



AGE OF ELEGANCE

A grand Tudor hall was the backdrop for Priya and Bayju's classic spring celebration



TRUE BLUE

Bayju wore a petrol-blue suit (top) from Gieves & Hawkes (gievesandhawkes.com), while Priya finished her look with satin Mary-Janes from Rainbow Club and earrings from Bayju's mother.

GOLDBLUSH

Roses, lily of the valley, stephanotis, and a touch of mint made up the bride's bouquet (top right); invitations by Hello!Lucky (hellolucky.co.uk) and gold table-number frames added to the opulent styling of the day.

After Bayju Thakar hit it off with Priya Jamus at a friend's dinner party, he was totally smitten. "He knew where I worked and just called up and asked for me out of the blue," Priya remembers. "We met for drinks, which led to dinner and lots of fun dates!" Two years on, they were enjoying a glass of champagne by the lake at the Waterside Inn in Bray when Bayju asked her to be his wife. "The staff knew he was going to propose and were giving me big smiles even before he asked."

Priya and Bayju began planning a wedding that would be sophisticated but not overly formal, guided by a spirit of simple elegance. "Overall, we wanted to have fun," Priya says. The couple soon found their venue: London's Eltham Palace, an English Heritage site that combines original Tudor and elaborate Art Deco elements. "Its history is fascinating, and we love the architecture," she says. "It was only the second place we looked at."

With help from wedding planner Zoë Lingard, they developed a warm, romantic ambience. "The finished design was soft and luxurious, using a delicate palette of peach-pink, cream, ivory and antique gold," says Zoë.

Beneath vibrant arrangements of cherry blossom in the palace's Great Hall, Priya and

WORDS BY JULIA SCIRROTTO

YOUR WEDDINGS



SO SWEET
Rose and lemon cupcakes from MerMade Cupcakes (mer@mermadecupcakes.co.uk) were dusted with blush glitter (left); spring flowers decorated the tables (far left and below); escort cards directed guests to their seats (below left)



Bayju exchanged their own vows on 5 March 2010. “Because we wrote the vows ourselves, we really felt as though we were speaking to each other, and it made the ceremony so much more meaningful to us,” Priya says. Her oldest friend, Lucy, gave a reading from an Apache Indian verse, and the couple left the ceremony arm in arm to Curtis Mayfield’s feel-good classic, *Move on Up*.

Priya wore a bespoke blush gown by designer Jenny Lessin. “I knew I didn’t want either a traditional Indian dress – Bayju and I are both of Indian heritage – or a white wedding gown, but I wasn’t sure what I did want,” Priya explains. With Jenny’s direction, Priya chose a satin gown with a draped silk georgette bodice and an asymmetric shoulder strap of French lace in the shape of irises. “The whole experience was so enjoyable, and I loved being involved in the design process.”

Meanwhile, the bridesmaids were asked to select their own dresses so their personalities could shine through. From a chiffon cocktail dress to a floral ankle-length gown, her four ladies in waiting chose a variety of vintage and high street frocks. “They looked great and made sure that things didn’t feel too formal,” Priya says.

At the reception, 200 friends and family dined on traditional dishes – lamb kebabs, tandoori

chicken, cucumber raita, and pulao rice – by Europe’s first Michelin-starred Indian restaurant, Tamarind, then got down to live soul and funk music performed by The Toots. Guests who stayed on to drink and dance the night away were served fresh-cut chips in retro cones – a special request from the groom.

“Originally we were going to take out some of the traditional elements of the day, like the cutting of the cake and the first dance, but Zoë advised us to include them because they’re so symbolic of togetherness,” says Priya, who spun around the dancefloor with Bayju to Al Green’s *Let’s Stay Together*. “We’re really glad we did.”

PRIYA’S ADDRESS BOOK

Photography Polly Alexandre (alexandreweddings.com)

Bride’s dress Jenny Lessin (jennylesin.co.uk)

Venue Eltham Palace, London (english-heritage.org.uk/elthampalace)

Wedding planning Weddings by Zoë Lingard (zoelingard.co.uk)

Flowers Lavender Green (lavendergreen.co.uk)

Catering Tamarind (tamarindcatering.co.uk)

Music The Toots (thetoots.co.uk)