

the knot



WEDDINGWIRE



bodas.net

2019 GLOBAL WEDDING REPORT

Argentina

Brazil

Canada

Chile

Colombia

France

India

Italy

Mexico

Peru

Portugal

Spain

United Kingdom

United States

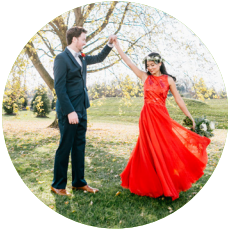


Clockwise From Top: You Look Lovely Photography; Tayler Canale Photography

01 / Introduction

Millions of weddings take place every month, and couples across the world find themselves with more and more choices for when, where and how to celebrate their love. The Knot, WeddingWire and Bodas.net teamed up to gather feedback from 20,000 couples in 14 countries to understand how today's couples are planning their wedding. From an elegant, [family-focused wedding](#) in Northern India to a [picturesque lakeside wedding](#) in Verona, Italy, or a [joyful outdoor celebration](#) in Acapulco, Mexico, this report captures the ins and outs of the wedding journey.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:



Each country has its own unique traditions, though couples across the world are also seeking ways to put a personal stamp on their wedding. From choosing a dress that reflects a bride's personality—like the bold choice of [this French bride](#)—to adding an [unexpected angle](#) to the first dance, couples make it a priority to infuse their own style.



Fall is the most popular time to get married in much of Europe and North America, as couples are drawn to the weather. Engagement rituals differ by country, though December is the top month in all countries except India.



Parents' roles in the wedding varies by location and culture. More than two-thirds of U.S. couples ask for the parents' blessing compared to less than 10% in Italy and Spain. However, these two European countries see parents/other family covering more of the wedding expenses (roughly two-thirds) than in other locations.



Providing a great guest experience is a must-have in many cultures. In Spain, this might mean serving unexpected drinks like a mojito or including a beer bar, while in Chile guests may be treated to a one-of-a-kind late-night party (la hora loca). Colombian weddings have the lowest guest count at 90, while India far surpasses all other places with an average of 524 guests.

02/ Engagement

How it Happens

“Popping the question” takes on a different meaning across the world, with couples in North American countries most likely to embrace the practice. In the U.S., Mexico and Canada, more than 80% of couples were engaged on a specific date.

Italians were least likely to say there was a proposal day (50%), as many couples jointly decide to get married.

Was there a specific date on which you and your spouse became engaged?

U.S.	84%	U.K.	75%
Mexico	82%	India	73%
Canada	81%	Portugal	71%
France	79%	Spain	70%
Colombia	79%	Brazil	63%
Peru	77%	Argentina	60%
Chile	75%	Italy	50%

When it Happens

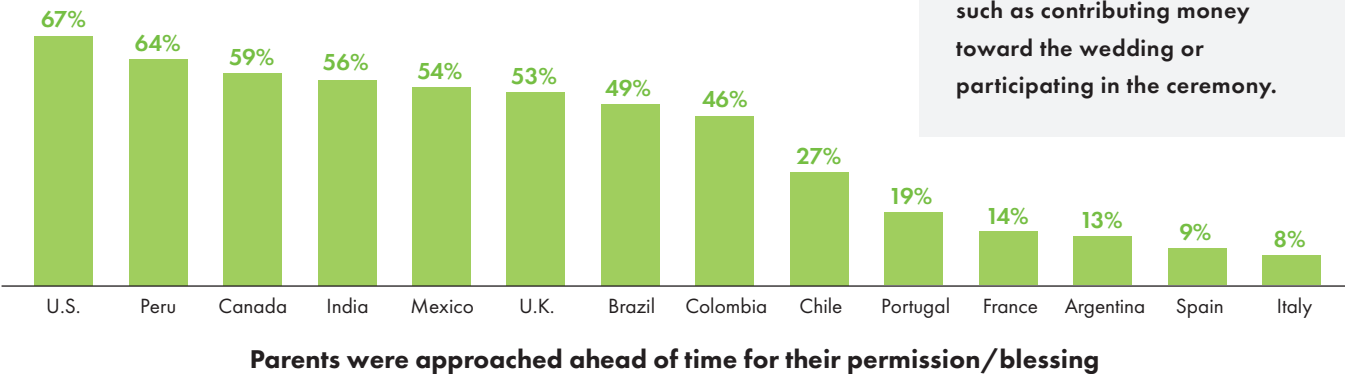
December is the most common month for couples to get engaged throughout many countries. Canada and the U.S. had the largest percentage of engagements occurring in December (18–19%).

India was the only country where the trend differed, as an engagement is most likely to occur in February (20%), followed by January (13%). A major reason for this is the preference to hold the engagement ceremony—as well as the wedding—on an [auspicious or good-luck day](#). Auspicious days vary by year as well as culture, but are believed to result in happiness and success in the future.

Parents’ Involvement

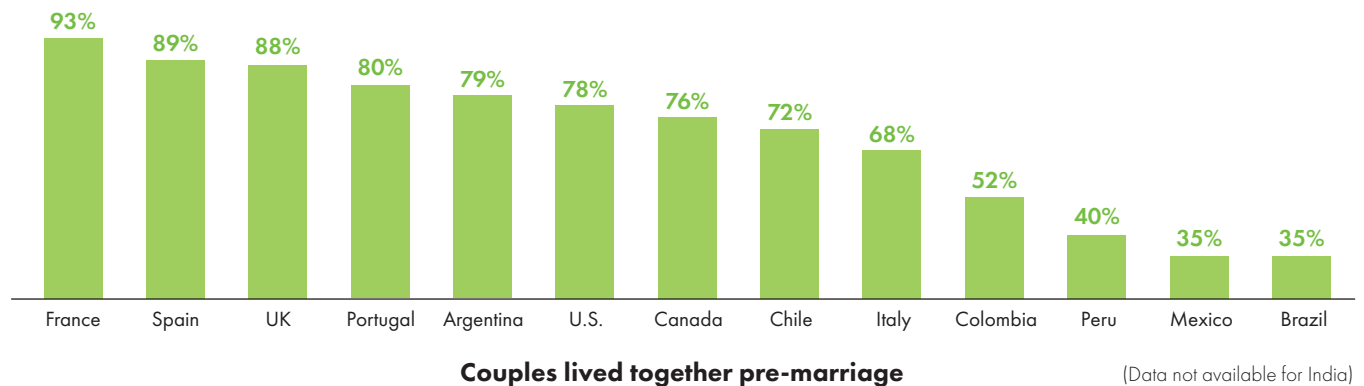
A majority of U.S. couples seek the parents’ blessing prior to getting engaged. For many, this is seen as a kind gesture and sign of respect rather than a true need to secure permission. This is less common in European countries, where couples will make the decision to marry and then share the news with their parents.

In Mexico, it’s typical to have [padrinos](#) who serve as sponsors for the engaged couple. These tend to be relatives, godparents or other individuals who have a special relationship with the couple. It’s considered an honor to hold this role, though comes with significant responsibilities such as contributing money toward the wedding or participating in the ceremony.



03/ The Couple

Marrying at an older age is a trend occurring across the globe and also means that many couples are living together long before saying “I do”. In France, Spain and the U.K., roughly 9 out of 10 couples lived together prior to getting married. Cohabitating is significantly less likely to occur in more religious countries like Mexico and Brazil.



Religion and Culture

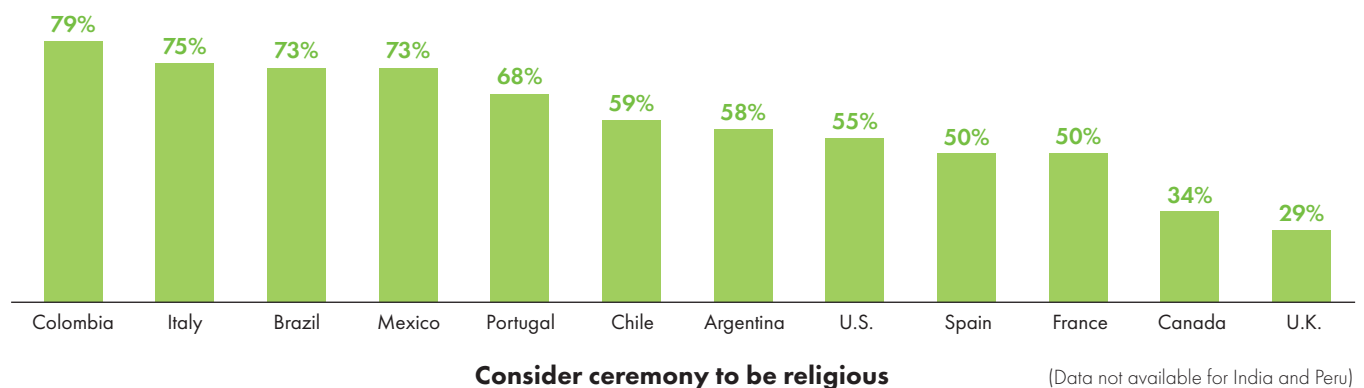
In most countries, a majority incorporate religion into the ceremony, with Colombia ranking highest at 79%. The patterns are consistent with larger religious patterns, as the five countries that ranked highest all have a Catholic-majority population. U.K. ceremonies are least likely to be religious, though more than 70% of its young population say they have no religious affiliation.¹

When it comes to marrying someone with a different race/ethnicity or religious upbringing, the U.S. and India lead the way. In these two countries, roughly 3 in 10 couples marry someone from a different race/religion, followed by Canada at 21%.



Colombia & Italy

3 in 4 couples have a religious ceremony.



04/ Planning

Timeline

Colombian couples have the shortest wedding planning timeline (seven months), followed by India (eight months), Chile (eight months) and Peru (nine months). Countries where couples are less likely to live together before the wedding tend to have shorter planning timelines. U.S. and Canadian couples typically start planning 14 months before the wedding, while the U.K. has the longest timeline (15 months).

Average Planning Duration

11-12 months

Western Europe

14 months

U.S. and Canada

Vendors

From the first kiss to the little details, a great photographer can be counted on to capture all the important moments. When it comes to hiring wedding professionals, couples across the world prioritize **photography**, with an average of 80% hiring a photographer (across all 14 countries).

The exception was in France, where **catering** was the top vendor category hired. French weddings often feature a vin d'honneur—a cocktail reception where guests can enjoy drinks and appetizers. For the main wedding meal and reception, this may include a more limited guest list and can range from multicourse [sit-down meals](#) to more casual [bites](#).

When looking for **wedding day attire**, brides in the Americas and Europe continue to embrace a white dress. However, many are seeking a look that reflects their unique style and find ways to personalize, such as through [unique necklines](#), [silhouettes](#) and [accessories](#). In the U.K., Meghan Markle wasn't the only one to include a [tiara](#) in her wedding look—22% of British brides wore one.



Decadent desserts are common at French weddings, with a popular choice being a [croquembouche](#)—a tower of cream-filled pastry puffs topped with caramel. These can take on elaborate [shapes](#) and have a variety of decorative elements, such as sugared almonds, flowers or ribbon.

Top Three Vendor Categories Hired

(Venue not included)

U.S.

Photo: 90%
Hair/makeup: 80%
Dress: 78%

Canada

Photo: 83%
Hair: 78%
Dress: 77%

Mexico

Photo: 70%
Music: 57%
Suits: 56%

Brazil

Photo: 85%
Decor: 76%
Caterer: 72%

Argentina

Photo: 74%
Music: 57%
Rings: 55%

Chile

Photo: 69%
Cake: 54%
Rings: 52%

Colombia

Photo: 69%
Rings: 66%
Suits: 55%

Peru

Photo: 79%
Suits: 71%
Invites: 67%

U.K.

Photo: 86%
Dress: 85%
Hair: 81%

Spain

Photo: 89%
Dress: 88%
Music: 73%

France

Caterer: 76%
Dress: 75%
Photo: 70%

Italy

Photo: 78%
Dress: 76%
Flowers: 68%

Portugal

Photo: 83%
Music: 62%
Suits: 61%

India

Photo/video: 89%
Caterer: 87%
Makeup: 87%

05/ The Wedding

The month in which couples choose to wed is heavily reliant on weather. September and October tend to be the peak months for weddings across **Europe** and **North America**, while weddings taking place in the southern hemisphere are most popular from October to February.

Countries such as **India**, whose geographical size makes for vastly different temperatures across the country, see a variation in wedding months based on location. As noted earlier in the report, auspicious days also heavily influence date selection in India.

Most Popular Months to Wed

North America

U.S.	October (16%) September (15%)
Canada	September (20%)
Mexico	November (15%) October (14%)

Europe

Spain	September (22%)
Italy	September (23%) June (22%)
U.K.	September (21%)
France	August / June (19%)
Portugal	September (21%)

South America

Argentina	November (18%)
Peru	November (12%)
Chile	February (18%)
Brazil	October (17%)
Colombia	October (14%)

Asia

Southern India	November (24%)
Northern India	January (20%)



Priscila Valentina Photography

06/ Traditions & Trends

Weddings around the world are each filled with unique cultural elements, but certain traditions, like the **first dance** are extremely popular in the U.S., France and other locations. First dances are another opportunity for couples to put their own spin on the wedding, ranging from having a unique choreographed number (such as [this U.K. couple](#) who took guests by surprise) to using special lighting effects to set the mood (this Mexican wedding had [indoor mini-fireworks](#)).

Modern trends like creating a wedding hashtag are gaining popularity—currently most used in the U.S. and Canada.

Other traditions like **raising a glass** to the happy couple or celebrating with some wine is also a commonality across the globe. In the U.K. and Spain, the vast majority of weddings serve alcohol (95-97%), though the experience is likely to differ. Open bar is a frequent occurrence at Spanish weddings, while a majority of U.K. weddings have a champagne toast but usually don't include free-flowing beverages.

Traditions & Trends by Country

Serve Alcohol at Reception

Spain	97%
U.K.	95%
Portugal	93%
Argentina	90%
France	90%
U.S.	89%
Chile	88%
Canada	87%
Mexico	85%
Peru	79%
Italy	70%
Colombia	67%
Brazil	64%
India	22%

Have a First Dance

U.S.	92%
Canada	85%
U.K.	84%
Spain	82%
France	82%
Mexico	81%
Peru	79%
Portugal	75%
Chile	72%
Colombia	66%
Argentina	65%
India	47%
Brazil	46%
Italy	37%

Use a Wedding Hashtag

U.S.	53%
Canada	45%
India	32%
Brazil	30%
Argentina	22%
Portugal	21%
U.K.	19%
Mexico	14%
Colombia	13%
Chile	13%
Spain	13%
Peru	10%
Italy	9%
France	3%

Question asked if alcohol was served at your wedding reception



In countries like Chile and Peru, great music will keep the party going until early in the morning. A popular trend in Latin America is la hora loca (crazy hour), where the party gets amped up to another level. At a [recent wedding in Santiago, Chile](#), there were gigantic LED robots that blasted confetti in the air while guests danced under neon lights. Some couples incorporate a theme, such as at a [recent gathering in Lima, Peru](#), where costumed characters from Super Mario Bros entertained the crowd and handed out hats, beads and fun accessories.

07/ Wedding Cost & Guests

Wedding planning can drive emotions ranging from tears to laughter, though it's often budgeting that proves most stressful, as the reality of how much things cost may not match up with a couple's vision.

Costs (Excludes ring/jewelry or honeymoon)

Wedding costs are highest in the U.S., and lower in South America where average income is also lower (below \$14K yearly based on U.S. dollars²). In Peru, Chile and Colombia, couples pay for roughly 55% of the wedding costs, and a significant percentage will take out a loan or incur credit card debt. In other countries, couples see more financial support from parents/family, especially in Spain and Italy, where they cover roughly two-thirds of expenses.

% Taking Out Loan/ Credit Card Debt

Highest		Lowest	
Peru	47%	Portugal	7%
Brazil	47%	Spain	15%
Chile	45%	France	21%
Colombia	43%	Italy	25%

Q: Did you take out any loans or incur any credit card debt to help pay for your wedding?

Guest Count

A major cost factor is how many guests are invited. In European countries, the average wedding has roughly 100 to 130 guests. The Americas see significant variation from 91 guests in Colombia to 159 in Brazil and 185 in Mexico. Given the larger guest count, Brazilian and Mexican weddings are also more likely to occur in couples' hometowns, which offers a centralized location that's convenient for family and friends.

% Hometown Weddings

Highest		Lowest	
Brazil	57%	Chile	28%
India	56%	Argentina	30%
Mexico	46%	Peru	31%

% Agree "wedding took place where either me or my partner grew up"

Indian weddings are typically a multiday gathering, and the average guest count for the largest event exceeds 500 people. Events like the [Mehndi ceremony](#) (where the bride is adorned with henna designs) tend to be more intimate gatherings, while the reception is a larger celebration where guests are invited to enjoy food and dancing. When it comes to costs, parents pay for a majority though there is a wide range of spend.

Wedding Costs

	U.S.	Spain	Italy	Canada	U.K.	France	Portugal
Avg Costs (\$USD)	29,200	23,400	22,500	21,900	19,200	17,600	16,700
Avg Guests	126	130	114	154	104	105	126
	Mexico	Peru	Chile	Brazil	Argentina	Colombia	India
Avg Costs (\$USD)	8,600	7,700	7,400	6,600	3,700	3,300	Varies*
Avg Guests	185	151	114	159	125	91	524

Costs cited in US dollars, using currency conversion rates as of March 2019, excludes ring/jewelry or honeymoon. Average number of guests for reception.

*While \$15-22K is the midpoint wedding spend for educated couples in India based on U.S. dollars, around 20% will spend more than \$45K. In India, the average middle class individual makes at least \$14,000 on an annual basis.³

08/ Honeymoon

After the wedding, a honeymoon is usually a time for the couple to unwind and celebrate life as a newlywed. In each country, the majority of couples will enjoy a honeymoon, whether it's basking on the amazing beaches in Fernando de Noronha, off Brazil's northeastern coast, or exploring the famed Bordeaux wine region in France.

78% of Couples

will go on a honeymoon.
(Avg. across all 14 countries)

09/ Methodology

The 2019 Global Wedding Report is primarily based on data collected from The Knot Worldwide (The Knot, WeddingWire and Bodas.net) annual newlywed survey, distributed to couples married in 2018. The survey was sent in December 2018 to couples with an email address on file, and a total of 19,993 responded. India data comes from a gen pop survey of 357 recently-married, college-educated couples. To provide the most comprehensive view, this report includes findings from ad hoc studies and examples from couples who have shared their real wedding experiences with the company. Please contact customerresearch@theknotww.com for more information.

1: [The Guardian](#) 2: [Worlddata.info](#) 3: [Business Standard](#)

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