HICKMAN

VENUE

THE RESORT AT PELICAN HILL

NEWPORT BEACH, CA

STATIONERY

ANGIE YUNG-HUEY

OFFICIANT

JPR WEDDINGS, JP REYNOLDS

FLORIST

NISIE'S ENCHANTED FLORIST

MUSIC

HEY MISTER DJ, LEE DYSON

VIOLINIST

REIKO NAKANO

PHOTOGRAPHY

RAY SOEMARSONO AND ERWIN DARMALI OF

APERTURA

PHOTO STATION

LA PHOTO PARTY

VIDEOGRAPHY

ELYSIUM PRODUCTIONS

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THE RESORT AT PELICAN HILL

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BRIDAL PARTY HIP-HOP PERFORMANCE

CHOREOGRAPHED BY BRANDIE STEVENSON

OF ARIEL DANCE PRODUCTIONS

HONEYMOON DESTINATION

TOKYO AND BALI