

¡FELICIDADES!

You've made the decision to exchange your wedding vows here in Los Cabos. Good choice! Finding the location is a big check-mark on the list of things to do.

I imagine you picked Los Cabos for the convenience it offers your guests with numerous daily flights. You feel secure with Cabos near perfect weather, 340 days of sunshine per year. You couldn't have picked a more perfect place to combine your ceremony and your honeymoon. There is an array of activities available to entertain your guests and a selection of accommodations and dining that can fit into any budget. No doubt you have also fallen in love with the magical, no rush, festive ambiance that belongs to Mexico and Los Cabos in particular.

With the technology available to us today, I know you've surfed the internet and discovered the many companies at your disposal to make your wedding festivities seamlessly stress free and memorable. If you haven't already, you'll soon make up your mind what works for you; hiring a wedding consultant; a hotel onsite coordinator or a do-it-yourself program (no guarantees of stress elimination with this last option). You're savvy enough to do the homework and discover there truly is something for everyone. (In case you have trouble finding information a few of the companies and places that specialize in weddings are listed alongside this article)

I'm wondering though if while planning your destination wedding in Los Cabos you've had time to think about, or learn about some of the ceremonial traditions of this country. Maybe you've already thought about using a good tequila for toasting, or having a wedding cake made of fruit soaked in rum or a rich tres leches cake. There are many wonderful Mexican traditions that can add meaning and enjoyment to this special day and leave your guests talking about their travels to your wedding for a long time. Some of the customs you could consider are:

The Men's Wedding Shirt and A Reboso (Shawl) for the Women

The *guayabera* is the best beach, tropical wedding attire for men. The groom and his attendants will love the comfort of these classic white, boxy shirts (flattering to any body type) worn over lightweight pants, they are a Mexican classic. It's the equivalent to a tie and jacket north of the border for formal attire.

A handmade light-weight shawl can be added to any style of dress worn by women of any age. It's useful if the evenings cool a little or just for adornment.

Mariachi

Celebrating a great moment and Mariachi music is synonymous here in Mexico. A Mariachi group can welcome the guests as they arrive, serenade the bride's entrance and trumpet out the jubilation when you happily walk down the aisle after sealing your vows with a kiss.

If your budget allows try and hire a large enough group to experience the gusto of Mariachi at it's best. There are groups of three or four who try to deliver the sound but it's not the same. You need the trumpets and violins and the vihuela (a five string guitar) and the small acoustic bass and big voices and the charro outfits with wide-brimmed hats to make it a true Mariachi experience.

El Lazo (The Lasso)

The custom of using a lasso symbolizes unity and can be extended to include your families. During the vows someone significant---the maid of honor or parent(s) drape a long chord made of flowers, ribbon or beads in a figure eight over the bride and grooms heads, to rest on their shoulders. This lasso signifies the love which will bind them and their families together everyday as they equally share the responsibility of marriage for the rest of their lives.

At the end of the ceremony the lasso is removed by the couple or the person(s) who placed the lasso on the couple. The bride keeps this lasso as a memento of her becoming the mistress of the grooms heart.

Trece Monedas de Oro (The Thirteen Gold Coins)

The symbolic coins (gold is nice but it doesn't have to be) are collected by the groom from family and friends who participate in their desire for the couples prosperity. He puts the coins in a keepsake box and gives them for safe keeping to his best man. Near the end of the ceremony the best-man gives the box to the officiant who in turn places the box holding the coins into the hands of the groom. The groom then pours them one by one into the palm of the bride, pledging that he places all of his goods into her care and safekeeping. When the bride accepts the coins it means she is taking them with trust and confidence and in turn promising to manage all he is giving with care and devotion.

Why thirteen coins? The custom of coins originated in Spain, the number 13 represents Christ and his 12 apostles which in turn stemmed from a Roman custom of breaking gold or silver, one half to be kept by the bride and the other half by the groom as a pledge of marriage.

Recuerdos (Remembrances for the guests)

In Mexico guests are given a gift to remember the day. Often it's a religious card with a prayer on the back or sometimes a rose either real or made of silk. If you decide to give your guests something a suggestion could be to buy something made in Mexico. There are many distinctive artesano pieces to choose from. A small box or basket filled with almonds with the almonds which represents good luck is a nice touch.

Brindis Mexicano (A Mexican Toast)

SALUD, AMOR Y PESETAS...Y TIEMPO PARA GOZARLOS...

Health, Love and Money...and time to enjoy them...

Saying this toast is urging the couple to take time to enjoy together these gifts of life.

So, while you are deciding every little detail I know you won't forget to relax and enjoy the moments leading up to this joyous day. You already have the two biggest decisions made; to join in marriage and the best place to celebrate your decision.