

traditions

grooms' brother sprinkles flower petals on the bridal couple at the end of the ceremony. After your ceremony is over, have a special relative or friend hand a single flower to every guest.

Ireland — The traditional wedding cake of the Emerald Isle is a heavy, rich fruitcake with golden raisins, ground almonds, cherries and spice. In true Irish spirit, lace your reception cake with brandy or bourbon.

Italy — For centuries wedding guests have tossed confetti — sugared almonds — at the couple to symbolize the sweet and bitter in life. Decorate reception tables with pretty boxes or bags brimming with almonds.

Japan — Bridal couples take nine sips of sake, becoming husband and wife after the first. The two of you could drink together from a wine cup then ask your parents to exchange sips, too.

Mexico — Reception guests gather around the couple in a heart-shaped ring. Your friends and relatives might do the same as you whirl through your first dance together as husband and wife.

Poland — Guests customarily have pinned money on the bride to "buy" a dance. Collect your pin money in a white satin purse.

Russia — Wedding guests not only give presents — they receive them, as well. Favor your guests with tiny picture frames, bud vases or instant photos of themselves.

Scotland — Traditionally, a bridegroom purchased a silver "wedding spune," engraved with the couple's initials and wedding date, to give to his bride. You and your groom might buy something special to commemorate the day.

Spain — In certain regions, the bride wore a black silk mantilla and orange blossoms in her hair. The groom wore a tucked shirt hand-embroidered by the bride. Try a lacy white mantilla for your headpiece and give your groom a formal shirt on which you've embroidered his initials on the cuff.

Wales — The bride gives her attendants cuttings of myrtle from her bouquet. Tell your bridesmaids that if their plants bloom, they'll soon wed.



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