

# East meets West



Bright-orange details in the wedding outfits create a splash

The wedding party pose at Plaisir de Merle in Franschhoek



**G**aiti and Erlank's big day was a beautiful, colourful mix of styles and cultures. Gaiti, of Pakistani origin, and Erlank, a South African, both live in Dubai but chose Cape Town for their wedding because of its diversity and striking scenery ... and because they wanted to spoil their overseas guests with a wonderful holiday. It was important to the couple that their celebration was modern, sophisticated and elegant, so they decided to combine two contrasting settings for their celebration – the tranquility of the winelands and city chic.

The marriage ceremony took place outdoors at Plaisir de Merle in Franschhoek, with vineyard views creating a perfect backdrop and the romantic vibe being enhanced by a solo saxophonist playing Gaiti and Erlank's favourite songs. Guests enjoyed cocktails and canapés for lunch on the terrace and were later bussed to the dinner-and-dance reception on the waterfront – the bride and groom travelled in style in a chauffeur-driven limo. The BOE building's observation deck provided a spectacular view of the city's twinkling night lights – the perfect setting for a celebration party.

Gaiti and Erlank's favourite colour, burnt orange, featured prominently in everything from the decor and bridal accessories to the stationery and drinks. The couple even created their own orange-coloured welcoming cocktail that they appropriately named 'Table Mountain Sunset'. Bright-orange gerberas made beautiful flower arrangements.

Gaiti chose to design her own dress and had it made in Dubai: 'It was important to me to have a dress that reflected who I am: a mixture of East and West.' The couple also had their wedding rings specially designed: 'We wanted our rings to have some sort of connection while still retaining individuality,' says Gaiti. So diamonds for both their rings were in the same cut, and both rings were engraved with their wedding date.

Says Gaiti: 'The whole experience was like a fairy tale ... we just smiled all day long. Finally sharing our vows was a very special moment. So, of course, was seeing my man waiting for me at the altar.... And sharing our first dance!' □

**BRIDE** Gaiti Rabbani, 35, marketing officer.

**GROOM** Erlank Pienaar, 35, sales manager.

**THEIR STORY** Gaiti and Erlank met in Dubai. It wasn't long after their first meeting that they realised they had a special connection ... and their relationship turned romantic. They've now been together for about three-and-a-half years.

**THE PROPOSAL** | September 2004 on a mountain-top in Kashmir. Gaiti and Erlank were there to attend a friend's wedding and had made a special trip into the mountains, where they stayed overnight in a cabin with friends.

**THE BIG DAY** 3 April 2005. The ceremony and pre-party drinks were held at Plaisir de Merle in Franschhoek, and a dinner and party were held at the Board of Executors (BOE) Building at the V&A Waterfront.

**WHAT I'VE LEARNT** 'Don't try to do it all yourselves. And, the day goes so quickly, you really want to enjoy every moment. Plan it all to please yourself and your husband, not others. Finally, hire a good photographer: it's the one area where you shouldn't try to cut costs!' says Gaiti.



Table settings featured orange gerberas in a bed of pebbles as part of the wooden centrepieces. Floating tea-light candles upped the romance factor



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Gaiti's trailing wrist corsage perfectly matched the colour scheme. Gaiti and Erlank both collect fridge magnets when they travel, so they gave their guests magnets printed with the venue and date of their wedding. The favours were placed in organza bags, along with thank-you messages. Orange gerberas, a wedding programme, and a message from the bride and groom were individually fixed to the back of each chair at the outside ceremony in Franschhoek. The square plates were chosen for their modern look, and to complement the square centrepieces

## MENU HIGHLIGHTS

Roast breast of Tokai quail in phyllo baskets on chakalaka and crème fraîche, with a passion-fruit gastrique sauce.

A duo of Franschhoek salmon – one traditionally oak-smoked and one gravlax and sugar-cured with fresh dill – served with a shooter of chilled chilli gazpacho.

Seared loin of Karoo lamb on a tian of roasted-butternut risotto, with garden-fresh vegetables.

## WEDDING CAKE

A three-tiered Belgian dark-chocolate cake with a lacy chocolate collar and a filling of Cointreau-flavoured chocolate mousse.



The wedding cake: a three-tiered Belgian dark-chocolate creation



## SERVICE PROVIDERS

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