

GCSE Coursework
Original writing: An Afghan wedding

An Afghan wedding is interesting and unique. We have our own special ways of doing things. An Afghan wedding is a most remarkable and astonishing occasion. You get to experience wonderful things, eat lovely food, listen to music, dancing and you get to talk, laugh and have an enjoyable time with your loved ones and celebrate the beginning of a couple's new life.

The wedding party begins around 4 or 5 o'clock. As you enter the hall there is usually a row of men at one side and a row of women at the other side, these men and women would mostly be the family members of the bride and groom, and would be greeting the guests who enter and lead them to the highly magnificent, stylish, well presented hall with everything just the way it would be in a fairy tale. Guests at an Afghan wedding, women, men, girls and boys are all dressed in exceedingly expensive luxurious clothes and jewelleries, as they show their finest appearance at the wedding. At another corner of the hall are two incredibly decorative chairs which are set for the bride and groom. In front of the chairs there is a table with stunning ornamental ensembles including gorgeous candles and outstanding flowers.

The musicians arrive normally at 7 or 8 pm to quench the thirst of the music lovers, and make the ceremony livelier. At first everyone is shy and reserved to get up and dance, so usually the brides and grooms families start off dancing to set the mood and get everyone off their warm seats which they have been sitting in. As the musician plays some astounding music, young people dance while more and more people arrive.

Around 9 pm the musicians play a particular special song, which commemorates the arrival of the bride and groom. The song is called "Ahesta bero, mah e man ahesta bero" (meaning walk slowly my light of night go slowly). This song was written decades ago and has been sung in weddings for generations, it is a tradition for this song to be sung at an Afghan wedding. As the bride and groom walk inside the hall all the guests stand up to pay respect to the entrance of the Holy Quran being held over the heads of the bride and groom.

As the bride and groom walk extremely slowly to the beat of the song, guests will then take lots of pictures and record everything. The bride and groom take their rightful place at the throne (the two chairs in the corner) as though they are a King and Queen. After the "Ahesta bero" is done the bride and groom is covered under a much decorated shawl where the groom will look at his bride's face in a mirror and will read a prayer from the Holy Quran. In past decades this would have been the first time ever that the bride and groom would have seen each other's faces due to arranged marriages. The shawl is then lifted and the bride and groom feed each other "Maaleda" (which is made from bread and mixed with sugar and cooked and it is very sweet) and beverage as the guests applaud.

The actual religious ceremony where the Mullah and the witness, the bride and grooms family agree upon the prenuptial contract occurs behind the scene either before dinner or after dinner. The next song that follows is "Hena beyarin bar dastash gozarain" which means bring henna (Henna a red colored dye which leaves an orange red stain on the skin) and place on their hand. The mother of the groom will place a teaspoon full of henna onto the bride's palm and cover it with a triangular cloth made of very fine and shiny fabric. The bride's mother places the henna on the pinkie finger of the groom and likewise covers it with the fabric.

After hours of dancing they will announce that dinner is ready, all the guests will form a line and walk alongside a beautifully decorated buffet where an assortment of authentic Afghan food is served. From the Shohla e Goshtee to three different types of rice called Palou and Chalou, there are many kinds of Kabobs; Kabob e Chopan, Chaplee Kabob, Teka Kabob, Shaami Kabob, also Mantu Aushak with authentic Afghan bread will conclude the dinner table, everyone would seat down and eat all the mouth-watering palatable food. For dessert they will serve Firnee, Sheer Brenj, Jello, and Baghalua with fruits of the season. After dessert is finished the bride and groom will walk over to the three tier cake and the musician will return from dinner and sing the traditional song of "Baada baada elahee mubarak baada-man dil ba tu dada am tawakol ba Khoda" meaning congratulations I gave you my heart now I leave it to God, as both bride and groom cut the cake, they represent commitment and love

by feeding each other a piece of the cake, everyone then applauds with such joy in their eyes. Then member of the family will cut the cake into small pieces and serve the guests.

Then comes the hours of enjoyment and cheerfulness as the musicians plays fast beat songs and the dance floor fills up with people as the dance till the end of the ceremony which could go till dawn. At the end of ceremony "Attan" will be performed, Attan is a traditional Afghan dance. A huge circle is created and the performers will follow each other going round and round in a circle to the beat as the rhythm and as the beats go faster the slower participants drop out and the people who can dance and move that fast keep on dancing till the song finishes.

The music is finished and the hosts along with bride and groom stand by the door to show their respect and thank the guests for coming to their wedding ceremony, when this happens the brides father ties round his daughter with a green fabric and inside that fabric can either be money or gold, they the father will pray for his daughter that she would be happy in her life with her new husband.

As the people leave tired and drained from all that dancing and eating they then go to their homes and have a nice relaxing, calming and peaceful sleep.