

weddings

Brilliant IDEAS

Spring 2009

DAZZLING
diamonds, dresses &
delicate underthings

RADIANT
big-day beauty

BEAUTIFUL
new ways to reinvent
the classics

LIGHT + LOVELY
cakes, favors,
flowers & more!

CITY OF Love

Two transplants to the city tie the knot Manhattan-style
with a **GLAMOROUS WEDDING** that perfectly
captures their New York state of mind.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY *Jonny Valiant* TEXT BY *Colleen Oakley*

PRIYA SHUKLA FIRST MET Ralph Totoonchie in a yellow taxicab.

"My friend David and I picked him up to go to a work holiday party. I had always heard David speak of Ralph but had never met him," she recalls. "The first thing I noticed about him was his smile. I was a goner from there."

They both knew they had something special five months later, when Priya went home to Australia to visit her parents and they missed one another terribly. Less than two years later, Ralph, a J.P. Morgan vice president, proposed on the sidewalk in a huge way. "I had been shopping for earrings at this one store," Priya recalls. "Ralph secretly asked the jeweler to call me and tell me that she was having this big sale." Ralph then made plans to meet Priya outside the store on the evening of the "sale." When she arrived, "He kept telling me to look at the earrings in the window," she says. She obliged—and was treated to the sight of a diamond ring, roses, and a big sign that read "Priya, I love you. Will you marry me?"

The planning of the wedding went just as smoothly as the proposal. What to wear—usually a bride's biggest dilemma—was a no-brainer; Priya is the executive assistant to Vera Wang. "To have her advice was invaluable, because to me she's the queen of all fashion—and definitely the bridal world," she says. The rest of the details would center on their love for the city. "We wanted to get married in New York because it's so magical for both of us," she says. And they wanted their families from overseas—Ralph's from Lebanon and Priya's from Australia—to feel that magic, too. "We really just wanted them to have the quintessential New York experience." Kind of like meeting your future husband in a taxicab.





These pages, clockwise from far left: The bride and groom pause for a photo. For her engraved stationery suite, Priya chose the Vera Wang "Imperial Scroll" design with a vellum sleeve; in lieu of a response card, they provided a special R.S.V.P. phone number and e-mail address because so many guests were from abroad. The storied Rainbow Room in midtown Manhattan served as the ceremony and reception site. Sweet peas and calla lilies make up Ralph's boutonniere. Priya's bouquet is a larger version. Priya poses with Vera Wang, who added a few special embellishments to her "Audrey" dress. Rekha and Mahesh Shukla, Priya's parents, traveled from Australia to attend the wedding.



This page, clockwise from top left: Miniature calla lilies, tucked sweetly into napkins, await guests at formally set tables. The escort cards are laser printed with calligraphy by Kate's Paperie. The elephant, made from carnations, signifies luck in Priya's Indian culture and adds a touch of whimsy to the event. Roses, hydrangeas, astilbe, and calla lilies in sleek vases make for formal centerpieces. Ralph and his groomsmen John Apostolides pose in Rockefeller Plaza before the ceremony. Priya heads out for pre-ceremony photos with bridesmaids Sarah Doyle, Shreya Dixit, and Nony Odum. **Opposite**, from left: Cake maker Ron Ben-Israel duplicated the lace from Priya's gown on alternating tiers. The newlyweds enjoy their first dance as husband and wife.

Everything about the wedding
SIGNIFIED UNITY—the joining of two
individuals, two cultures, and our
family and friends. —Priya



SOURCES

LOCATION AND CATERING
The Rainbow Room

FLOWERS Michael George Hybrid

CAKE Ron Ben-Israel Cakes

INVITATION Vera Wang Fine Papers

CALLIGRAPHY Kate's Paperie

MUSIC Molly McLaughlin Quartet,
DJ Rumor (Brendan McCormack)

PHOTOGRAPHY
Dan Loh Photography

GOWN Vera Wang Luxe

BRIDESMAIDS' DRESSES
Vera Wang Maids

TUXEDO Domenico Spano
Custom Clothing at Saks Fifth
Avenue New York

ACCESSORIES Veil, Vera Wang;
bride's rings and earrings, Jeri
Cohen Fine Jewelry; groom's ring,
De Beers; cuff links, Asprey

HAIR Jennifer Lawrence
for Louis Licari

MAKEUP AJ Crimson

>MORE IN OUR **GO-TO GUIDE**, p. 266