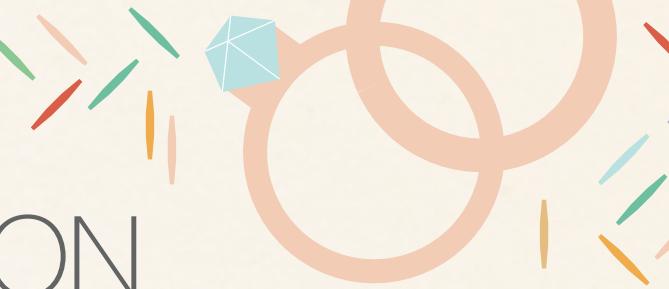


SEE

Curious Planet

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STATE OF THE UNION

FOR BETTER OR WORSE, people all around the globe get married. But as universal as marriage is, its rituals take many different forms. Here's a look at how the world weds.

Pre-Wedding Traditions



INDIA

Families choose a fortuitous time (*muhurta*, in Hindi) for the ceremony based on astrological charts, the lunar calendar, and matching the horoscopes of the bride and groom.



FIJI

When asking for a woman's hand in marriage, the groom presents her father with a whale's tooth or *tabua*. If the bride's father does not approve of the engagement, he will give the groom a *tabua* in return.



GERMANY

Polterabend, "the evening of porter," is when friends and family gather, usually at the bride's parents' house, and bring old dishes to smash for good luck. The groom's job is to serve drinks and sweep up afterward.

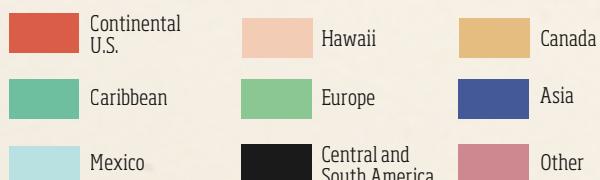


KOREA

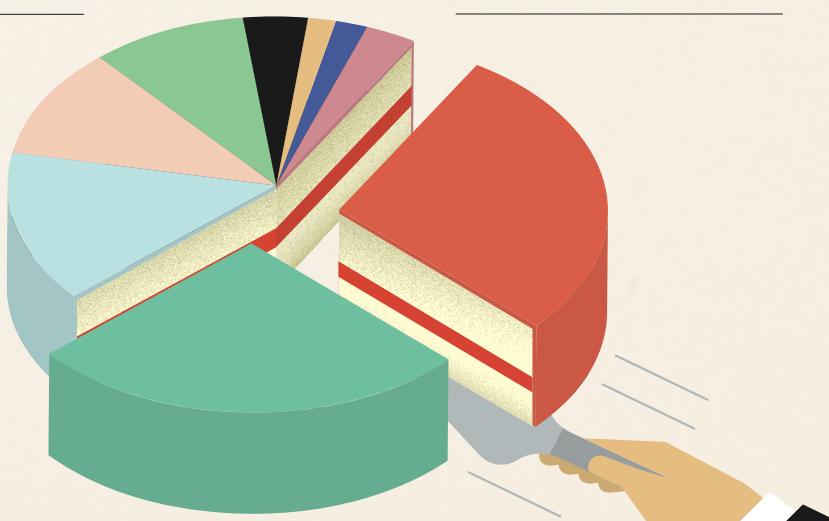
The prospective groom gives a wild goose (these days it is often a wooden goose) to the bride's mother. Geese, which mate for life, symbolize the groom's commitment to his bride.

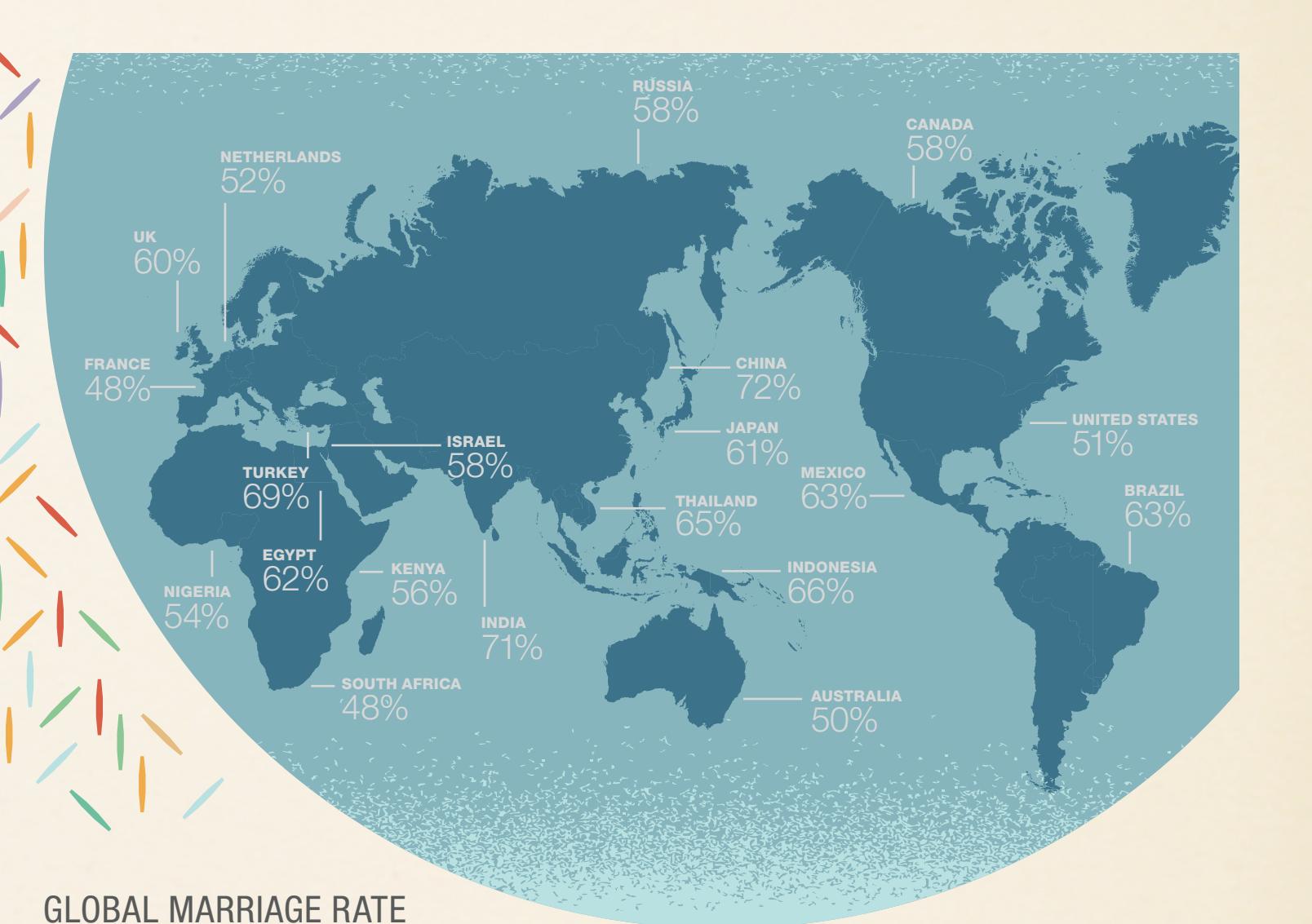
Honeymoon Destinations

Couples from the United States tend to stick close to home for their honeymoons. Nearly a third travel within the country, with the most popular destinations being Las Vegas and Walt Disney World, and 28 percent head to the Caribbean, where Jamaica and the Bahamas top the list.



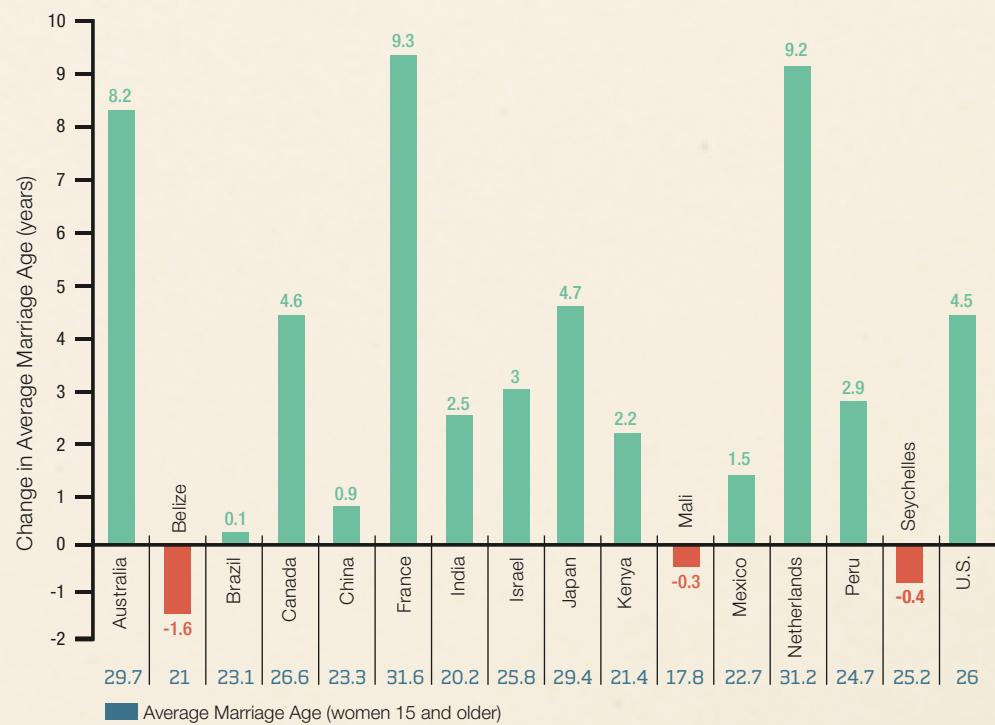
SOURCE: The Knot Market Intelligence, 2010 Honeymoon Study





GLOBAL MARRIAGE RATE

ESTIMATED MARRIED PERCENTAGE of population, age 15 and older, based on United Nations statistics.



Older and Wiser?

Across the globe, men and women are waiting longer to get married. Looking at the most recent United Nations statistics, we found only three countries (indicated with red bars) where the average age at marriage had gone down over the last 30 years. Everywhere else, the age went up, and it increased dramatically in Europe. This chart shows a sampling of the changes in marriage age for women in different parts of the world. The surveys were taken at different times, but they all compare ages from the early 1970s and the first decade of the 2000s.

SOURCES FOR MAP AND CHART: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division: World Marriage Data 2008 and World Population Prospects: The 2008 Revision.