



# **Wedding customs in Crete**

Krousonas High School

In Crete we find plenty customs related to marriage and vary from region to region. Some



however are common and many intended spouses to follow faithfully. But what are the most popular? Let's look at a few: The traditions of the Cretan wedding starts with " ring ", which includes dinner

in the house of the bride where the groom, accompanied by his family, offers the bride a ring and a bouquet of flowers, which confirm the love and ensure his promise of marriage.



This is followed by a still a significant mystery called "Engagement" during which the couple is united with vows of love passing rings to each other, called "veres" that symbolize their eternal connection.

A custom which dominates is that of dowry. The bride used to prepare her dowry while she was unmarried which was usually consisted of linen, clothes, underwear, kitchen utensils



and decorations. All these were either purchased or handmade by the bride herself and her mother.

Before the wedding the "bridal bed" is laid. Unmarried girls, girlfriends or relatives of the bride are responsible for the laying of the bed with white sheets and white handmade blankets. The layer is decorated with sugared almonds and rice.

A few days before the wedding, "Progamos" is celebrated. In this, the couple invites relatives and friends to celebrate the announcement of their marriage to the entire family.

Before the wedding ceremony, the bride writes down the names of her friends who have not get married yet in the soles of her shoes,. The names of those that will be erased are these that will marry in the future.

As the bride is getting ready her relatives put money in her shoe, which will be quite useful in the beginning of her life as a married woman. The day of the wedding the groom must not be present because it is considered as bad luck. Also, the groom mustn't see the wedding dress before the wedding. She must be delayed a few minutes prolonging the agony of the groom for whether she will come or not.

During the ceremony the groomsman gives the wedding rings to the Pope and he crosses the crowns three times over the head of the newlyweds. The crowns are joined by a white ribbon that symbolizes the unity of the couple.

Everyone is waiting for the moment that the Pope will say "and the husband should be afraid of the wife». Then, the bride needs to set foot on the groom to show him that she is not going to be afraid of him during their marriage.

When the dance of Isaiah begins, the well-known "ricefight" is going to start too. The guests throw rice on the couple in order for their relationship to have strong roots. The couple's friends usually throw entire bags of rice on their heads.



At the end of the ceremony, the parents, relatives and friends offer jellewery to the wife and husband or they give them money so that they will have good luck and prosperity.

If the newlyweds decide to visit their new home before going to the reception, both their



mothers have to wait there and welcome them by giving them to eat honey with nuts that will be offered with silver spoons. When the couple arrives at the reception venue the bride invites her friends and without seeing, she throws them the bouquet. The one who catches it is said to get married in the future.