



## Casually Elegant Weddings

individualized service for quality results in Las Vegas

### CEREMONIES WITHIN YOUR CEREMONY

#### **Coins/Cord/Veil — Arras/Lazzo/Velo Ceremony**

Las arras are coins used in Spanish, Latin American, Philippine, and similar wedding ceremonies [The Spanish colonization period in the Philippines (1521-1898) brought these traditions to the islands]. Las arras are thirteen precious coins in an ornate container.

*Arras* [*ah-rahhs*] is a Spanish word meaning “earnest money” or dowry, though most often today the thirteen coins are seen to represent Jesus and his 12 apostles. They are given to the Bride with the Groom’s promise to care for and support his wife, and the Bride’s trust in his ability to do so. They are often seen as symbolizing the prosperity that will be shared by the newlyweds.

Filipino weddings typically include an “arrhae-bearer” or “coin-bearer” who functions similarly to the ringbearer. Unlike the ringbearer, he carries the actual *Arrhae* [*ar-rah-heh*] in a ceremonial chest or pouch, on a pillow.

Las arras, the coins, are usually dropped into the Groom’s waiting hands, who in turn drops them into his Bride’s hands. The Bride then puts her hand above the Groom’s and drops the coins into his hands again. The Groom then places the coins back into the chest (in a church service he would allow them to drop through his hands into a plate held by an acolyte).

The metal tinkling of the coins being passed from one pair of hands to the other is a distinctive reminder of the Groom’s promise to take care of his wife materially. The Bride, by giving back the coins to his hands, conveys that her earnings as well as his now belong to their marriage. The trickling sound also anticipates that there will be abundance and success in the couple’s joint efforts.

Arras, today, represent the couple’s trust, hard work and good administration of their income rather than a dowry. Similarly, las arras are less tied today to the Lazzo and Candle. We suggest that the Coin Ceremony be immediately after the exchange of wedding rings.

A frequent, though not essential, ceremony accompanying “the coins” is “the *lazzo*”, the lasso or cord. A lazzo is a large rosary, a ribbon or a decorative rope that is symbolically draped around the necks or shoulders of the Bride and the Groom, to bless and protect their unity. It is first placed around the Groom’s neck or shoulders. It can otherwise be placed around the couple’s wrists. It affirms their union and their commitment to always be together side-by-side. The couple may wear the lazzo through the remainder of the wedding until, at the end, it is removed and given to the Bride as a keepsake.



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Filipino Weddings reflect strong traditions of family and extended family. Filipino weddings will often include mention of loved ones who are unable to be present, and those who are deceased. On this special day, each is represented in the Bride's and Groom's heart and are truly missed. This is particularly evident if the couple intended to have these loved ones as sponsors.

Sponsors, family members and close friends whom the Bride and Groom admire, may facilitate key parts of the wedding. In the Philippines, they are official witnesses of the state and they sign the marriage license. Worldwide, their participation is symbolic of the wisdom and support they offer to the new couple. The number of sponsors can vary from a single individual to many couples. Principal Sponsors are part of the bridal procession. At the nuptial blessing, they may also be invited to extend their right hands and, together with the officiant, offer a prayer of blessing. In doing so, they are fulfilling their roles as sponsors.

Filipino weddings often have a Veil Ceremony between the coins and cord. Wedding rituals are very important to Filipino culture, and visual symbolism is an important part of the traditional Filipino wedding. Sponsors drape and pin the veil (a long white tulle) on the Groom's shoulder and over the Bride's head. This symbolizes the union of two people 'clothed' as one. Further symbolizing the couple's eternal bond, the Cord and Unity Candle ceremonies follow the Veil Ceremony. Filipino weddings are a bit longer than others, and involve a few more participants, but certainly make for a memorable testimony of love!

It is up to the bride and groom to request a coin, cord, veil, and/or candle ceremony as part of their wedding, and to inform us of the responsibilities of sponsors they may have for these.

We will gladly discuss all this with you, providing simple explanations and offering suggestions. We prefer to include the coins, cord, veil, and associated candle ceremonies immediately after the exchange of rings. One example (mildly religious) is:

### Blessing Exchange of the Coins (Arras)

[Officiant]: "The Blessing of the coins is a symbol of the husband's dedication and responsibility to his wife and their future children. The husband presents the coins (arras) to his Bride who accepts the coins to represent her support and commitment in their union."

[Officiant]: "Hold these coins in your hands as a sign that your blessings will no longer be held separately, but together. Remember that the gifts you have in this life are not truly yours but God's. As guardians of God's gifts, use them well."



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(*Groom, Saying Bride's name*), accept this symbol of all my possessions as a pledge of my dedication and concern for your wellbeing. These I offer to you, of all that I am, and with all that I have.

(*Bride, Saying Groom's name*), I accept them with joy and gratitude; And I also offer you these coins in return as a sign of my effort and concern for our family's wellbeing.

### Veil Ceremony– (Velo) means “ watch over”

[Officiant]: “The veil is laid on the Bride and Groom to emphasize their union for life under one roof. The laying of the veil symbolizes the purity and honesty of marriage and invokes God’s protection in their lives. The veil covers the Bride’s head, its edge is placed over the shoulder of the Groom, covering his back.”

[Officiant]: “Dear God, with the purest threads which these sponsors now hold, you have spun a fine veil of love over (*Saying Groom's name*) and (*Saying Bride's name*). Keep this precious mantle whole and immaculate; mend the tears of trials and hardship with fibers of strength, and wash away the stains of anger and distrust with the waters of forgiveness and faith.”

### Cord Ceremony- (Lazzo) means “ tie, knot or loop” .

[Officiant]: “The cord is placed in the form of an eight (symbol of infinity) around the couple to represent their spiritually boundless commitment in marriage. One strand is placed over the Bride’s shoulders and the other the Groom’s, with the knot in between them.”

[Officiant]: “Dear God, as these sponsors offer the cord of unity, we ask You to continue to bind (*Saying Groom's name*) and (*Saying Bride's name*) in courage. You have entwined their lives and fortified their bond with your Spirit. With you they are a three-fold cord that cannot be broken: one strength, one life, one love.”

### Prayers of the Faithful