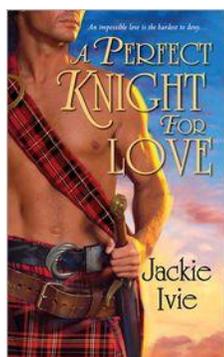


Romance

WEDDING CUSTOMS FROM ACROSS THE GLOBE

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Thu, 09/13/2012 - 1:47pm — admin



Who knew that in Scotland, at one point, it was perfectly legal for a couple to declare themselves married, and then — bam! — actually *be* married just like that? Certainly not the heroine of Jackie Ivie's *A Perfect Knight for Love*. After fleeing England and an unwanted marriage, Lady Amalie finds herself in Scotland ... in an unwanted marriage. Although, to be fair, the man who claimed her as his wife did it for the lass' own protection. Thayne MacGowan saw no other way to protect Lady Amalie other than to claim her as his — and by not refuting his claim, she lent it credence.

And it really was as simple as that, which you can't say about most weddings these days. Even if one has never been to or planned a ceremony, WE tv, TLC and Lifetime all offer scary glimpses into the wedding-industrial complex with shows like *Bridezillas*, *Say Yes to the Dress* and *My Fair Wedding*. With all those in mind, I've always been the one to try to talk sense into my "tying the knot" friends.

Parents and in-laws taking over the show? "Vegas," I've been known to whisper, "is only a plane ride away."

The mounting associated costs have you questioning whether you'll ever be able to retire? "It's not too late to just lose the deposit, save the rest and find a justice of the peace," I counsel.

And, for my final attempt: "Just think about the kick-ass honeymoon you could have in Tahiti if you just stop the madness?!"

No one has taken me up on my suggestions yet — not that I ever expect them to — and I've actually attended many a pleasant wedding. But I know, as we all know, the hard work that goes into these shebangs. Having been, in the past year, a guest at a Hindu ceremony and a Chinese wedding banquet, even I'm bowled over by the level of detail, planning, stress and ... well, love, that goes into the whole thing. I bet there were times my friends would have loved to follow the path of ye-olde-Scotlanders and just declared themselves married, but they had their own customs to fulfill.

Their weddings and Ivie's book inspired me to look up some interesting traditions around the world that are still practiced today. And I was amazed by what I found out!

ROPED INTO MARRIAGE IN MEXICO



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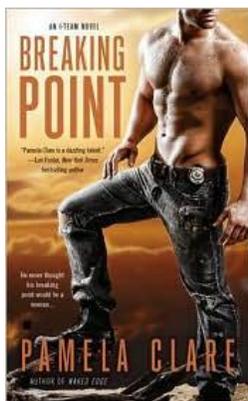
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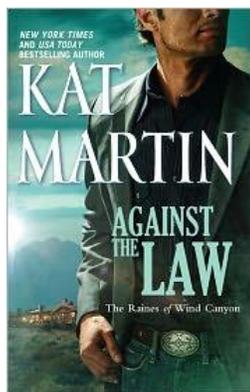
I wonder how Lady Amalie would have felt if, instead of traveling to Scotland, she somehow wound up on a hacienda in Mexico with Thayne throwing a lasso around her neck, calling her “his?”

Ok, I kid. The tradition of “lassoing” in Mexican ceremonies is actually quite beautiful. During the vows, the bride and groom have their necks draped together with a rosary (or white ribbon), symbolizing their union and binding love. The couple wears the lasso for the rest of the ceremony, but, when it’s removed, it is given to the bride for safekeeping — as she is now the keeper of the groom’s heart.

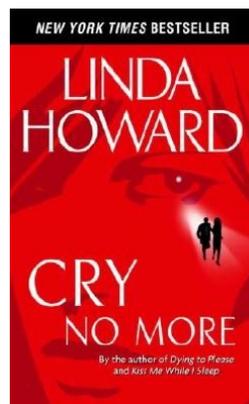
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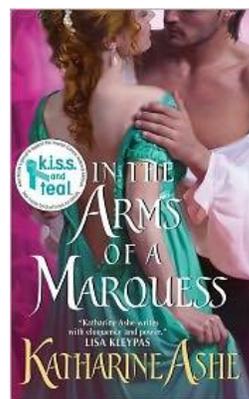
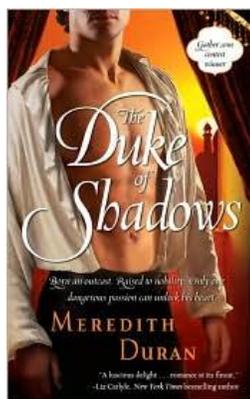
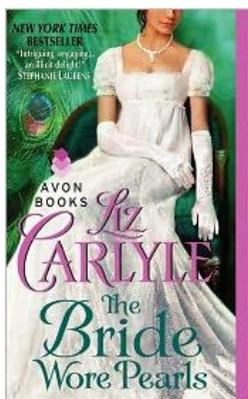
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I WANT TO HOLD — AND PAINT — YOUR HAND IN INDIA

Having had a first hand look at the beauty of the mehndi, henna applied in an intricate design on a bride’s hand and feet, this is one tradition that I wish were okay for everyday wear!

Which certainly isn’t practical as the designs can take hours to complete. The bride’s friends and family usually turn the application of the mehndi into a party. They gather a few days before the wedding to “decorate” the bride, and the event takes on a celebratory feel. Women dance and sing, festive colors are worn and a good time is had by all. And, best of all, somewhere hidden among the pattern of the mehndi are the initials of the groom.

Intrigued by heroes and heroines who come from India? Check out these historical tales:

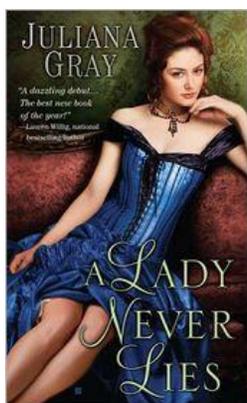
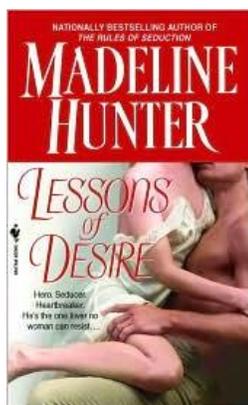
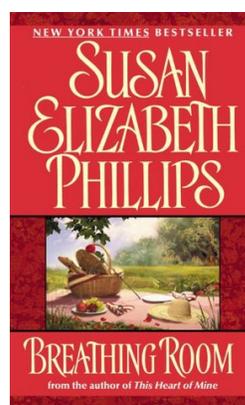


[Read The Review >>](#)[Read The Review >>](#)[Read The Review >>](#)***WALKING TO THE CHAPEL OF LOVE IN ITALY***

The path to love is hardly ever smooth, but the good people in the Italian region of Veneto (home to Venice, one of the most famous romantic cities in the world) take it a step or two ... or three ... farther. Couples who want to unite in holy matrimony won't glide up to the doors of the church in a horse-drawn carriage. No, if they're serious about their joining, then they walk on foot to the chapel.

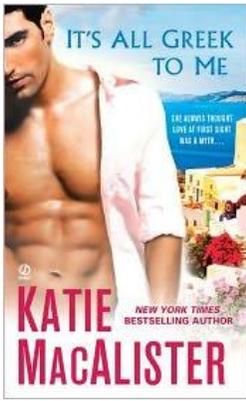
Along the path, it's traditional for neighbors to place obstacles in the bride's way. If she stops to pick up a broom, than that says something about her domestic skills (note: as a citified girl, I'd probably skirt right around that broom). They might even send a "lost" child in her way to see if she'd make a good mother. Nothing like a pop quiz before taking the plunge!

Do you want to read more about Italy? Here are three books set in the beautiful country:

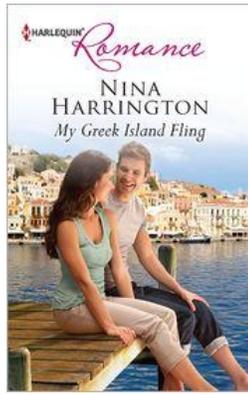
[Read The Review >>](#)[Read The Review >>](#)[Read The Review >>](#)***ROLL THAT BABY ONE MORE TIME***

Greece, I've found, has its own quaint and utterly adorable pre-wedding custom. The marital bed is given a "blessing for babies" when friends and families bring their little ones over and roll them around in the sheets. This must be so much fun for the babies — I just hope they don't leave behind something other than their blessing!

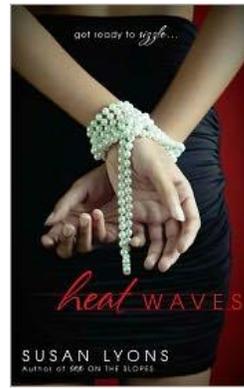
Is modern day Greece your dream destination? Then you will definitely want to pick up these contemporary reads:



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As much as I'm a wedding curmudgeon, even I recognize the beauty and meaning behind some of these heartfelt traditions. And this is only the tip of the iceberg! Have you ever experienced a wedding tradition that left you in awe? Tell me in the comments below. And for more romantic tales, check out RT's [Everything Romance Page](#).

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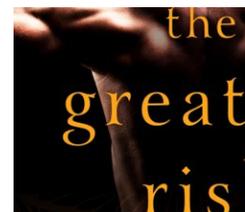
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